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Los Angeles

Gordon Cullen and the “Cut-and-Paste” Urban Landscape

A dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction of the
requirements for the degree Doctor of Philosophy
in Architecture

by

Miriam Engler

2013

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Miriam Engler

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ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION

Gordon Cullen and the "Cut-and-Paste" Urban Landscape

by

Miriam Engler

Doctor of Philosophy in Architecture

University of California, Los Angeles, 2013

Professor Sylvia Lavin, Chair

The new rules of the emerging consumer economy radically reconfigured both the discourse and practice of architecture during the postwar era. Architecture became a commodity whose products were sold through mass media to mass audiences, via images that performed as advertising. In this world, image makers, rather than theorists, stood at the forefront of the architectural production, performing as "visual marketers." Thomas Gordon Cullen (1914–1994), the subject of this dissertation and one of the best-known twentieth-century architectural draftsmen to emerge from Britain, flourished during this visual consumerist push. Cullen gained widespread acclaim in the 1960s and 1970s following the publication of his book *Townscape* (1961) and its abbreviated edition, *The Concise Townscape* (1971).

Cullen is therefore closely associated with the three decades-long Townscape campaign, initiated and promoted by the prestigious London-based magazine *The Architectural Review*, which espoused a visual modern-picturesque approach to city design. Though Cullen is well known, he is little studied and—owing specifically to the malleability of and contradictions in

his legacy—even less understood. In examining his urban ideas, most scholars have placed him in the history of urban design. An in-depth study of Cullen's printed image and modus operandi, however, is conspicuously missing. This study fills this gap. It provides a structural understanding of Cullen's massive popularity and influence through his image-making trade—its professional status, income sources, clients, norms of success, production modes—and through his drawings. These influences work palpably beyond urban design and Townscape: they signal a major shift in the role of image makers and the status of the image in the production and consumption of popular architecture in the postwar era.

This study uses key samples of his published work; exemplary samples of original drawings, sketches, and journal notes from his personal archive housed at his residence in Wraysbury, England; and a range of academic references and citations, as well as formal interviews and informal conversations, to examine the ways in which Cullen (1) packaged and sold architecture as visual "merchandise" to manufacture consumer desire, (2) reinvented the landscape perspective as a tool to rethink the postmodern city, (3) reconfigured the design book as a new kind of literary architectural genre, and (4) constructed his audience. It shows that Cullen was precisely fitted to the requisites of a society of spectacle in a hyper-consumerist economy. Not only did he shape the postwar generation of architects and landscape architects educated between the 1970s and 1980s across the world, but he continues to exert his influence over both professionals and laypeople today. Knowingly and mostly unknowingly, many see the world through Cullen's eyes—as mobile, pedestrian, at eye level, and spectacular. And many draw or design the city through bricolage and montage—a "cut-and-paste" maneuver of a constant Cullenesque interplay in virtual and actual space.

The dissertation of Miriam Engler is approved.

Dana Cuff

Dell Upton

Sylvia Lavin, Committee Chair

University of California, Los Angeles

2013

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All photographs of Gordon Cullen's personal archive are by the author with permission by Mrs. Jacqueline Cullen.

PREFACE

It is no coincidence that in my first semester as a landscape architecture educator at Iowa State University, I turned to a well-known example of Gordon Cullen's serial vision drawing from his *Townscape* book in the first design studio outdoor drawing exercise. I instructed my students to use a copy of Cullen's perspective sequence as a guide for their urban sketches along Nicollet Mall in Minneapolis, Minnesota. Like numerous other educators, I found Cullen's images lucid and expedient, both in drawing pedagogy and in my own design work, despite my disagreement with the romantic overtones of Townscape—the modern-picturesque urban model for which Cullen became a spokesman. In hindsight, I can trace my own design drawing to Cullen through Ron Lovinger, my undergraduate professor at the Technion, in Haifa, Israel, in the late 1970s. He, like many postwar landscape architecture students educated in the United States, emulated Cullen, and remains explicit about this influence. Other academic acquaintances have "confessed" to me privately over the years that they relied on Cullen's book, *Townscape*, to teach or learn to draw townscapes, despite insisting that they were indifferent to, or even scornful of, Townscape.

This book explains Cullen's pervasive influence across the world and, indirectly, elucidates this paradoxical attitude toward Cullen—a mix of antipathy and fascination, a kind of cerebral push and emotional pull. An architectural draftsman by training and a commercial artist, Cullen became the spokesman for Townscape and a prominent author. He was given numerous professional titles, including urban designer, architect, planning consultant, and theorist, and he gave himself many others. Given that "draughtsman" was a position of low status, this label was not his favorite. Yet draftsmanship—more broadly, image making—was both his prime production and his source of power. It would win Cullen a permanent place in the history of

landscape and urban representation. Around 1970, Cullen negotiated with Oxford University Press a book project that he called *The Draughtsman*. It never appeared. The reason for the plan's failure, and perhaps an early draft, may still be buried in his personal archive, to which I was granted only limited access. Had it been realized, *The Draughtsman* might have proven to be one of the most genuine and illuminating of Cullen's products.

A key hypothesis of this dissertation is that the rise of image makers to the forefront of architectural discourse, a place formerly reserved for intellectuals and scholars, followed the emergence of global capitalism, the growth of mass media technologies and visual consumer culture, and the turn of architecture to mainstream appeal. This rise is also intricately related to developments in print technology and to the phenomenon of free-floating images that circulate in the stream of mass media detached from their original context. This work therefore examines the postwar role of design images and image makers in the production and consumption of architecture, and the ways they fit into the broader historical context of popular culture. My underlying hope is that given the contradictions in perspectives on Cullen among scholars, critics, and practitioners, this study not only redefines Cullen and restores him to contemporary disciplinary conversations but also invites reflection on the history and agency of landscape and urban representation, urban design strategies in a consumerist economy, and the making and shaping of an architectural audience.

Several people, to whom I owe my sincere thanks, have helped bring this work to fruition. First and foremost, I am indebted to Sylvia Lavin, my main PhD advisor, for her uncompromising and penetrating critique. Working with Sylvia was a professional transformative experience that improved my research and writing skills tenfold. She directed me to Cullen, and steered me toward an exploration that brings together my home discipline of

landscape architecture and architecture. I am also thankful to my dissertation committee: Professors of Architecture Diane Favro and Dana Cuff in the PhD Critical Studies Program at UCLA, who guided my study and taught me a great deal about historical research and about urbanism; Professor Dell Upton, Chair of the Art History Department at UCLA; and Professor Stan Allen, Professor and former Dean of the School of Architecture at Princeton University. (Professors Favro and Allen were non-certifying members of the committee.). All have inspired and provided me with comments and material during the preparation of this work. Last, the late Denis Cosgrove, Professor of Geography at UCLA, provided me with inspiration and guidance during the early phase of this work.

I thank Gordon Cullen's widow, Jacqueline M. Cullen, and his daughter, Isabelle Price, for their hospitality and for savory French meals during my three-day stay at their home in Wraysbury, south of London, during which time I browsed through Cullen's personal archive. The material I accessed and hastily photographed, however partial, proved highly valuable for this study. Clément Orillard, Associate Professor at the Institut d'Urbanisme at the Université Paris-Est, in Paris, France, has generously shared with me a portion of the archive he has organized over the past few years. I am also thankful to several British colleagues: Alan Powers, Bob Jarvis, Peter Rees, and David Price, whom I had the pleasure of meeting and interviewing, and from whom I learned firsthand about Cullen. Alan Powers's work on interwar British modern architecture and its later turn to conservation has been particularly valuable for this study. Other academic colleagues whose work has greatly informed mine include Erden Erten, Architecture Professor at Izmir institute of Technology, Turkey, whose PhD on the postwar *Architectural Review* policy has been most informative, and Mathew Aitchison and John Macarthur, Architecture Professors at the School of Architecture in the University of

Queensland, Brisbane, Australia, whose recent work on Townscape has been most illuminating, and has inspired renewed interest in the subject.

In Iowa, I am grateful to my colleagues at Iowa State University—to the College of Design Dean Mark Englbrecht and Landscape Architecture Department Chair Tim Keller, for their invaluable academic and financial support during my study at UCLA; to Professor of Art History John Cunnally, for his continuous support and comments on early drafts during my PhD exams; and to Dan Naegle, Professor of Architecture, who gave me a onetime, pointed lesson on fairness in historical research when reviewing an early paper of this work. I am grateful to Margaret Thilges, my research assistant, who provided great help in library research and documentation of Cullen's work. I also owe thanks to my editors: Lea Messinger Smithers, who helped edit two of this work's chapters; Alice Falk, who worked on the final draft of the manuscript; and the brilliant Chris Nelson, who toiled with me throughout the writing process and made sure I stayed on track to reach my destination safely.

Finally, I am grateful to the two men in my life: my son, Amir Efrati, and my partner in life and play, Scott Burger. Amir edited many papers and drafts over the past few years, and came to know about Cullen more than he had ever wished. His journalistic writing inspires me today, just as my academic writing inspired him just a decade ago. Last but not least, I am indebted to Scott for his support and encouragement during many stressful months in preparation of this work. He made this process whole and fun in more ways than I can count.

VITA

1979-1982	Bachelor of Landscape Architecture, Technion, Israel Institute of Technology, Haifa, Israel, with honors
1987-1989	Master of Landscape Architecture, University of California, Berkeley
1980-1987	Chief Designer, Gideon Sarig, Landscape Architecture & Urban Planning, Ramat Ha'Sharon, Israel
1988-1989	Teaching and Research Assistant, University of California, Berkeley
1989-1996	Assistant Professor, Department of Landscape Architecture, Iowa State University, Ames, Iowa
1996-2006	Associate Professor, Department of Landscape Architecture, Iowa State University, Ames, Iowa
1997, 2000	Visiting Associate Professor, College of Architecture and Urban Planning, Technion, Haifa, Israel
2003-2009	College of Design summer urban design studio, program leader, Rome, Italy
2006-present	Professor, Department of Landscape Architecture, Iowa State University, Ames, Iowa

Publications

2004	*Designing America's Waste Landscapes*. Baltimore, Maryland: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2004.
2006	"Nuclear Effigy Mounds and Catacombs," *There* 2 (2006): 10–15.
2005	"Postnuclear Monuments, Museums and Gardens," *Landscape Review* 9, no. 2 (2005): 45–58.
2002	"Monuments for the Living," *The Israeli Magazine of Landscape Architecture* 5 (March 2002): 16–17.
2000	"The Garden in the Machine: Latz+Partner's Reclamation Works," *Land Forum International* 5 (April 2000): 78–85.
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1993 "Drive-Thru History: Theme Towns in Iowa," *Landscape* 32, no. 1 (1993): 8–18.

Presentations

2011 "The Conscious Eye and the Everydayness of Townscape," European Council of Landscape Architects (ECLAS), Sheffield, UK, Sept., 2011.

2011 "When Lettering Entered Urbanism: Townscape's Textual Obsession," Society of Architectural Historians (SAH), New Orleans, LA, April 2011.

2009 "Scaping the City: The Drawings of Gordon Cullen, 1947-1959," Society of Architectural Historians (SAH), Pasadena, CA, April 2009.

2009 "Gordon Cullen in Perspective," The University of Tennessee, Knoxville, College of Architecture, Church Lecture Series, October, 2009.

Awards

2004 International competition winner, "The Otherworld Garden," Westonbirt Festival of the Garden, Gloucestershire, UK, 2004.

2003 State competition winner, "Democracy/Hypocrisy," Des Moines Public Art Commission, Iowa Arts Council, Des Moines, 2003.

1999 International exhibition, "Reclaiming Metaphors Out of the Dump," Tel Aviv Museum of Art, 1999.

1995 National award, "Rural Reliquaries," Visionary and Unbuilt Landscapes Competition, American Society of Landscape Architecture, Dec., 1995.

1992 National award, The Once and Future Park competition, Walker Art Center and The Minneapolis College of Art and Design, Minneapolis, MN, 1992. with Gina Crandell.

CHAPTER 1. LOCATING GORDON CULLEN IN THE REALM OF IMAGE MAKING AND CONSUMER CULTURE

> *Architectural design was one of many disciplines whose history was directly and permanently affected by printed images. From the beginning of the early modern period, . . . mechanically reproduced illustrations gradually replaced those copied by hand. This change of format had in its turn irreversible effects for the transmission and transmissibility in space and time of architectural models, as the quality of copies was vastly improved and quantity increased.* —Mario Carpo[1]

Image making and architecture, as distinct from building, are inseparable. Architecture's primary mode of discourse is drawing—an interpretive, critical act of making an image.[2] Of course, the medium of the image and its methods of diffusion have changed over time, most notably because of progress in printing technology. The architectural theorist Mario Carpo has argued that although images were transmitted by hand in the Middle Ages, mechanical reproduction in the early modern era profoundly and permanently changed their circulation. Following from Walter Benjamin's "The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction," Carpo has posited further that this development threw into question the relationship between imitation and invention and, eventually, the very notion and nature of both "the original" and "the author."[3] Along with the development of print media came the globalization of the capitalist economy and an increase in visual consumption. The coupling of an increasingly visual society

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[1] Mario Carpo, *Architecture in the Age of Printing: Orality, Writing, Typography, and Printed Images in the History of Architectural Theory* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 2001), 11.

[2] This argument owes much to Beatriz Colomina's essay on architecture and reproduction, "Architectureproduction," in *This Is Not Architecture: Media Constructions*, ed. Kester Rattenbury (London: Routledge, 2002), 207–21.

[3] Walter Benjamin, "The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction," in *Illuminations*, ed. Hannah Arendt, trans. Harry Zohn, (New York: Schocken, 1969), 217–51.

and rampant consumerism in the Western world was not entirely new, having been true at various historical junctures since the eighteenth-century industrial revolution. However, surging consumerism and advertising in the past century, and major advances in reproduction technology—from engraving and letterpress, mimeography, and offset lithography to multicolor silk-screen printing and digital printing, to name a few—have dramatically expanded the circulation of the print image, changing people's relationships with art and architecture. Co-opted into the capitalist economic system of production and consumption, art and architecture were joined by new design professions—industrial design and commercial art—in fashioning and promoting consumer products.

Thomas Gordon Cullen (1914–1994), the subject of this dissertation, was a product of the rise of the interwar visual consumer culture and the consumerist push of architecture. Wedded to the publishing world of print media, he became one of Britain's best-known twentieth-century architectural draftsmen and commercial artists in the 1930s, and gained worldwide fame in the 1960s following the publication of his book *Townscape* (1961) and its abridged edition, *The Concise Townscape* (1971).[4] He is therefore closely associated with the Townscape campaign, which for half a century espoused a visual modern-picturesque approach to city design, and which was initiated and promoted by *The Architectural Review* (*The Review*). Though Cullen is well known, he has been little studied and is even less understood. In examining his urban ideas, most scholars have placed him in the history of urban design. An in-depth study of the production and influence of his printed images, however, is conspicuously missing. This study,

[4] Cullen's book was published by the Architectural Press (AP) in 1961 in London and immediately reprinted in 1962 in the United States by the Reinhold Publishing Corporation. The book compiled his essays and drawings published in the *Architectural Review* in the late 1940s and '50s.

therefore, places Cullen both within the history of image making and within the twentieth-century production and consumption of architecture through the image.

Image Making in Architecture: Forerunners and Contexts

Cullen belongs to an eminent strain of architectural draftsmen, also known by such names as "delineators," "illustrators," "renderers," and "consultants." Their contribution resides in the medium of drawing itself, rather than in construction—a strain with a rich history of prominent figures, including the eighteenth-century Italian Giovanni Battista Piranesi (1720–1778), whose exuberant etchings of Roman antiquity modeled Baroque architecture; the French-born English illustrator Augustus Charles Pugin (1762–1832), whose picturesque watercolor aquatints shaped the image of Regency London; the American Harvey Ellis (1852–1904), whose pen-and-ink rendering fashioned the late nineteenth-century Arts and Crafts movement; and the American Hugh Ferriss (1889–1962), whose volumetric soft-pencil and charcoal renderings influenced the early twentieth-century modern city. Caught between art and architecture, their drawings have had more or as much influence as the buildings they portrayed or the architects who employed them. Each of these figures worked in a particular economy and a particular publishing market. Dependent both on the publishing trade (and, therefore, on print media and printing technology) and on the whims of the public of his time, each illustrator satisfied a broad public taste while simultaneously shaping it. Working in the early industrial capitalist economy, for example, both Piranesi and Pugin responded to the growing appetites for realism of the new bourgeoisie and the emerging modern tourist. Piranesi prepared his *Vedute di Roma* and other drawing series for picture books, but he also produced loose print sheets for tourists who visited Rome on their Grand Tour.[5] Pugin published his aquatints in picture books—most notably in *The Microcosm of*

[5] Giovanni Battista Piranesi, *Giovanni Battista Piranesi: The Complete Etchings*, ed. Luigi Ficcaci (Cologne: Taschen, 2000).

London (1808), printed by the famed publisher Rudolph Ackermann—and for urban dwellers keen on realistic imitation of the cityscape;[6] the architectural presentation drawings of Ellis and Ferriss responded to the growing mass middle-class consumer culture, with its taste for Arts and Crafts architecture and modern urban metropolis skyscraper, respectively. Ellis's drawings were submitted to professional periodicals, such as the weeklies *American Architect* and *Building News*, while Ferriss published his influential images first in the *New York Times* in 1925, and later in professional publications, public exhibitions, and monographs.[7]

The drive for wide public appeal privileged the perspective technique over others. Recalling perception and the observer's body, perspective has long been the most widely understood drawing technique, which therefore made it the locus of innovation for these illustrators. Intending to seduce and, at the same time, critique the projects that they professed to embody, each of these renowned image makers remade the perspective anew for his time. As they used new drawing media and steeped their images in new techniques and effects that exuded new sensibilities, they also included subtle "corrections" of the reactionary blueprints upon which they were based: Piranesi exploded the Renaissance Euclidian one-point perspective into a multipoint perspective of fluid and fantastical Baroque space; Pugin retrofitted the picturesque landscape perspective for a theatrical and animated urban architectural space; Ellis adapted the meticulous Beaux-Arts perspective to the picturesque taste of the American Arts and

[6] Augustus Charles Pugin and Thomas Rowlandson, *The Microcosm of London; or, London in Miniature* (1808; reprint, London: Methuen, 1904). Pugin illustrated Parisian magazines in the 1780s, and began focusing on architectural perspective drawings when he moved to London in the 1790s, working with John Nash as a draftsman. Pugin studied the work of the landscape gardener Humphry Repton. See Rosemary Hill, *God's Architect: Pugin and the Building of Romantic Britain* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2007), 13–14.

[7] Eileen Manning Michels, *Reconfiguring Harvey Ellis* (Edina, Minn.: Scrupulous Pond Press, 2000), 136-142; Hugh Ferriss, *The Metropolis of Tomorrow* (New York: Ives Washburn, 1929).

Crafts movement; Ferriss stripped the neoclassical perspective of its excess, retrofitting it for the real-estate ventures and urban planning of the modern metropolis.

In the 1930s, contemporaneous with Ferriss but on the opposite side of the Atlantic, in London, Gordon Cullen shaped another distinct idea about architecture, and later the city: Townscape. Positioned as he was at a critical historical junction of the modern city, Cullen played an instrumental role in the transition of the city from the modernist functional phase to the postwar, postmodern one. Emerging during the interwar decade of the 1930s—an era of marked shift from the early phase of consumerism around the turn the century to an international market economy in mid-century, a phase that Fredric Jameson later termed "Late Capitalism"[8]—Cullen was therefore shaped by the growing appetite of mass consumer culture for visuals, a demand highly influenced by advertising.

At the height of the Depression in 1933, Cullen graduated from Regent Street Polytechnic in London, where he completed a three-year program of rigorous architectural draftsmanship after having transferred from the London School of Arts and Crafts.[9] His brilliant graphics landed him a spot in top-ranked modernist architectural offices in London and, within five years, he became a leading British commercial artist. His freelance illustrations for diverse clients—manufacturers, government, professional organizations, private offices, and publishers—appeared in consumer catalogs and newsprint advertising, as well as in notable publications and key national exhibitions. This initial body of work led to his being hired at *The Review* in 1946,

[8] Fredric Jameson, *Postmodernism, or, The Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism* (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 1991).

[9] Cullen transferred to architectural drafting because of the low earning prospects in the arts. At the Polytechnic, he studied under the tutelage of Professor Thornton White, who established a rigorous curriculum in classical architecture and emphasized drafting skills. The Depression forced Cullen and many of his classmates into the labor market before graduation. See TOVATT: Architects and Planners, "Ralph Erskine," www.tovatt.com/EN/RalphErskine.htm (accessed July 1, 2013).

where he published extensively and was listed as assistant art editor between 1947 and 1959. His innovative drawings of architectural photomontage perspectives from the 1930s, and of flat, anti-naturalistic cartoonish urban landscape perspectives from the 1940s and 1950s, ushered in a new era in the history of representation in architecture, urbanism, and landscape. They inculcated a whole new "pedestrian" way of seeing and designing the city as landscape, a modality that conflicted with that of the dominant city models of the time, including the rational modern city and the romantic garden city models. Like those of his predecessors, Cullen's drawings were widely disseminated in popular publications, becoming highly influential. Aside from their mass appeal, the drawing traits and mannerisms were soon imitated by hordes of architects and delineators.

Normative Ways of Studying Cullen

Most scholars as well as the general public know Cullen through his book *The Concise Townscape* (1971) and its massively diffused imagery.[10] Few, though, know him through the original book *Townscape* (1961), and even fewer through the original publications of the ideas in the actual pages of *The Review* itself.[11] Furthermore, his for-hire and freelance work in the 1930s is hardly known or studied. Through the mid-1990s, academic researchers discussed Cullen exclusively in the context of urban design and town planning, à la Townscape. Despite occasional criticism, Cullen was lauded as a visionary urban designer by urbanism scholars such as Geoffrey Broadbent and Nan Ellin, and has become synonymous with Townscape, whether in the popular professional mind or urban design and planning academic discourses.

[10] Gordon Cullen, *Townscape* (London: Architectural Press, 1961).

[11] Gordon Cullen, *The Concise Townscape* (New York: Van Nostrand Reinhold, 1971). Cullen was hired by *The Review* as a staff member in May 1946; he was listed as "assistant art editor" for the first time in February 1947, and for the last time in October 1959. Though he left the journal team in 1956, he continued to make contributions thereafter as a freelancer.

This widespread association was further perpetuated by the only monograph of Cullen, *Gordon Cullen: Visions of Urban Design* (1996), a coffee-table book by the urban designer David Gosling, who was Cullen's collaborator and colleague in the 1970s. Gosling's book covers the six decades of Cullen's career, from the beginning of his professional practice in 1933 to his death in 1994.[12] Filled with glossy color reproductions of many known and lesser-known drawings, *Visions* highlights Cullen's extensive contribution to the field of urban design, and emphasizes that Cullen's art as well as understanding of human perception made that contribution possible. However, Gosling's monograph—and all other references before and after—fail to examine the agency and influence of Cullen's art directly and thoroughly, despite mostly praising it.

In contrast to these scholars, a small but vocal group of critics associated with the architectural vanguard in the 1950s and conversant in the development of Townscape in *The Review* underscored the key role of its editors Hugh de Cronin Hastings and Nikolaus Pevsner in the conception and methodology of Townscape, mostly treating the theory with scorn, and either completely ignoring Cullen or remarking on him only in passing. Among them are Alan Colquhoun, Colin Rowe, and Reyner Banham.[13] In part because Cullen was portrayed as someone who interprets the ideas of others, and in part because his writing was convoluted and incoherent, he was dismissed as the guy who supplied the images. Joseph Rykwert was perhaps the only prominent architectural theorist who, as early as 1959 in his pivotal essay "Review of

[12] David Gosling, *Gordon Cullen: Visions of Urban Design* (London: Academy Editions, 1996).

[13] The debate over Townscape raged on the pages of *The Review* and *Architectural Design* through the 1950s and continued in later book publications. See I. T. A. Colquhoun, "Twentieth Century Picturesque," *Architectural Review* 116, no. 691 (July 1954): 2; Reyner Banham, "The Revenge of the Picturesque," in *Concerning Architecture*, ed. John Summerson (London: Penguin. Press, 1968), 265–74. For an extensive discussion of the debate, see Mathew Aitchison, "Who's Afraid of Ivor de Wolfe?" *AA Files* 62 (2011): 34–39.

The Review," deemed critical Cullen's individual contribution: "The wide publicity [Townscape] has been given internationally is due largely to the services of a most experienced and prolific draughtsman: Gordon Cullen."[14] Yet Rykwert assigns both credit and blame to Cullen's visualization. In this most pointed critique of *The Review*'s policy, he implicated Cullen as "exactly the right vehicle for the policy which informs it—both a concern for surface and neglect for structure."[15] In fact, as his recent remark on a discussion panel underscore ("There's no Townscape without Cullen"), Rykwert is the lone architectural critic to consider Townscape and Cullen to be inseparable.[16]

I concur neither with those who embrace Cullen for his urban visions nor with those who dismiss him as merely "the guy who supplies illustrations." I agree with Rykwert's appraisal of Cullen's paramount role in disseminating *The Review* policy and Townscape by way of his drawings, but on completely different grounds. Rykwert's term "vehicle" is entirely too passive a description of Cullen; I instead consider Cullen a "producer" and "product designer" who shaped Townscape according to market conditions—a premise that directly attributes the agency and popularity that Townscape acquired to Cullen's influence. Finally, I also believe that it is specifically because of its concern for surface, rather than structure, that Townscape has had immense influence.

In recent years, theorists working to construct a more nuanced history of late modernism and postmodernism in urbanism attempted to reposition Townscape within its broader cultural

[14] Joseph Rykwert, "Review of a Review," *Zodiac* 4 (September 1959): 13.

[15] Ibid.

[16] Rykwert made this comment in a symposium organized by Mathew Aitchison, Nick Beech, and Murray Fraser, "Townscape: A Retrospective Symposium on the *Architectural Review*'s Townscape Campaign," University College London, London, July 22–23, 2011.

and architectural context. They revisited the Townscape campaign and, subsequently, revisited Cullen. It is commonly agreed that Cullen entered the scene after the theoretical grounding of Townscape had been established, and that he "emptied" Townscape of its core nationalist overtones and its picturesque theory. Later, their focus turned to Cullen's methodology of Townscape, and his position vis-à-vis ideas developed by his colleagues, including vision in motion or serial vision. By understanding Pevsner's and Hastings's own positions, for example, these scholars wanted to disentangle Cullen from *The Review* and assess each more accurately.

Three main views have emerged regarding Cullen's own perspective in relation to the AR editors: (1) he shared a political agenda with the editors, but disguised it; (2) he had no political agenda, and was instrumental in developing specific areas that interested him, especially of human psychology and at the micro level of material and mundane urban details, where he overlapped with, and mostly applied, the AR editors' interests to architectural practice; and (3) he had no agenda of his own, and was merely advancing a popular version of the AR editors. The first view is held by Richard Williams, Andrew Law, and Joe Moran. Williams saw Cullen as a key figure in *The Review*'s vision of Townscape. In his view, Cullen's markedly yet superficially formalist Townscape had the same ideological ambition as *The Review*'s version of Townscape, which conveyed nationalist ideology and promoted a seemingly naturalistic and popular aesthetic.[17] Williams's moral (and Marxist) argument accused Cullen of using advertising and surrealist tactics, thereby promoting a city of spectacle, one detached from any function or history, and one in which the viewer aestheticizes any scene, however distressing.[18] Law joined Williams's critique, arguing that Cullen's Townscape, despite promoting itself as either "down to

[17] Richard J. Williams, *The Anxious City: English Urbanism in the Late Twentieth Century* (London: Routledge, 2004), 32–41.

[18] Ibid., 38.

earth" or as a "messenger of the people," in fact advanced the same elitist aesthetics as *The Review*.[19] Moran found Cullen's Townscape engaged only in relatively small details of the environment and lacking in references to neo-romanticism and political ideology, while concurrently obscuring the editors' idealized vision of public life that emphasized the traditional and familiar.[20]

Andrew Higgott, Erdem Erten, and Alan Powers belong to the second group: they consider Cullen to have been a full partner in the development of Townscape on specific themes and in specific capacities. Higgott argued that Cullen's artistic viewpoint and sensibility regarding surfaces and material, together with Richards's concept of "Functional Tradition," were central to the shift of architectural discourse about the city in the 1950s from abstract and large-scale to materiality and place.[21] Erten posited that Cullen was instrumental in developing the Townscape's visual methodology and exemplary design solutions, moving the editorial policy from the theoretical-professional level to mainstream practice—in other words, from its conceptualization to its dissemination.[22] Alan Powers showed Cullen even greater appreciation, considering him a unifier who bridged the gap between architecture and urban planning for the benefits of the public, as well as the gap between development and historical preservation

[19] Andrew Law, "English Townscape as Cultural and Symbolic Capital," in *Architectures: Modernism and After,* ed. Andrew Ballantyne (Malden, Mass.: Blackwell, 2004), 202–25.

[20] Joe Moran, "'Subtopias of Good Intentions,' Everyday Landscapes in Postwar Britain, *Cultural and Social History* 3, no. 4 (September 2007): 401–21.

[21] Andrew Higgott, *Mediating Modernism: Architectural Culture in Britain* (New York: Routledge, 2007), 13.

[22] Erten posited that the design methodology and pedagogy of Townscape developed after the arrival of Cullen, and that their development mirrored the organization of Pevsner's manuscript. Erdem Erten. "Shaping 'The Second Half Century': *The Architectural Review* 1947–1971" (PhD diss., MIT, 2004), 60; http://dspace.mit.edu/handle/1721.1/17662?show=full.

(though unintentionally).[23] Elsewhere, he considered Cullen to be a partner in the idea of Townscape as a mode of thinking about the visual world in terms of relationships between things, and someone who helped promote a system-based, environmental state of mind.[24]

Among those who recast Cullen as a mere illustrator with no conscious agenda, or a minor guy who supplied pictures, are Mathew Aitchison and John Macarthur. Aitchison and Macarthur specifically tried to rectify what they argued to be Cullen's undeserved prominence in the campaign—in part because he invented neither the idea nor the methodology of Townscape, and in part because of his postmodern bent. Each viewed Townscape both in terms of its broader framework from the 1930s through the 1970s and in terms of its many contributors. They also set out to reposition Townscape further from the neo-romanticism of postmodernity (and therefore Cullen) and closer to modernity (essentially reinstating the argument that Pevsner had used to defend Townscape against its adversaries).[25] Macarthur judged Cullen's book to be hardly intellectual and viewed Cullen's idea of Townscape as a hazy compound of several popular ideas naively grafted onto each other (views I share, but on utterly different bases). He added that the lack of political ideology in Cullen's Townscape was readily subsumed in postmodernist pychologized concepts of vision.[26] At a recent symposium titled "Townscape: A Retrospective

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[23] Alan Powers, review of *Gordon Cullen, Visions of Urban Design*, by David Gosling, *Journal of Architectural Conservation* 1 (March 1997): 89–92.

[24] Alan Powers, paper presented at "Townscape: A Retrospective Symposium on the *Architectural Review*'s Townscape Campaign"; a revised version was later published as "Townscape as a Model of Organized Complexity," *Journal of Architecture*, 17 no. 5 (2012): 702–14.

[25] Macarthur and Aitchison have made these and related arguments in numerous recent publications. See in particular John Macarthur, *The Picturesque: Architecture, Disgust, and Other Irregularities* (London: Routledge, 2007), 204–5; John Macarthur and Mathew Aitchison, "Pevsner's Townscape," in *Pevsner's Visual Planning and the Picturesque*, ed. Mathew Aitchison (Los Angeles: Getty Research Institute, 2010), 29; Aitchison, "Who's Afraid of Ivor de Wolfe?" 35, 39.

[26] Macarthur, *The Picturesque*, 204.

Symposium on the Architectural Review's Townscape Campaign," Aitchison, Macarthur, Erten, Powers, and other speakers revisited faded figures in the AR circle, resurrected unpublished manuscripts, examined British and international reactions to Townscape, and reconsidered the authorship of the various concepts harbored by Townscape.[27] These authors add substantially to the literature of Townscape. However, the focus of even these recent studies has remained largely within the context of the autonomous development of theories of architecture rather than architecture's modes of production and consumption.

Indeed, much of the moral and intellectual criticisms of Cullen by authors such as Williams and Macarthur are quite acceptable. At the same time, they are beside the point. Cullen's advertising and popular tactics were precisely the strategies needed for consumer imagery to gain esteem and influence. Cullen's apolitical, nonnationalist, and practical stances were just the sympathies needed to reach the consumer of "the spectacle society," a term coined by the Situationist Guy Debord; he did not create the sympathies but simply—consciously or naively—incorporated them into his work.[28] Many ideas attributed to Cullen were shown to have originated with his colleagues at *The Review*. Yet it is precisely because of such findings that Cullen's sustained and remarkable influence and his rise to the unofficial status of spokesman for Townscape demands full examination. To this end, a completely different approach is needed: a structural inquiry into his production modes within the context of his image-making trade, and within the broader postwar cultural and economic processes.

[27] The talks were published in the *Journal of Architecture* 17, no. 5 (2012).

[28] Guy Debord, *Society of the Spectacle*, trans. Donald Nicholson-Smith, (New York: Zone Books, 1995).

A Structural Approach to Understanding Cullen

To discover Cullen's production modes and "products" instead of his ideas, and to rectify several oversights in earlier critiques, this dissertation positions Cullen outside urban design and further disentangles him from the Townscape espoused by the editors of *The Review*. It does not examine the question of the authorship of Townscape, or Cullen's position vis-à-vis Townscape and his colleagues (except for briefly mentioning his own occasional notebook commentaries on the subject). This discussion instead shifts the focus of assessing Cullen to the nature and structure of his position while assisting in the development of Townscape. Authorship is enlisted within postmodernist notions of the "author," whose work is largely manipulated and completed by the reader. Townscape enters the discussion mainly as a symptom of the logic of the emerging new economy of late capitalism and postmodern culture.

My hypothesis is that an understanding of Cullen's massive popularity and influence can be found in an operative understanding of Cullen's image-making occupation—its professional status, sources of income, norms of success, mode of operation—and within the context of the status of the image in consumerist culture: spectacles intended to drive consumer desire. I therefore locate Cullen within the history of illustration, and assess him essentially as an architectural draftsman and commercial artist, regardless of his workplace—architectural office, freelance, or the press. I also postulate that broader cultural issues surface from Cullen's work, and have a palpable influence beyond urban design and Townscape—a premise that signals a major shift in the role of image makers in reconfiguring midcentury architectural discourse and thus practice.

I make three arguments. First, Cullen the draftsman occupies not a lesser position but rather a position of power at a particular historical moment, right when pictures superseded

words and theories. Like other illustrators or "image makers" who operated in the shadows of better-known architects and thinkers, Cullen played a crucial role in shifting the architectural profession toward mainstream appeal. He constructed, rather than merely represented, the architectural discourse, helping to change the architectural profession from one in which artists and architects were the arbiters of good taste to one that catered to the whims of the audience that became the most important client in architecture: ordinary consumers. It was a radically new and more popular discourse that transcended the boundaries between disciplines and between professional and public, and that was conveyed primarily through images and in terms of how the environment feels rather than how it looks and what it means. Second, Cullen happened to be among the most successful of those illustrators primarily because he was a superb visual marketer, and he rose to prominence when most of his equally important colleagues continued to toil in obscurity. Cullen combined the attributes of artist and salesman. His savvy visual marketing for Town-scape—a city as landscape and as spectacle—drew from advertising and theater arts to meld visual and emotional effect, and to merge architecture and landscape, thereby prefiguring contemporary efforts to create urban forms of pleasure and entertainment. His marketing ability is reflected in his specific pictorial choices, a blend of lowbrow and highbrow art genres and of popular and professional techniques, and his bricolage and montage working process—hybrids of readymade and newly made imagery that he massaged together to create new products of great appeal to a postwar generation. Moreover, Cullen's work expressed a perfect connection between his bricolage-montage operation, his graphic expression, and the message of Townscape (itself an urban model foregrounded in the pastiche). Third, Cullen's visual strategy was made possible precisely as Britain entered an era marked by mass-produced images, a time when the image itself became a particularly strong form of agency. Circulating in

the stream of mass media and divested from their original context and ideology, Cullen's images acquired malleable, often conflicting, interpretations in scholarly discourse and became a versatile commodity in the hand of the consumer. It is this logic, built into the procedures of a hired illustrator, that enabled Cullen to detach himself from a given subject and enabled his images to be produced and detached in a certain way—agreeable to diverse positions and conducive to the broader consumer market. To the dismay of some of his erudite colleagues at the journal, Cullen voided Townscape of their ideologies and created a popular, consumer-friendly product that, in turn, found a large audience and had great influence. His pictorial, curatorial, and journalistic production advanced a distinct agenda alongside that of the editors. This agenda then attained a separate life as a coherent body of work in book form. Cullen's work was markedly Cullenesque: it unapologetically embraced the postmodern cultural-economic reality, according to its own requirements.

In short, this dissertation answers the following questions: What personal abilities and cultural circumstances enabled Cullen to take ownership of Townscape? What are the economic and cultural systems through which these influential illustrations became possible and necessary? What specific visual sources and techniques did Cullen employ to make his visual products, and primarily his drawings, highly persuasive to a broad and diverse audience?

My structural approach is indebted to Sylvia Lavin, my doctoral adviser, whose work on Quatremère de Quincy's encyclopedic project and his role in constructing public architecture during the eighteenth century served as guide to Cullen's Townscape project and his role in constructing popular architecture in the postwar era.[29] Whereas the eighteenth-century public

[29] On the role of architecture in constructing the public domain during the eighteenth century, see Sylvia Lavin, "Re Reading the Encyclopedia: Architectural Theory and the Formation of the Public in Late-Eighteenth-Century France," *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians* 53, no. 2 (June 1994): 185.

sphere crystalized in a world of public discourse, and was shaped through works of architectural theory, encyclopedias, and pattern books, the twentieth-century popular sphere operated in a world of consumers, increasingly responding to pictures on TV, in photojournalism, and in advertisements. Architectural images, just like advertising, were protagonists in the shaping of the popular domain, providing the means for producing consumer desire for suburban and urban lifestyles. As this study shows, Cullen actively lodged architecture in the popular imagination by creating urban images of desire. The popular sphere was therefore shaped by the new class of image makers, whose livelihood depended on consumer culture through the packaging of architecture as a commodity, and via mass media. Cullen's imagery, which explicitly addressed the needs of a popular architecture-in-the-making, will serve as a vehicle for the examination of these larger issues.

Among the scholars who laid out a structuralist understanding of architectural and design culture is Adrian Forty. Forty discussed design products in terms of commodities, arguing that "[e]very product, to be successful, must incorporate the ideas that will make it marketable, and the particular task of design is to bring about the conjunction between such ideas and the available means of production."[30] This is precisely what this study explores through Cullen's work. Forty further explained that in this process manufactured goods commonly embody innumerable myths about the world, and that these myths in time come to seem as real as the products in which they are embedded. Likewise, Cullen's goods—Townscape drawings—cast myths about the city into enduring and tangible forms. Responsible for implanting in people's mind the idea (and myth) that a modern-picturesque city is fun, sociable, and exciting, his images have become reality itself, even when "unreal," and have shaped the city.

[30] Adrian Forty, *Object of Desire: Design and Society, 1750–1980* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1986), 9.

My structural approach extends from the cultural-economic level to the representational level, or to the "structure" of Cullen's products—his book, essays, drawings, and language. Here the guide is Bob Jarvis, a planning professor at South Bank University, who wrote a short essay titled "Townscape Revisited," one of several commemorative eulogies published in the October 1994 issue of *Urban Design Quarterly*.[31] In contrast to other expositions on Cullen, Jarvis attempted to explain why, after thirty years, Cullen's book is still in demand and in print, while other similar town-planning books, including those by other Townscape contributors, have either disappeared or become collector's items. Jarvis's essay provides a new opening through which to examine Cullen, one outside urban design and *The Review*. He shifted the focus to Cullen's product—*Townscape*—and examines the book itself as a designed object that, above all, is a system of representation.[32] Exploring the device of language with the specificity of literary and cultural analysis, he linked Cullen's work to Baudelaire's *flâneur*, to the surrealist promenades of André Breton and Louis Aragon, to the Situationist International *dérive*, and, finally, to the "text of pleasure" of Roland Barthes:

> Townscape, unlike so many urban design texts is not written with the arrogance of the author. It is written from the heart of experience, to engage not subdue the reader who like Barthes, cruises its pages/spaces[.] . . . Barthes's texts, like Cullen's towns and spaces are to be savored as sequences, rhythms, fluctuations of attention. There is no single prescription.[33]

Jarvis therefore reframed Cullen's primary product within postmodern literary notions of authorship and readership that privilege sensorial experience and nonlinear thinking over intellection and linearity. This study expands the literary inquiry, showing that Cullen's

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[31] Bob Jarvis, interview with the author, July 23, 2010.

[32] Bob Jarvis, "Townscape Revisited," *Urban Design Quarterly*, no 52 (October 1994): 20–22.

[33] Ibid., 22.

staggering influence derived in large measure from a collaborative strategy, or "open" work—a term coined by Umberto Eco—that both reflected and helped carve out a new type of architectural audience—one that was an active participant in the construction of the city. But Jarvis deemphasized Cullen's primary concern with product design and visuals, a concern this study extensively engages.

By setting him apart from urban design, like Jarvis, and by structurally focusing both on his production modes and products within the broader cultural system, like Lavin and Forty, I hope not only to present Cullen anew but also to explore the working nature of landscape and urban design drawings and of architectural books, to examine the shifts in architectural authorship and audience, and to speculate on consumerist design strategies in the construction of the postmodern city in the past century. It is these aspects of Cullen's work that, as I show, continue to exert unrecognized influence, in terms both of direct visual techniques and of recent advances in digital media, vis-à-vis their marketable supremacy and immersive character.

What Makes His Drawings Cullenesque?

Given that Cullen's drawings inspired generations of architects from the 1950s onward, it is surprising to discover that so little has been said about them. Their distinct traits came to be understood as uniquely Cullenesque, yet the drawings have not been studied seriously and thoroughly. Testimonies to Cullen's distinct style from the United States and Britain were written as soon as his book appeared in 1961. Walter McQuade, the American architectural critic and editor for *The Architectural Forum* and *Fortune* magazines, called Cullen "[t]he great English Draughtsman . . . who had a far-reaching influence on professionals, including the

American delineator Helmut Jacoby."[34] The British town planner and landscape architect A. E. Weddle wrote in his review, "[Cullen's] drawing technique has had a considerable influence upon students and architectural draughtsmanship generally."[35]

McQuade's and Weddle's commentaries exemplify Cullen's early, extensive reach and sway on both sides of the Atlantic. As the renowned architect Norman Foster later confirmed: "Nearly 40 years later, I am still entranced by the magic of those sketches. They influenced the way that generations of architects not only expressed themselves but also the way that they thought—their sense of social values."[36] But the basis for the drawings' influence—or the source of their "magic," to use Foster's term—remained obscured. The seduction of the image eluded many who were captive to its indelible power—or who ridiculed it for the same reason. Whether the drawings are praised or criticized (as has happened a few times) is irrelevant. What matters is how and why they worked so well—how and why they seduced.

In the rare instances when Cullen's drawings have been discussed, the analysis has relied entirely on the effects of the drawings or on a formalist interpretative framework (i.e., composition, texture, color, and so on), mostly ending up with a discerned style. Several critiques have agreed on the drawings' persuasive virtues, recognizing two traits that make Cullen's drawings widely appealing: simplicity and whimsy. But these critiques have shunned explanation. Gosling attributed the potency of the drawings to inherent "evocative, impish, and whimsical" characteristics, but mostly described rather than explained them: he used terms such

[34] Walter McQuade, review of *Townscape*, by Gordon Cullen, *Architectural Forum* 117, no. 115 (July 1962): 155.

[35] A. E. Weddle, review of *Townscape*, by Gordon Cullen, *Town Planning Review* 33, no. 3 (October 1962): 239–42.

[36] Norman Foster, "Obituary: Foster Remembers Cullen," *Architectural Review* 196, no. 1174 (December 1994): 12.

as “airy,” “panoramic,” or “enclosed view,” and mentioned a few techniques that Cullen had borrowed from the Gestalt school in psychology, like “figure-ground.”

Powers and Rykwert had more emphatic observations. Powers stressed the drawings’ novel depiction of modern architecture: “clear, but unmechanical, the drawings gave modern architecture a unique visual language, and their portrayal of spaces, planting and people remains seductive.”[37] Elsewhere, he emphasized their “spare lines, looseness, and playfulness even when they involve traditional technical architectural techniques,” and added that they “are cartoonish” and “radiate gaiety and levity.”[38] Powers therefore located the drawings’ seduction in the lighthearted quality that countered the usual somberness of modernism. Rykwert identified the apt reproductive quality of Cullen’s graphics: “Cullen has developed a brilliant personal style, whose incidental virtue is that his drawings actually gain in reproduction,” and added:

> The strength of Cullen’s art is journalistic: his photographic eye, his ability to “cut” the field of vision to the most arresting and striking passages, and his tendency to reduce all the objects in the picture to one surface and to one rather hard, open-eyed, wooden look: the people look like dolls, the buildings like models, the landscapes positively dinky. Cullen’s style is artificial then; yes, but it is also catching and even attractive in a perverse fashion.[39]

The flatness and artificiality that Rykwert identified are particularly relevant for the ensuing discussion. Both Power and Rykwert, while they locate critical pictorial elements in the drawings, stop short of offering an operative theory for their success.

More recently, Timothy Hyde interpreted the drawings’ strategic sources to attempt a deeper analysis. He discerned the drawings’ theatrical tactics and use of the absurd element

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[37] Powers, review of *Gordon Cullen, Visions of Urban Design*, 90.

[38] Alan Powers, interview with the author, July 22, 2010.

[39] Rykwert, “Review of a Review,” 13.

found in caricature.[40] In examining Cullen's drawings for the Smithson's Economist Building in London, he noted the building's resemblance to a theatrical stage, one perched between indoor and outdoor, and observed that both characters and architectural space were suspended between reality and the absurd. He concluded that compared to other famous representations of that building, Cullen's showed a more nuanced understanding of its critical features. Hyde avoided treating Cullen's drawing as fetishistic, offering new insights that had eluded many academics, including prominent architectural critics.

While the observations of Powers, Rykwert, and Hyde are useful for understanding Cullen, it is important to place them within a completely different analytic framework. Neither a critique nor a formalistic study of traits, this analysis sets out to uncover the position that guaranteed the images' impact and marketability. Cullen's illustration is not merely a question of style or drawing medium. It is a statement, a set of propositions about architecture and the modern city—one that places its trust in the subject, in the mobile spectator, and in the very detachability of images.

Study Method and Framework

Since this study focuses on drawings within the context of the production and consumption of architecture, employing the discursive procedures of cultural, media, and literary theories is appropriate. Moreover, since publicity was the mainstay of Cullen's body of work, this analysis is based on both the work he published in books, government publications, reports, newspapers, and magazines, of which *The Review* is chief, and on publications that have referenced and cited Cullen's work. This broader sample places Cullen outside *The Review* and his Townscape "production" period and extends to the reception period, unraveling the way in

[40] Timothy Hyde, "Bowlers Hat," *Log* 22 (2011): 39–42.

which his work behaved. As significantly, the sample of original drawings, sketches, and journal notes from Cullen's personal archive at his residence in Wraysbury, England—previously inaccessible and unstudied—provides invaluable evidence of Cullen's thinking and image production.[41] Finally, to corroborate its findings, this analysis includes interviews with several of Cullen's acquaintances. This combination of a wider sampling that maps his publicity, together with personal archival sources that afford more insight into his work, made possible a clearer focus on Cullen's little-recognized legacy. He replaced the pedantry of the architecture of his time with consumable, playful image making that helped produce popular architecture and had a marked impact on the development of urban landscapes.

This study does not cover the entire six decades of Cullen's career (Cullen's consulting and teaching engagements from the 1960s through the 1980s did not yield new pictorial strategies or techniques). Instead, it focuses on three decades of significant production: the lesser-known part of his career in 1930s as draftsman in private practice and as freelance commercial artist, and the art editorial post at *The Review* in the second half of the 1940s and the 1950s. It ends with the publication of his book in 1961, and then turns to an analysis of the book itself, and to the nature and extent of Cullen's influence over several decades following his departure from *The Review*. Cullen's work pre-Townscape was his most artistically inventive, and is essential for understanding the nature of his trade and of the mannerisms of his later work.

[41] I examined this archive on September 25–28, 2010. The archive contains more than twenty boxes as well as two flat file cabinets of several drawers filled with disorganized drawings and undated documents. The sample of drawings and other documents that I was able to examine represents about 30 percent of the entire archive. Much of Cullen's work for private offices in the 1930s is dispersed in various archives, and Cullen's drawings more often than not are not credited to him. The AR has lost his original work, though his personal archive contains some illustrations from that period. Cullen also gave many of his personal drawings as gifts to friends and family members, which further prevents full completion of the archive. A small sample of drawings and photographs were also available at the RIBA drawings and photographic archives in London.

Cullen's career, however, is anchored in his time as art editor at *The Review*, where he produced his most influential (if not most inventive) body of work, for which he became most known. Since Cullen was not credited for most of his 1930s work, his personal archive, in particular, sheds light on his early career, and helps clarify his personality and motivation. His *Review* publications, supported by journal notes, establish Cullen's own agenda in contrast to that of his editors. Citations and references to Cullen's work in a wide range of publications from 1960 onward chart the broad influence his work exerted.

Dissertation Chapter Outline

This introductory chapter defines the particular interpretive lens, method, and sources I use to understand Cullen anew, all of which distinguish my analysis from existing scholarship. Rather than simply provide a broad historical review, each of the subsequent four chapters addresses Cullen's work within its distinct political, economic, and architectural and urban contexts. They are organized according to distinct production periods and products of Cullen's image making: chapters 2 and 3 address the draftsmanship services he provided during the Depression and interwar period from 1934 to 1940 and his stint with *The Review* from 1946 to 1959, respectively; chapter 4 addresses his 1961 book, *Townscape*, and its concise 1971 version; and chapter 5 explores the ways in which Cullen's images have taken on a life of their own—detached from their original context, they appear in unexpected, often contradictory, places. It addresses this phenomenon within a larger visual consumerist behavior of production, circulation, and appropriation of images.

Chapter 2 argues that any understanding of Cullen must first be seen in the context of the economic depression and the alliance between industry and artists in Britain during the interwar decade of the 1930s. It was a period in which the role of art and architecture in society changed

radically, coinciding with the rise of mass visual consumer tendencies. It was also a period during which modern architecture took root in Britain. Architecture participated in the emerging consumer economy, and followed the new rules of the market. In this light, architecture was a commodity whose products were sold through mass media to mass audiences, via images that performed as advertising. Image makers were "visual marketers." To be successful and popular as a commercial artist, Cullen had to appeal to the average consumer. He packaged and sold his "merchandise"—as the new economy required—in the most persuasive and humanly conducive way. The 1930s, therefore, was the environment into which Cullen emerged, which he shaped, and in which he was shaped. The chapter covers the years from 1933 to the start of the Second World War. During this time, Cullen first worked as a hired architectural draftsman at three prominent architectural offices—for Raymond McGrath, Godfrey Samuel, and Berthold Lubetkin's Tecton—performing as a communication expert who prepared drawings for publications and exhibitions. He then worked as a freelance commercial artist, producing drawings for diverse clients, such as the Ministry of Labor, the Electrical Development Association, MARS, *The Review*, and Times Furniture Company.

The chapter reviews the key figures, events, personal impulses, and motivations that influenced his early career and that provide clues to his working method and pictorial choices. It then isolates the elements crucial to making the work so popular, and the specific mix of pictorial techniques from highbrow and lowbrow genres that produced these elements. Finally, it focuses on his main production mode—bricolage, or cut-and-paste—and the place of photography and the photomontage (or, drawing-photograph composite) technique that enabled Cullen to transcend professional, disciplinary, and media categories. Cullen's photomontage corresponds to the "space" of film, surpassing the experiential and temporal limits of drawing and

photography respectively. His little-noticed early drawings, for which he rarely received proper credit, show that a reimagining of architecture, and subsequently urbanism, was already under way. Cullen's pictorial devices and rhetorical strategies during the 1930s were a prelude to his production of a new understanding of the urban, one that was decidedly within human experience and that stood against its modern counterpart. Chapter 2 is informed by Beatriz Colomina's essays on Le Corbusier and her concepts of publicity and privacy.

Chapter 3 examines Cullen's work between 1946 and 1959 at the architectural establishment of *The Review*, where, in addition to his role of graphic artist, he assumed the mantle of art editor, photojournalist, and Townscape designer. During this period, Cullen produced his most influential body of work. Chapter 3 argues that during the immediate postwar period, and as it undertook the role of public opinion shaper, *The Review* fully participated in the imperatives of the society of the spectacle—the same image-saturated postwar environment that the International Situationist Guy Debord expounds in his book of the same title—and of a city created through a patchwork of bygone and contemporary images, or pastiche, which the cultural critic Fredric Jameson further elaborates in his book *Postmodernism, or, The Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism*. The social and economic workings of the society of spectacle that these two authors describe broadly conditioned the popular conception and reception of Townscape, specifically as the concept was channeled through Cullen's body of work. Cullen's work also must be understood in terms of *The Review*'s adjustments to the changed town-planning goals of the British postwar regimes—those of the Socialist Party–controlled government and those of the conservative government that subsequently rose to power—and the subsequent change to postwar reconstruction and development of New Towns.

Within this context, Cullen marketed *The Review*'s visual reeducation policy—the premise of educating masses to "see" the environment anew in aesthetic consumerist terms, which became the foundation of the Townscape campaign. As *The Review* delivered Townscape to wider and more diverse audiences, Cullen's method of bricolage (which he had developed a decade earlier) did to drawings what Townscape did to the city. Cullen took bits and pieces of different genres and then patched and packaged them in a new orchestrated way in order to produce an effect with visual impact that cohered with postmodern conceptions of city and culture. Thus, the articulation par excellence of the supremacy of the image and the logic of late capitalism espoused by *The Review* was the earliest alternative model to the modern functional city, and it ushered in a postmodern urbanism whose most vital agents included a number of image makers at the forefront of whom (this dissertation argues) stood Cullen.

To examine the kinds of rhetorical strategies—pictorial and textual—that Cullen built into his marketing program, chapter 3 incorporates select publications of Cullen's from *The Review*, linking them with preparatory drawings and journal notes from his personal archive to reveal Cullen's ability to compel readers to imagine themselves as simultaneously existing within and creating the city—a reflexive relationship driven by the consumption of a postwar reimagining of cityscapes. As the chapter shows, in a series of pictorial essays under the label "Townscape," Cullen, the journalist and author, used the "captioned image" as a basic format and, in many cases, the "casebook precedent" (as conceived by Hastings)—existing examples of visual concepts—as the essays' basic logic. Cullen reversed the existing hierarchy of text and picture by making pictures a semi-independent system of relationships and by privileging images over language. Language became an accessory.

In laying out the magazine pages, Cullen's montage operations produced a "tactile" sensibility—an all-around sensorial reader experience akin to a filmic-immersive quality that the philosopher Walter Benjamin would later describe in his renowned essay "The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction." Moreover, Cullen re-created reciprocal metaphorical relationships between the message of Townscape, its method, and the design of the page. In so doing, Cullen transferred both the picturesque quality of Townscape and the pedestrian path through which Townscape is explored to each page and throughout the successive pages of the issue. The chapter thus focuses on the radical change Cullen made to the perspective as he employed flatness, along with filmic montage tactics, through the concept of serial vision. These two techniques enabled him to animate urban surfaces, and thereby fill the city with a joyful atmosphere, and to locate vision in the body of the urban stroller to create an animated experience of motion. This system of representation established a radicalized terrain for the conciliation of urbanism and landscape, a conception of an affective urban terrain embodied in the viewer.

Although subservient to image, language still played a crucial role in Cullen's essays. His everyday language—coupled with metaphor-rich, almost figurative, text—made the text accessible to the masses. Cullen created a "textual montage" that enabled the text to produce fresh associations and meanings, thereby "opening [it] up" to greater reader "participation." In this way, Cullen's text, in inviting a dynamic experience, speak to postmodern literary notions of text (e.g., Umberto Eco's "open text," and Roland Barthes' "the text of pleasure"), which situate it as an "open work." As such it encourages readers to co-conceive of an urban landscape in which play with various elements is possible.

Despite their obvious overlaps, I show that rather than simply illustrating the ideas of his erudite colleagues, Cullen staked out a related yet distinct agenda: while the editors' Townscape was intellectual and moralistic, Cullen's was humanized and consumerist. Much like his interwar work, he produced a new amalgam of existing ideas from his colleagues and others, shaping it into attractive, popular, and easy-to-emulate products.

The chapter ends by identifying Cullen as the most influential designer of Townscape despite a number of rivals, editors, and collaborators pushing their own vision. It examines Cullen's collaborative work with his non-academic colleagues at *The Review*, especially the journalist-architect Ian Nairn, in the second half of the 1950s. In a series of intramural programs—hands-on, town hall–style meetings—aimed to educate communities to see their towns through the lens of Townscape, Cullen took to the "field" and hammered out his visual products for popular consumption, an effort instrumental in helping him make the leap to becoming an independent Townscape consultant upon his departure from the AR. Although the editors did not consider him fit to be a member of the journal's debating team, and rejected his demand for promotion in the late 1950s, Cullen emerged from this period as an author in his own right, with seminal text in hand: *Townscape*.

Chapter 4 examines Cullen's primary products—the book *Townscape*, published in 1961, and its abbreviated 1971 edition. The chapter builds on Jarvis's "Townscape Revisited" commentary, and interprets the book both as a new product schema and as a new system of representation. It focuses on the "physique" of the book—structure and layout, image–caption relationship, and typography—the formulae that kept it in print for five decades. Despite minor reediting for format and illustrations and an expanded "Casebook" section, the book was an almost purely editorial salvage, an assemblage of most of Cullen's essays written for *The Review*

into a cohesive volume and under one cover. Cullen transposed the casebook idiom, the pictorial-expanded caption format, the "figurative" text, and the catchword labels from the essays to the entire book. He also transferred the tactile, picturesque quality of the essay page.

Nonetheless, I argue, *Townscape* was a new kind of architectural book, a hybrid of existing genres—pattern book, illustrated book, standard manual, and the casebook on which it was modeled—for the postmodern consumer. In fact, it was a model that reconceived reading practices.

Using the Casebook as a dynamic set of visual concepts, a kind of "kit-of-parts," and the essays as possible gambits (maneuvers for, in his own words, "putting the city together"), Cullen conceived of his book as a game that everyone could play. It was (and remains to this day) also a game in which everyone could construct their own "urban paths." Cullen used a nonhierarchical book structure and typography to produce a kind of "hypertext," a book that lacks a single or fixed order or prescribed reading "path" and, instead, generates flexible maneuvers by its readers. As such, *Townscape* encouraged readers to co-conceive of the urban landscape as a dynamically created space, one in which experimentation and play with various elements was eminently possible.

Chapter 4 analyzes *Townscape* within the context of architectural books and trade magazines in the 1960s, an era marked by an explosive crop of experimental magazines and novel graphics. However, Cullen deliberately shunned their novelty to reach new crowds with his own immersive, popular experience of Townscape. Seen in light of the simultaneous growth of planned communities and theme towns, as well as the rise of civic conservation groups, the book has provided both private developers and civic activists with the same building blocks necessary to realize their ambitions.

This chapter also studies *Townscape* against other Townscape books produced by Cullen's colleagues: Thomas Sharp's *Town and Townscape* (1968); Hastings's *The Italian Townscape* (published under the pseudonym Ivor de Wolfe, 1966) and *Civilia* (1971); and Ian Nairn's *The American Landscape: A Critical View* (1965). These comparisons highlight the appealing, expedient, and entertaining features that have made *Townscape* a more popular product for a growing visual consumer culture. Finally, the chapter samples book reviews to reveal the book's captivating effect on, though alas mixed reception by, architectural critics. While architects who fancied themselves visionaries scorned the book's simplicity as a popular sort of media (assuming that "popular" means "fashionable," and "aiming to be liked"), *Townscape* constituted a simple faith for laypeople of the time, and ultimately raised Cullen to the unofficial status of a spokesman of Townscape.

Chapter 4 ends by discussing the irony of Cullen's individual endeavors: even though he emerged as the singular voice of Townscape while working for the AR, he could not reproduce that success when he worked on his own. For all his genius in understanding the high-minded ideas of Hastings and the other AR editors; sensing the new gestalt of the postwar city, the postwar audience, and the postwar consumer culture; and then translating the ideas into graphics and text that appealed to that new, broad audience, Cullen somehow functioned less well as a solo operator than he had as part of an AR team, despite being underprivileged and underappreciated.

Chapter 5 explores Cullen's influence through the reception and diffusion of his work—its permeation and permutations—as it has traveled through disciplines, cultures, and geographies over the past six decades. Because of the sheer volume of both formal references and citations and of informal accounts of his work, this qualitative study focuses on the agents

and apparatus of this diffusion and the nature and extent of his impact. It samples three kinds of representative evidence: (1) academic citations and references of Cullen in professional literature; (2) accounts, obituaries, blogs, websites, and other memoranda by individual practitioners who had been touched in some way by Cullen's influence; and (3) formal and casual interviews with acquaintances and colleagues of Cullen. Intertwined with the above evidence is another kind of elusive (often uncredited) and more pervasive manifestation of his influence, as seen in the graphics of influential authors in their own books as well as in the format of their books—a visual casebook of "hypertext" that encourages the reader to sample elements and program variable outcomes.

The chapter first taps and synthesizes select, existing scholarly writing on his initial influence in Britain and along the Anglo-American axis, followed by influence in western Europe and along the Spanish–Portuguese–South American axis during the 1960s and 1970s, and weaves these elements together with formal and informal personal accounts. It then studies the formal academic references and constructs three academic discourses in which Cullen's work circulated: "embodied-disembodied eye," "elitist-popular-ordinary aesthetics, and "realistic-romantic-absurd."

The chapter argues that Cullen's staggering influence derived in large measure from the escalating tendency of images to circulate in the visual mass media stream, detached from their initial context and ideology (a phenomenon that has culminated in today's Google Images, and other websites that store images). Cullen's own production of images was rooted in this phenomenon of detachability, as was the Townscape visual way of thinking about the city—itself rooted in that detached phenomena under the new logic of late capitalism. This massive body of diffused images created by image makers—most of whom remain largely anonymous—and

reappropriated in the hands of the consumer significantly influenced the postmodern city and landscape.

This broad argument is corroborated by three subarguments. (1) Cullen's imagery (and words) has been solely responsible for his appeal and influence on the postwar generation of architects, planners, and landscape architects educated between 1950s and the 1970s. His fresh combination of high and low pictorial art genres—modern art spare line and animated cartoon sensibilities, with which the postwar generation was enamored—liberated architects from the laborious and rigid draftsmanship of the Beaux-Arts drawing tradition, and legitimized freehand drawing as a design tool in landscape and urban representation, thus transforming the entire design process. Coupled with an affable message for a culture of spectacle—a humanized, pedestrian, eye-level way of seeing the city—his work was immediately assimilated into landscape and urban design process and pedagogy and, ultimately, practice. (2) While his work occupies a prime position in academic discourses on the city, and in diverse and far-reaching fields, Cullen himself was quite passive in these conversations, having had but minor correspondence and collaboration with leading figures of these discourses. Cullen's images were singularly responsible for his presence in these conversations. In fact, essentially a nonacademic, Cullen intentionally avoided intellectual exchange. As a result, his images took on a life of their own, having been grafted onto diverse arguments and meanings—frequently in support of ideas they never sponsored and, often, on contradictory sides of debates. (3) Cullen's work has remained relevant through today's digital age, increasingly becoming commonplace in the hand of the consumer—as means to many ends. The chapter shows the proximity of his serial vision to today's three-dimensional computer animation, thus making his vision particularly relevant for a younger and technologically savvy generation that has become accustomed to seeing and

reproducing digital imagery. His drawings were subject to countless imitations that imported into the process not only stylistic traits but also their embedded intelligence—the production and reproduction of postmodern architecture and cities primarily through "cut-and-paste" images. Cullen's readers therefore have treated his work with much the same sensibilities of bricolage and cut-and-paste montage operations as he did.

Cullen in Suspension

Cullen eluded professional categories and practices. Over the years, the popular press and academics have given Cullen dozens of labels: artist, architect, architectural critic, architectural illustrator, street architect, town planner, urban designer, urban psychologist, draftsman, and delineator—none of which Cullen appreciated. Once he became famous, and perhaps to avoid being associated with the lesser status of a draftsman or commercial artist, Cullen preferred to be called "Townscape consultant," or simply "consultant on . . . (a given planning and development project)."[42] Cullen's suspension between art and architecture has haunted him. Throughout his career, the balancing act of innovation and salesmanship, creativity and practicality disconcerted him. But it was this suspension between categories that enabled him both to construct popular architecture and to become popular, and thereby rise above the category of image making. His predisposition to empathize and his willingness to extrapolate and teach—to say something that was not merely empirical or readily demonstrable—were the conditions for his success, the sources of his strengths, and the bases upon which much of the appeal of his works rests.

[42] In a 1970 vita, Cullen referred to his early professional identity as "architectural assistant," and "freelance Illustrator and exhibition designer." Gordon Cullen, personal archive, #339* (*the numbers indicate my own record numbering system). In a biography in the catalog of a 1976 exhibition of his drawings (personal archive), he omitted the label "illustrator." In a 1984 catalog of another drawing exhibition, he referred to the period 1936–1940 as "in private practice" (and most of his work after 1961 as consulting jobs); Gordon Cullen Drawings, exhibition catalog, 1984, 1 (in David Gosling archive, Archives and Rare Books Library, University of Cincinnati, Cincinnati, Ohio).

When the AR editors hired Cullen, they did it on the premise that his pictorial work had mainstream appeal. He was not hired because he was expected to produce ideas; he was also not hired simply to "visualize and translate others' ideas into convincing urban design schemes."[43] Cullen was hired because image making itself had a role to play. Image makers were shapers, not mere conveyors, of the discourse. Cullen's image making was a constitutive object-producing phenomenon, and while the particular phenomenon that he produced did not contradict the ideas of the AR, neither did it fully embody them. And though Cullen alone did not account for the influence of Townscape and the expanding readership of *The Review*—many of the journal's contributors furthered its influence—his input was indispensable. Despite the dismissal of Cullen and those like him as primary producers of content, his conception of Townscape, rather than that of his erudite colleagues, had a sustained influence, and he left his mark indelibly on the production of popular architecture and urbanism in the second half of the century. This dissertation thus presents Cullen anew as the shaper of a new architectural audience and an enabler of new modes of seeing and designing.

Of course, Cullen was not alone in pushing the architectural profession closer to the mainstream consumer. Other contemporaneous examples include the draftsman Derek Oxley, who worked together with Cullen in McGrath's office; the perspective artist Raymond Myerscough-Walker, who was a colleague at Tecton; the graphic designer Edward Mcknight Kauffer, known for his London underground posters; and the illustrator Donald Dewar Mills, who collaborated with Cullen on a number of projects. Equally influential in the postwar period was Eric de Maré, an architectural photographer and colleague at *The Review*, and also a close

[43] Erten, "Shaping 'The Second Half Century,'" 60.

friend. Other unsung illustrators and photographers worked in ways similar to Cullen during this period, but few possessed Cullen's synthetic ability.[44]

Perhaps more than anyone else, H. de C. Hastings—*The Review*'s chief editor, who hired Cullen as art editor in 1946—understood the power of Cullen's image making. In 1984, exactly fifty years after they first met, and just before his death, Hastings wrote to Cullen: "Your drawings are more exquisite than ever which makes you the most dangerous man in the profession."[45] Hastings was a powerhouse who controlled an influential architectural institution for almost fifty years and who conceived of Townscape as a means to an ideological end. In nodding to Cullen's artistic prowess and influence, he perhaps acknowledged his own defeat in a society in which theory and national ideology were soon superseded by consumable pictures. The theorist was trumped by a draftsman.

[44] For example, in the United States Julius Shulman was likewise highly influential. His photography of key examples of modern architecture in Los Angeles brought the new style to consumer consciousness, making him the spokesman of the Los Angeles school of the modern steel-and-glass architecture of the 1950s.

[45] Gordon Cullen, "H. de C. Hastings, 1902–1986," *Architects' Journal* 184, nos. 51–52 (December 17 and 24, 1986): 5.

CHAPTER 2. IMAGE MAKERS AND THE MARKETING OF MODERN ARCHITECTURE: THE THIRTIES

> *Whether we like it or not, the designed image of our present society is being realized now in the pages of the American glossies by people who can do it best—those who have the skill and imagination to create the image that sells and the wit to respond humanly to their own achievements.* —Richard Hamilton[46]

Richard Hamilton's controversial 1960 essay "Persuading Image" brought together two practices—a decade's worth of production by Hamilton's own avant-garde Independent Group and the three-decade-long practice of Cullen. Both practices, however different in their approach, promoted the notion of collaboration between the business community and the consumer. The essay also marked the culmination of a generation of growing influence on the part of the commercial art and industrial design professions. Hamilton's essay explored the status of images in British consumer society, and described a fundamental shift in the role of artists and designers in the postwar visual culture and market economy, coinciding with the rise of consumer tendencies across the world. Hamilton argued that these trends mirrored those in the United States at the time, and advised that "to play a creative role in the new consumer visual society, the designer must adjust to a new set of rules and values that involve working with industrialists and market researchers to 'actively shape consumer desire' and to 'design a consumer to the product.'"[47] The images created by designers and advertisers, "moulded" as they were "by the most successful editors and publicists of the era," were supposed to have instilled in the consumer a "desire for possession." In other words, the new order required that manufacturers,

[46] Richard Hamilton, "Persuading Image," *Design* 134 (February 1960): 29–32.

[47] Ibid., 29. The essay was a shortened version of "The Design Image of the 'Fifties,'" a lecture that Hamilton gave earlier in the year at the Institute of Contemporary Art in London.

the illustrators they hired, and mass publicity should work together to persuade the public to accept ideas and buy products. This alliance between art and industry in 1930s Britain was the environment from which Gordon Cullen emerged, and economic depression was the backdrop to his effort to boost consumer desire.

The 1930s, therefore, played a critical role in shaping Cullen's life work. During this interwar period, before the outburst of postwar consumerism and the cultural manifestations of the Independent Group and Pop art, the economic downturn forced Britain to acknowledge its deficiencies in product design and its competitive disadvantage in the international market. This spurred cooperation between art and industry and a led to government-funded effort to build up the industrial design profession:[48] architectural and art magazines promoted professional expansion into commercial and industrial design,[49] architects and artists turned to product design, and photographers and illustrators undertook commercial art and advertising. In particular, illustrators at architectural firms took on a role that went beyond draftsmanship, becoming the

[48] This process, which began around 1930 and accelerated after the Second World War, is well documented. See Penny Sparke, *An Introduction to Design and Culture* (London: Allen and Unwin, 1986); Robin Kinross, "Herbert Read's 'Art and Industry': A History," *Journal of Design History* 1, no. 1 (1988): 36. Up to the late 1920s, the design movement in Britain was identified largely with the Design and Industries Association (DIA), founded in 1915. The Society of Industrial Artists (SIA) was founded in Britain in 1930 as a professional society for designers. Through the 1930s, it emphasized the work of graphic and exhibition design, but turned later to industrial design. The Gorell Committee on Art and Industry was soon appointed, and initiated radio debates (1933), as well as exhibitions at the Dorland Hall (1933, 1934). *Design in Industry* magazine began publication by DIA in 1932; the book *Art Now* by Herbert Read was published in 1933, followed by his *Art and Industry* and John Gloag's *Industrial Art Explained* in 1934. After the war, in 1944, the Council of Industrial Design (CoID) was appointed by the Government Board of Trade.

[49] Commercial art was concerned primarily with the promotion of goods through advertising in the press: posters, window signs, commercial literature (such as booklets, leaflets, and folders), shop window and showroom displays, exhibition stands, and the design of packaging. See John Gloag, *Industrial Design Explained* (1934; reprint, London: Allen and Unwin, 1946), 18. Industrial design concerned the formal qualities of objects produced by industry: structural, functional, and aesthetic. See Misha Black, "Propaganda in Three Dimensions [1949]," in *The Black Papers on Design*, ed. Arvile Blake (Oxford: Pergamon Press, 1983), 119.

communications and publicity experts of their offices. Cullen was among the best-known of these newly versatile architectural draftsmen in Britain in the 1930s.

As this chapter shows, it was during this period that Cullen not only produced some of his most original graphic work but also exhibited the qualities that, according to Hamilton, made him successful. When the war broke out, Britain relinquished its industrial production and consumerist drive to the war effort; putting commercial design on hold, Cullen lent his skills to the war effort service and thereafter joined *The Review* as staff member.[50] The war demarcates a change in the status and environment of his career, but not in its nature. Because Cullen's body of work during this period is poorly documented and rarely credited to him, my investigation is based on published work and interviews with his acquaintances, as well as samples of original drawings, sketches, and journal notes from his personal archive at his residence in Wraysbury, England.[51] A portfolio of works in the archive, covering the years 1937–1939 and handpicked by Cullen, is particularly valuable for showing Cullen's own views of his most important contributions from the period, and for showcasing his previously unidentified works from several publications that did not credit him as the illustrator.[52]

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[50] Cullen was not drafted for the war, because of his shortsightedness. During the war, Cullen helped design factories at Imperial Chemical Industries (ICI), and worked with the industrial designer Misha Black on exhibition design and graphic promotion for the Ministry of Information. Between 1944 and 1946, he joined a team of architects and planners led by Robert Gardner-Medwin (formed by the Department of Colonial Development and Welfare); he was sent to Barbados, British West Indies, where he worked on self-help design for schools and housing.

[51] Like other illustrators and photographers in the 1930s, Cullen did not receive credit for many of his illustrations. Images were credited to artists and to architects of illustrated projects. In several cases, however, Cullen signed his name on the illustration. *The Review* began systematically crediting images only after the war. The first time it did so was in August 1947, under a subtitle "Acknowledgments" in the marginalia, at the end of the issue.

[52] Cullen's portfolio was compiled circa 1940. There is no specific label or date on the binding of the portfolio. It is composed of about 89 images of work, on 79 three-hole black cardboard pages, A4, many of which are unlabeled. Although the file seems well preserved, there may have been misplaced pages. With a few exceptions, the images, photo prints, and line print reproductions are commissioned and

This chapter makes three arguments. First, Cullen's early work, like that of other illustrators in the interwar period who operated in the shadows of better-known architects, played a crucial role in shifting the architectural profession toward mainstream appeal. Cullen did not simply represent someone else's ideas; he helped shape the architectural discussion. Second, his success stemmed from his unique ability to sell visual products to a growing and diverse consumer market. This ability is attributed to a set of ontological positions about artistic purpose, which go beyond simply being a draftsman virtuoso. Finally, what made his images widely appealing to professionals and the general public alike was the particular blend of techniques he borrowed from both highbrow and lowbrow pictorial genres—architecture, theater, film, and landscape on the highbrow end and cartoon, comic strip, and advertising on the lowbrow. Examining the figures, events, and impulses that shaped Cullen's early career, as well as the presence of specific pictorial genres and techniques in his work, not only reveals the impact he had on midcentury architectural discourse but also, more generally, how architecture was produced and consumed, and how image makers became central to this discourse.

A Product of the 1930s

Commercial Artist and Metabuilder

The interwar worlds of commerce and publishing both validated Cullen's career choice and furnished the environment for his work to flourish. As Britain entered an era marked by mass-produced and mass-consumed images, the image itself became a particularly strong and

published work. They are mostly non-technical office drawings. Thirty-two of the images are line illustrations in books, magazines, exhibition catalogs, and newsprints; twenty-five are photo-prints of exhibition displays and posters; fifteen are clips of newsprint adverts; and eight are photo-prints of models. They were originally commissioned by more than 15 clients, including four architectural offices, five private manufacturing companies, two magazine and book publishers (primarily the Architectural Press), three news corporations, a professional association (MARS), a quasi-governmental organization (Electrical Development Association), and a government office (Ministry of Labour).

new form of agency: images shaped, rather than merely represented, the architectural discourse. "Architecture," as Beatriz Colomina puts it, "did not simply address or exploit mass culture" but was in "itself, [and] from the beginning, a commodity."[53] It participated in the new consumer economy in the same way as a vacuum cleaner, electricity, or even fresh air, stoking consumer desire.

When Cullen joined the workforce in 1933, the emerging popular consumer economy and deep depression had weakened artists and architects and sent them searching for new sources of income. Meanwhile, the British government, realizing that good design could boost the manufacturing industry in creating domestic products, used public money to found and fund design institutions in an effort to build up the market economy. In turn, the industry sponsored public exhibitions, design competitions, and new publications that brought together the nascent British modern architecture and the rising design professions in an effort to create new markets for their products.[54] Mass-produced domestic appliances and prefabricated building units needed buyers. Effective marketing, including advertising, required both professional and popular mass media. Architectural magazines were able to draw voluminous advertising contracts, which in turn gave them incentive to expand their readership base, and then to expand their featured topics. All this encouraged them to heavily emphasize pictures in place of text.[55] Cullen's ability

[53] See Beatriz Colomina, *Privacy and Publicity: Modern Architecture as Mass Media* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1994), 195.

[54] Before the war, in Great Britain alone some seventy major exhibitions were held during an average year, apart from the hundreds of still smaller exhibitions organized privately by commercial undertakings and propagandist bodies. See Black, "Propaganda in Three Dimensions," 119.

[55] The design theorist Penny Sparke, among others, has argued that "design theory tended to move away from the problem of form-giving and became the preserve of non-practitioners, among them design propagandists and, later, sociologists, anthropologists, cybernetic theorists and semiologists who were more concerned with the meaning of the designed artifact than with its aesthetic dimension" (Sparke, *An Introduction to Design and Culture*, 37).

to create the type of visuals that the industry needed to appeal to consumers led him to set out as a freelance draftsman and commercial artist in 1937—after only four years of apprenticeship in private architectural practice. He remained in high demand until the outbreak of the war.

During the 1930s, Cullen worked on everything from magazine and book illustrations to miniature models, from magazine covers and book jacket designs to newsprint and product catalog advertising, posters, and national exhibition panels. [Figure 2.1] Lacking a formal degree in architecture, Cullen could not join architectural organizations such as the Modern Architecture Research Group (MARS). But he was listed as a member of the Society of Industrial Designers (MSID) in 1947, and became a Fellow (FSID) in 1948.[56] Cullen did not fit neatly into any of the established art and architectural classification systems, and remained suspended between categories—in a sort of limbo of which he was acutely aware. A 1934 journal entry by Cullen reads: "Architecture's resemblance to building is the same as the relation between physics and metaphysics. In fact I am quite prepared to set up shop as a metabuilder (or an archibuilder for that matter)."[57] [Figure 2.2] Hence, Cullen located himself somewhere between the physical and the conceptual or psychological realms of architecture, a position in which he could neither build nor theorize, but could only mediate between the discipline and the profession and between the practitioner and the user.

[56] The Society, founded in 1930 but revamped in the early 1940s, had a three-tier membership: Licentiates, Members, and Fellows (LSIA, MSIA, and FSIA).

[57] Gordon Cullen, personal archive, journal, March 5, 1934. #425.

Among the "Who's Who"

Of course, Cullen did not practice in a vacuum. His predecessors and peers were numerous, their work renowned. His visual concepts intersected with those of the era's top architects and artists, with whom he was personally acquainted. It is clear that he drew inspiration from their works. Moreover, magazine editors and both business and government clients who hired Cullen had a hand in shaping the look of his drawings. The three heads of offices for whom he worked—Raymond McGrath from 1933 to 1934, Godfrey Samuel (later Harding & Samuel) from 1934 to 1935, and Berthold Lubetkin of Tecton from 1936 to 1937—were among the leading British modern architects as well as founders of key professional organizations. They were also well connected with mainstream media outlets. By working within this professional network, Cullen brushed shoulders with the "who's who" of London's architectural, art, and design scenes; he crossed paths with the circle of architects associated with the MARS group and the elite of the Society of Industrial Art, notably the leading industrial designer Misha Black.[58] Simply being linked to this circle helped him make connections with potential clients and employers. Winning fame and public esteem was another matter, however.

To achieve success within this circle, one first had to appear in the monthly architectural periodical, the *Architectural Review*, whose readership at the time included the elite ranks of architecture, art, and design. *The Review*'s counterpart, the biweekly *Architects' Journal* (*AJ*), was under the same publishing house, the Architectural Press (AP), but covered the technical and business side of architecture and catered to practicing architects, professional builders, and

[58] Cullen worked alongside Black, one of Britain's leading industrial designers, on key national exhibitions, including the 1938 MARS "New architecture" Exhibition in London, and the New York's World's Fair in 1939. During the war, Black became the Ministry of Information's Principal Exhibitions Officer and hired Cullen to produce displays and promotional material. In 1933, Black co-founded the Industrial Design Partnership (later the Industrial Design Unit), which was one of the first design consultancies in Britain that actively promoted the profession.

craftsmen. Cullen's career was intertwined with both journals, though *The Review* served as his experimental ground and became his more influential platform. His first published work appeared in *The Review* in 1935, and he became a regular fixture until 1940.[59] During that time, he illustrated monthly features in the periodical's "Decoration Supplements" and "Current Architecture" sections, including projects for such well-known modern architects as Lubetkin, F. R. S. Yorke, Marcel Breuer, Serge Chermayeff, Wells Coates, and Walter Gropius. He received no public credit for many of these projects. Through this work, Cullen also came to know the local and international art and architecture scene. Not surprisingly, his arrival at *The Review* coincided with the journal's shift to a broader public appeal and, therefore, the inclusion of a wide range of topics beyond architecture, including interior design, furniture, landscape design, and town planning. In his memoir, J. M. Richards, *The Review*'s editor at the time, explained the editorial policy of looking beyond strictly architectural topics as "the need to do everything possible to remedy the isolation from which the modern architects suffered . . . , and a desire to appeal to a wide circle of readers."[60] Richards acknowledged everything but the new consumer environment that was driving the decisions. Richard's colleague, AP co-owner and chief editor Hugh de Cronin Hastings, had an entrepreneurial mind and was closely attuned to this new environment. *The Review*'s new policy marked the emergence of a different sense of mass media and of architecture—one that had as its requisite greater pictorial presence and which required hiring people like Cullen. The relationship between Cullen and *The Review*, therefore, is integral to any examination of Cullen's early work. Much of his work was commissioned for *The Review*,

[59] Cullen met H. de C. Hastings at the Café Royale, in connection with a 1933 competition sponsored by Venesta, a plywood manufacturer, in which Cullen had placed third. See Cullen, "H. de C. Hastings," 5. Cullen continued to be well connected with *The Review* through McGrath and later Lubetkin, both of whom were regular contributors.

[60] J. M. Richards, *Memoirs of an Unjust Fella* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1980), 136.

and much of it appeared in *The Review*—and as a result gained influence and attracted more commissions. Significantly, his acquaintances also found a home in *The Review*.

Direct Influences

Artists and designers have always sought out great masters whose work they emulate, borrow, and build on. Cullen, however, looked for role models who not only created inventive imagery but also understood the new commercial apparatus sustaining art and architecture. Cullen was attracted to like-minded artists who worked within the industrial system, like Le Corbusier, Raymond McGrath, and Paul Nash.[61] All three doubled as artists or architects and product designers. Le Corbusier painted while practicing architecture and designing furniture. McGrath came into architecture after pursuing a career in engraving and designing wallpaper, glass, upholstery, clocks, signs, and furniture. Nash had been a practicing painter who also designed posters and interiors. While Le Corbusier pioneered the alliance of architecture, art, and industry in the early century, all three vigorously advocated that alliance, producing industrial design products and promoting them in exhibitions and publications. McGrath, Cullen's first employer, promoted British industrial products at exhibitions and advanced industrial design through institutional activism and his publications. He was also a regular contributor to *The Review* between 1933 and 1935—precisely at the time of Cullen's apprenticeship. In July 1933, he contributed to a special industrial design issue and drew a two-leaf issue cover titled "Progress and Period Chart of English Design"; in April 1934, he wrote the cover essay for a special issue on the evolution of British industrial art titled "Progress Chart, 1901–1934."[62]

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[61] Alan Powers, "Simple in Time—The Work of Raymond McGrath," *The Thirties Society* 3 (1982): 7.

[62] McGrath founded the Twentieth Century Group (later absorbed by MARS), and became one of MARS's leading members. In 1934, McGrath was a key organizer of the CIAM Congress, which took place in London. See Donal O'Donovan, *God's Architect: A Life of Raymond McGrath* (Wicklow, Ireland: Kilbride Books, 1995), 151–62.

Cullen had likely taken note of the publicity his boss pursued and, of course, of his exquisite draftsmanship.[63] McGrath's architectural drawings were always grounded in and surrounded by a landscape, displaying atmosphere and dramatic effects. During the time they worked together, Cullen also became captivated by the environment around the building. He wrote in his journal: "The problem I have discovered, regardless of whether others have discovered it, is the application of the mind to the physical geography of a building. I seemed to have been walking round it not seeing plainly but being under the influence of it. I am now unveiling it."[64] In McGrath, therefore, Cullen saw aptitudes similar to his own—sensitivity to landscapes, an attention to exterior and interior details, and a taste for theatrical effects, as well as a penchant for humor, which infused McGrath's drawings.[65] Consequently, and "fortuitously"—as Alan Powers noted years later in an interview—"Cullen and McGrath were of the same type, and could imitate each other's work."[66]

But despite this sympathy with McGrath, Cullen arguably found in Le Corbusier the greatest inspiration. As the first modern architect to understand the rules of the new economy wherein the arts and industry became entangled, Le Corbusier was a model for Cullen and those around him, including McGrath. McGrath worked on a manuscript about Le Corbusier (which was never published); and in his first book, *Twentieth Century Houses: History of Domestic*

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[63] Alan Powers claimed that McGrath was considered to be one of the best draftsman of the time, and singled him out of a group of twenty-nine British architects practicing during the 1930s in an 1983 exhibition of their drawings that he curated, titled "Look, Stranger, at This Island Now: English Architectural Drawings of the 1930s" and held at the Architectural Association from January 14 to February 12, 1938. Alan Powers, *'Look, Stranger, at This Island Now': English Architectural Drawings of the 1930s*, exhibition catalog (London: Architectural Association, 1983), 13, 36–37.

[64] Gordon Cullen, personal archive, journal, February or March 1934. #418.

[65] See O'Donovan, *God's Architect*, 328.

[66] Alan Powers, interview with the author, July 22, 2010.

Architecture of the Century, he featured more than thirty examples of Le Corbusier's work. Cullen was hired by McGrath to help with the illustrations for *Twentieth Century Houses*.[67] The influence of Le Corbusier's representation on the works of both McGrath and Cullen can already be seen in this book. Of the dozens of technical drawings in the book—mostly house plans, but also a few axons, sections, and one elevation—only four are perspectives. One was by Le Corbusier, one by McGrath, and the other two were by Cullen, though they were not credited.

Cullen's perspectives in the book, seen in relation to those of Le Corbusier and McGrath, exhibit both similarities to and distinctions from his influences, and display traits visible in his later work. The first image in the book, Le Corbusier's well-known illustration of *Ville Contemporaine* (from 1922)—a distant view of a grid of skyscrapers towering above a park, and seen from a rooftop restaurant terrace, furnished with chairs and tables fitted with tablecloths, plates, and drinks—clearly inspired the line quality and abstraction found in Cullen's and even in McGrath's perspectives. [Figure 2.3] Cullen's perspective of Gabriel Guevrekian's modernist garden in Hyères, France, which he redrew "after" a photograph taken from the Cut-Flower Room inside the villa, emulates Le Corbusier's flat, fluid, and unbroken outlines as well as selective choice of spatial elements and details. He also mimics the mechanical line of built elements and, alternately, the wobbly freehand line of tree canopy.[68] In "Cowboy," a drawing of

[67] Raymond McGrath, *Twentieth Century Houses: History of Domestic Architecture of the Century* (London: Faber and Faber, 1934). In the book, credits to the drawings are also given to W. H. Havard and John Lawrence. The drawings by Cullen appear on pages 47 and 57, while those by McGrath appear on page 201. Cullen, however, claimed to have drawn almost all of the book's illustrations (see Powers, "Simple in Time," 7). He repeated his claim when he was interviewed by David Jacques on February 11, 1989. See David Jacques and Jan Woudstra, *Landscape Modernism Renounced: The Career of Christopher Tunnard, 1910–1979* (London: Routledge, 2009), 45.

[68] In contrast, McGrath's drawing titled "Deeper London"—a futuristic, air-raid-safe private house that is a cross between technical section and perspective—shows lines that are heavier, and its overall impression is devoid of the relaxed quality produced by Le Corbusier and Cullen. See Powers, *Look, Stranger*, 36.

the chaise lounge designed by Le Corbusier and drawn by Cullen for the book, the soothing lines boast an additional calming effect. [Figure 2.4] Here, Cullen redrew a photograph of Charlotte Perriand, an architect who collaborated with Le Corbusier on the interior design of the room in Salon d'Automne (1929), where the chair was displayed. Perriand, laying in the chair and facing away toward a wall, is drawn as a soft, continuous, and flat outline that bears a Cullenesque simplicity of cartoon. Whereas the line transposes Cullen's line, the posture is indicative of Le Corbusier's photographic aesthetic. If it were up to Cullen, he likely would have turned the model's face toward the viewer in an indulgent gesture. But beyond pictorial predilections and techniques—a belief in the superiority of flat, pared-down shapes and looseness in perspective views—Le Corbusier also passed to Cullen modes of production that would reemerge in Cullen's work: redrawing and editing, readymade and photo-montaging, as well as advertising tactics including relations between image and text, perspectival sequence, and cut-away staging.

Cullen's connection with Nash, the third figure he claims as an influence, also seems to have passed through McGrath (McGrath and Nash were close friends). Nash, too, helped open debate about the role of the artist in industry, and promoted British design in his journal contributions, particularly to *The Review* and *The Listener* in the first half of the decade. Between 1932 and 1934, he presided over the Society of Industrial Artists (SIA).[69] Beyond Nash's activism, his affinity for affect and found objects (or *objets trouvées*) and their surreal dissonance (which he expressed in several *Review* essays on seaside towns) inspired Cullen.[70]

[69] Nash was a member of the Society of Industrial artists and of the Board of Trade's Council for Art and Industry. Andrew Causey claims that Nash was the British artist most involved in industrial design in the early 1930s. Andrew Causey, "Paul Nash as Designer," in *Modern Britain, 1929–1939*, ed. Alan Powers (London: Design Museum, 1999), 107–16.

[70] Cullen may have seen the collection of *objets trouvées* that John Nash used to show to his acquaintances, including McGrath and Tunnard. Two of Nash's *Review* essays on landscape and surrealism and objects and surrealism are "Swanage or Seaside Surrealism," *Architectural Review* 79, no.

Just as significant as the three influences that Cullen acknowledged are Berthold Lubetkin and László Moholy-Nagy. Both were grounded in Russian constructivism, which embraced the idea of using art to serve society, and both helped catalyze the rise of the design profession.[71] The architect Lubetkin led the collaborative Office of Tecton, and was Cullen's employer from 1936 to 1937.[72] Cullen relished the experimental and competitive environment of the office, and fed off constructivist tactics of depth and composition as well as the innovative representation techniques of axonometric cutaway and photo-collage, which first appeared in Le Corbusier's publications. [Figure 2.5] Lubetkin (admired by the editor Richards) was well connected and, like Le Corbusier, understood the power of publicity: he labored continuously to advance his modern agenda in public. He recognized the broad appeal and marketing potential of Cullen's illustrations and employed him, along with a number of other illustrators, to prepare drawings for publications and exhibitions. In fact, although uncredited, Cullen was responsible for many of the publicity drawings of Tecton's modernist "Milestone" projects featured in *The Review* and in subsequent publications. Seven of these drawings were included in Cullen's personal portfolio—five of the controversial project Highpoint II (October 1938), two drawings for the sea lion pool and Bear Ravine at the Dudley London Zoo (October 1937), and one model

473 (April 1936): 151, and "The Object," *Architectural Review* 82, no. 492 (December 1937): 207–9. In his 1951 notebook, under the title, "Notes on Authority," Cullen specifically referred to the aesthetic pleasure created through a disjunction between a pipe and a wall in a photograph by Nash. Gordon Cullen, personal archive, journal, #375-76.

[71] Lubetkin was a central figure of the British modern movement. He was voted onto the Central Executive Committee of MARS in 1935 but had a problem with MARS' lack of political focus; later he became more involved in the Architects and Technician Organization (ATO). He, too, participated in industrial design and architecture exhibitions. See John Allan, *Berthold Lubetkin: Architecture and the Tradition of Progress* (London: RIBA Publications, 1992), 246.

[72] Lubetkin founded Tecton in 1932 together with Godfrey Samuel and five graduates of the architectural Association. By 1936, Samuel had left the partnership, and Lubetkin's partners were Francis Skinner, Denys Lasdun, and Lindsay Drake. The painter-architect Peter Yates was a fellow draftsman.

with a façade drawing of the deep shelter of the Air-Raid Project in 1939. Cullen's drawings for Tecton's projects both matched and evoked Lubetkin's affinity for austere forms, materials, and colors that were also tinged with a sense of delight and irony.[73] Among the Highpoint II drawings was *The Review* page showing Cullen's six alternative sketches of the building's floating entry canopy, with its support made of two Erechtheion caryatids, which was at the center of much debate. [Figure 2.6] Cullen's flirting freehand line drawing whimsically shook off modern architecture's soberness and rationalism, and thus was a perfect match for Lubetkin's purpose to achieve "a very gay atmosphere . . . inside the building."[74] Like Nash and Lubetkin, Cullen had a taste for harmonious visual discord and eclecticism. Although this tendency was scorned by the modern architectural vanguard, the mix of modern and classical styles and the integration of fragments became vital to the acceptance of modern architecture by the general public, and thereafter to the consumption of postmodern architecture that catered to diverse values and tastes.

The Hungarian-born artist and designer László Moholy-Nagy—also from the constructivist hotbed of the German Bauhaus school, where he was a professor—provided boundless morsels for Cullen's visual appetite. Moholy-Nagy immigrated to London in 1936 and worked there until 1938, continuing to design the kind of products he began in the mid-1920s, such as book and magazine covers, exhibitions, and stage sets. Although there is no record of direct collaboration between Cullen and Moholy-Nagy, the two men created works for the MARS 1938 exhibition, and their images were published side by side in the February 1936

[73] John Allan posited that for Lubetkin, architectural irony was a way of overcoming excessive Englishness. It appeared in Lubetkin's quasi-Surrealist use of the Erechtheion caryatids at Highpoint II, or in the printed design of the wallpaper in his penthouse flat. He also referred to this propensity as a desire to "activate the affective terrain of architecture." Allan, *Berthold Lubetkin*, 298.

[74] Tecton, Architects, "Highpoint Number Two," *Architectural Review* 84, no. 501 (October 1938): 170.

edition of *The Review*—Cullen's second appearance in the publication.[75] Moholy-Nagy's essays on and images of photography and photograms appeared in *The Review* starting in 1934. Whether the two collaborated, however, is less important than the fact that Moholy-Nagy left a lasting impression on Cullen, as evident in his work and in his 1937 cartoon, "Breuer and Moholy-Nagy leave for America." [Figure 2.7] Specifically, Moholy-Nagy's photo-drawing composites, or photomontage and photoplastic (the latter an invention for which he is credited), left a decisive mark on Cullen and on English modern design more broadly, and were widely imitated. Following Moholy-Nagy's first showing of these techniques in a special July 1936 issue of *The Review* on Brighton Beach, for which he served as guest art editor, photo-drawing collages pervade Cullen's work. They can be seen in many of his publications, including images that he included in his portfolio.[76]

While Cullen learned much from his role models, as a commercial artist in need of steady commissions he had to remain (if not ideologically free then at least) ideologically pliable; he could not have been firmly grounded in the same established nationalist ideologies that crept into the work of Nash and McGrath, or in Le Corbusier's purist functionalism, or in Lubetkin's socialism. Nor did he share *The Review*'s elitist aesthetic and nationalist proclivities. Cullen harbored a set of positions that proved persuasively effective precisely because they were not obviously attached to any explicit doctrine. Like the clever ads, his positions did not argue with viewers. They triggered identification and sensation instead. Like Le Corbusier's, Cullen's success derived (beyond his superb drawing skills) from his commercial shrewdness. Le

[75] Cullen's image was of a plate showing wood sources on a world map and preceded Moholy-Nagy's plate "Composition in Plywood."

[76] Cullen used photoplastics on several covers of *The Review*, beginning with a special issue, "Metals," in June 1937, which he included in his portfolio. The photoplastic design on the cover of the October 1943 issue bears a most striking similarity to Moholy-Nagy's artwork *New Museum* (1927).

Corbusier was able to get his doctrine through to the reader without being explicit about it, so it stirred no disagreement; Cullen merely subjugated his opinion to his prime motive—mass appeal.

As his journals make plainly clear, however, Cullen did harbor strong views about architecture, city planning, culture and art, and politics.[77] These were formed in the 1930s and early 1940s, well before his time at *The Review*. The notebooks reveal his keen interest in architecture and art as seen and experienced by laypeople, instead of only by experts and critics. It was a sensibility that stood against the modern construction of architecture and privileged the receiver—be it a reader, a viewer, or an inhabiter. These positions, which greatly affected his career, were also shaped by his physique and upbringing.

Personal Traits and Proclivities

In particular, three of Cullen's personal traits influenced his work. First, a birth defect had left him with only one good eye. His monocular sight flattened his world into a single plane, and might explain his exceptional ability to move effortlessly from horizontal plan to vertical elevation or from two dimensions to three dimensions, and vice versa. Second, in part because of his shyness, he did not make speeches or publish philosophical texts (except in his notebook entries), preferring instead to let his drawings do the talking.[78] Third, as the child of a peripatetic

[77] Cullen's archive contains dozens of notebooks written from the early 1930s onward. They are filled with sketches and notes about the state of design, architecture, and the city, and are interspersed with personal notes, poems, and financial calculations. The notebooks also include more than a dozen drafts (about 10–20 pages each) under specific titles—perhaps manuscript drafts in a very crude form. There appear such titles as "Metropolitan Improvements" on the development of London, "Notes on Culture," "A Tiny Beginning of How to See," "Notes on Authority," " On Drawings," and a draft in two parts: "Part I: Techniques of architectural Practice Reviewed" and "Part II: architectural Design." Although in a preliminary state, some notes were laid out in orderly page design, as if on their way to the publishing house. As I remain constantly aware, interpreting these notes is a difficult—at times, slippery—job.

[78] When he did contribute journalistic writing later for *The Review*, it was scrutinized by skilled editors.

clergyman, Cullen spent many hours listening to sermons by a variety of parsons (some of whom inspired the characters in his drawings), which might account for his sharpened emotional intelligence. Cullen was drawn to the subject of visual psychology for its attendant sensorial response. He referred to it as "psychological planning." Criticizing architects for their lack of attention to the people for whom they design, he wrote in a personal revelation in a 1934 journal entry:

> The problem set forthcoming, Psychological planning. Formerly confused with composition. . . . Most people are entirely unconscious of architects in the real sense. The furthest they get is decoration. . . . This however is not the point. The crux of the problem is this. Do some buildings wear people down? Do they thwart their instinctive, inexpressible sense of the right thing? Do they tacitly oppose the intellect?[79]

His awareness of his own creative sensibility, his powers of empathy, and also his instinctive salesmanship all combined to focus Cullen on the psychological effect he wanted to create, the story he wanted to tell, and the way to convey it to a public that had become more receptive to visual images than to spoken or written words. Cullen was a kind of cross between visual communicator, psychologist, and salesman.

Furthermore, he was highly adept at the technicalities of printing production and had a feel for the mechanisms that supported it: advertising, mass media, and publicity.[80] These human, business, and technical abilities, together with his artistic skills, were precisely the qualities required of a designer in the new economic environment and made his work widely appealing. His diverse and prominent clients in the 1930s, from the Ministry of Labor to the Electrical Development Association, from MARS to the *Architectural Review*, as well as the Times Furniture Company, were evidence of his pull. He had an exceptional ability to convince

[79] Gordon Cullen, personal archive, journal, February or March, 1934, #419.

[80] Cullen maintained close relationships with press printers and colorists. See Gordon Cullen, "Colour Line," *Penrose Annual: A Review of the Graphic Arts* 44 (1950): 57.

people to take direct, positive action—visit an exhibit, purchase a thing, or subscribe to an architectural lifestyle (or, later on, redesign a town), and he accomplished these things through an intuitive understanding of what the art theorist and visual psychologist Rudolf Arnheim once argued: "Every picture is a statement. It does not present the object itself but instead presents the object as a set of propositions."[81]

The remaining discussion in this chapter concerns the intelligence of the images Cullen produced and the set of propositions embedded in them. How did he persuade his viewer to buy the product and how did he evoke a desire to consume architecture? Moving beyond the approaches that have yielded the Cullen we already know—legible, seductive, and playful—it launches an inquiry into Cullen's mode of production and the pictorial devices he employed, a crucial line of investigation not yet followed. Specifically, I discuss the place of photography and photo-drawing collage in the early work, and the particular blend of avant-garde and popular techniques borrowed from highbrow and lowbrow pictorial sources. This blend was tailored to the specific product, site of exhibition, and audience. The techniques are discussed in relation to elements in two genres: the lowbrow art of cartoons and advertising and the highbrow art of film and theater. They are examined thoroughly within the context of architecture and landscape design, where Cullen's innovation significantly altered disciplinary representation.

Before proceeding with the substantive discussion, however, I would like to use the example of a 1930s advertising poster by Cullen to illustrate a more typical analysis from which I will diverge, and construct instead a structural analysis based on production modes and professional requisites. It highlights the work's formal elements and effects, which produced the

[81] Rudolf Arnheim, *Visual Thinking* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1969), 308.

image's "shelf appeal," thus inciting consumer desire. This sample work was publicly praised in a magazine dedicated to demonstrating innovation in consumer product design.

Image Making at Work

Shelf Appeal

The poster "Enjoy Electric Cooking, Airy Kitchens with Electricity," included in his portfolio, is one of six that Cullen designed for the Electrical Development Association campaign, essentially encouraging people to buy appliances and use power. [Figure 2.8] The poster series appeared in various marketing venues, most notably the Health and Beauty Woman's Fair in Olympia in 1938. Mixing photographs, drawings, and lettering, much like other ads of the time, the electricity poster produced the necessary interplay of realism and abstraction that appealed to popular taste and harbored key pictorial devices that make it utterly Cullenesque. It depicts a modern electric stove/oven and a friendly woman holding a dish in well-lit kitchen. Several elements converge to pull in and persuade the viewer to spend time absorbing its message: familiar domestic scene, delightful cartoonish character, striking illusion of depth and dynamics, and visual drama. Cullen borrowed his devices from the arts of theater, cartoons, and advertising. He created the impression of a stage set, in which the object of interest sits downstage, the proscenium arch frames the kitchen space, the skewed proscenium and false perspective behind it brings out depth, and the performer engages her audience directly as she demonstrates the joy and ease of cooking in an airy, modern kitchen. The cartoonish touch was also expressed through the utterly flat character, with her childlike face, and the whimsy of the "clouds," which are drawn in the windows and on the ceiling. Visual intrigue is enhanced through contrasts—black and white colors, abstract lines, and realist photographic media.

Advertising tactics show through in the simple forms, minimal elements, mixed media, and expressive typography—floating, wavy lines that correspond to the "fresh air" message.

Judged on the basis of its "shelf appeal" by a trade magazine of the same name, Cullen's six-poster series received high praise from the merchandising, design, packaging, advertising, and display magazine. Labeling it "Electricity Display Challenge," *The Review* stated that while "conventionalists" would be "likely to oppose Gordon Cullen's new campaign," the posters "promise to put real punch into the point-of-sale publicity for appliances." It concludes: "Frankly, we regard these new displays as the best of their kind that we have seen for a long time. They are keyed to the right note . . . [and] should do a better job of selling than the hackened [*sic*], disorderly, and excessively commonplace effusions which previously abused the windows of our electricity showrooms."[82]

The poster series matched the temperament and disposition of *Shelf Appeal*, which itself expressed the contemporary state of consumer culture and industry. And, as the media scholar Rachel Bowlby noted, it increased the competitive edge of British packaging, making it part of the rise of modern shopping, publishing, and salesmanship.[83] The magazine, which featured young designers eager to highlight modern, everyday objects in their abstract simplicity—and to experiment with graphics, typography, and layout—invited Cullen to design the cover for its special issue on the New York City World's Fair in 1939. [Figure 2.9] Cullen subsequently included the *Shelf Appeal* review article in his portfolio, along with images of three posters from his electricity series and the issue's cover design. As was typical of other public exhibits in his

[82] Gordon Cullen, "Electricity Display Challenge," exhibit review, *Shelf Appeal*, 1938. In Gordon Cullen, personal archive, #751.

[83] Rachel Bowlby, *Carried Away: The Invention of Modern Shopping* (New York, NY: Columbia University Press, 2001), 84-89.

portfolio, the electricity poster was created in a process that reveals much about the way Cullen worked. I call it "Cut-and-Paste Cullen Style."

Readymades: Cut-and-Paste Cullen Style

Cullen was a bricoleur in the true sense of the word. From an extensive collection of "readymade" pictures, he pieced together images, mixing them with his own drawings. His archive contains several scrapbooks with clippings from magazines, cartoons, catalogs, advertisements—anything that struck him visually. [Figure 2.10] Though the scrapbooks are undated, many drawings are obvious reworkings of photographs taken by him or others and of other drawings that he or others created during the 1930s. There is also evidence of repeated use of bits and pieces of these images in different drawings. Employing the readymade played two interrelated roles in Cullen's production: practical and creative. On the practical side, it was reprinted or used as a template or a pattern for more efficient production of drawings. On the productive side, it encouraged him to use the scrapbooks as a kit-of-parts, a source of inspiration for visual ideas and pictorial techniques. As Peter Rees, Cullen's assistant from 1973 to 1975, recalled: "The only thing Gordon would look at was a box of cut-outs from magazines. He would populate a drawing with the inventory of visual images he collected; any magazine—anything, no logic, just visuals from popular magazines, ..."[84] An example of a straightforward reuse is the reprint of a plant leaf photograph in an exhibition poster, "Design in the Garden," at the Gordon Russell Galleries in London, in the summer of 1938, which could have been taken from a *Review* essay published a year earlier.[85] [Figure 2.11]

[84] Peter Rees, interview with the author, July 25, 2010.

[85] The image appeared previously in Clive Entwistle, "Approach to Interior Design," *Architectural Review* 80, no. 491 (December 1937): 226.

Cullen's more typical use of readymades was a distillation of the image, or part of it, into essential forms and details. Two examples of line drawings using photo-prints as templates and patterns are the illustration of modern mass production system in his pictorial essay, "Everyday Things" (1935), which was redrawn from a photograph of Alvar Aalto's chairs, originally printed in the August 1933 issue of *The Review* [see Figure 2.11],[86] and a drawing of a table in a 1937 cartoon titled "The Birth of an Idea," which appears to be sketched after a photo of Marcel Breuer's dining table for the Isokon Furniture Company. The same table then reappears in a photomontage by Cullen for *The Review*'s "Decoration Supplement" in January 1938. [Figure 2.12] In the same photomontage, he added Breuer's Isokon "Long Chair," possibly redrawn from a photo-print of exhibition displays (seen in the background) designed by Cullen. That photo-print was included in Cullen's portfolio. In a sketch for Lubetkin, after visiting his farm in 1940, Cullen used "patterns" from both the refined "editions" of his own preliminary field sketches and templates extracted from newspaper images of tractors. He combined and massaged these into a final drawing. [Figure 2.13] These images show that while some involved a single quick and straightforward tracing, his typical drawing process consisted of one or more drafts on tracing paper or vellum, which were laid over the "found" image or quick original sketch, then reworked more carefully to include selective contours of forms and to leave out some details and modify others.

However, the activity of recycling and redrawing a readymade, including the photo reprint, should not be taken as demonstrating that he created the images in a passive manner—although in some cases it could be construed that way. Drawing after a photograph is a deliberate act of selecting specific fragments and their modification in the transfer process, as well as of

[86] Gordon Cullen, "Everyday Things," *Architectural Review* 78, no. 471 (December 1935): 219–21.

framing their meanings anew. As Roland Barthes argued, the photograph is a floating chain of signifiers that the reader is able to choose or ignore, implying that the photograph does not have specific meaning in itself.[87] The meaning of the sketch unravels in the redrawing process and is gained from the new context in which it is placed. For Cullen, the reductive drawing process, similar to that which Le Corbusier adopted more than a decade earlier, was, as Colomina has argued, "a search for form and technique that enabled the image to enter into his creative process as interpreted."[88] But the selection of relevant details and the choices about the level of abstraction and the final form of each person were different, and related closely to their distinct motives. Le Corbusier propelled his own conception of modern architecture and used both graphic and built works as tools to drive his agenda; his drawings were therefore precursors to the physical creation. For him, readymade images and repetitive editing were research tools for discovering ideas and gaining inspiration. He seldom repeated himself exactly and resisted giving his repeated drawings a final form.[89] By contrast, Cullen pushed his client's message and goal to sell: his drawings were his primary and final form of expression. His own agenda, as he later wrote in a 1946 journal entry, was "to be the best architectural draftsman," which for him translated to "the most popular." His graphic decisions were therefore conditioned (in addition to the formal requirement of the new image) by the audience—its level of comprehension and its impulses. In other words, decisions about what to reproduce, how much to reproduce faithfully, how much to simplify, and how much visual complexity to add were based on the aesthetics and the visual reception of the viewer. For Cullen, therefore, the redrawing of a readymade was a

[87] Roland Barthes, "The Rhetoric of the Image," in *Image-Music-Text*, trans. Stephen Heath (New York: Hill and Wang, 1977), 38–39.

[88] Colomina, *Privacy and Publicity*, 159–60.

[89] Le Corbusier, *Creation Is a Patient Search*, trans. James Palmes (New York: Praeger, 1960), 37.

process for the discovery of relevant and persuasive visual tools that would appeal to mass audiences.

What he saw in the Isokon table in the photograph was its skin-like pattern, which coincided with a pattern of dog's hide when flattened and, therefore, with the dog itself as source of inspiration—that is, with his concept of the product design process. But to make transparent to a layperson the analogy between the design process and the three elements in the cartoon, Cullen adjusted the texture of the Isokon table to resemble that of the dog, and that of the hide pattern on the wall. What Cullen took from the Aalto chairs photo was its multiple cloning, which encapsulated the idea of mass production. However, function and efficiency alone cannot produce a good modern product: it is important to note that Cullen placed four of Aalto's chairs on a grid and spaced them apart to create a dull, repetitive effect, not present in the original photograph. Even the leaf photo reprint he placed in the exhibition poster was not a passive use of the photographic source. Cullen displaced the photograph from its original context and meanings; on the poster he juxtaposed it with a drawing of play equipment and outdoor furniture, thus extending the analogy from interior design to garden design, and making an analogy between nature and garden artifacts.[90] The new meaning of the displaced photo, as Colomina posited, is gained from its relationship to other elements in the new page—photographs, caption, writing—and the layout of the page.[91] Cullen's intentional use of readymades therefore involved a creative process rooted first in an understanding of the effects of visual elements on his

[90] The image was used by Clive Entwistle as an analogy between the economy of lines and function in nature and the aesthetics of form and material economy in Marcel Breuer's interior design.

[91] Colomina, *Privacy and Publicity*, 100. Colomina argued that a "photograph is uncritically received as fact, but the published photograph is composed and worked on."

audience, and only second in making an artistic statement. But clearly, the practice was also a matter of job productivity.

Incorporating found imagery and borrowing techniques from masters was not new in art and, of course, had been part of professional practice in art and architecture since the invention of printing. But the 1930s explosion of cheap print media and photographs accelerated this process. The new system of production and reproduction enabled by the improved printing press and camera lens became vital to the expediency of commercial art in general, and was indispensable to Cullen. While the process of reuse and redrawing—especially from photographs, and as exemplified by Le Corbusier—resulted in a practical shift to more efficient mass production by the modern designer, it also "coincided more broadly with a conceptual shift of the world by the individual."[92] This argument applies equally to Cullen, especially in distinguishing his innovation from the work of his role model. In fact, as a commercial artist whose products remain primarily graphic, Cullen depended even more than Le Corbusier on the new industrial and technological reality for his livelihood. And whereas found images were readily available as templates or stencils, for Cullen they were master prototypes and tool kits from which to derive inspiration. Though they may have resembled the "original," Cullen, like Le Corbusier, never repeated himself exactly.

The Place of Photography in Cullen's Work

Cullen found other practical and creative uses of photography. On the practical side, he extensively deployed the photograph as a visual record of a project site, both before and after construction. A photographic record by then had become integral to architectural production and representation. However, photography was also a vital component of design—particularly

[92] Ibid., 117–18.

important for a freelance illustrator who was generally relegated to a technical rank and whose production was to be economical. Cullen did not visit many of the buildings and gardens he drew before the Second World War. Visiting a site was the privilege of the architect, or the task of the hired photographer. Therefore, Cullen used site photographs, architectural drawings, and text supplied by the commissioning architect to construct his drawings. These working habits persisted throughout his career, regardless of his status. Another, perhaps more prevalent use of photography, especially during and after the war, was the "contact," or small print made straight from the negative filmstrip. Many archival pieces include contacts pasted on a page in grid form. [Figure 2.14] There are also corresponding sketches made by laying tracing paper on top of the contacts.[93] Placed on a desk or wall, the initial pasteup displayed a panoramic and sequential visual record that could be examined at a glance. Like the photographs of furniture or, say, a tractor, the site contact was used for further sketching and editing in a reductive process of discovery. Cullen also often used the small outlines he made from the contacts on a paper to make decisions on page layout or to provide guides for the printing technician. But photography figured in his work in another significant way. The process of photo-drawing collage, also known as photomontage (see "Photomontage and the Deconstruction of Modern Architecture," below), enabled Cullen to break free from the dogma of modern architecture.

The image-making process Cullen employed— a fusion of practical and creative elements manufactured through bricolage and readymades—mirrored his state of mind, his job imperatives, and his desire for shelf appeal. It also reflected an aesthetic sensibility and operational modality that accommodated the varying mixture of avant-garde techniques taken from art, architecture, film, and theater, together with popular techniques taken from cartoon and

[93] Most of the contacts I encountered were likely taken with Cullen's Leica camera from his time in the West Indies during the war onward, and especially from the post-*Review* period.

advertising. This fusion, in turn, produced a blend of both abstract and rhetorical requirements that reached professionals and the general public alike. Its effect kept the viewer informed and challenged, on the one hand, and engaged and entertained, on the other. The serious and trivial were happily merged.

Cullen permitted such opposite poles to inhabit the same picture. He employed the Purists' abstraction—the need to see objectively, to see the objects in their material closure, to dissociate them from nature, to diminish all relativity and spatial depth. He was not unlike an abstract painter. Yet, to have the viewer empathize with the object, he also employed the tactics of the cartoon and advertising. This position would attain greater significance when his subject was nature itself (see "Drawing the Modern Landscape," below).

Cartoons and Advertising

Cullen was enamored of cartoons. They brought together artistic sophistication, whimsy, and childlike simplicity. Aiming to appeal to the widest possible audience, Cullen used cartoon to ensure legibility and, at the same time, to preserve the mood in his images. Cartoons solved Cullen's challenge of using modern art and architecture techniques: they ensured the rigor of information and preserved the flatness of the picture, while at the same time relaxing the image, recalling reality (and three-dimensional space), and generating atmosphere. His drawings—from architecture to advertising—always exuded gleeful exaggeration. In fact, architectural drawings and cartoons had never before in the profession been so closely integrated. The radically reduced and flat composition of the cartoon, in which all elements were confined to a two-dimensional plane, successfully reduced realism, imparting clarity to form and message without risking the austerity that generally permeates abstraction. This effect, of course, was accomplished through the expressivity and the absurd element common to cartoon and caricature figuration (people and

animals) and through strategic "garnishing" of accessories. Cullen seized on the ineffable overtones of people and lived-in places to deliver the functions and mood of architectural space. Cartoons offered the aesthetic techniques of flatness, humor, and mood that Cullen's work often insisted on showing.

The cartoon was Cullen's favorite form of sketching and, of course, many cartoon sketches are scattered throughout his archive. Among the personal and commissioned cartoons, in draft and in finished form, are Christmas cards and invitations, illustrations, posters, and other forms of publicity media. Sketches in Cullen's archive from the 1930s show a range of stylistic options for his human characters, and varying levels of exaggeration or absurdity in each image, always rendered with the audience and place of exhibition in mind. Cullen had a peculiar appetite for the absurd. In his first published piece, a letter to the editor of the *Architects' Journal* titled "Infernalismus," he discussed the very short existence at the turn of the century of an architectural group called the Institute of Diabolic Architects (IDA), who "combined with the Futilists in 1887" and whose mainstay constituted "unreason," "irrationality," and the "absurd." He continued: "IDA is an invention through which architects can become basically and fundamentally false. We are beyond classicism or the Gothic, we are organically irrational and absurd."[94] The idea behind the letter is obscure. However, it sheds light on Cullen's perverse personality, in which irrationality, skepticism, and eccentricity lurk. It is no surprise that Cullen often ridiculed architects in his images—a sort of in-circle joke offering stinging criticism of the profession. He disliked the arrogance with which architects lorded over draftsmen. Furthermore, Cullen felt more accomplished than many of them, despite not being one—a constant cause of

[94] Gordon Cullen, "Infernalismus," *Architects' Journal* 79 (July 12, 1934): 55.

frustration[95]—and his cynical view of architects surfaced in his work. Two 1938 examples of his work illustrate this animus. [Figure 2.15]

The sketch for the official invitation to a Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA) party in February 1938 (not ultimately used) shows a goofy-looking architect in an indecent, drunken embrace of a Greek priestess in the form of a Doric column; she is handing the architect a laurel wreath. Another cartoon, "'How'm I Doing?' Sir Henry Wotton: 'Hey Nonny Nonny,'" displays a similar cynical outlook. It is a cartoon for the MARS group London exhibition, "The New Architecture," which was held in New Burlington Galleries in 1938. The head of another doltish architect emerges from a curved centerpiece wall panel, his eyes glued to a flirtatious lady tiptoeing in the foreground.[96] The cynicism of exaggerated elements in a cartoon, however, was an unwelcome attribute for a visual marketer, and Cullen wisely restricted his satires to personal and in-circle drawings.[97] But other qualities of the cartoon, such as its simplicity,

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[95] Several of Cullen's acquaintances attested to this frustration, including Eric de Maré, David Gosling, Peter Rees, and David Price, in separate interviews. Peter Rees said, "Gordon was a frustrated architect. He completed Part I of the course. There was no money to finish. [He] had to make his own way. [He] worked in frustration, having to do work for architects who were less creative than he was. For income, he would do architect impressions of architects schemes" (interview with the author). David Price, a partner in the 1980s and Cullen's son-in-law, said that Cullen's unfinished architectural degree would continue to haunt him throughout his career (interview with the author January 4–5, 2010).

[96] Alan Powers, frontispiece to *Britain: Modern Architectures in History* (London: Reaktion Books, 2007), 6. The cartoon was based on a photograph, thus bringing out several spatial and formal design features of the exhibition, including the amoeba-shaped display windows on the wall behind the architect and column, the long corridor that led from the first room to the second, and the gramophone that played a repeated sound behind a screen. According to Powers, Cullen explained that the gramophone represents the voice of MARS, whose words sounded repeatedly from behind a screen; the figures in the back represent architects over-entangled with display. Its appearance in the frontispiece of Powers's recent book points to the centrality of the featured event in the nuanced history of British modern architecture. It also nods toward Cullen's ironic twist of that event, which was less than flattering. By selecting this drawing, one might surmise, Powers positioned Cullen as the representative of an era, cogently capturing its uneven faces.

[97] His drawings sympathized with consumers without poking fun at them or passing moral judgment on them. This did not prevent Cullen from implicit commentary in his public drawings. In British caricature, it was common for artists to serve as subversive critics whose implicit visual commentary could pass

whimsy, and flirtatiousness, were much welcomed as evocations of thought, identification, and entertainment.

Cartooning became inseparable from all of Cullen's work—whether professional construction drawings, public exhibition posters, or product catalogs. In the same "New Architecture" exhibition, the three drawings Cullen exhibited on the curved and freestanding panel at the center of the room that welcomed visitors to the first room of the exhibition, as well as the four wall panels across the room, were devoid of any explicit criticism, but were cartoonish nonetheless. [Figure 2.16] The characters ground each image. The drawings on the panel show three large, abstract, and enigmatic characters, which correspond to Sir Henry Wotton's celebrated paraphrase of Vitruvius's building blocks of architecture: "Commoditie, Firmness, Delight." Three delicate line drawings of basic architectural techniques—plan, section, and perspective—are drawn in the background.[98] The characters on the opposing wall in the same room are also flat, but smaller and less abstract, both more animated and more cheerful. Set within their workspace, they correspond to the four kinds of modern economic labor—agriculture, industry, commerce, and administration. The inclusion of traditional architectural representations, or professional codes, on the central panel might have made them restricted, understandable only to the initiated, but the universal code of perspectives on the wall panels was

unnoticed by clients and consumers. See Martin Myrone, "What's So Funny about British Art?" in *Rude Britannia: British Comic Art* (London: Tate Publishing, 2010), 8–11. Cullen, with his sharp pencil, deployed the apparent naiveté and entertaining quality of cartoons, thus joining the long-established British caricature tradition. The subtle insertion of such criticism is evident, for example, in the antiwar sign that hangs on the construction fence of the building on each page of "Everyday Things."

[98] Cullen also illustrated the exhibition catalog: MARS Group, "The New Architecture," exhibition catalog, New Burlington Galleries, London, January 11–29, 1938. He featured two photos of the displays and four illustrations from the catalog in his portfolio. The exhibition was heralded as a turning point in British architecture and design: it garnered high praises in the media, and was celebrated as the coming of age of the modern movement in Britain.

transparent to everyone. The level of abstraction therefore addressed different audiences in the same room. Of the two character styles, the affable characters on the wall panels persisted in Cullen's work. They are a hybrid of several strains—architectural "people," children's dolls, and theater performers. They are utterly flat, geometric, seemingly stiffened by straight mechanical lines, but plump. They are partly professional and serious, partly cute wooden dolls, and partly theatrical. Mostly they are amiable and easy to like. Taken from the devices of architecture, cartoons, and advertising, the figures entice consumers to accept the ideas and products of the "new architecture." This geometric, agile, and flirtatious quality is built into Cullen's line, not only with people (and in some cases with animals) but also with objects and architecture, becoming perhaps Cullen's primary trademark.

Most of Cullen's published drawings, therefore, are not cartoons in the pure sense of the word; rather, they are a hybrid of cartoon and architectural drawing, in which human characters play a key role. Agreeable and always congruent with the setting, the human characters sharpen the ostensible point of Cullen's message by walking the line between going about everyday pursuits and acting out an advertising role. Like an actor, the cartoon character enables a spectator to project herself. As in commercial advertisements, Cullen's image is meant to excite, the message to be absorbed and obeyed. Furthermore, as in advertising, the cartoon and comic strip enabled him to tell a story while constantly negotiating between text and image (often via a caption inside or outside a "bubble"). Such is the case with the MARS cartoon, and later on with Tecton's "Finsbury" panels, both of which resemble labeling in technical architectural drawings.

Cullen also borrowed heavily from Le Corbusier's advertising tactics, especially techniques related to display, visual juxtaposition, and intrigue. But Cullen diverged from his model in one important regard. Le Corbusier showed very few people, and only in his

perspectives, and those were mostly small in scale and either lacking in expression or seemingly austere and self-absorbed. In contrast, Cullen's characters were large and present in almost every drawing—not only in perspectives but also in plans, in sections, and in construction drawings. They looked cheerful and engaging as they went about their assigned roles.[99]

While cartoonish sympathy creates desire in the consumer, the flattening effects of Cullen's cartoon were welcomed not only for their simple and legible qualities but also for their explicit artificiality. The creation of "pictorial frontality" (to borrow from the art historian Rosalind Krauss), seen earlier in the Purists' work, called attention to the inherent superficiality of color and texture, and contributed to the artificial construction of the image.[100] Artificiality was a sustained position for Cullen. It not only held him in touch with the idiom of the time but also guaranteed intelligibility and legibility.

Topographical Draftsmanship and Caricature

Cullen was a conscious successor of a specific English tradition of visual satire that displayed keen topographical understanding. This line of descent sprang from William Hogarth in the eighteenth century and extended to Thomas Rowlandson in the nineteenth century and Osbert Lancaster in the twentieth century.[101] The tradition of merging caricature with architectural draftsmanship, however, may be traced to the collaboration between Rowlandson

[99] In the entire *Oeuvre Complète* series, only a few of the perspectives show human figures. These are often small and merely outlined, devoid of additional features. A few other sketches show larger figures, which often seem bored and aloof, with facial and bodily features. Le Corbusier rarely showed people in his photographs, and when he did, they tended to be women, either shot from the back or looking away; when both men and women are shown, they never occupy the same space. Colomina, *Privacy and Publicity*, 293.

[100] Rosalind Krauss, "Léger, Le Corbusier, and Purism," *Artforum* 10, no. 8 (April 1972): 50–53.

[101] Hogarth is considered to be the first artist whose art made use of a strong sense of social and topographical specificity: the characters and settings of his paintings and prints were instantly recognizable to his contemporaries. Myrone, "What's So Funny about British Art?" 48.

and Augustus Charles Pugin in their 1808 picture book, *Ackermann's Microcosm of London*. The work's three volumes, with 104 aquatint plates that illustrated the city in detail—its buildings, public spaces, and people—became a quintessential image of the Regency Period in London and established a new standard in print media urban imagery. [Figure 2.17] As the publisher Rudolph Ackermann explained in the book's introduction, its engravings transcended a chronic problem with most engravings on architectural subjects at the time—a lack of proper ambience, atmosphere, and impression of people. Ackermann credited this development to the fruitful collaboration between Pugin, who delineated the architecture "with the utmost precision and care," and Rowlandson, who drew the human figures by using "almost every variety of character that is found in the great metropolis."[102] Cullen surely would have encountered that book or some of its published images. A Rowlandson etching titled "A Table Dhote or French Ordinary in Paris" was found in Cullen's archive, along with his own version of that etching, using the original as a background and replacing its foreground with cutout images of tables complete with dishes in the form of modern and Renaissance iconic architecture by, among others, Buckminster Fuller, Jørn Utzon, Le Corbusier, and Bramante, showing the latter's Tempietto being cut and served to the feasting bourgeoisie.[103] [Figure 2.17] Cullen was not only influenced but able to combine in his work the aptitudes and skills of the draftsman-caricaturist pair—Pugin and Rowlandson—to manufacture modern architecture consumer desire.

Two years into his professional career, Cullen's idiosyncratic pictorial humor must have been deemed valuable to both the explication and the marketing of architecture. He was invited

[102] Pugin Rowlandson, *The Microcosm of London*, x–xi.

[103] Comics by other contemporaries in the file were created by the cartoonist Bill Tidy. In a 1951 journal entry, Cullen also made notes on the American cartoonist Saul Steinberg, whose cartoon series using spare line over background page consisting of musical score or newsprint Cullen emulated in his own cartoons. [Figure 2.18]

by *The Review* editors to publish a pictorial essay that appeared in December 1935. This time, the magazine did not desire the mechanical line and technical content of architectural drafting, but rather the flowing line and comical gist of Cullen's modern cartoon.[104] The work, "Everyday Things," is a two-page pictorial essay of twenty-six cartoons, each accompanied by short captions. [Figure 2.19] Each cartoon elucidates a concept from J. M. Richards's essay in that issue, titled "Towards a Rational Aesthetics." Read in sequential order, as in a comic strip, the images distill Richards's densely theoretical argument. The drawings describe, in comparative fashion, the changed considerations behind the form of objects and buildings over time and throughout that decade. Cullen's pictorial sequence made Richards's then-new approach to industrial product form—one that goes beyond function to encompass mass production, leisure, and economy—accessible to nonacademic architects and nonarchitects. "The story of the condition of chaos which has developed in the design of everyday things, and the moral that attaches to it," wrote Richards in his introduction, "is *simplified* overleaf into a cartoon, drawn by Mr. T. Gordon Cullen" (emphasis added).[105] Cullen's prized ability to replace words with pictures to convey an idea, or in this case a complex theory, was thus publicly recognized for the first time, leading to more commissions and ultimately to his hiring at *The Review*.

Cullen's cartoon "essay" was made possible by forerunners who had appeared in *The Review*. What is significant about these precursors is that they signaled a fundamental change not only in the magazine's choice of subject matter and representation but also more generally in

[104] The word "cartoon" originally derives from the Italian *cartone*, which meant a large sheet of paper with an outline of a small drawing, enlarged to the scale of the final work, to be transferred to a wall or a panel to be painted. It was a preparatory design drawing. Over time, "cartoon" acquired the meanings of a drawing showing features of its subject in a simplified or exaggerated way.

[105] Cullen, "Everyday Things," introduction by J. M. Richards, 219.

print mass media and marketing.[106] An early noteworthy ancestor was a pictorial series of three installments in 1933, called "What a Life!"[107] With "What a Life!," a reprint of a 1911 illustrated fictional autobiography whose authors had cut out a series of images from a 1910 product catalog and attached new captions, *The Review*'s editors intended to show the new status of illustrations in modern life.[108] [Figure 2.20] By publishing the pictorial essay, they also pointed out the capacity of images to transcend their original context and meaning, thereby becoming free from their text. The editors further argued that detaching an image from its original context was not just possible but desirable for the creative design process: "The Dorland Hall Exhibition of British Industrial Art, illustrated in this number, will be enhanced in value for readers of the serial which has been reappearing in these pages," they wrote.[109] By the time of this issue, of course, the rise of mass print media, which cheaply reproduced images and spread them around the world, made such detachment inevitable, and underscored the emerging cut-and-paste design work processes, as well as the opportunity for architects and image makers to have broad impact. Le Corbusier had already demonstrated the efficacy of such moves in *l'Esprit Nouveau* in the early 1920s. Juxtaposing both turn-of-the-century and contemporaneous commodity images from manufacturing catalogs against his text in an analogical manner, he relied on the collision of the

[106] The tradition of satire in British architecture goes back to the caricatures by A. W. N. Pugin (Augustus Charles Pugin's son) in his book *Contrasts: or, a Parallel between the Noble Edifices of the Middle Ages and Corresponding Buildings of the Present Day* (2nd ed., 1841; reprint, Leicester: Leicester University Press; New York: Humanities Press, 1969 [1st ed., 1836]) and to the AA annual pantomime programs in the 1880s. Quite a few architectural magazines featured sporadic cartoons in the 1920s, including *Architecture Building News* and *Architects' Journal*. Occasionally, "The RIBA Newsletter" incorporated individual cartoons on architects.

[107] Another was "Progress in Pelvis Bay," a cartoon-illustrated essay series by Osbert Lancaster, which began in November 1934 and ran through April 1936.

[108] E. V. Lucas and George Morrow, "What a Life!" essay series, *Architectural Review*, February, May, and July 1933 (reprinted from the 1911 book of the same title [London: Methuen]).

[109] AR editors, *Architectural Review* 74. no. 1 (July 1933): 46.

visual material with the text—much as in advertising. The primacy of image over text and the acceptance of strategies from popular art coincided with the need to cater to a wide readership. Whether from Lucas and Morrow or from Le Corbusier, the cut-and-paste technique (devoid of the original message) opened the door for *The Review* to accept such strategies, and thereby embrace the new world of commodity architecture. For Cullen, the technique enabled him to attain a prime site of experimentation and innovation.

But the path leading to *The Review* went through the office of Tecton, where Cullen had hammered out his techniques. As oddities in architectural representation, Cullen's cartoon and advertising strategies were a welcome addition in the office of Lubetkin's Tecton, which Cullen joined in 1936.[110] Lubetkin had labored to advance a lighthearted version of the modern agenda through public discourse and through mass media. Thus Cullen's drawings aligned strongly with Lubetkin's goal; they not only helped to change a professional drawing opacity into a pictorial lucidity understood by nonspecialists and specialists alike, but they also invigorated modern architecture—which had become sanitized—with humanist and affective qualities.

Beginning with "Highpoint I" (1935–36), some of Tecton's architectural drawings turned less mechanical and more relaxed. Although he was not officially credited, strong visual evidence suggests that Cullen was involved in this production. In the detailed construction drawing titled "Service Duct and Heating Rationale," the mechanical lines appear looser than in contemporaneous designs, and the page is peppered with cartoon figures. [Figure 2.21] This looseness is evident in other drawings, such as "Storage Strategy and Glide-In Door Details," where clothing is implanted from the world of cartoon, and in "Window Details and Door

[110] Cullen left the office of Godfrey Samuel, where he worked from 1935 to 1936. Before establishing his own office, Samuel had been a partner at Tecton, but his strict functionalist approach clashed with Lubetkin's more humanist approach.

Ironmongery," where commonplace objects, such as a blown-up handle, are reimagined. The quality of these drawings differs starkly from the rigid, technical quality of the "Stainless Steel Sink, Skirting, and Cill Details" produced by other image makers for the same project. In the drawings for "Highpoint II" (1938) and "Finsbury Health Centre" (1939), Cullen's involvement clearly shows. Cartoon techniques dominate the drawing, and were carefully adjusted for the targeted audience. The illustrations of "Highpoint II" in the October 1938 issue of *The Review*, four of which Cullen included in his portfolio, melded a number of techniques from cartoons and theater to articulate extremely complex information involving the simultaneity of the functions—the workings of the technology and the separate circulation systems.[111] [Figure 2.22] Here, the sections and perspectives, populated with cartoon figures, are composed using theatrical stage and cinematic framing devices of shifting distances and angles to animate and unravel the building. The appearance of these techniques in the magazine not only made opaque technical architectural knowledge accessible and fun for a general audience, who were likely to consume these innovations, but also provided professionals adept in the trade with new tools to communicate and market complex ideas.

Theater and Film

In the "Highpoint II" drawings, Cullen managed density of information in a legible and rich composition by using stratified and concurrent scenarios on various floors and in different rooms throughout the building. [Figure 2.23] The drawings recall one of Le Corbusier's advertisements in a 1924 issue of *l'Esprit Nouveau* for the company Innovation, which produced armoires and other domestic products.[112] As a pictorial analogue to the company's product, Le

[111] Tecton, Architects, "Highpoint Number Two," 176.

[112] *L'Esprit Nouveau*, nos. 17–20 (1924) (reprint, New York: Da Capo Press, 1969). There are no page numbers in the journal, which was published in Paris between 1920 and 1925.

Corbusier used the modern two-story building depicted in the section-perspective composite, along with accompanying text, to promote standardization in architecture. He juxtaposed antiquated construction and furniture on the lower floor with modern counterparts on the upper floor. Four blown-up details of wall sections were fitted into the center of the building section. Cullen used similar pictorial techniques, but made distinct choices to explain Tecton's distinct message—a balanced social-functional architecture—and to reach a wider audience. He applied section perspective, instead, only to portions of Highpoint II for larger images that could accommodate people and the appropriate furniture, and to better show details of various solutions; he changed the rigid section cuts into irregular "wavy" lines to make the cut explicit to laypeople; he appended familiar symbols such as arrows and dashed lines to indicate functions. Like Le Corbusier, however, he used different angles, scales, and viewing distances for different rooms, alternating between close-ups of complex details and wide-angle shots. He added detailed vignettes of mechanical apparatuses alongside the section, and then organized the "pieces" into an orderly (yet relaxed) grid composition, with logical adjacencies. In essence, Cullen did not simply trace or cut-and-paste Le Corbusier's image. Instead, he applied the techniques selectively, mixing them with cartoon elements, and then massaged them together to create a new composite. Cullen thus effectively transforms Le Corbusier's more technical cut through the building into a complete "theatrical production," a cross between a stage set and a dollhouse. Like actors in a theater, the human characters pose and face us, at least partly, as they demonstrate the way the building functions and feels. They are reminiscent of the figures in the electricity poster Cullen created at about the same time.

Similar filmic and theatrical pictorial devices, with lesser density for even greater legibility and wider audience appeal, appear in a series of fifteen panels for the Finsbury Health

Center public exhibition in 1938. Here, too, it is impossible to know how fully Cullen was involved in the project—noticeable variations of line quality and composition density suggest multiple illustrators. But his trademark cartoon characters and handwriting indicated that he played a role in most of the panels.[113] [Figure 2.24] Each panel acts as a storyboard and displays a single physical or affective design element through multiple views and scales. Each merges technical architectural drawing techniques—section, axon, and construction details (there are no plans)—with a delectable perspective, or cutaway technique, to unravel hidden spatial and functional concepts.[114] Many of the drawings also combine cinematic techniques—shifting viewing angles, close-ups, zoom-outs, text insets, and architectural signs and symbols—along with cartoon figuration. Construction details were drawn as blown-up extensions of the main perspective or as pullouts linked to their place in the large image, as in cartoons. All of these elements make the drawings utterly engaging.

This casual graphic treatment given to complicated technical, and intangible empirical, architectural considerations perfectly fit the national publicity venue for which the panels were intended. Titled "Getting It Across to the Layman," the panels responded to broad public interest in the project. They served as both explanatory guide for the building and promotional tool for modern architecture—especially social services—and ultimately met with great success. As the Lubetkin scholar John Allan explained, the health center—and its panels—became a teaching

[113] Tecton had a few highly qualified illustrators, and Lubetkin was known to initiate competitions between his assistants and select the winner himself. Gosling, *Gordon Cullen: Visions of Urban Design*, 14.

[114] The cutaway technique that Tecton famously employed in Finsbury both to reveal the unseen and to explain the mechanics of the building was seen earlier in *l'Esprit Nouveau*. Le Corbusier, in turn, might have been inspired by Piranesi's "Carceri" series and Auguste Choisy's "axonometrics," as well as by the modern film director Sergei Eisenstein. Sergei M. Eisenstein, "Montage and Architecture," trans. Michael Glenny, intro. by Yve-Alan Bois, *Assemblage* 10 (December 1989): 110–31.

vehicle to change both social attitudes and social services.[115] Cullen was working as part a team on these projects, and while he may not have been responsible for all the techniques that made the work a public success, his primary engagement in Tecton's publicity drawings for *The Review* suggest he had a predominant role in their development.

The drawings of the Finsbury Health Center featured in *The Review*'s January 1939 issue included many of the techniques seen in their public counterparts.[116] In addition, they used more mechanical lines and technical information, and involved complex photomontage compositions. [Figure 2.25] Several of these professional images, of course, displayed strong evidence of Cullen's hand, and featured distinct techniques that persist in his future work. The section-perspective composite of three floors in the construction drawing titled "Wing Unit" replaced the drawing with a photograph of a room's interior on the upper floor, while exposing the infrastructure and construction inside the walls and floors through line drawing. Moreover, Cullen's cartoon characters perform on each floor, demonstrating its function, as they animate an otherwise professional construction drawing.

The same photograph—though in a larger version—is also used repeatedly in other drawings, as in each case white lines and notations are employed atop the photograph to reveal different infrastructural and spatial features. [see Figure 2.25] The photos establish the "hardware," or the rigid structure, while the drawing and text describe the "software"—the flexible elements and the effects of finishes of built forms. Each medium constructs an independent geometric layer. In drawings illustrating the lecture hall at the Centre Block, a photographic fragment extends into line drawing in a manner that, by that period, had become

[115] Allan, *Berthold Lubetkin*, 334.

[116] Tecton, Architects, "Health Center for the Borough of Finsbury," *Architectural Review* 85, no. 504 (January 1939): 5–22.

Cullen's specialty in the magazine—photomontage and photoplastic. [Figure 2.26] Although Cullen neither invented these techniques nor was the first to introduce them in architectural print media, his impact was unprecedented. The photo-drawing collage enabled him to blur the boundaries between high and low art genres, as had the Cubists who invented collage around the turn of the twentieth century.[117] Cullen changed not only the way that modern architecture was featured in *The Review* and beyond but also the way that it was produced and consumed. Tecton's stimulating environment yielded many of the devices that Cullen combined in new ways, calibrating them to create both an imprint on architectural representation and an alternative to modern architecture, one that placed architecture in human experience.

Photomontage and the Deconstruction of Modern Architecture

The replacement of the drawing made of proper lines with the photomontage in the diagrammatic section of the Wing Unit in the Finsbury Health Center presents an alternative to the technical cross-section—the nuts and bolts of architecture. It creates a more widely understood image without compromising complex technical information. It drives home to architecture the playfulness of cartoons, the seduction of advertising, the drama of theater, and, as importantly, the versatility of film, in the search for ways in which optic becomes haptic and visual space becomes sensorial, lived space. This mixed media technique bridges several opposing realms: specialized and general, realistic and abstract, built space and concieved space, camera and mind. And it is the camera, especially, that opened for Cullen a new way of seeing the world. It shaped the way he viewed space, and offered him an opening to express his interest in the architecture of sensation.

[117] See Matthew Armstrong, "High & Low: Modern Art & Popular Culture: Searching High and Low," *MoMA* 2, no. 6 (Autumn 1990): 4–8, 16–17.

The photograph, mediated of course by cameras, introduced a new conception of the world that, according to Colomina, "disassociate[d] itself from a classical and humanist episteme," and thereby from its counterpart, the perspective drawing. Photography, unlike the eye, is not a faithful reproduction of reality. "[It] presupposes a new spatial model in which the interior and exterior (of the viewer) are no longer clear-cut divisions."[118] Photography thus blurs distinctions between subject and object. Again, the contrast between Le Corbusier and Cullen proves instructive. In his reappropriation of the photograph, Le Corbusier changed his conception of space with the horizontal window, thereby upsetting the traditional framing of the photograph. But while photography enabled Le Corbusier to place the observer "inside" his designed interior space, with a ceiling above and a panoramic landscape view bound by horizontal top and bottom wall lines in front, photography took Cullen one step further. He eschewed all framing devices. Breaking free from architectural walls, he moved the observer freely between inside and outside. His appropriation of the photograph reframed architecture anew, ridding it of the walls that divided interior from exterior. It was a new understanding of architecture in exterior terms and of landscape in interior terms, akin to the effects of film. This spatial conception would later make Cullen the eminent producer of a postwar urbanism that would stand against modernist construction, siding with a full-fledged consumer economy.

Though Cullen began using the photomontage techniques extensively when he joined Tecton, where Lubetkin was familiar with it, the tradition of photomontage was hardly novel. Drawing inspiration from Russian Constructivism, Lubetkin had used photomontage in 1930 to illustrate the interior of the Harari House in Hapstead (unrealized), where he collaged photographs of domestic furniture and ornaments with an interior drawing of the residence.

[118] Colomina, *Privacy and Publicity*, 82.

Beginning with its representation of the T.B. Clinic in 1932, Lubetkin's Tecton combined photos and drawings into a seamless picture, and then copied or photographed them for further reproduction. In both cases, the photo-drawing collage introduced realism into the drawing itself, making the image more appealing, enabling clients and readers alike to visualize architectural space. After the First World War, El Lissitzky and László Moholy-Nagy, like earlier constructivists, had turned to photographic art representations in search of the integration of art, architecture, and industrial production. Moholy-Nagy, who had mastered a range of new photo art—photography, photograms, photomontages—and who was credited specifically with the invention of the photoplastic, had used this technique to create unambiguous, and somewhat surrealist, compositions. In his 1926 series "Between Heaven and Earth," Moholy-Nagy's thinly penciled lines linked the photographic motifs into spatial patterns, thereby giving depth and meaning to the work. He later applied the photomontage technique to architecture, introducing it to the readers of *The Review*, perhaps for the first time, in July 1936.[119] [Figure 2.27] In this special issue on Brighton Beach, for which he served as guest art editor, Moholy-Nagy included a photograph of the completed Bexhill Pavilion, joined with a line drawing that showed the future expansion of a circular bathing pool and deck by the architects Mendelsohn and Chermayeff. This landscape photomontage, like other innovative graphic maneuvers that Moholo-Nagy introduced in this issue, was influential largely because it produced an intersection of avant-garde art and architecture trends that otherwise opposed each other. The flurry of

[119] Le Corbusier had already used the technique in the 1920s. We see it in *Oeuvre Complète de 1910–1929* (Zurich: H. Girsberger, 1937), 98, in a drawing for the villa apartments that he showed in Pavilion L'Esprit Nouveau (1925).

photoplastics and photomontages that showed up later in Cullen's work, as well as in the works of others, attests to their influence.[120]

In February 1937, *The Review*'s monthly feature "Current Architecture" was illustrated with photomontages for the first time. Though Cullen, again, is not credited, the style and idiom of the drawings—especially the human character and chairs in the interior figure and the plants the tree canopy in the exterior—strongly suggest his hand. The essay featured Lubetkin and Tecton's "Bungalows at Whipsnade" and included—in addition to several photographs and the traditional plans and sections—two photomontages.[121] [Figure 2.28] The architectural photomontages presented greater analytical and pictorial potency than their traditional counterparts. Significantly, they reintroduced perspective together with the human viewpoint into architecture. The Bungalow feature marked a turning point in the magazine, from a publication that catered primarily to professionals with technical knowledge to one that appealed to anyone interested in architecture.

The two photographs, taken at eye level, were integrated into larger perspective drawings. In the exterior photo of the building, Cullen simply extended the building lines beyond the photographic frame, and incorporated some landscape that completed the parts of the scene that the photo frame left out. By contrast, the interior photo, whose view looked down on the tapering corridor, was carefully cropped and inserted into a larger line drawing of the interior space. In both cases, the photograph imparted a realistic view with which the viewer was most likely familiar.

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[120] Cullen's cover design for the October 1943 issue of *The Review* is perhaps one of the most striking montages, bearing great similarity to Moholy-Nagy's artwork *New Museum* (1927).

[121] Lubetkin and Tecton, "Bungalows at Whipsnade," *Architectural Review* 81, no. 481 (February 1937): 62–63.

Cullen's photomontages surpassed both the human view and the camera view. It transcended the limits of human vision—broadening the cone of vision and thereby the context, and making visible hidden structural and physical details. It also transcended two main shortcomings of the photograph: the limiting frame and detachment from the viewer. By enlarging the frame, Cullen extended the space forward to include the observer and extended the sides to widen the view. He created a seamless shift from photograph to drawing through the particular selection of photographic views and angles that were extended into the drawing. Yet he did not attempt to hide the contrast between the two forms of media. Rather, the distinction between line drawing and photographic image makes explicit the artificiality of the view, even when that view involved landscape. The technique might have resonated particularly with modernist architects, but the aesthetics could be appreciated by anyone. For Cullen, the realism of photography entailed more than empirical evidence and a new aesthetic. It also located the image in popular culture, where photography became prevalent through photojournalism, photo books, and especially TV and film. Photography, then, enters Cullen's work through its popularity.

From July 1937 through January 1940, Cullen executed dozens of photomontages in the "Current Architecture" feature for projects by Tecton, F. R. S. Yorke, Marcel Breuer, Serge Chermayeff, Denys Lasdun, Wells Coates, Frederick Gibberd, Walter Gropius, and Maxwell Fry, among others. One photomontage that Cullen included in his portfolio is a page spread from Lasdun's March 1938 feature, "House in Newton Road, Paddington." [Figure 2.29] Cullen used ink lines to extend the living room sliding window, shown in a photograph taken by Alfred Cracknell, with an architectural section to show its internal structure. The central figure in the

page, a man tending a window box, added no proper architectural information, except for displaying architecture within human experience.

Cullen also published photoplastics, five of which are now part of his portfolio, made of photographic fragments and connected by pencil lines in a monthly *Review* feature, "Decoration Supplement."[122] These images privilege free association using abstract composition instead of legible perspective. [Figure 2.30] Cullen was partial to the practice of assemblage. And, like Nash and his surrealist circle, Cullen saw the photograph, a visual snapshot of reality, as equivalent to the found object. He therefore used photographic fragments as raw material for the construction of assemblages that encouraged free associations.[123] The montage mode fit Cullen's state of mind. Combining photographic motifs with line drawing, he could produce a new mosaic of reality and new meanings that participated in the experiences and products of modernity. These experiences, as the architectural theorist Stan Allen argues, are "mass media images, the disjunctive experience of the city, the anonymity of the crow, [and] the impersonal products of the machine."[124] From Cullen's viewpoint, montage operations charged an image with what he called "frisson" and "tremor" (and later on mostly referred to as "drama").[125] The photomontages were far more popular and persistent in the magazine than the photoplastics, especially as *The Review* catered to a growing consumer market and expanded its penchant for landscape.

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[122] The three photoplastics were published in the "Decoration Supplement." One appeared in "Modern Period Character Mania," in January 1938, and two in "Decoration without Limitation," in February 1938.

[123] On the restorative possibility of the fragment in architecture, see Dalibor Vesely, "Architecture and the Ambiguity of the Fragment," in *The Idea of the City*, ed. Robin Middleton (London: Architectural Association, 1996), 108.

[124] Stan Allen, "Drawings," in his *Practice; Architecture, Technique and Representation* (New York: Routledge, 2000), 27.

[125] Gordon Cullen, personal archive, #375.

Drawing the Modern Landscape

With its eye-level perspective, a long-established landscape representation, and its panoramic drawing supplement, the photomontage was a natural fit for landscape representation. When, in 1938, Cullen began engaging landscape as a subject in and of itself, instead of as a background for a building, he was ready to move landscape representation from its English romantic phase to the modern age. As Cullen moved freely between interior and exterior, his treatment of architecture and landscape fused. So, when he turned to integrate architecture and landscape by embedding a structure in an existing landscape, the landscape photograph and drawing composite came in handy. However, as in his architectural work, Cullen insisted on a distinction between the media. In contrast to the long tradition in landscape that privileged complete deception in an effort to disguise the interruption of the "natural" view, he did not let the landscape photograph completely subjugate the constructed drawing and thus suppress the artificiality of the operation. But he also created a product that diverged from the architectural photomontage, in which clear effort was made to show the seams of the two media. Cullen created only a few landscape photomontages in the 1930s, mostly for the modern landscape architect Christopher Tunnard's *Review* essay, one of which is included in his portfolio. They demonstrate his effort to preserve a considerable measure of artificiality.[126]

The photomontage in his portfolio shows a proposed restaurant, part of Tunnard's redevelopment proposal for Claremont, Surrey, drawn and neatly inserted into a photograph of the proposed site of a landscape by a lake. [Figure 2.31] The pencil line drawing brings out the features of the building, contrasting it with the photographic realism of the landscape view.

[126] It was first published in *The Review* and later in a book. Christopher Tunnard, "The Case for the Common Garden," *Architectural Review* 84, no. 500 (September 1938): 109–16; Christopher Tunnard, *Gardens in the Modern Landscape* (London: Architectural Press, 1938), 143–52.

Cullen then pasted readymade photographic images of three young women, dressed in casual summer clothes, walking along the path leading to the building. The women's ambiguous postures likewise were intended to render the drawing "unnatural" for viewers, and the image as constructed and artificial. He carefully drew their shadows on the grid pattern of the white path. Shown from behind, an atypical move on Cullen's part, one of the women holds her hands to her head, a gesture that may imply astonishment, perhaps at seeing the new building suddenly come into view; the other two, in contrast, look down at their shadows, in complete indifference to the sight. The image of the proposed view was paired with the existing view, showing the before-and-after scene. This old-time English traditional representation was available for Cullen to borrow and, at the same time, and for the first time, to revise for the modern condition and aesthetic.

Cullen found in landscape representation a rich source of rhetorical techniques embedded both in the viewer and with the viewer inside a space, which coincided with his own affinities. He did not need to invent persuasive landscape techniques. The less analytical nature of landscape drawing and its tendency to show the "scape" (i.e., view) rather than explain how things work—something that is supposed to be hidden—makes it even today a less professional, more naturalized way of seeing, and thereby appeals to more people.

Furthermore, landscape painting, which in turn bred landscape design representation, has been inseparable from the concept of seduction. As the art historian E. H. Gombrich theorized, the origin of landscape painting in Renaissance-era Italy is linked to the conception of humanism, the art of sensation, and the invention of perspective.[127] Its rise was associated with a theory and a vocabulary that reframed art anew—not as a source of intellect and religious

[127] E. H. Gombrich, *Norm and Form: The Renaissance Theory of Art and the Rise of Landscape*, 3rd ed. (New York: Phaidon 1978), 107-121.

spirituality, but as a source of sensation and pleasure. As such, pleasure and sensation (as well as innocence and idealism) were embedded in landscape by the time of the eighteenth-century Enlightenment, when landscape paintings were translated into 3-D reality through the works of the early English gardeners. This trajectory culminated in Humphry Repton, who conceived of the profession of "landscape gardening," essentially landscape design, and invented its first system of representation. As a precursor to today's Photoshop software, the technique of blending a projected design into existing landscape underscores one of the tenets of picturesque landscape and architecture. Illusion was central to Repton's work. It entailed the creation of scenic deception, of a natural landscape that has always been there.[128] Repton's work and his inventive technique itself, the before-and-after perspective he constructed with a flap overlay on an existing water-colored scene (or, as he called it, "slide"), borrowed from scenic set design and popular optical instruments. [Figure 2.32] Cullen was familiar with Repton's before-and-after scenic technique, as well as his "Red Books," in which Repton bound his design proposal drawings. Cullen's modernization of the technique became endemic to landscape representation (as opposed to architecture, which had little use for it). In contrast to Repton, and as in the Clermont Lake illustration for Tunnard, Cullen's "after" image avoided seamlessly meshing the real and the imagined, the existing and the proposed. Like his treatment of architecture, his work for Tunnard shows that Cullen's landscape treatment is inherently rooted in the makeup of the discipline and its representational traditions, while at the same time made anew.

With little to no prior experience in landscape representation, and despite his lack of education in landscape design and horticulture, Cullen became a trendsetter in landscape design, as he did in architecture. Surpassing other garden design illustrators who worked closely with

[128] Stephen Daniels, introduction to *Humphry Repton: The Red Books for Brandbury and Glenham Hall*, ed. Stephen Daniels (Washington, D.C.: Dumberton Oaks Research Library and Collection, 1994), ix.

Tunnard, he proved himself to be the best for the job of giving form to the English modern garden. When, in 1937, Tunnard was asked by the editor J. M. Richards to write a series of essays on garden design, he gave Cullen, rather than his own draftsman Frank H. Clark, the task of articulating his modern garden theory.[129] Cullen's drawings have since become synonymous with Tunnard's book; in fact, the very first book on modern landscape was composed of Tunnard's *Review* essays on the topic. The influential drawings from the *Gardens in the Modern Landscape*, however, were perspective line drawings, rather than the photomontages, four of which are included in his portfolio.

Seemingly traditional and unassuming, the drawings nonetheless presented the landscape anew. The illustrations depicted proposals for four gardens, all designed by Tunnard for residences that McGrath had designed: the house and garden of St. Ann's Hill, Chertsey (1936–37); the garden at Walton-on-Thames; the house and garden at Gaulby, Leicestershire; and the weekend house at Cobham. The Cobham illustration was also used on the book jacket as an insert inside a photograph, and is included in the portfolio. [Figure 2.33] The views, mostly facing toward the house, are elevated perspectives, raised slightly from the ground—enough to show more of the ground and the surrounding landscape, but not enough to display the totalizing bird's-eye view typical of architecture. Cullen used the photographs of the existing sites that he was given, together with thumbnail plans drawn by Clark (shown below his drawings), to establish the viewer's position and draw the perspectives. The drawings of St. Ann's Hill, which were based on photographs taken from the roof of an existing stable block there, might partly

[129] Cullen illustrated three of Tunnard's seven essays on gardens, in March, April, and May 1938, as well as *Gardens in the Modern Landscape*. Cullen also illustrated another series by Tunnard, "Garden and Landscape," which ran from January 1939 through June 1940.

explain the choice for the elevated position of the perspectives (instead of the eye-level position), which is otherwise rarely seen in his work.[130]

However, Cullen might have chosen to settle on a compromise position between the modern preference of the architectural view, which favored the totalized view of the axon, and the picturesque inclination to privilege the eye-level human viewpoint. As Dorothée Imbert showed, modernist landscape architects such as Garrett Eckbo and Dan Kiley took on the axon for their drawings, following modern architects such as Theo van Doesburg and Le Corbusier. However, the early European architects Gabriel Guevrekian and Jean Canneel-Claes, who inspired Tunnard and whose gardens photos were included in the book, photographed their gardens from balconies. [Figure 2.34] Cullen rejected the axon—a rational, accurate, and more scientific representation—instead preferring the elevated perspective, or "balcony view." This position enabled the viewer to see more of the garden, and its relationship to the house and broader landscape, as the book's title, *Gardens in the Modern Landscape*, later confirmed.

Because Cullen worked mostly with architects, he normally worked from plan and site photographs to arrive at the perspective, but he was also adept at doing the reverse: his notebook and archive sketches suggest as much. He exhibits a striking ease in moving between plan, section, perspective, and details, as well as an ability to shift from two to three dimensions. Unlike Repton and his more famous predecessor, Capability Brown, whose garden designs were conceived with the perspective and advanced to the plan, the modernist garden was designed through a plan and, just as importantly, with the aid of the photograph. Its pictorial view was therefore equally driven by plan and by camera.

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[130] Cullen did not visit St. Ann's Hill until 1989. See Jacques and Woudstra, *Landscape Modernism Renounced*, 32.

Compared to his architectural drawings, Cullen's landscape drawings include more textures that distinguish the various plants, but do not disturb the relative abstraction and flatness of the drawing. Again, strategic introduction of cartoon figuration and vivid "accessories"—animals, plants, and decoration—enliven the drawings and convey both function and atmosphere, which survive modernist reductionism. The people in the drawings appear relaxed, going about their everyday activities.

Cullen's artificial treatment of landscape without concession to naturalism was most explicit in his plant drawings for Tunnard's "Garden and Landscape" series, which ran in *The Review* between January 1939 and January 1940; it was later reprinted in Tunnard's revised book edition, in a planting design section titled "The Planter's Eye."[131] [Figure 2.35] His drawings, for which he claimed he had glimpsed only nurserymen's windows and not their gardens, could be as instantly identified as carefully modeled and accurately colored nineteenth-century botanical specimen drawings. Yet they were utterly modern in their flat, basic, formal composition. In fact, they were so successful that he became a sought-out illustrator of plants, and earned commissions to illustrate several plant and gardening essays and books.

Cullen's preferences for the directness of sensorial values over the illusionistic rendering of nature and his emphasis on objective visuals fundamental for expressing a particular concept surface again in his work at *The Review* after the war. Cullen thus joined many other modernists who viewed as paramount being free from the imitation of nature, and rejected symbolic color references and modeling or shading. This impulse enabled the fusion of landscape and architecture, and later on landscape and urbanism. As David Jacques and Jan Woudstra argued, *Gardens in the Modern Landscape* was "the first book in English which crossed the boundary

[131] Tunnard, *Gardens in the Modern Landscape* (1948), 107. One of the drawings from February 1939 appears in Cullen's portfolio. Jacques and Woudstra, *Landscape Modernism Renounced*, 47.

from traditional garden architecture and made links with Modernist architecture."[132] Cullen's landscape drawings therefore worked across disciplines, and were considered pivotal for many leading landscape architects and architects during the postwar period. By drawing the modern garden, Cullen did not merely visualize Tunnard's ideas but shaped a new way of seeing, and therefore designing, modern gardens.

Conclusion

Cullen's early, keen interest in landscape, already spelled out in his 1934 journal (and quoted earlier), not only would make him the finest executor of Townscape but also rooted his drawings in a visual-experiential field of landscape with which most people can connect. It also explains why, beginning in his early career, the perspective—rather than the plan or section—was Cullen's predominant mode of representation. Cullen took the eighteenth-century landscape perspective, which had been rejected by modern architects for its seduction, illusion, and naturalism, and reformed it for modern use. Cullen's pictorial devices and rhetorical strategies during the 1930s were a prelude to his production of a new understanding of the urban. Cullen packaged and sold his "merchandise," according to the requisites of the new economy and, in Hamilton's words, did so with the skill and imagination needed "to create the image that sells and the wit to respond humanly to [his] own achievements."[133]

Of course, Cullen was not alone in pushing the architectural profession closer to the mainstream consumer. Other contemporaneous examples include the draftsman Derek Oxley,

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[132] Jacques and Woudstra, *Landscape Modernism Renounced*, 2009, 1. According to Jacques and Woudstra those who specifically point to the book as a major inspiration include the landscape architect Lawrence Halprin and the environmental planner Ian McHarg. Jacques and Woudstra, *Landscape Modernism Renounced*, 2009, 235-36. Also see Lance Neckar, "Christopher Tunnard: The Garden in the Modern Landscape," in *Modern Landscape Architecture: A Critical Review*, ed. Marc Treib (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1993), 144–58.

[133] Hamilton, "Persuading Image," 1960, 29.

who worked together with Cullen in McGrath's office; the perspective artist Raymond Myerscough-Walker, who was a colleague at Tecton; and the illustrator Donald Dewar Mills, who collaborated with Cullen on a number of projects. Equally influential in the postwar period was Eric de Maré, an architectural photographer and colleague at *The Review*, and also a close friend. Other unsung illustrators and photographers worked in ways similar to Cullen during this period, but few possessed Cullen's unbridled and apt impulses.

Figure 2.1. *Left to right*: newsprint advertising, Times Furnishing, ca. 1938; poster, "Design in the Garden Exhibition," Gordon Russell Galleries, 1938; display panels, Women's Health Fair, Olympia, 1938; miniature model, Carter and Company, ca. 1939. From Gordon Cullen, personal archive, portfolio exhibits, 1937–39.

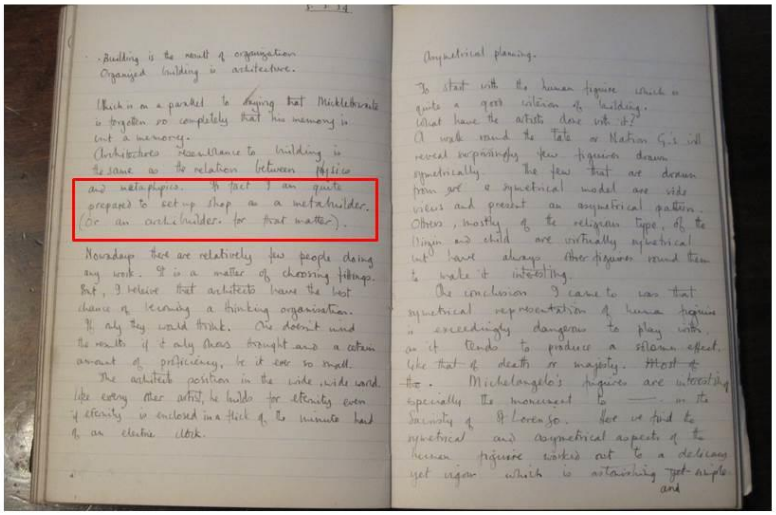

Figure 2.2. Journal entry, March 5, 1934. From Gordon Cullen, personal archive.

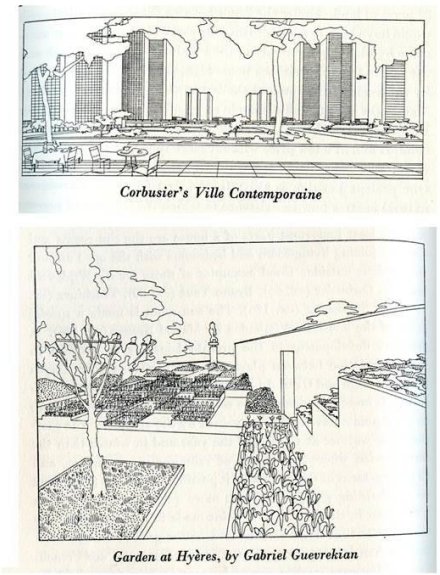

Figure 2.3. Le Corbusier, line drawing, *Ville Contemporaine*, 1922 (*top*); Gordon Cullen, line drawing, *Garden at Hyères* by Gabriel Guevrekian, 1934 (*bottom*). From Raymond McGrath, *Twentieth Century Houses*.

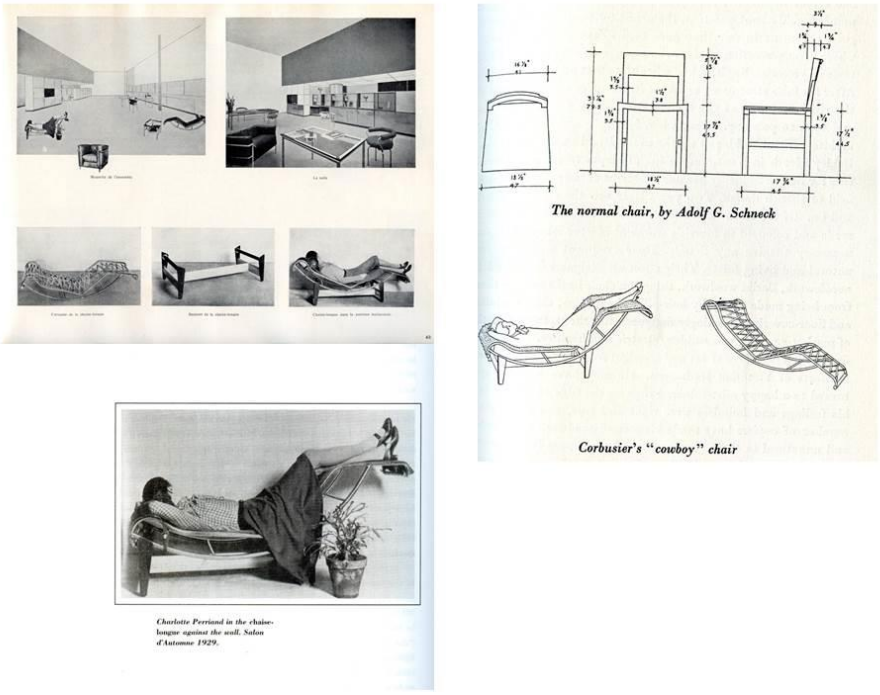

Figure 2.4. Le Corbusier's chaise lounge: photograph, chaise-longue against the wall. Salon d'Automne 1929. From Beatriz Colomina, *Privacy and Publicity* (*lower left*); photomontage, in his *Oeuvre Complete, 1929–1943* (*upper left*); and Gordon Cullen, line drawing after photograph, in Raymond McGrath, *Twentieth-Century Houses* (*right*).

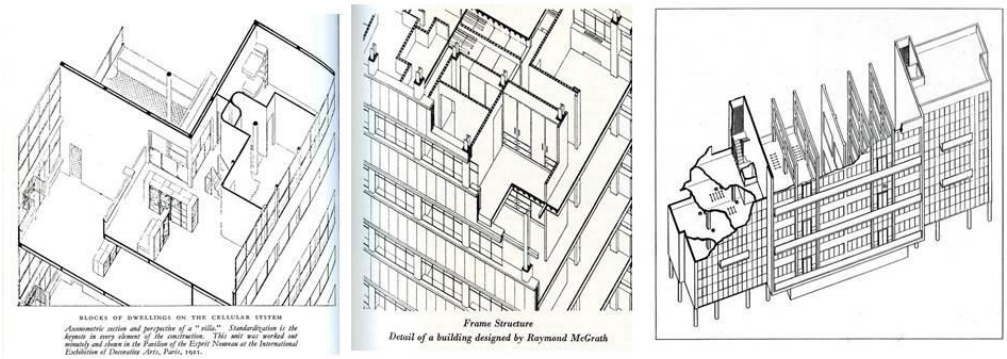

Figure 2.5. Cutaway axonometrics. Le Corbusier, 1925, in his *The City of To-Morrow* (*left*); Raymond McGrath, in his *Twentieth Century Houses*, ca.1933 (*middle*); and Tecton, illustration, *Architectural Review,* October1938 (*right*).

Figure 2.6. Gordon Cullen, page spread of sketches of the floating entry canopy, in "Highpoint Number Two," *Architectural Review,* October 1938. From Cullen's personal archive.

Figure 2.7. Gordon Cullen, cover of *Architectural Review*, June 1937 (*right*); sketch and print, "Marcel Breuer and Moholy-Nagy leave for America," 1938 (*left*). From Cullen's personal archive.

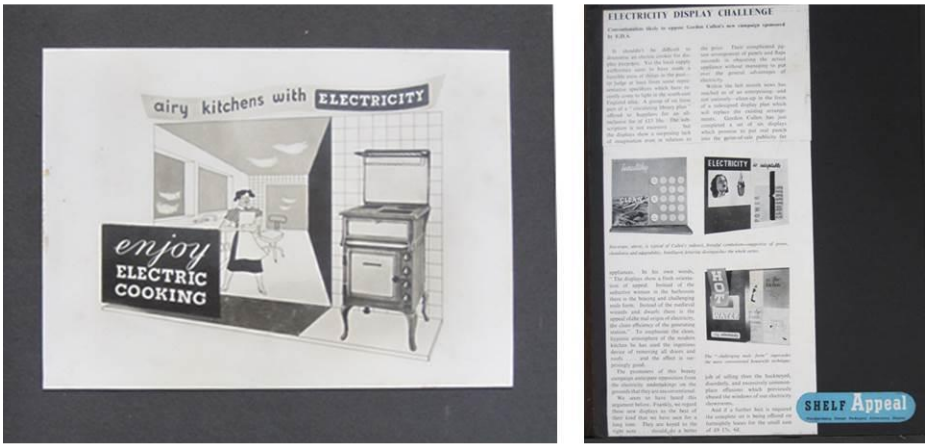

Figure 2.8. Gordon Cullen, promotional posters: "Electricity," for Electrical Development Association, ca. 1938 (*left*); clip of magazine review essay of poster display, Health and Beauty Woman's Fair, Olympia, in *Shelf Appeal*, ca. 1938 (*right*). Portfolio exhibits from Cullen's personal archive.

Figure 2.9. Gordon Cullen, cover of *Shelf Appeal*, July 1939. Portfolio exhibit from Cullen's personal archive.

Figure 2.10. Gordon Cullen, scrap book and magazine clippings, 1930s. From Cullen's personal archive.

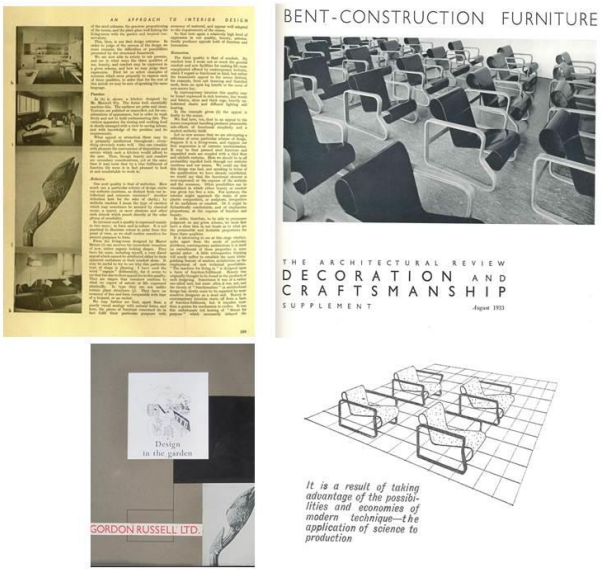

Figure 2.11. Gordon Cullen, two examples of reuse of a single image. Page spread, *Architectural Review*, December 1937 (*upper left*); poster, "Design in the Garden," Gordon Russell Ltd., 1938 (*lower left*, from Cullen's personal archive); page spread, in *Architectural Review*, August 1933 (*upper right*); illustration, in "Everyday Things," *Architectural Review*, December 1935 (*lower right*).

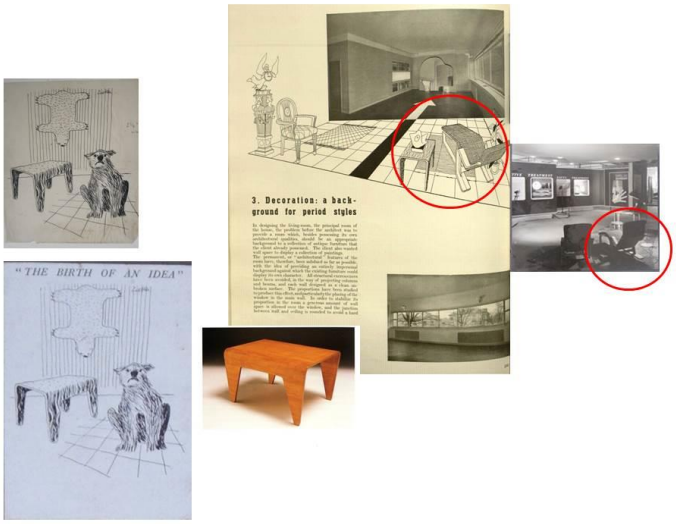

Figure 2.12. Gordon Cullen using images from Marcel Breuer. Isokon dining table, Bentwood Design Museum, 1936 (*lower middle*), original sketch and print of cartoon, "The Birth of an Idea," 1937 (*left*, from personal archive). Breuer's Isokon "Long Chair," 1936 (*right*), photographed in exhibition display, Health and Beauty Woman's Fair, Olympia, ca. 1938 (*right*, from Cullen's personal archive), with photomontage, page spread, in "Decoration Supplement," *Architectural Review*, January 1938 (*upper middle*).

Figure 2.13. Gordon Cullen, "Lubetkin on Tractor," 1940 (*lower right*), with preliminary sketches and newspaper clips, ca. 1940. The sketch was given to Lubetkin and published in David Gosling, *Gordon Cullen: Urban Visions*; other items from Cullen's personal archive.

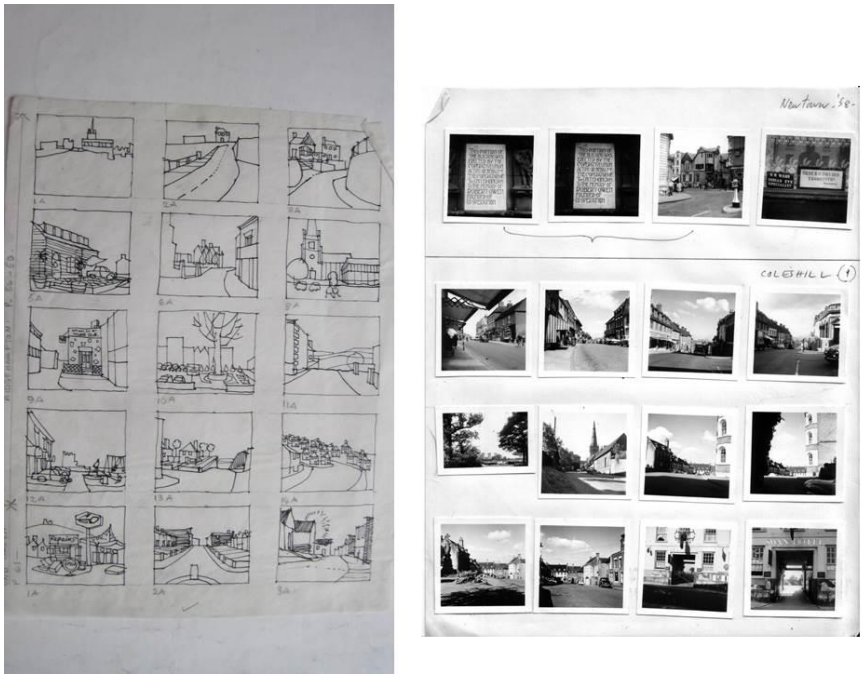

Figure 2.14. Gordon Cullen, sketches of contacts," New Towns, 1958 (*right*), after photo "contacts," ca. 1947 (*left*). From Cullen's personal archive.

Figure 2.15. Gordon Cullen, two unpublished cartoons. MARS exhibition, January 1938 (*left*); RIBA invitation, February 1938 (*right*). From Cullen's personal archive.

Figure 2.16. Gordon Cullen, photograph of panel display, "New Architecture," MARS exhibition, London, January 1938. From portfolio, Cullen's personal archive.

Figure 2.17. Augustus Charles Pugin and Thomas Rowlandson, illustration, "Pantheon Masquerade," in *Ackermann's Microcosm of London*, 1808 (*left*); Thomas Rowlandson, cartoon, "A Table Dhote or French Ordinary in Paris," 1810 (*upper right*), from Cullen's personal archive; Gordon Cullen, photomontage, improvisation on "A Table Dhote" (*lower right*), from Cullen's personal archive.

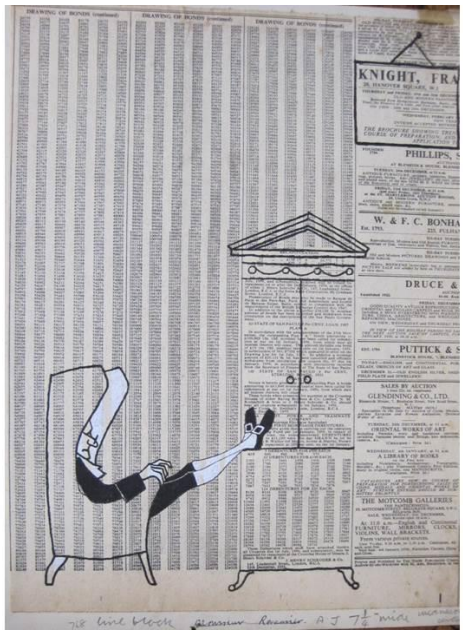

Figure 2.18. Gordon Cullen, cartoon (inspired by the American cartoonist Saul Steinberg), published in *Architect's Journal*, ca. 1950s. From Cullen's personal archive.

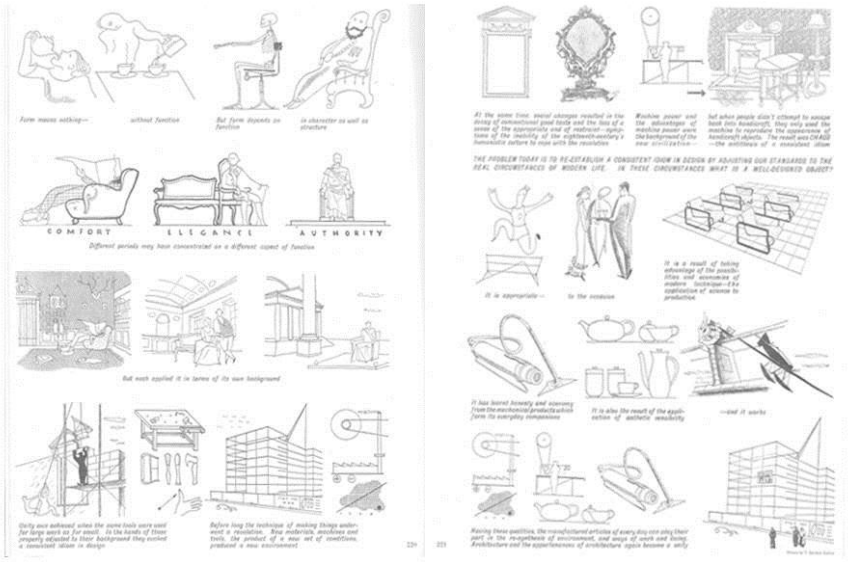

Figure 2.19. Gordon Cullen, double-page spread, from "Everyday Things," *Architectural Review*, December 1935.

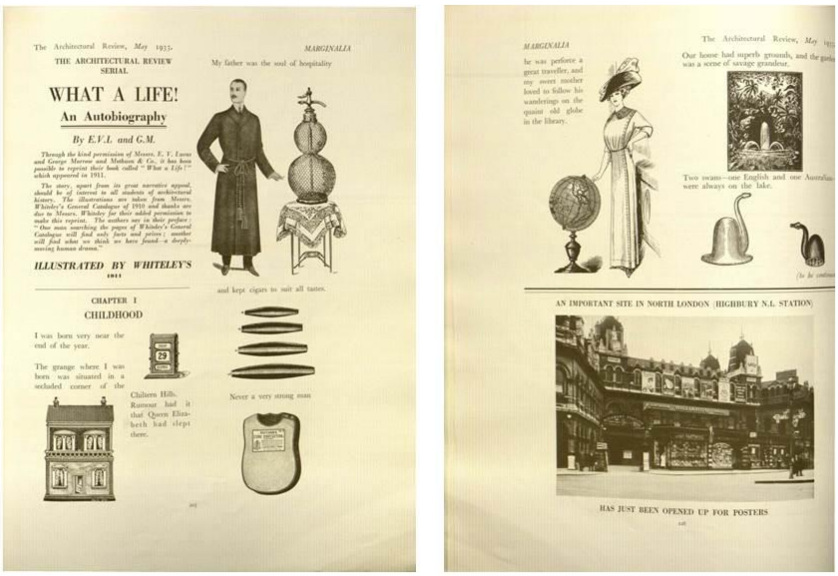

Figure 2.20. E. V. Lucas and George Morrow, cartoons from "What a Life!" 1911, reprinted in *Architectural Review*, February 1933.

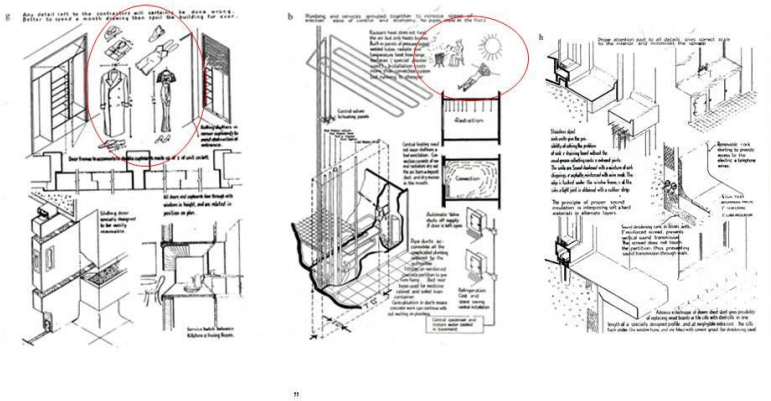

Figure 2.21. Drawings of construction details, page spreads in "Highpoint I," *Architectural Review*, January 1936. The illustrations are uncredited, but the circled images in the left and middle pages are possibly by Cullen.

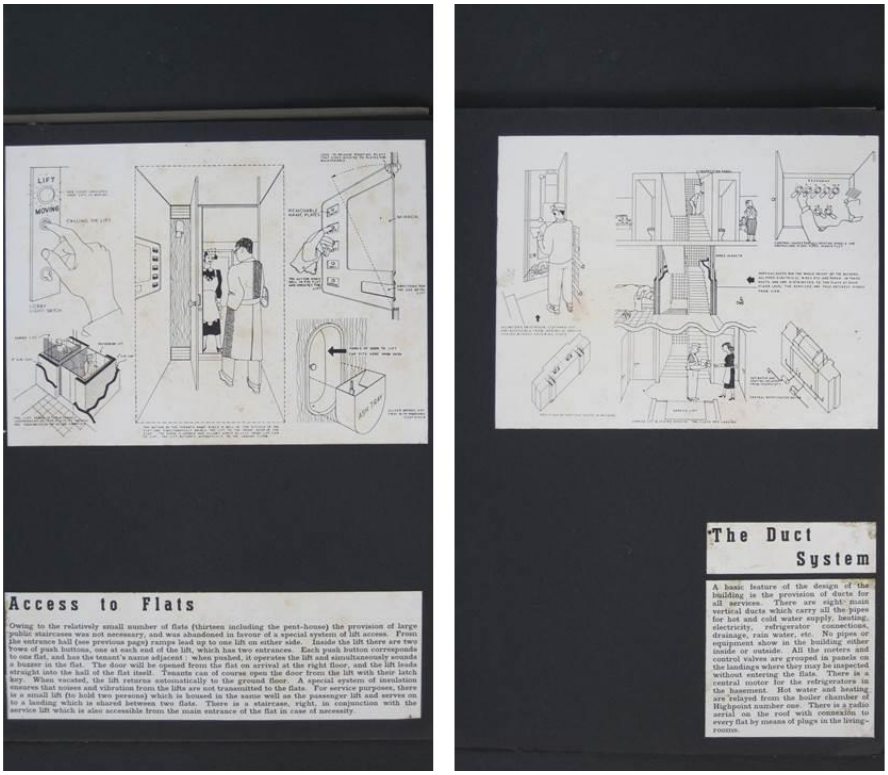

Figure 2.22. Gordon Cullen, illustration prints, in "Highpoint II," by Tecton, *Architectural Review*, October 1938. Portfolio leafs from Cullen's personal archive.

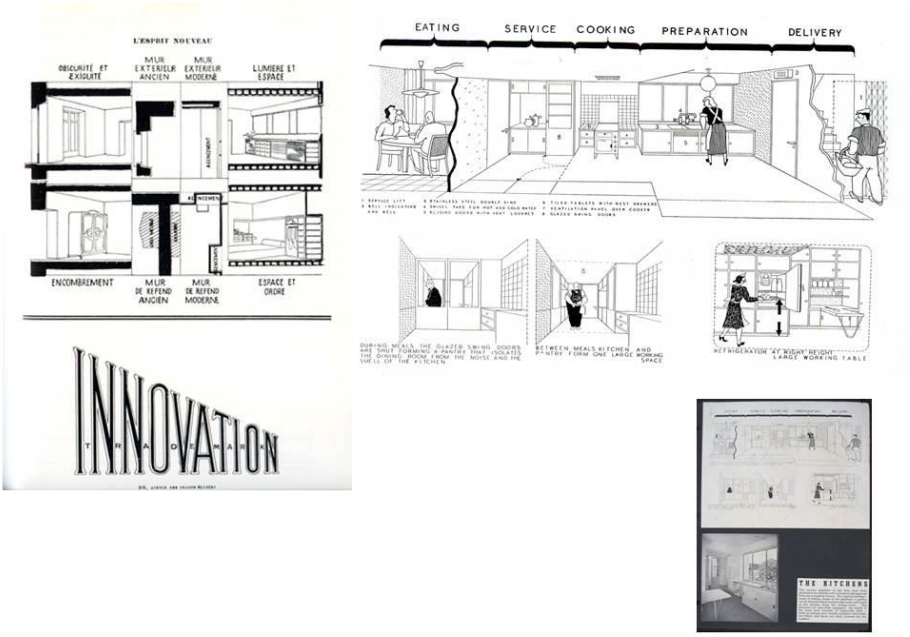

Figure 2.23. Gordon Cullen, illustration of Highpoint II, Tecton, in *Architectural Review*, October 1938 (*upper right*); Cullen, portfolio leaf, from personal archive 1938 (*lower right*); Le Corbusier, advertisement, "Innovation," *L'Esprit Nouveau*, 20, ca. 1924 (*left*).

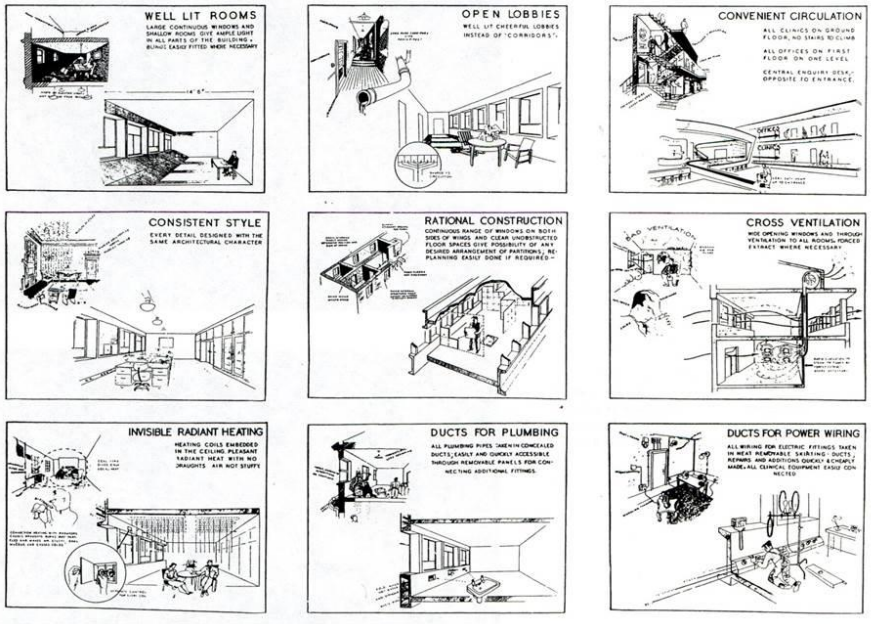

Figure 2.24. Tecton, exhibition boards, *Finsbury Health Center*, 1938, from David Gosling's *Gordon Cullen*. These illustrations are possibly collaborative work with Cullen.

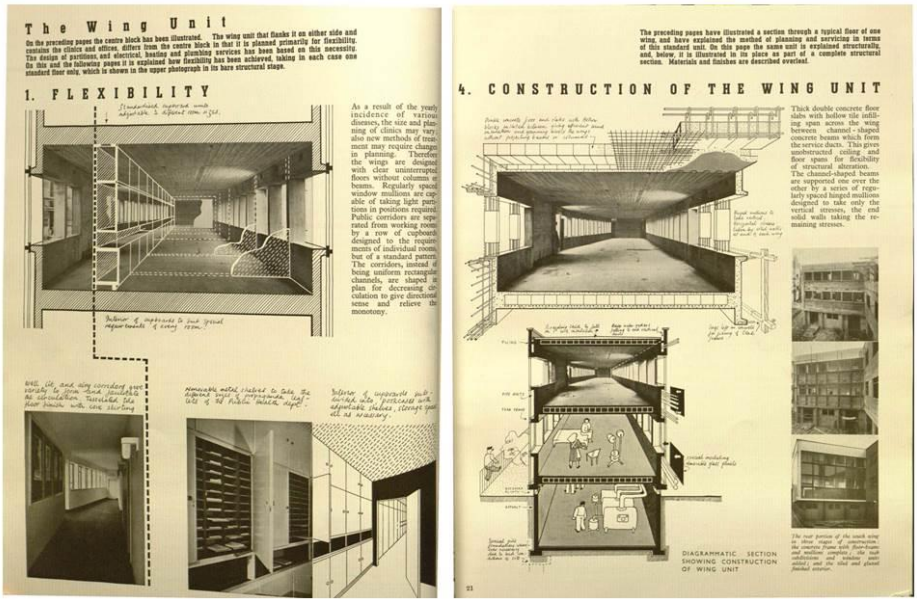

Figure 2.25. Photomontages, two pages spreads, from "Finsbury Health Center," in *Architectural Review*, January 1939 (possibly by Cullen).

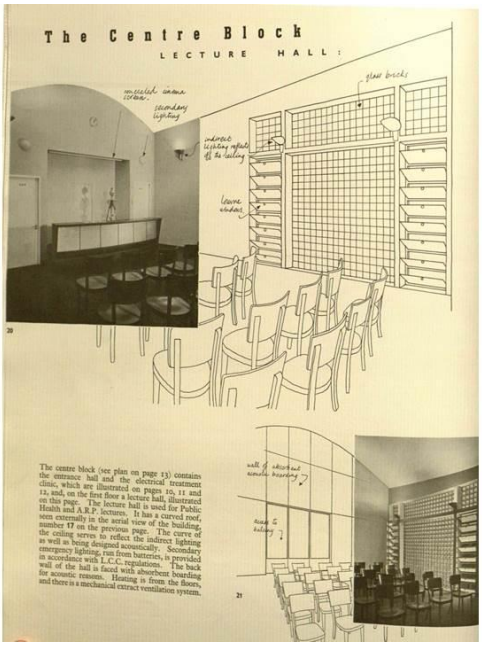

Figure 2.26. Photomontage, page spread, from "Finsbury Health Center," *Architectural Review*, January 1939 (possibly by Cullen).

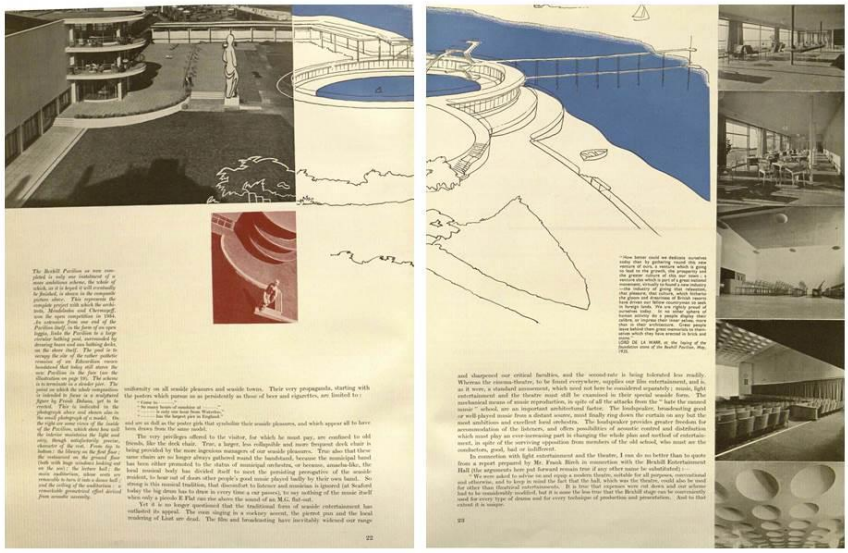

Figure 2.27. László Moholy-Nagy, photomontage, double-page spread of Bexhill Pavilion, Brighton Beach, in *Architectural Review*, July 1936.

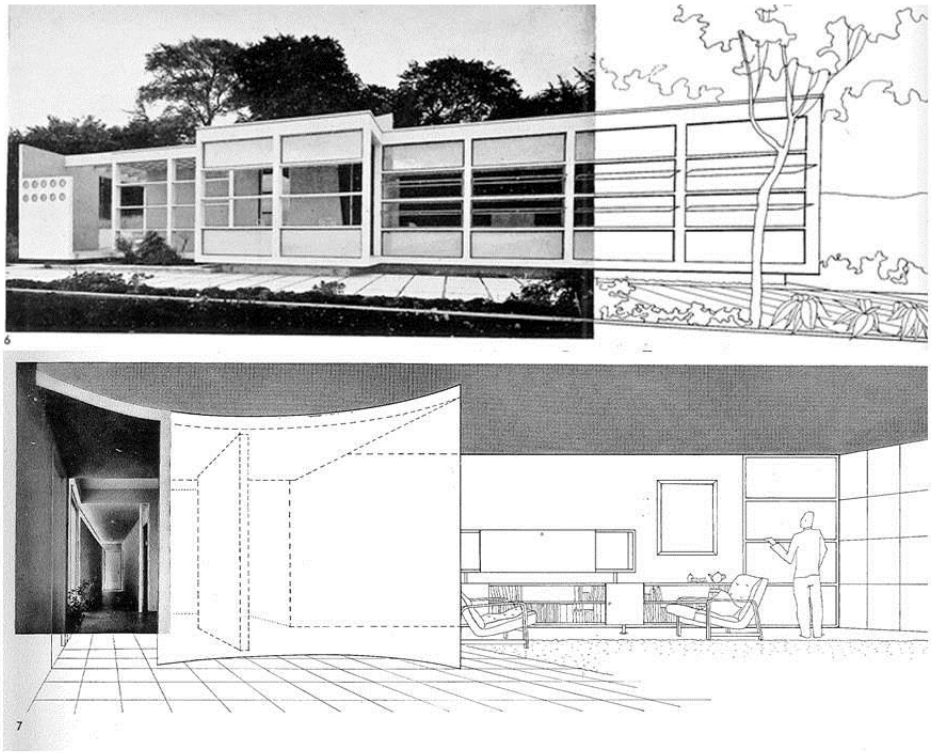

Figure 2.28. Lubetkin and Tecton, two photomontages, in "Bungalows at Whipsnade," *Architectural Review*, February 1936 (possibly by Cullen).

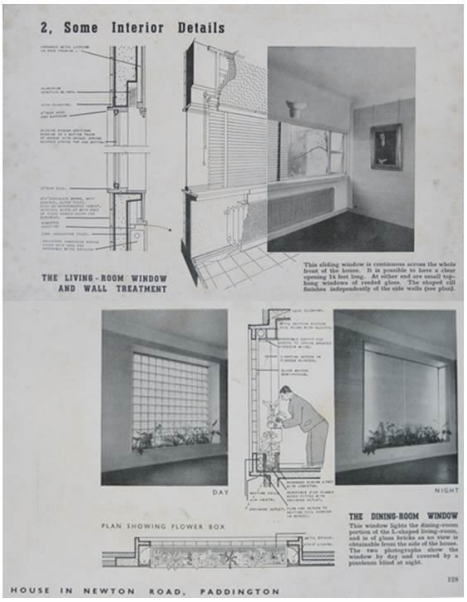

Figure 2.29. Gordon Cullen, page spread from "House in Newton Road, Paddington," by Denys Lasdun, in *Architectural Review*, March 1939. Portfolio leaf, from Cullen's personal archive.

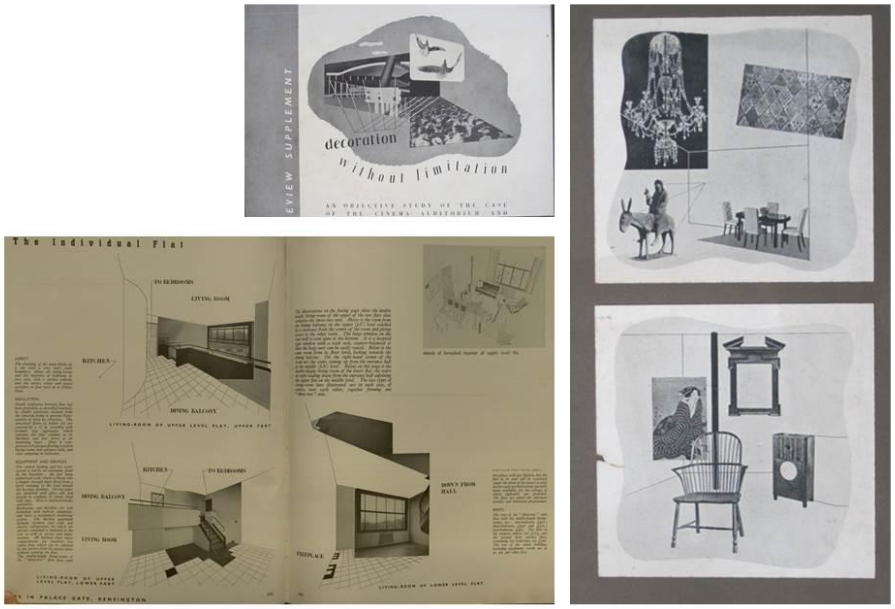

Figure 2.30. Gordon Cullen, photoplastics, in "Decoration Supplement," *Architectural Review*, January 1938 (*top left and right)* and in "Decoration without Limitation," *Architectural Review*, February 1938 (*top left*); Exhibits from portfolio leafs, in Gordon Cullen archive; Double-page spread from "Flat in Palace Gate Kensington," by Wells Coates, *Architectural Review*, March 1939 (*left*). Photoplastics, possibly by Cullen; drawing in top right corner of spread, by Cullen, also included in archive.

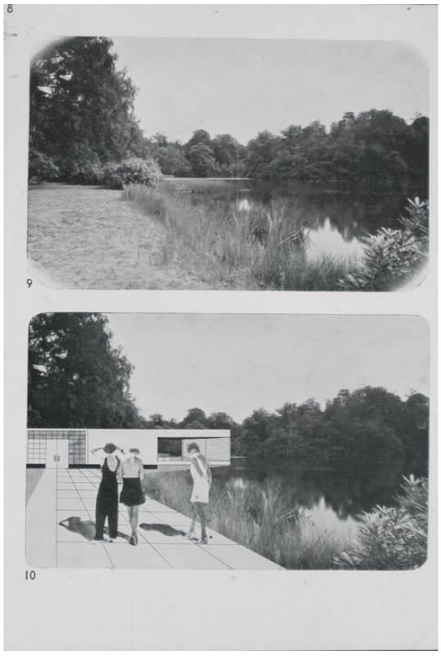

Figure 2.31. Gordon Cullen, photomontage for “The Case for the Common garden,” by Christopher Tunnard, in *Architectural Review*, May 1938. Portfolio leaf, from Cullen’s personal archive.

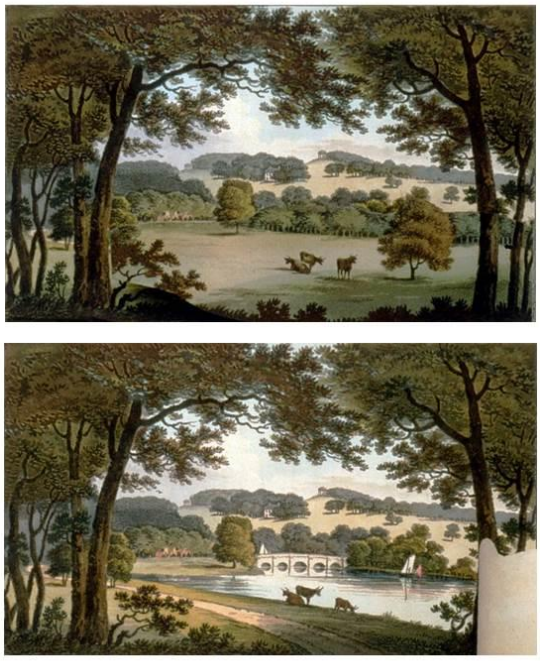

Figure 2.32. Humphry Repton, before-and-after perspectives, 1790s, in his *The Red Books for Brandbury and Glenham Hall*.

Figure 2.33. Gordon Cullen, illustrations for “Gardens in the Modern Landscape,” by Christopher Tunnard, in *Architectural Review*, March and April 1938. Portfolio leaf, from Cullen’s personal archive.

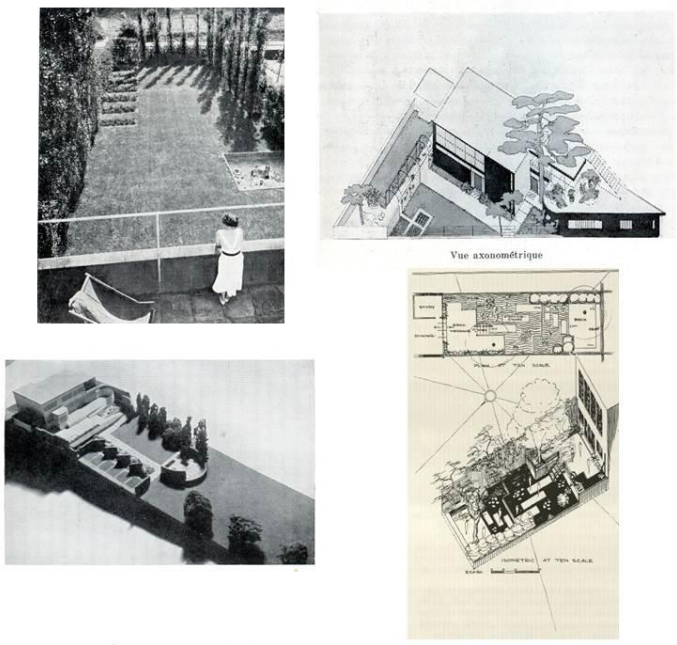

Figure 2.34. Jean Canneel-Claes, photographs, garden (*upper left*) and model of garden at Liedekerk, Belgium, ca. 1930s (*lower left*), from *Garden in the Modern Landscape*, by Christopher Tunnard, 1938; Le Corbusier, axon drawing, “Small Artist’s House at Boulogne,”1926, in his *Oeuvre Complète de 1910–1929* (*upper right*); and Garrett Eckbo, axon drawing, “Small Garden in the City,” *Pencil Points*, September 1937 (*lower right*).

GARDEN AND LANDSCAPE

ARCHITECTS' PLANTS

The plants illustrated are intended as examples of useful structural material and have not been chosen especially for their interest when in flower. Nor are they strictly the features architecturales which M. Correvon, the Swiss plantsman, has taken pains to identify, but are rather a selection from those subjects which in various ways can be employed to contribute to the shape or atmosphere of certain familiar settings. No claim is made for the botanical accuracy of the sketches.

2. Variegated Evergreens

Vinca major elegantissima (golden periwinkle); *Elaeagnus pungens aureo-variegata* (golden oleaster).

Figure 2.35. Gordon Cullen, illustrations, "Variegated Evergreens," in "Garden and Landscape," by Christopher Tunnard, *Architectural Review*, February 1939. Portfolio leaf, from Cullen's personal archive.

CHAPTER 3. MANUFACTURING POSTWAR TOWNSCAPES: IMAGES AND WORDS AMID A SOCIETY OF SPECTACLE

> *In a society of spectacle, the image has become the final form of commodity reification. . . . The spectacle is capital accumulated to the point where it becomes image.* —Guy Debord[134]

When German bombs struck London in November 1940, work was scarce. Cullen jotted down an idea for a series of books of drawings that would provide him "with a vehicle of self-expression."[135] Reflecting on the further possibilities of what he considered to be a highly successful illustration job he had recently finished for the *Kynoch Press Diary and Note Book for 1940*, he wrote:

> There is, of course, no need to always make it a diary, I imagine a series of books appearing perhaps once a year each dealing with some vital facet of the 'seen' world. The Kynoch Press Diary dealt with English Classical architecture very briefly of course, both in drawing and explanatory text[;] remove the diary portion and you will see what I mean. This diary, rather opened my eyes as to the possibilities of *a book of drawings with text*. It was quite easy to *do*, I enjoyed it and I think *there would be quite a good sale* [emphasis added].[136] [Figure 3.1]

This idea of creating a bound volume of drawings with expanded captions, documented in Cullen's journal, would lead to the format of his future publications.

His early notebooks from the 1930s—which display sketchy notes on specific architectural, planning, and cultural topics laid out loosely in book format with title, contents page, headings, and subheadings—could be taken to suggest that he had intended to publish

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[134] Debord, *Society of the Spectacle*, 24.

[135] Gordon Cullen, personal archive, journal, November 5, 1940, #434.

[136] Ibid.

professionally all along. His musings on the Kynoch Press work in 1940, however, indicate a later realization that he could successfully produce and market such work. It also suggests that he consciously came to terms with the complementarity of creativity and marketing.

During the interwar Depression era, Cullen illustrated just about any commission offered to him, promoting professional and commercial ideas and products by leading British modern architects, government offices, and private companies. By the time the war began, despite his having become well known among commercial artists and architects, Cullen still operated in the shadows. To his clients and employers he was a hired hand, the man who anonymously provided images. His innovative representations of a more humanized, and therefore marketable, modern architecture done for practicing architects and the general public had passed largely unnoticed. By the early1940s he had run out of commissions, not merely because the war efforts superseded all other endeavors but also because the bulk of his prewar creations did not bear his name; anonymity kept him in obscurity. Cullen was not recognized as an author.

Cullen was hired at *The Review* shortly after the Second World War, and his arrival coincided with the journal's inauguration of a new editorial policy and campaign—both of which later came to be known as Townscape. He joined *The Review* as a staff illustrator in May 1946, shortly after Townscape was first formulated.[137] In February of 1947, he was promoted to Assistant Editor of art (a title later changed to art Editor). While Cullen conceived of neither the idea nor the methodology of Townscape, he emerged out of *The Review* period as an author in his own right. His body of work finally bore his name—and it was *his* Townscape, not that of his colleagues, that people found most compelling.

[137] Cullen's work had already appeared in *The Review* as early as February of that year.

Townscape as Spectacle

The Townscape campaign by *The Review* was launched as British society was on the brink of entering the age of mass consumption and mass communication (a development that was incubated under the Labour government, and that surged after its fall in 1951). The campaign also coincided with three trends that materialized and converged at that time: a blurring of the boundary between town and countryside, an intensification of visual culture, and a newly realized capacity of mass media (the press and cinema screen, specifically) to turn real time and space into flat images. Underlying these trends was the development of a global political and economic environment. In his seminal book, *The Society of the Spectacle* (1967), the Situationist Guy Debord observed that society during the postwar period had become one of spectacle, in which images replaced the perceptible world. These images ruled over all lived experience, and all that once was directly lived had become mere representation. "The language of the spectacle," Debord argued, "is composed of signs of the dominant organization of production—signs which are at the same time the ultimate end-products of that organization."[138] By this line of thinking, the flood of images in advertising, TV, film, and print media became the chief products ("image-objects," in Debord's terminology) of and the essential tools for mediating social exchange and for instilling in the consumer the urge to buy. This spectacle drove this particular formation. It bolstered the commodity market and spurred all effective desires.

Debord addressed this environment head-on, denouncing the dictatorship of cars, the spread of highways, the destruction of the countryside, the blurring of city and country, and the growth of giant shopping centers.[139] He criticized architecture's response to social needs,

[138] Debord, *Society of the Spectacle*, 13, 15.

[139] Ibid., 123.

blaming the profession for preserving the hegemony of industrialists and capitalists and for developing an "abstract" environment. He further observed that the society of spectacle "preserves the old culture it congealed from, going so far as to recuperate and 'rediffuse' even its negative manifestation," and doing so in a profoundly superficial manner.[140] Twenty-five years later, the cultural critic Fredric Jameson coined terms for similar cultural symptoms of this new phase of global economy (late capitalism): he named them "pastiche" and "simulacrum" (in Baudrillardian terms, the signs of signs).[141] Jameson considered pastiche to be the reemergence of past modern cultural styles.

In its total dependence on images and taste for historicism, *The Review*'s Townscape can be seen as an early expression of the cultural phenomenon described by Debord. It both epitomized the "spectacle" and echoed Debord's criticism of the effects of modern development. It is no surprise that the January 1947 editorial policy of *The Review*, the precursor to the Townscape campaign, argued for "visual re-education" of the public and invited "painters" to serve as these educators.[142] Published at the journal's fiftieth anniversary and titled "The Second Half Century," the editorial manifesto decried negligence in the design of town and countryside. They attributed this negligence to the effects of visual clutter and the erasure of distinct place features introduced by postwar planning, thus sharing Debord's analysis. The editors further

[140] Ibid., 136–37.

[141] Jameson, *Postmodernism*, 58. Jameson in turn borrowed the term from Jean Beaudrillard. See Jean Baudrillard, *Simulations*, trans. Paul Foss, Paul Patton, and Philip Beitchman (New York: Semiotext(e), 1983).

[142] AR editors, "Second Half Century," *Architectural Review* 101, no. 602 (January 1947): 24. The goal of the visual reeducation campaign was to affect bureaucratic effort and public policy in anticipation of urban reconstruction and large-scale planning, known as New Towns, as well as several important Planning Acts. For an extensive account of the AR politics in this period, see Erten, "Shaping 'The Second Half Century,'" 15–76.

claimed that modern-day urban planners and laypeople —not unlike the eighteenth-century English promoters of the aesthetic theory of the picturesque who studied landscape paintings and fashioned their gardens from what they learned—would achieve "salvation" only through visual training. They proposed to usher in a "visual culture" by training people to "see" the environment as they knew it.

Chief editor Hugh de Cronin Hastings's further elaboration of the policy in his December 1949 philosophical treatise (under his pseudonym, I. de Wolfe) made official the label "Townscape" and cemented the role of the image in town planning, while more broadly aligning Townscape with spectacle. He recast picturesque theory with more political, nationalistic undertones, describing it as the English reformist tradition. He called for restoring its economic, social, and especially visual stylistic permissiveness—an eclectic taste of diverse style and period architecture, including decaying Victorian churches, Regency-era civic buildings, and Arts and Crafts bungalows, as well as ubiquitous elements of the environment, such as grain elevators and rustic farmhouses, constructed by anonymous builders. The idea was to preserve traditional buildings alongside their modern counterparts. His exposition was delivered with moral overtones, purportedly celebrating the diverse aesthetics of the "common man" instead of the imposition of elitist modern architecture.

In turning to the past in search of images and in its promotion of rampant stylistic permissiveness, Townscape became synonymous with both pastiche and the spectacle. In its nod to Jameson's "common man," Townscape also represented a collective project of late capitalist society. Like earlier bourgeois aesthetic philosophies, Townscape was meant to "impose its distinct moral ideals with their attendant taste and style through a vast collection of images, a

multitudinous photographic simulacrum."[143] As several scholars rightly argued, by resisting the social development of global mass consumerism and its attendant environmental effects—including suburban expansion, the rise of automobile, and the influence of American and other popular cultures—the editors in effect espoused elitist aesthetics and the conservative positions of the privileged.[144] Such arguments supported Jameson's analysis of postmodern cultural dominants.

Therefore, at the same time that *The Review*'s Townscape aligned itself with key elements of the postmodern consumer economy, including the replacement of the real world with images, most of which belong to the past, and the assumed promotion of the common man, it was misaligned with other elements, notably a total dependence on advanced technology and a consumerist mentality that was largely post-ideological. Despite the fact that *The Review* editors claimed to root Townscape in the picturesque (the English like to claim the picturesque as their home turf) and in popular ideology, Townscape was actually rooted in Jameson's market economy and Debord's postmodern society of spectacle.[145]

In characterizing the spectacle, Debord reserved a crucial spot for image makers. He contended that in a society of spectacle, the originators of ideas are often superseded by the originators of image making. The importance of image makers is one reason that Cullen, as an

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[143] Jameson, *Postmodernism*, 66.

[144] See Erten, "Shaping 'The Second Half Century.'" Erten's doctoral argument specifically concerns the AR's strategy of cultural continuity and environmental awareness, which also implies resistance to certain changes such as the rise of technology and consumerism. Also see Law, "English Townscape as Cultural and Symbolic Capital," 217.

[145] Hastings claimed the origin of Townscape to be in the English picturesque landscape in his famous Townscape manifesto, which appeared under the pseudonym Ivor de Wolfe: "Townscape: A Plea for an English Visual Philosophy Founded on the True Rock of Sir Uvedale Price," *Architectural Review* 106, no. 636 (December 1949): 355–62.

image maker of Townscape, played such a vital role. Cullen's modus operandi gave expression to the spectacle of the Townscape within the context of postwar architecture and urbanism. Cullen's ideas about the city could not have been more different from Debord's revolutionary idea, yet there is one element in which they overlap, and which has been noted by scholars of psychogeography: both promoted the idea of designing the new city for heightened physical and social encounters.[146] To counter the substitution of real experience for the experience of the spectacle as advanced capitalism, Debord and his Situationist International fellows proposed to encourage walks within the city—known as *dérives*—which in turn would lead to the constructions of social "happenings" or "situations." Through his visual representations, Cullen also encouraged individuals to experience the city through walks—and he advocated that the city be designed for the mobile pedestrian—but he also created images that were especially "tactile," albeit visual, as they touched the individual at a deeper, emotional level. It was Cullen's way of transcending the detachment of the spectacle. The difference between Debord and Cullen, and the reason that Cullen's position was viable while Debord's remained theoretical, is that Cullen worked within rather than outside the capitalist system. Through his art editorial work, Cullen and other visualizers, marketers, and publicists became champions of the society of spectacle, streamlining architecture within the economic and social forces that Debord's observations decried.

As one of the earliest alternatives to the modernist functional city model, Townscape ushered in an urbanism whose chief imperative was vision and whose most vital agents were image makers. From among his colleagues, Cullen most effectively reified and manufactured the editors' Townscape as a commodity for a society of spectacle. By constructing both apolitical

[146] M. J. Thomas, "Urban Situationism," *Planning Outlook* 17 (Autumn 1975): 27–39.

Townscape messages and alluring images, he not only gave the campaign an image and a face but also fostered an appetite among diverse publics for an environment consisting solely of images of itself, an environment as spectacle. Because of his shrewd marketing skills, his use of clever genres and montage techniques developed before and after the war, and his adaptive use of available printing technologies, Cullen was uniquely able to package *The Review*'s alternative urbanism to the modern city. This chapter examines Cullen's shaping of the city as spectacle. It is essential, however, first to establish the different ideas that constituted Townscape in both its production and its consumption phases, and to examine Cullen's capacity to navigate deftly—in fact, to evade—the editors' social ideology and nationalistic agenda in order to produce a superior Townscape product for consumers.

In the AR Circle

That the active production period of Townscape began shortly after Cullen's arrival at *The Review* in 1946 and ended shortly after his departure in November 1959 should come as no surprise. Although Cullen was neither the first nor last Townscape campaigner, his tenure at the magazine defines the Townscape's moment as a popular product. This point is especially apparent when one delineates the different periods of the development of Townscape—conception, incubation, proclamation, manufacturing, and marketing. The ideas related to visual and environmental planning aims were incubated in *The Review* during the 1930s; they took shape during and immediately after the war; they were clearly first introduced to the public in an essay by Hastings in 1944; they became *Review* policy in January 1947; they were formally named "Townscape" in December 1949, with Hastings's philosophical treatise and Cullen's Townscape Casebook method; they peaked in the 1950s; and they continued to be promoted

through Hastings's retirement in 1974.[147] Though Townscape was maintained for almost half of a century, the thirteen years of Cullen's employment represented the period in which Townscape was first packaged as a product for the public at large. Despite its dozens of contributors, many of whom produced essays that exceeded the intellectual rigor of Cullen's own written work, it was Cullen who became synonymous with Townscape.[148] His ability to rise above his colleagues resulted from postwar cultural and economic sensibilities that favored his Townscape product over theirs.

Coexisting and Competing Townscapes

Conditioned by his vocation, Cullen's production of Townscape differed from that of the other key contributors, including Hastings, the idea's originator; Pevsner, the historical scholar; J. M. Richards, the intellectual polemicist; John Piper, the artist; and Ian Nairn, the journalist essayist. Cullen did not share the idealistic sociopolitical agenda the editors espoused, nor did he have any great appreciation for the pre-romantic idea of the picturesque. He was not skeptical of modernism, he did not share Nairn's concern for conservation, and he did not fetishize soot or bombed-out churches as did Piper. In fact, he dismissed these predilections as metropolitan elitism and class snobbery.[149] Cullen's blue-collar background and low professional status shaped a practical and visceral Townscape agenda—one devoid of idealism, politics, and

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[147] The essay that laid out the conceptual underpinning of Townscape, however, was Hastings's "Exterior Furnishing or Sharawaggi?" *Architectural Review* 95, no. 565 (January 1944): 1–8.

[148] For a full account of Townscape's wider context, see Mathew Aitchison, "Townscape: Scope, Scale and Extent," *Journal of Architecture* 17, no. 5 (2012): 621–42.

[149] See Cullen's eulogy of Nairn: Gordon Cullen, "Ian Nairn," *Architects' Journal* 178, nos. 34– 35 (August 24, 1983): 29. For studies of Nairn's work, see Gillian Darley, "The London Ian Nairn Knew," Journal blog, Saturday, December 18, 2010, http://fantasticjournal.blogspot.com/2010/12/london-ian-nairn-knew.html (accessed January 2013); Gillian Darley, "Ian Nairn and Jane Jacobs: The Lessons from Britain and America," *Journal of Architecture* 17, no. 5 (2012): 733–45.

aesthetic superiority, and filled instead with sensorial and emotional intensity. (Such intensity resembles Jameson's definition of the concept of "intensities": a new type of emotional tone pervading postmodern society.) As a commercial artist, Cullen had the task of making Townscape marketable: of connecting ideas to the consumer using the available means of production. His mission was to seed the notion (and myth) that a city shaped according to the principles of Townscape was fun, sociable, and exciting.

Given the imperative of a commercial artist to shape a marketable product, suppressing or self-censoring political ideology is de rigueur. Such habit is conditioned by the new consumer system and inherent in the code of the profession. That is not to say, of course, that Cullen held no opinions on politics and culture—he did, and they were strong. For example, in a wartime entry titled "Notes on Culture," Cullen reflected on the role and status of artists in society, on politics, and on labor issues:

> [T]he private ownership of labour, utilities and land for the purpose of individual profit at the expense of others leads inevitably to disaster. . . . [T]he only sensible way out is the common ownership of the country's assets to be developed for the common good. . . . [I]f you do resist you can easily be deflected because *all the newspapers are owned by the ruling class* and it is easy for them to misrepresent [emphasis added]. Of course you can argue that no one is forcing the working class to put itself to sleep. They simply have themselves to blame.[150]

Such radical socialist ideas, including critiques of the ruling class and media institutions, did not prevent Cullen from joining a workplace that was owned by the established elite who advanced a radically different ideology through their institutional press. Success and a decent salary earned Cullen a living.

A story Cullen once jotted in his 1941 personal journal perhaps further exposes this inherent conflict between message and making a living faced by the image maker. Cullen

[150] Gordon Cullen, personal archive, undated journal, #832.

referred to it as a "silly story" on "a serious study of the problems of the fabric of London," writing:

> A certain rich man commissioned an artist to paint his portrait. The artist however explained with some annoyance that this would not be possible since for some obscure reason there was no canvas to be obtained for love or even for money. The rich man therefore returned to his home and as he paced the length of his ample study he suddenly had an idea. The following week he again appeared at the artist's studio followed by two porters carrying a large, flat package which, on being opened, proved to be an oil painting. It was subsequently explained to the bewildered artist that all he need do would be to scrape off the existing painting and commence the portrait. 'Oh' cried the artist but this is a Rubens! 'Never 'eard of 'im' replied his client; and if you won't do it there's plenty more that will![151]

Cullen's story not only conveys his message against replacing older building with modern ones but also alludes to his position in the lowly tier of trade hierarchy and, as a result, to the often unavoidable and frustrating choices he has had to make to sustain a living, even at the cost of setting aside his own beliefs.

Even his markedly different interpretation of, and dislike for, the term "picturesque" did not prevent Cullen from collaborating with the editors. In a 1951 journal entry on the "picturesque," Cullen expressed his own working interpretation of the term, stressing the viewer's response and explaining that its ultimate ambition was to create "vitality" or to generate an emotion-triggering phenomenon he called "frisson" or "drama," a goal he incessantly repeats in his writing, and one akin to Walter Benjamin's idea of "aura" and the effect of film (see "Making a 'Tactile' *Review*," below).[152] [Figure 3.2] Cullen apparently later dismissed the term

[151] Gordon Cullen, personal archive, journal, 1941, #401. Cullen presented this state of mind again in "Planner's Progress," a 1953 whimsical cartoon essay in the *AJ*. It describes the eleven professional development stages each planner undergoes, ending with "Frustration," and captioned: "by naïve wit . . . but becomes partly preoccupied with making a living . . . etc. . . ." The accompanying drawing is Cullen's self-portrait, captioned in handwriting, "most people lead life of quiet frustration." Gordon Cullen, "The Planner's Progress: Described in Oddly Assorted Pictures," *Architects' Journal* 117 (January 15, 1953): 81–84.

[152] Gordon Cullen, personal archive, journal, 1951, #371.

"picturesque" altogether. He did not utter it once in his book, and even invented for the picturesque a derogatory expression, "picture-skew" (implying perhaps that the term is skewed altogether and, possibly, that what the "picture" looks like has an insignificant relation to its effect).[153] Despite his gut reaction to picturesque, Cullen's works for the magazine, and later his book, were nevertheless heavily steeped with picturesque aesthetics—irregularity, asymmetry, visual contrasts, and more.

Of course, Cullen's concept of Townscape also overlapped with that of his editors and colleagues, especially on issues of place character and concerns over the visual monotony of New Towns, or suburbia. Still, as the following discussion shows, Cullen advanced another kind of Townscape, a version of the editorial Townscape that extended his humanist and consumerist interwar architecture to the scale of the city, to human experience, and, as importantly, to a city of spectacle. While multiple Townscapes could coexist at the press, personal coexistence at the office proved increasingly more difficult, especially as Cullen acquired fame.

In the Shadows of the Editors

When he joined the AR, Cullen joined the space of the press. He left behind a constant, exhausting battle for clients and commissions for a more financially secure workplace. Hired at a fixed salary of £750 per year, he gained the benefit of a stable income, enabling him to focus on developing his artwork instead of worrying about his next commission. Still, Cullen joined the AR on the condition that he works three-quarters' time so he could take on outside commercial

[153] David Price, interview with the author, January 6, 2008. In a 1974 reply to a letter from Grady Clay, editor of the American magazine *Landscape Architecture*, Cullen explained that the value of the term "picturesque" was in its "practical use . . . as a means of orientation and identity." Gordon Cullen, personal archive, letter dated March 1974. ##8325-26.

work. In his words, the idea was "to prevent claustrophobia and to keep a wider life going."[154] His use of the word "claustrophobia" could be taken to reveal a fear of the emotional stress associated with the AR environment, of being subject to the whims of his bosses. In any case, his decision may also have been intended to provide an economic safety net. Cullen did not take *The Review* job because it paid well, but instead for his own professional development: "I always regard my time at the architectural Press as educational. Not only did it have very little relation to money making, but I learnt a great deal—mainly how to concentrate my mind . . . to write and illustrate a piece on an odd subject in three days."[155] He used the job to form disciplined work habits, which he felt he lacked, and as a platform from which to jump to the next phase of his career.

Cullen became part of an intellectual group at a prestigious magazine that after the war came to be known in the architectural circles as "the establishment."[156] It was organized as a hierarchy: editors were at the top tier; their intellectual circle of collaborators occupied the middle tier; the laborers responsible for the actual production and marketing, including staff illustrators and photographers, occupied the bottom. Not surprisingly, Cullen and his closest friends at *The Review* belonged to the lower tier of the press hierarchy. These included the production editor Marcus Whiffen, his fellow illustrator Donald Dewar Mills, the photographer

[154] Gordon Cullen, personal archive, journal, April 15, 1960, #670. When he left fourteen years later his salary was £1,450 a year, which according to Cullen had simply kept up with the cost of living. Occasionally he did outside jobs, continuing his work on a number of book, exhibition, and mural projects.

[155] Cullen, "H. de C. Hastings," 1986, 5. The AR was more concerned with ideas and influence than with profit. As Colin Boyne, editor of the *Architects' Journal*, later commented that the AJ was the magazine which earned the money Hastings lavished on the AR. See Colin Boyne, "H. de C. Hastings, 1902–1986," *Architects' Journal* 184, nos. 51–2 (17 & 24 December 1986): 4.

[156] Members of its pre- and postwar editorial board—James Richards, John Betjeman, Hugh Casson, and Osbert Lancaster—were all educated in colleges in Oxford and Cambridge, and all were knighted. Pevsner, also knighted, was educated in Germany.

Eric de Maré, as well as the illustrator Kenneth Browne, another colleague who would join the magazine in the early 1950s. With de Maré, in particular, he maintained a warm friendship.[157] These men toiled and readied publications for the printer, often working together in the field and at the office, where they were subjected to strict deadlines, top-down orders, and occasional insults.

Cullen's relationship with the editors was tense, especially as his fame and respect grew. The editorial board at the time of his hire included two continuing prewar editors (Hastings and Richards), with whom Cullen had worked in the 1930s, and two new editors, who joined during the war but were *Review* contributors before the war: the cartoonist Osbert Lancaster and the architectural historian Nikolaus Pevsner.[158] The four editors had different but complementary positions and interests, and shared several central ideas, including the desire for architects to communicate with the common man, the value of cultural continuity, and sensitivity to topographical planning, a concept closely related to the picturesque's *genius loci*, or character of a place.[159] Pevsner, who brought an academic tone to *The Review*, and who at Hastings's request researched the history that formed the foundation of the Townscape philosophy, considered Townscape to be a new postwar phase of rationalist modernism, an English empirical modernism

[157] Eric de Maré expressed his sentiments about Cullen in his eulogy. See Eric de Maré, "Gordon Cullen, My Friend and Colleague," *Architectural Review* 200, no. 1196 (October 1996): 81–84.

[158] Richards began his post in 1937 and remained an editor through 1971, with a break for war service between 1942 and 1946, during which Pevsner served in his stead. Pevsner began writing essays in the *Review* in 1936, becoming an editor in 1942. Lancaster was an editor between 1946 and 1951 and a *Review* contributor from 1934 on, though he was a minor collaborator in the development of Townscape.

[159] For extensive account on the editors' agendas and predilections, see Erten, "Shaping 'The Second Half Century,'" 2004.

on the functionalist side of the modern movement.[160] Since Cullen eschewed the academy, he and Pevsner could not have been more different. Cullen intended to gratify the senses rather than cater to intellect. His description from a 1946 notebook of a walk in a typical London block elevates the visual-sensorial over the intellectual: "Underlying all this, however is the actual visual effect of juxtaposition, views along alleys, views in winder [*sic*], views from windows. This is to make the styles come to life and not to be just an academic exercise in architecture."[161] Cullen stresses the idea that visual triggers must "come to life," operating on sensorial and emotional levels. Although little evidence remains of Cullen's collaboration with Pevsner, his work would nevertheless be informed by Pevsner's Townscape ideas and methodology.

Since Hastings remained mostly behind the scenes, Richards managed the daily affairs at the AR. His central agenda was an architectural preservationist one, which he advanced by linking modernist functional architecture to nineteenth-century vernacular industrial structures under the rubric of "The Functional Tradition."[162] Cullen collaborated on several of Richards's key essays, most significantly the January 1950 feature essay, "The Functional Tradition," in a special issue of the same name, to which he contributed photographs and graphics; the issue also included two townscape proposals by Cullen applying Richards's theory. In addition, in the July 1953 issue Cullen followed up Richards's vehement criticism of New Towns in "Failure of New

[160] See extended discussion in John Macarthur and Mathew Aitchison, "Oxford versus the Bath Road: Empiricism and Romanticism in the Architectural Review's Picturesque Revival," *Journal of Architecture* 17, no.1 (2012): 65.

[161] Gordon Cullen, personal archive, journal, 1946, #440.

[162] As the AR acting editor between 1937 and 1942, during which time he worked closely with Cullen, Richards worked to expand the magazine readership beyond architects, a value that he acknowledged more than once in his memoir. J. M. Richards, *Memoirs of an Unjust Fella*, 136.

Towns" with his own essay, "Prairie Planning in the New Towns."[163] There, Cullen defines Townscape for the first time in the phrase "One building is architecture but two buildings is Townscape"; it would become Townscape's definitive definition. Despite their collaborations, the working relationship between Cullen and Richards was uneasy. In his memoir, Richards mentioned Cullen only once and in passing, calling him "*The Review*'s distinguished staff draughtsman" who collaborated with Nairn "on a series entitled, 'Outrage' and another highly critical one entitled, 'Counter Attack.'"[164] When he left the AR, Cullen noted Pevsner's and Richards's dismissive attitudes toward him in his personal notebook, especially their attempts to avoid acknowledging that he could be more than just a simple illustrator.[165]

Aside from the four members of the editorial board at the time of his hire, Cullen also worked in the shadows of three other editors who joined the board in the early 1950s, as part of a restructuring effort that coincided with broader national political and economic changes: the assistant editor Ian McCallum, who later became executive editor; Hugh Casson, who joined as directing editor; and Reyner Banham, who joined as literary editor. In particular, an unresolved rift between Banham and Cullen tainted Cullen's remaining time at the AR.[166]

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[163] J. M. Richards, "Failure of the New Towns," *Architectural Review* 114, no. 679 (July 1953): 29–32; Gordon Cullen, "Prairie Planning in the New Towns." *Architectural Review* 114, no. 679 (July 1953): 33–36. These two essays, which are repeatedly cited in later studies about Townscape, marked an explicit turn by the *Review* regarding planning and the environment from a reflective and positive tone to a prophetic and vehement tone.

[164] J. M. Richards, *Memoirs of an Unjust Fella*, 191.

[165] Gordon Cullen, personal archives, journal, 1960, ##675-77.

[166] Ian McCallum was assistant editor when Cullen arrived. In March 1950 McCallum joined the editorial team as a full editor, and in March 1953 McCallum became executive editor. In July 1954 Hugh Casson joined Hastings, Pevsner, and Richards as directing editors. Banham joined as staff writer in 1952 and as literary editor in March 1953. In October 1959 he became assistant executive editor; he left in1964. According to David Gosling, Banham's theoretical approach "foreshadowed Gordon Cullen's eventual departure from the Review." Gosling, *Gordon Cullen: Visions of Urban Design*, 49. Cullen has mentioned this rivalry in his diary. Gordon Cullen, personal archive, journal, 1960, ## 675-77.

Cullen was really a Hastings man. Despite Hastings's dictatorial management style, Cullen deeply appreciated him. In his 1986 eulogy to Hastings, Cullen wrote: "It was a splendid life, [Hastings] was a superb editor with a cause, confidence and style and I got sucked into it."[167] The two men understood the business of the press differently than did their colleagues. The match between Hastings's savvy entrepreneurial mind and Cullen's unique capacity to sell issues was a productive one.[168] Other writers have argued that Cullen was a perfect fit for Hastings, a brilliant interpreter of his notion of a modern-picturesque city. Hastings had resurrected the theory of the "picturesque" and had made both the image and its maker the center of his Townscape philosophy after reading Christopher Hussey's 1927 book, *The Picturesque: Studies in a Point of View*.[169] In their visual reeducation policy, the editors directly addressed the town planner, whose decision-making power over postwar reconstruction was growing, and called on architects to reconnect with their artistic roots and take charge of the visual landscape. Although they addressed the town planner and architect, the editors explicitly sought out a "painter" for the job of visual education, a qualification that Cullen uniquely possessed. Only a painter—and not an architect proper—could understand and effectively propagate the art of the townscape.

[167] Cullen, "H. de C. Hastings," 5.

[168] In the 1950s, the periodical was still available solely through subscription and in a print run of 10,000 copies only. Circulation of *The Review* in 1959 was about 10,000; up to 13,500 in 1969; and then down, rising again by 1972 through 1975 to about 17,000. See Steve Parnell, "AR's and AD's Post-war Editorial Policies: The Making of Modern Architecture in Britain," *Journal of Architecture* 17, no. 5 (2012): 763–75, esp. 773.

[169] Christopher Hussey, *The Picturesque: Studies in a Point of View* (1927; reprint, London: Cass, 1967).

Replacing Piper

Though he was not a staff artist, John Piper (who was preceded by the artist Paul Nash and was a close friend of the editor J. M. Richards, as well as of his predecessor, John Betjeman) brought a much-desired painterly eye to the magazine. Between 1936 and 1949, he wrote and illustrated close to twenty *Review* essays on seaside architecture, materiality, and affect, including a series of eight essays on color in buildings and towns. Piper, however, was not the right man for *The Review*'s visual reeducation mission. Initially an abstract artist, Piper shifted in the late 1930s to neo-romanticism and began focusing on mood and atmosphere. This romantic bent, coupled with his use of the traditional media of lithographs, aquatints, and watercolors, gave his drawings a dreamy quality that privileged color and mood over form, and produced enigmatic images that left architects at a loss as to how to interpret them into form.[170] [Figure 3.3] He lacked the skills to create representations that enabled architects to translate two-dimensional drawings to actual three-dimensional environments, the reverse of a painting process. Piper's aesthetics differed from those of Pevsner and Hastings, who considered the picturesque to be pre-romantic, and therefore closer to modernist aesthetics.

Piper was truly an artist with capital "A." Dedicated to his own creativity and artistic perspective, he produced work outside the domain of mass and popular culture; compared to Cullen, he was neither a salesman nor an educator. It is precisely because Cullen was not entirely committed to the artist's ideals of self-expression and originality—or to a specific genre—that he possessed the will to sell his art and to teach it. Cullen's work overshadowed Piper's because he embodied Hastings's requirements for delivering Townscape. Cullen was the precise combination of artist, salesman, and educator needed to fulfill the AR's mission.

[170] See Anthony West, *John Piper* (London: Seeker and Warburg, 1979), 12; Macarthur and Aitchison, "Oxford versus the Bath Road," 65.

The press environment was intellectual and artistic, with significant deadline pressures and distinct professional hierarchies, an environment that proved immensely productive to Cullen's fabrication of Townscape. Even as he assumed new functions, which went beyond graphic design to writing, photography, and education, Cullen's work expressed a perfect connection between his mode of operation, the message of Townscape, and the graphic expression. Cullen designed the pages of *The Review* on the very model of their subject by looking to the picturesque landscape for pictorial motifs and for inspiration for page compositions. And he used his prewar montage operation.

Scaping the Magazine

In his early work in the 1930s, especially at Tecton, Cullen had already assumed the role of visual communicator and office publicity expert. He had become savvy about publishing and had mastered production means. Armed with this experience, he was ready to take on new roles at *The Review*. As art editor, he engaged in the typical range of graphic design tasks, including illustration, page layout, and issue cover and frontispiece design. As his tenure lengthened, he found himself wearing additional hats: townscape designer, journalist, photographer, and visual educator. In all of these functions, Cullen continued his prewar bricolage activities: sampling images and words from colleagues, magazines, and books; borrowing techniques from highbrow and lowbrow pictorial genres; and reassembling these pieces anew.

Despite his lack of training in architecture and town planning proper, Cullen became the prime Townscape designer at *The Review*. His numerous design proposals adorned essays (his and those of others'), and translated Townscape principles into action. Through his design work, Cullen demonstrated a simple fact: Townscape was essentially a graphic design problem. That Townscape was an urban landscape medium privileging surfaces, décor, and affect over

conventional architectural structures and planning of land use, building massing, and infrastructure made his job all the easier. As a matter of image making, the commercial artist could treat the page and the city as one and the same. Cullen "scaped" the pages of *The Review* and, ultimately, the landscape of the city itself.

The Art Editorial Oeuvre

Art editorial work came naturally to Cullen, for whom everything was a potential subject for publication. As Cullen's archive makes plain, from an idea's conception he always laid out visuals and typography in "dummy" form, ready for the printer. [Figure 3.4] His approach to production reveals not only the creative side of his work but also the essential role he played in making Townscape so popular. Between 1946 and 1959, Cullen put his stamp on the look and feel of *The Review*. He produced fifty illustrated essays, nearly twenty columns for the "Miscellany" section, about thirty magazine covers, about forty frontispieces, and illustrations for more than 150 essays authored by others.[171] Cullen shared daily art editorial tasks—page layout and typography, and decisions about paper and tint—with the other editors. Richards, Hastings, and McCallum, as well as other draftsmen and typographers, had a hand in molding *The Review*'s printed page. In his memoir, Richards claimed that for thirty years he was responsible for the design of every number, a claim that the breadth of Cullen's work disputes.[172]

Since taking office in 1927, Hastings, who had studied painting as well as architecture, could and did occasionally sketch layouts with the fluency and accuracy of a commercial artist. In fact, according to Richard Hollis, who studied *The Review*'s graphic design from the 1930s to the 1960s, Hastings's taste dominated the publication. Hollis argued that by the mid-1930s,

[171] Cullen also contributed drawings and occasional essays to the *Architects' Journal*, *The Review*'s sibling trade journal. This work was peripheral to his central activity in *The Review*, however.

[172] J. M. Richards, *Memoirs of an Unjust Fella*, 136.

Hastings had laid the groundwork for the magazine's eclectic graphic manner and its mannerism of combining traditional and modern looks and messages.[173] [Figure 3.5] This eclectic method is what specifically made *The Review* a landmark design magazine. Yet Hollis goes on to point out that from 1947 onward, following *The Review*'s "visual re-education" project—when the "look and feel" of the magazine was an instrument consciously deployed to disseminate the editorial policy—Cullen was indispensable. Hollis adds, "The magazine's graphic innovations were largely due to the architect Gordon Cullen."[174]

Like a handful of other contemporaneous architectural periodicals, most notably the California-based *Art and Architecture* in the 1930s and 1940s, *The Review* devoted most of its space to a barrage of images that went beyond typical technical drawings: pictures of cities, buildings, and everyday objects in the form of aerial photographs, as well as historic etchings, newspaper tear sheets, sales catalog clippings, cartoons, old master paintings, and so on. In heavily relying on pictures and in mixing genres and styles, architectural magazines clearly were following a trend in mass print media. As the media theorist Marshall McLuhan argued in *The Mechanical Bride*, "[A]ny paper today is a collective work of art, a daily 'book' of industrial man, an Arabian Night's entertainment in which a thousand and one astonishing tales are being told by an anonymous narrator to an equally anonymous audience."[175] *The Review* was no exception. It embodied this eclecticism in its ideology. Cullen continued *The Review*'s mixed cultural graphic positions and eclectic layouts during the 1930s, juxtaposing photographs and

[173] Richard Hollis, "Building a Graphic Language—the *Architectural Review*," *Eye* 7, no. 28 (Summer 1998): 38.

[174] Ibid., 41.

[175] Marshall McLuhan, *The Mechanical Bride: Folklore of Industrial Man* (New York: Vanguard Press, 1951).

realistic drawings with highly abstract, geometric, and flat compositions, or with technical drawings. Then he peppered this amalgam with the popular sources of his choice—comic magazines and advertisements—thus broadening the magazine's consumer appeal, as he had done before. But Cullen also used new graphic and textual devices to make explicit the graphic allusion to the architectural space of the picturesque (when this strategy became official AR policy) and to intensify a visual-tactile reader experience.

Making a "Tactile" *Review*

The impact of Cullen's images went beyond the visual, extending to the tactile and emotive. In his 1929 essay on graphic design, the de Stijl architect Theo van Doesburg recommended the optical-acoustic treatment of the page, translating the temporal structure of a musical composition to the page and suggesting a way of creating an immersive visual experience—of turning a reader into a listener.[176] Cullen considered a similar experience for his readers but preferred the optical-tactile treatment. As he contemplated Manhattan's grid layout on his second visit to the United States in April 1960, Cullen jotted down journal notes under the title "A Study in Lost Causes": "There are two ways to order the environment," he wrote. "1) To stand outside it and impose an intellectual pattern, 2) To occupy it with a tactile pattern."[177] It is the second way that he fostered for the city and demonstrated through the medium of the page. His rejection of Manhattan's grid and his promotion of a tactile brand of urbanism that, not surprisingly, agrees with the picturesque, appear throughout his art editorial oeuvre. He embedded the page, the essay, and the journal with a tactile pattern that not only arrested the

[176] Theodore van Doesburg, "Film as Pure Form" [1929], trans. Standish Lawder, *Form*, no. 1 (1966): 11.

[177] Gordon Cullen, personal archive, journal, April 1960, #681.

reader's attention but also begged for back-and-forth leafing and mental rearranging, not to mention the urge to "touch" and trace the drawings.

By producing a "tactile" graphic and sensory-producing page space, Cullen compensated for art's loss of "aura" in the age of mechanical reproduction—a loss that the philosopher Water Benjamin cogently evaluated in the 1930s.[178] Benjamin described not only the changes that a work of art underwent with the invention of photography and mass-reproduction, but also, as a consequence, the different ways that art—including architecture—came to be experienced, most notably one akin to the experience of film. Benjamin analyzes concretely, on the level of the technical instrument, the effect of filmic operation when he describes the work of the Dadaists, an avant-garde art group around the 1920s: "It plunges in on the spectator, *it takes on a tactile quality*. The diverging in film is also first-and-foremost a tactile element, based effectually on the constant change of place and camera angles that stimulate the spectator" (emphasis added).[179] This is precisely the tactile effect Cullen aimed for through print media, and he accomplished it by using filmic tactics.

To evoke in his audience the tactile effect, Cullen employed his montage sensibility to make every issue and even every magazine page spacious (large at 12″ × 9.5″) and distinct. Freehand drawings, lithographs, and photographs appear on pages together with technical drawings and photomontages. Some pages display drawings and photos, others only photos or only drawings; some images appear side by side while others overlap; sometimes a single image occupies the entire surface, bleeding off the edge; other pages juxtapose as many as four different views. The general layout of pages is rarely centered or characterized by a marked

[178] Benjamin, "The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction."

[179] Benjamin, "The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction," as quoted in Baudrillard, *Simulations*, 119.

geometrical organization. Composition and the size of images depend on the relationship between text and image, though normally a larger image sets a theme's tone. The number of text columns and their dimensions constantly change throughout each issue, from a single column to four on a page, typically separated by a thin line. Equally significant is the interplay of image, typeface, and occasional accents of flat color (see "Tone, Tints, and Other Tools," below). The blank areas between reproductions are sometimes filled with a flat color zone and sometimes left empty.

Cullen used double-page spreads, a practice first seen in interwar magazines, to create new and more sophisticated "synthetic" layouts, conceived as coherent spaces. He integrated graphic elements, the alphabetic with the linear and the tonal, into a seamless rendering of a complex idea. Using his tried Purist devices for arresting the viewer, he aimed to cut through complexities to attain simplicity through abstraction and, at the same time, retain visual intrigue. By freeing the image of its apparent "content," he was able to free the spatial nature of the drawing or photograph, thereby, accentuating its formal properties.

The double-page spread in "Highway Code" (November 1957) is a design tour de force. [Figure 3.6] Bleeding off the page, the composition combines a street map and circulation diagram punctuated by two windshield-framed perspective views linked by arrows with people and road details. The ambiguous field—paraline space construction, exaggerated frontality, contour overlap, figure-ground reversals—transmits a "resonance" that had a very calculated emotional impact. The line and color composition—flat green, gray, and black—seamlessly meshes the styles of cartoon and abstract modernist painting, thereby countering the severity of abstraction. The spread in "Trowbridge" (February 1958) summons a romantic art nouveau painting style—a multifaceted composition of a "free-floating" diagrammatic pedestrian flow

overlaid on a cartoonish bird's-eye view of the town center, surrounded by framed perspectives that punctuate the space of the page.

In fact, it becomes difficult to tell the editorial pages and essays within the magazine apart from the advertisement sections that flank the magazine's front and back inside covers, several of which were created by Cullen. [Figure 3.7] By the mid-1950s, the number of advertisements per issue reached 120 pages, and it continued to steadily rise thereafter, doubling the page count of each issue.[180] Big, thick, and heavy, the different sections of *The Review* were printed with different paper: sometimes heavy textured, tinted, yellow or brown leaf; sometimes a thin, bluish-tinted sheet made for typists' copies; sometimes a brilliant glazed white that highlighted halftones, not unlike the popular illustrated biweeklies of the day, such as the American *Look* or *Life*, and the French *Vu*.

In consultation with other editors and illustrators at the AR, Cullen designed the magazine's successive layers of page type and page composition to dazzle the reader, as does a film. The act of opening a copy of the magazine and turning its pages successively reveals intrigue and surprise, but it also conjures up the particular experience of a walk in a picturesque city. [Figure 3.8] Once more, Cullen's work echoed that of Le Corbusier, who had similarly analogized the city and the typographic program of several of his books. The most notable example is Le Corbusier's *Les Plans de Paris*, in which Paris's bazaar is invoked through a chaotic succession of diverse page compositions and odd collections of images.[181] *The Review* similarly reflected picturesque subjects in its pictorial pattern and page impression and, with

[180] See table in Parnell, "AR's and AD's Post-war Editorial Policies," 765.

[181] Catherine de Smet, "The Book as Urban Metaphor: The Design of Les Plans Le Corbusier de Paris, 1956–1922," in *Medium Architektur* (Weimer: Bauhaus-Universitat Weimar, 2003), 191–97. The art historian, de Smet draws this analogy between Le Corbusier's book theme and the organization of images on the printed page.

Cullen at the creative helm, created a perfect spectacle, thus affirming Debord's assertion that "Since the spectacle's job is to cause a world that is no longer directly perceptible to be *seen* via different specialized mediations, it is inevitable that it should elevate the human sense of sight to the special place once occupied by touch."[182] Thus, the effect Cullen achieved moved from beyond the ocular to the corporeal. This tactile, physical shift also coincided with his own manner of working, which increasingly involved the physical exploration of a city he wished to "reshape" and became integral to his newly assumed role of journalist.

Becoming a Photographer

The affordability of cameras and photographic reproduction enabled Cullen to expand his pictorial repertoire to photography, and to move his hand in drawing art forward. Armed with his light Leica, a popular and relatively inexpensive camera that revolutionized postwar photography, Cullen crisscrossed the streets of London and traveled throughout England in search of photojournalistic material. Photography liberated Cullen, freeing his drawing from the more traditional role of realistic depiction and allowing it to evolve into a more creative medium in which he could convey ideas that would have been insufficiently expressed via any other artistic medium. He used the camera to reframe and refocus reality; he used illustrations to abstract and make reality fictive.

The camera allowed Cullen to turn the outdoors into a huge inventory of "readymade images." Using both sketchbook and camera, Cullen recorded and shot existing, built urban elements and spaces, and added them to his collection of magazine and news clips. His personal archive shows that he took pictures like a photojournalist, shooting many more photos than he would need (all of which ended up in the Architectural Press archive). Back at the office, alone

[182] Debord, *Society of the Spectacle*, 17.

or with colleagues, he examined contact sheets and chose those shots he believed best conveyed an experience. Often, he supplemented his own photographs with imagery from the archive, which grew exponentially after the war and ultimately served as an enduring repository of source material for various projects. Next, he developed selected photo prints and laid them out on standard pages. This process resulted in graphic compositions for final publication layout that gave form to the Townscape methodology of imagining the city from a mobile, pedestrian eye. [Figure 3.9]

Cullen's essays and personal archive are filled with examples of carefully composed pages that trace the paths he took to study the townscape before settling on a design that articulated his experiences in graphic form. This unity between experience, mode of seeing, and layout became standard practice in Cullen's work. The photos were no longer published like a family album or individual images to illustrate a story. Instead, he employed and mastered ample compositional variations, resulting in townscape layouts that would never be repeated twice. Lines, arrows, and notations reinforced "pedestrian paths," guiding the eye of reader through the illustrations in a fashion that became synonymous with Cullen's Townscape (see "Shifting Viewpoints: Serial Vision," below).

Cullen first published his photographs in his landmark pictorial article "Townscape Casebook" in December 1949. It was a fitting occasion that demonstrated Hastings's notion of teaching Townscape based on everyday visual precedents from "out-there," an idea that he expressed in the introduction to the essay. Cullen's photography shares the effects of contrast and drama with other *Review* photographs, and is undeniably close in style to those of de Maré and Hastings. However, his photography also displays distinct choices, derived from the photo-advertising strategy seen in the commercial work of Moholy-Nagy and, not surprisingly, found

in Cullen's drawings and texts. Like de Maré, Hastings, and Moholy-Nagy, Cullen applied modernist techniques of experimental photography to commerce, promoting the desire for consumption through close-ups and juxtapositions.[183]

Cullen explicitly emphasized promoting desire. He referred to the "authority" of the photographic object to evoke emotion. In his 1951 journal entry about one of Nash's photographs of found objects, Cullen wrote under the title "Notes on Authority": "The whole of the [Functional] Tradition and the *object trouvé* are . . . made more premium by the authority of being first of all something else, either unselfconscious or natural. In fact, it is just this frisson between the two which excites. A basic incongruity which is released and heightened [by] this feeble stimulus."[184]

He finds the "authority" of Nash's photography incongruous between the first impression and the ultimate realization of the actual object. His use of the term "authority" coincides with Benjamin's (for whom "authority" constituted the "aura" of the object that photography had eroded). Cullen's photographic approach is also similar to that of Le Corbusier. The architectural theorist Dan Naegle, in discussing Le Corbusier's photography in light of Benjamin's theory, eloquently argued that this architect's way of compensating for the architectural object's loss of "aura" in his photography was to create "a new architecture of illusionist space: a 'psychological' and relative architecture compatible with new science yet at the same time curiously secretive and atmospheric."[185] Secretive and atmospheric, like Le Corbusier's, Cullen's

[183] Mary Warner Marien, *Photography: A Cultural History* (New York: Harry N. Abrams, 2002), 266.

[184] Gordon Cullen, personal archive, journal, 1951, #375.

[185] Daniel Naegele, "Object, Image, Aura: Le Corbusier and the Architecture of Photography," *Harvard Design Magazine*, no. 6 (Fall 1998): 1–6.

images—both his photographs and the drawings he created after the photographs—create an illusionistic space, and have within them a trace of aura.

Cullen, however, counteracted this photogenic effect that risks promoting a sign-like characteristic of mere exhibitionism, which scholars like the architectural theorist Kenneth Frampton deemed distancing.[186] Instead, and to compensate for impoverishing the senses, Cullen intensified the intimate reception through close-ups of built details, through which he brought out textures and shadows that induced something of a tactile sensation. The attention evident in his photography to minute details—such as handrails and stone texture—was not simply a concern for minutiae, as many scholars have inferred, but a deliberate move to counter visual detachment, albeit pictorially. [Figure 3.10] Cullen also used his advertising tactics to draw attention, showing in the pictures more people (compared to the work of his contemporaries) to bring out the playfulness and vitality of urban space. He avoided extreme angles and unusual camera positions, and instead used either frontal eye-level camera position (like that of a painting canvas)—mostly to increase his audience's sensitivity to these elements—or perspectival eye level camera position, to convey a sense of space.

To produce the urban drama that dazzled him, he focused on disappearing compositional lines suggestive of spaces beyond, and on the juxtaposition of lines and planes. This juxtaposition is notable, for example, in the photograph of a skeletal iron bench in Bisdon Hill. Situated precariously on a solid rock, the bench looks as if it is about to slide away. The photo is

[186] Kenneth Frampton. "A Note on Photography and Its Influence on Architecture." *Perspecta* 22 (1986): 41; Kenneth Frampton. "Intimation of Tactility: Excerpts from a Fragmentary Polemic." *Content* 12, no. 1 (August 2007). www.tu-cottbus.de/theoriederarchitektur/Wolke/eng/Subjects/071/Frampton/frampton.htm. (accessed June 20, 2013). Frampton follows the concept of the impoverishment of intimacy put forward by the social psychologist Abraham Moles, as well as what the German philosopher Martin Heidegger has recognized as the loss of nearness.

charged with the same lyrical and animistic qualities present in his text, and its caption, "it might have been left out there by a traveler," makes the reader wonder about the story behind that bench.[187] Animism, or anthropomorphism, can be seen in the photo of a door "masked" with a cloth; the openings suggest a human facial expression, and the nearby wall is animated by fence-cast shadows.[188] Cullen increasingly used the camera to provide illustrations for his and his colleagues' essays; but the hand drawing—rather than the camera—was his unparalleled instrument of choice and marketability, even if most drawings were produced "after the photo."

Cullen's main art editorial activity was drawing. Much like his medium of photography, his drawing was an off strike of reality. As such, it allowed Cullen to present reality as coded, as a sign of something else that required of the reader to discover. In the moment of viewing, then, the image becomes an experience, and its oscillation evokes a palpable sensory intake, even as it reveals the image as illusion.

Drawings, Off Strike of Reality

As in his earlier career when he used the photos of others, Cullen now used his own photographs to make what he described as "roughs from the photos."[189] Now, free from the need to show laborious detail, he could instead focus on a selective few, creating a believable world in a few strokes. Far from acting in a technical or automatic way, he continued to pick and choose the precise content of his images during this process; he homed in on particular city elements, highlighting them through the use of close-ups, eye-level and flat perspectives, and so on, while omitting others in a way that he believed would produce a spectacular but humanized city that

[187] Cullen, *Townscape*, 86.

[188] Ibid., 72.

would appeal most to his consumers. By presenting the townscape as a collection of cultivated and exciting spaces, Cullen developed an easily consumable, easily marketable product.

In his attempt to make the city seem cheerful and socially vibrant, as in a good advertisement, Cullen drew beguiling street and square scenes, mixing real and unreal (make-believe) elements: people strolling on sidewalks or sitting in outdoor cafes, streets between charming buildings and decorated with lovely planters, and carefully composed views that laymen might find delightful. He also added surface textures, patterns, contrasts, enticing décor, and other details of which architects and town planners might take note. Part propaganda aimed to increase loyalty to a consumer product, the partial deception of Cullen's drawings recalls Benjamin's argument on the ease in putting images in the service of political cause.

The rhetorical mix of avant-garde and popular graphics, as well as traditional and modern pictorial techniques, would later appear again in Cullen's work. The difference was that in his Townscape essays, Cullen ceased conveying technical professional information. Now, without the construction details and other information needed by builders and engineers, Cullen's illustrations featured urban landscape surfaces and spaces, delivered mostly in perspectives. Cullen steered clear of the photomontages (or photoplastics) he had used earlier to adorn essays by modernist architects in *The Review*'s pages in the 1930s; such drawings were aimed at specialists. Townscape instead targeted town planners, public officials, and laypeople. Avoiding graphics likely to put off laypeople, Cullen used simple and easily intelligible line drawings, such as those seen in Tecton's "Highpoint II." This presentation of urban concepts in a simple and attractive fashion took its cues from commercial ads and the theater. Occasionally, Cullen used the "before-and-after" traditional landscape technique to show a magical townscape

[189] Gordon Cullen, personal archive, journal, 1955, #469.

transformation. These graphics became the requisite format for communicating editorial policy to wider audiences, especially from the early 1950s onward (see the extended discussion below in "Drawing the Townscape").

For his design proposals, Cullen continued his earlier habit from the interwar period of borrowing design ideas and fragments of images from any visual source he could lay his hands on. Using the "recycle and reuse" modus operandi, he salvaged back issues of the magazine for images and reprinted many of his own graphics. For instance, the festive urban decoration and flagmast in "Westminster Regained"—and, similarly, the structures and décor featured in "Bankside Regained"—mirrored typical World's Fair art, especially that of Gunnan Asplund's design for Stockholm in 1930. The wall advertisements in "Outdoor Publicity" in April 1949 resembled some of Le Corbusier's World's Fair murals, such as the Nestle pavilion in 1928.[190] [Figure 3.11] In the same article, the three-dimensional sign over the art gallery was traced from an image of a Congolese wooden mask, which had been the cover image a month earlier. Combining cartoonish and technical lines, the drawings highlighted the mood and surfaces of the city and mimicked the experience of existing in a space.

From Typography to External Lettering

Typography was a critical element in Cullen's work; and here, too, as he reflected the magazine's use of mixed graphics, Cullen refreshed *The Review*'s largely traditional English vernacular approach by incorporating his pictorial advertising experience. Of special importance

[190] Fernand Léger might have been another guide, as he, too, was attracted to outdoor advertisements. Le Corbusier, Léger's Purist colleague, created large-scale murals, including outdoor murals on the walls of the l'Esprit Nouveau Pavilion (1925) and the Nestle Pavilion (1928), and an indoor mural in the Stockholm Exhibition (1930).

was his reliance on visual contrast, playfulness, and intrigue.[191] For instance, the heading for the essay "Closure" (March 1954) displays large Clarendon type with fuzzy edges that look chewed on; the effect—the use of graphic letters with incomplete lines—focuses attention on the expected physical "closure" of space. Cullen used whatever style and period he deemed fitting to the theme or message, as did other British commercial advertisers at the time, including Ashley Havinden and Arpad Elfer. Havinden, who dominated the British advertising scene, argued for this freedom to borrow, proclaiming that designers "regard themselves as solvers of problem of communication in whatever medium is required," and thus freely draw from all graphic design eras and styles.[192]

Far from being a sign of superficiality, borrowing from other eras and styles could serve a greater purpose: to characterize concepts—such as Townscape! For example, unlike many of his graphic design peers, Cullen considered lettering to be integral to the art of Townscape. He studied the outdoor examples of typography and advertising on building walls, signs, and billboards, and he designed lettering both for graphics on the magazine page and for street posters and highway signs within his townscapes and landscapes.[193] A double-page spread on outdoor lettering from "The Functional Tradition" exemplifies this conflation of graphic and

[191] The search for nineteenth-century print and architectural typefaces, as part of *The Review*'s preservationist campaign, was carried by the poet John Betjeman and the art critic Nicolete Gray, who became an authority on the subject following the 1938 publication of her book *XIXth Century Ornamented Types and Title Pages*. In the 1930s, without abandoning its penchant for Caslon for typeset and Egyptian and Condensed Gill capitals for headings, *The Review* introduced Bodoni, the standard text type in modernist publications in mainland Europe.

[192] Ashley Havinden, quoted in Richard Hollis, *Graphic Design: A Concise History* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1994), 157.

[193] Between 1949 and 1959 *The Review* featured no fewer than fourteen issue covers devoted to urban inscriptions and advertising, most of which were designed by Cullen. Altogether, the journal published nineteen essays, ten written by Gray and three by Cullen. Both Gray and Cullen were among the five members of the Festival of Britain's Typographic Panel.

architectural styles. [Figure 3.12] Cullen's capacity to seamlessly oscillate between the page and the landscape landed him the honor of serving as one of five members of the Festival of Britain's Typographic Panel in charge of external lettering. He personally produced an external sign guide, and designed the typography for brochures and souvenirs.[194]

Cullen was also responsible for the radical change of *The Review*'s masthead from small, almost invisible type of Egyptian capitals (spelling "THE ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW"), which usually appeared at the bottom of the cover, to large, lowercase Clarendon, using only the initials "ar." [Figure 3.13] For the August 1953 issue, the new masthead was featured across the entire cover and without additional graphics; this same cover ran twice more, in July 1955 and April 1959. Cullen usually floated the initials on the cover in varied positions and with different graphics, making the masthead a formal element of the composition. He even once made the letters from clay, and displayed them as three-dimensional objects on the cover. The magazine's initials were the basis of many designs in the 1960s, and the masthead itself is still in use today—an enduring tribute to Cullen.

Packaging the Magazine: Artwork and Cover Art

In contrast to the relatively simple drawings that populated the Townscape essays, Cullen's covers and frontispieces were works of art in their own right, outlets for his creative experiments. [Figure 3.14 & Figure 3.15] At times, Cullen collaborated with his immediate circle of skillful draftsman colleagues, such as Dewar Mills, contributing to artistic cross-pollination in the workplace. Envisioning the magazine as viewed on a drafting board or coffee table, Cullen intended for its cover to establish the chief editorial idea of each issue in a way that struck the

[194] Paul Rennie, "Fat Faces All Around: Lettering and the Festival Style," *Twentieth Century Architecture* 5 (2001): 107–16.

reader. In this way, Cullen operated like an industrial designer who designed product packaging to appeal aesthetically to the consumer.

For the covers, Cullen continued to use his photomontage techniques, mixing photographic fragments and drawings to create bold compositions consisting of or juxtaposing drawings with one to two flat tints, including grays and black for contrast and depth. The cover paper varied to suit the image. For example, a tinted laid stock accompanied an engraving, or a heavy, coated paper presented halftones. With its use of pictorial and tactile details, the cover elicited both an analytical and a sensorial response. [Figure 3.16]

Many of the choices Cullen made about fragmented images and typography relied specifically on commercial advertising tactics of the time. Cullen's cover designs often borrowed techniques from early modernist artists (Kazimir Malevich, Paul Klee, Moholy-Nagy, or Léger) who also made art for advertisements. For example, the composition of the October 1943 cover for the wartime military exhibit in a bombed church in London bore close similarity to Moholy-Nagy's photoplastic series from 1925. For the June 1957 cover, Cullen traced an image of the "Roneo" filing cabinet, which he likely took from Le Corbusier's *l'Esprit Nouveau* advertisement.[195]

In addition, specific influences of British and American graphic designers are noticeable in Cullen's cover art. The abstract October 1956 cover, featuring traffic signs and letters in two colors plus black-and-white, resembles the "Orient Line" labels of 1935 by the British designer Edward McKnight Kauffer and the Rural Administration Electrification series from 1937 by the American Lester Beall; the special issue cover of the Festival of Britain in August 1951 recalls

[195] The ad was printed in *l'Esprit Nouveau* 23 (1924), and reprinted in *L'Art Decoratif d'Aujourd'hui* (1925). Le Corbusier. "The Decorative Art of Today." In *Essential Le Corbusier: L'Esprit Nouveau Articles*. Trans. James I. Dunnett, (London: The Architectural Press, 1998), 70.

the composition and *trompe l'oeil* effect of the photo-advertisement "Ide Collar" (1922) by the American Paul Outerbridge.[196] [Figure 3.17] The August 1951 cover is also Cullen's best-known: created in collaboration with D. Dewar Mills, the design aptly announces the national landmark event of the Festival of Britain, touted by *The Review* as the first plan built after the Townscape model. The cover encapsulates this new understanding of the city as a landscape—a visual, all-encompassing phenomenon. It relies on minimal elements and tools to create a stunning visual impact; a montage featuring a blueprint plan of the exhibition site spreads across the entire page, and is topped with a vertical curved band in an axon view. The band forms an incomplete circle and is printed with the façades of London's landmarks, visible from—and thus brought into—the site. The work is reminiscent of the late eighteenth-century panorama that presented a 180-degree, all-encompassing realistic view of elevated urban scenes to enthusiastic crowds. The façades on Cullen's vertical band are a reprint of his cinematic illustration of the landmarks he drew for "Westminster Regained," which inaugurated his serial vision technique. The yellow, black, and white upright band casts a deep shadow on the flat light brown plan, creating a trompe l'oeil effect of extraordinary depth. In addition to the Outerbridge work, the cover also alludes to effects in other illustrations, notably from the cover of *Bauhaus* magazine's first issue in 1928.

By emphasizing the primacy of a vertical pictorial view over a horizontal abstract plan, a perspective that the content of the special issue elaborates on, Cullen and Dewar Mills promoted *The Review*'s focus on visual town planning from a pedestrian's viewpoint and as a means to design a city. But for the overall effect, they chose graphics consistent with the stylish modernist

[196] For a discussion of experimental photography and advertising, see Marien, *Photography*, 266–69.

portrayal of commodities by advertising photographers, rather than with the picturesque undertone of the Townscape.

From the conception of page layout to the intended emotional response of the printed page, Cullen used his art editorial oeuvre to sell *The Review*'s Townscape to diverse audiences. But it was his writing that ultimately afforded him the chance to regularly see his name in large print and to receive credit for his work. Unlike many *Review* writers, Cullen both wrote and illustrated his articles. As an illustrator, he was credited in the small print of the "Acknowledgements" section at the end of each journal issue, along with many photographers and draftsmen. By contrast, for his written work, Cullen's byline was written in large print on the contents page and on the article's title page. Cullen the writer finally had his name packaged along with the product he created.

The Picto-Journalistic Oeuvre

Cullen conceived of his texts not so much as intellectual projects but as accompaniments to his pictures. He morphed the attractive picture-based format of photojournalism—a combination of photography and journalism—into his own form of *picto-journalism*: journalistic pictures that combine drawings and photographs. This format enabled Cullen to express his sensibilities in a new way, still mainly but no longer only through pictures. He accompanied both photographs and drawings based on photographs with expanded captions, as in the *Kynoch Press Diary* format with which he was enamored. The photojournalistic format that began dominating *The Review* in the interwar period reversed the hierarchy of word and picture, creating a new way of making meaning.[197] Detached from its initial context, the photograph is placed into a new situation, its meaning attained in relations to the caption, other images, and the layout on the

[197] The origin of photojournalism dates to magazines of the 1920s, when editors and photographers began working together to produce a story told in pictures and accompanied by words.

page. Aided by the popularity of photography, with its capacity to speak the language of empiricism and direct observation, *The Review*, like other architectural magazines, turned to reporting experiences conveyed by journalists who could take pictures and write their impressions. The photojournalistic format gained importance after the war, when the editors explicitly formalized this development in the 1947 treatise on the policy of visual reeducation: "One of the aspects of the English cultural tradition most worth preserving is the practice of dilettante journalism by experts who are also amateurs[.] . . . But the urbane habit of literary dilettantism, of scholar's table talk conducted in public, is not one that can be indulged without a medium."[198] One consequence of this new policy in the 1940s and 1950s was the hiring of people like Nairn, de Maré, and of course, Cullen—journalists, photographers, illustrators, and cartoonists who worked alongside academics and professional architects, and who could write in everyday language understood by laymen.[199] The postwar replacement of hard-core theorists and critics by amateur journalists and image makers was merely another step in the transformation of trade literature toward a broader reception that had begun two centuries earlier in eighteenth century, when amateur writers on architecture (for example, Marc-Antoine Laugier and Quatremère de Quincy) had replaced established academic writers, ushering in a new genre of architectural literature. Like the encyclopedia, it addressed the new readership of the embryonic consumer culture.[200] That early process coincided with and helped construct the modern notion

[198] AR editors, "Second Half Century," 22. Both Pevsner and Richards began broadcasting with the BBC, and Richards was also *The Times*' architecture correspondent in the late 1940s.

[199] A decade later Hugh Casson, the AR editor, further acknowledged that midcentury architectural journals assumed the added roles of shaping public opinion and therefore required "extramural" or "amateur" journalists, who were "opinionated, involved, individualistic, as happy with the typewriter as with the T–square," and for whom "the modern self-effacing, highly efficient professional editor is no substitute." Hugh Casson, "On Architectural Journalism," in *Concerning Architecture*, ed. John Summerson (London: John Lane, 1968), 260, 262.

of the *public sphere*. Similarly, postwar journalists, photographers, and graphic designers helped construct the *popular sphere* of the new global consumer economy. Many of the publications written by amateurs and nonacademics—most prominently by Cullen—appeared in Townscape-related essays.[201]

Cullen was uniquely qualified for the photojournalistic task. Since a photo may contain specific meaning not in itself but rather in its relationship to other photographs, captions, writings, and page layouts, Cullen's mastery in balancing these elements enabled him to convey pictorial meanings precisely and poignantly. He privileged image over text, making pictures the heart of his essays and language simply an accessory. By using the explicit, revelatory argument of illustrations, he was able to avoid feeble narrative descriptions; he could instead emphasize decoration and features, such as the edges of a path or an ornament on a wall, by using the power of imagery to make them leap to the viewer's eye. Cullen's writing style differed markedly from that of his colleagues; he wrote neither as a scholar, architect, nor journalist. He "wrote" as a draftsman and an artist, translating graphic compositions and metaphorical allusions into words. Just as he used figures of graphics for illustrations, so Cullen used figures of speech for his text, making accessible, consumable, and otherwise serious literature.

The Painterly and Conversational Text

Without exception, the core of Cullen's essays is the pictorial-caption format. The text in Cullen's pictojournalistic essays is kept to a minimum and appears mostly as caption. Captions are printed in text blocks next to the images, with bold subheadings or labels that often aim to bolster a reader's vocabulary. A short, normally one- to two-page introduction in larger type

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[200] See Lavin, "Re Reading the Encyclopedia," 185.

[201] Aitchison, "Townscape: Scope, Scale and Extent," 635.

accompanied by images and bold headings precedes the main body of the articles. The exigency, or "problem," is described first; the argument follows; the (re)solution appears mostly in images in the body of the article. As a recurrent feature in the magazine, and not only in essays by Cullen, this format first appeared soon after his arrival at the AR, and owes much to him. He turned it into something of a new medium.

The first time the pictojournalistic format appeared in *The Review* was in "Hazards" (March 1948), for whose drawings alone Cullen receives credit. But it was in Cullen's "Townscape Casebook," the pictorial sequel to Hastings's pivotal philosophical exposition, that this format became permanently attached to Cullen. "Townscape Casebook" marked Cullen's categorical entry into the teaching of a new way to see the city as landscape, or Townscape. Using the captioned drawing format, "Casebook" also prefigured Cullen's *Townscape* book and established his authorial voice as that of a visual educator (see "Reconfiguring the Case Book" in chapter 4).[202] Both the introduction and the captions of his essays often featured a painterly language that was as agreeable to the reader as were his drawings. The language Cullen used seemed to spring from the same creative well that inspired his drawings, and it, too, was channeled into and made successful his published work. Creating from fragments in a process of assemblage from fragments, Cullen envisioned a synthetic reading of the textual space and visual space of the printed page.

Perhaps more than his published and edited texts, Cullen's personal notebooks or daily logs, in which he jotted down ideas and sketches side by side to inspire future work, provide clues to his way of putting ideas together. The edited texts may seem disorganized, and the written notes and drafts are even more esoteric, idiosyncratic, and at times incomplete, yet they

[202] Gordon Cullen, "Townscape Casebook," *Architectural Review* 106, no. 636 (December 1949): 363–74.

reveal an intense associative, metaphor- and episode-rich way of thinking. This bricolage is also evident in his drawing process of combining, sampling, and assembling. For example, in preparation for a never-published 1946 issue cover, Cullen made the following argument to justify his choice of an image of autumn leaf as a metaphor for a precinct plan, rather than the editors' choice of an image of human tissue:

> An autumn leaf is a microcosm of a city plan . . . On it are marked the main traffic routes pedestrian network and precincts (of varying size and shape)[.] . . . I visualize the cover as a white sheet onto which as autumn leaf appear to have accidentally fallen, light and ephemeral. . . . Yet containing a wealth [of] symbolism . . . The choice of a leaf is apt in that one of the main visual results of precinctual development will be the flourishing of millions of leaves in the city. It is a universal form, pleasing and picturesque in itself.[203]

The passage brings out in graphic terms his fantastically layered visual analogies. The city plan is like a microcosm: if realized, it will become filled with trees. Cullen's consideration of his readership is evident in his statement of seeking to use a "universal form" that is both "pleasing and picturesque."

In other instances, Cullen's idiosyncratic mode of thinking survived editorial cleansing and remained visible in the published work. The editors allowed Cullen to assert his own voice, and it is this voice that would become his trademark. Cullen's linguistic sensuality offsets the editors' cerebral academic writing. His essays lacked the scholarly references, lofty words, and language of criticism commonly found in his colleagues' polemics. Despite his simple writing style, evidence suggests that Cullen casually browsed professional literature; furthermore, it is possible to link several journal entries with the literature of Gestalt Psychology.[204]

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[203] Gordon Cullen, personal archive, journal, 1947, ##459, 460, 461.

[204] Clément Orillard cites a rare list of forty-three books from a 1940 notebook by Cullen, the fourth of which is Sigmund Freud's *Introduction to Psychoanalysis*. Clément Orillard. "Gordon Cullen beyond *The Architectural Review*: Some New Perspectives from His Personal Archives." *Journal of Architecture* 17, no. 5 (October 2012): 722. Several journal entries from the early 1940s restate key Gestalt principles with

Like his drawings, Cullen's text made his work marketable. He created textual bricolage constructions filled with figures of speech, woven-together tropes, analogies, metaphors, and descriptions akin to lyrical poetry, as well as elements of whimsy and animism. His words infused the language of the published texts in *The Review* with qualities of fancy and pleasure that spoke to everyone much as did his advertisement and cartoons. Many of Cullen's essays opened with an episode from everyday life.

"A Visual ABC," for example, opens with the following scene: "'The root of the problem,' sighed the administrator, wailed the designer, 'is that the public is apathetic.'"[205] Similarly, "Midland Experiment: Evesham" begins: "An art gallery presents the viewer with a number of self-contained framed works of art. He looks at one, then at another, then a third. But in each case he starts afresh. . . . A town can, in some ways, be likened to an art gallery for it should have its 'set pieces.'"[206]

In addition to actorly scenarios, Cullen uses multiple perceptual modes to elucidate concepts. He desired his reader to understand abstract ideas with all five senses. In the article "Immediacy," for instance, he refers to a photograph of cobblestone paving at the water's edge, using multisensory terminology: "Here the cobbles imitate wavelets both in their shapes and shine, but are as hard as the waves are soft, a contrast which heightens the sensation of

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respect to the visual recognition of figures and whole forms, such as pure geometric shapes, closed forms, good contour, movement, and figure-ground. Gordon Cullen, personal archive, journal, November 1941. Concepts from Ernö Goldfinger's essays in *The Review* are also apparent in his texts. Ernö Goldfinger. "Sensation of Space," *Architectural Review* 90, no. 539 (November 1941): 129-31; Ernö Goldfinger. "The Elements of Enclosed Space," *Architectural Review* 91, no. 541 (January 1942): 5-8.

[205] Gordon Cullen, "A Visual ABC," *Architectural Review* 120, no. 719 (December 1956): 355.

[206] Gordon Cullen, "Midland Experiment: Evesham," *Architectural Review* 115, no. 686 (February 1954): 127.

proximity."[207] Thus, to elicit the concept of "immediacy"—a sense of intimacy and familiarity—the text moves from pictorial to tactile to spatial.

Cullen's writing style exemplifies the postmodern linguistic theories of Roland Barthes' *The Pleasure of the Text* (1975) and Umberto Eco's concept of "open text" in *The Role of the Reader* (1979). Bob Jarvis expounds on this connection in his revealing retrospective commentary, in which he explains why *Townscape* has lasted while many other urbanism books from that time have fallen into obscurity. Jarvis credits Cullen's nonacademic style, calling its authorial tone one that "is written from the heart, not the lectern."[208] Jarvis interprets the mood of the book, constructing a pedigree that runs from Baudelairean meandering in the urban metropolis to surrealist promenades and situationistic psychogeography. Barthes' "pleasure of the text" refers to reading that pleases and fills the reader with euphoria. It is a text that enables the reader to enter a work, and it comes alive through the reader's voice. No longer using the sentence as its model, it is instead "a powerful gush of words . . . of assonance, of plausible neologisms, of prosodic rhythms, of [quoted] truisms."[209] And it is also fun and easygoing. Eco's specifications of the "open text" in his book likewise leave the text without boundaries, asking the reader for cooperation.[210] Eco's open narrative structure presupposes an ordinary, less competent reader, and at the same time through textual means increases the competence of that reader.

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[207] Gordon Cullen, "Immediacy," *Architectural Review* 113, no. 675 (April 1953): 237.

[208] Jarvis, "Townscape Revisited," 20.

[209] Roland Barthes, *The Pleasure of the Text*, trans. Richard Miller (New York: Hill and Wang, 1975), 7.

[210] Umberto Eco, *The Role of the Reader: Explorations in the Semiotics of Texts* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1979), 8.

Like Barthes' text, Cullen's is a gush of words, a stream of consciousness filled with textual figuration; its whimsy makes casual an otherwise cerebral message. For example, Cullen describes an image he had taken from an old catalog of the outfitter and supplier S. W. Silver & Co. to illustrate ideas for outdoor living: "Despite his beard, the gentleman above, who resembles Ramses, is a boy at heart. The city, too, is full of beauty, drama, traffic, crowds . . . But, how often do we get a chance to sit and look at them? What is wanted [are] offensive . . . all-weather gadgets that will make living outdoors a pleasure in the English Winter."[211] Like Eco's "open text," Cullen's builds passages to the reader and requests her participation.

What makes Cullen's text porous and highly adaptable is its annulment of ideologies. It uses a sensorial logic with which every reader can identify according to his own experience. A "Floorscape" passage from his notebooks in preparation for "Focus on Floor" (January 1952) provides one example. Cullen writes, "It is a sign of a worried man that he looks neither to the left or right but down at the pavement. It is a sign of an interested person that he looks left and right, at buildings and sky."[212] The text uses this imagined episode to convey the idea that a more compelling floor could do much to cheer up a worried man. He then follows with a metaphor of the ubiquitous game of Monopoly (today's equivalent might be SimCity) to make tangible to the average person the architect's habit of treating the continuum of the floor as a uniting and visually intriguing element. Cullen's multiple, often excessive, metaphors demonstrate his relentless efforts to present each idea in ways that can be understood by everyone.

Metaphor plays another central role in Cullen's creative writing and his page layout: it serves to open his text and invite readers' participation. As Eco argued, by combining linguistic

[211] Gordon Cullen, "The English Climate," *Architectural Review* 105, no. 627 (March 1949): 146–47.

[212] Gordon Cullen, personal archive, journal, 1951, #379.

fragments into a textual collage that is at once imaginative and tangible, the metaphor enables a reader to create fresh linguistic associations, "combinatory possibilities or semantic couplings not anticipated by the code" that generate new stipulations of the code.[213] The conventional meaning of individual elements in the text is subordinate to their transformative and potentially allegorical meaning. Thus, the Monopoly game board (or, in the essay "Legs and Wheels," the checkerboard) might conjure up in addition to the architect's model both the excitement of playing the game and the desire to participate in building a city.[214]

Cullen also opens his text by employing conversational, everyday language to connect with his reader. His frequent use of second-person pronouns carries Cullen himself into the reading experience as tour guide or teacher. He actively addresses the reader as "you," takes her on a tour, shows her places, and asks her to imagine and respond. He also uses "we" to share the authority of the author with reader, and he refrains from using the personal pronoun "I" in the text, preventing the reader from distancing herself as mere audience.

The body of texts he composed, however, cannot be summed up wholly by concepts of openness, sensuality, and figures of speech. Though many of Cullen's essays could be said to be figurative and lyrical, it must also be acknowledged that others are dull and prescriptive. Yet even in his straightforward instructions, he is opening the text. By using didactic textual devices—step-by-step instructions, repetition, summaries, "good" and "bad" examples, do-and-don't-do instructions, and descriptive walk-throughs—Cullen offers a simple path for bringing his ideas to fruition. He delivers them in friendly fashion, peppered with playful allusions, as in the following passage from "A Visual ABC," in which he devises a game to teach readers to

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[213] Eco, *The Role of the Reader*, 69.

[214] Gordon Cullen. "Legs and Wheels." *Architectural Review* 104, no. 620 (August 1948): 77-80.

preserve qualitative distinctions between urban and rural areas: "The first principle is respect for the category. Ask the question: what am I dealing with? Wild, country, arcadia, town, or metropolis? Having decided, stick to the category its proper character. Town: remove suburban rockery."[215]

While Cullen's linguistic sensibility was lauded by average planning and architectural practitioners, as well as laypeople, it was largely ridiculed by academics. They dismissed his writings as unintelligible and vague, if not plain, frivolous, and messy (see "Of Critics and Competitors" in chapter 4). Despite this viewpoint, his writing still enjoyed a following and was another, possibly unexpected, facet of his ability to promote an idea of townscape that was usable and understandable from a planning perspective. As a necessary component of his pictojournalistic production, his text acted as expanded captions for a quasi-independent pictorial system. The representational system Cullen created to see the urban landscape and effectively teach the Townscape way of conceiving the city has had a marked influence on the postmodern city. In fact, it has become so pervasive as to have become naturalized in landscape drawing representation. Two specific drawing techniques, in particular, are now ubiquitous in urban design: flat perspective and serial vision.

Drawing the Townscape

Townscape, in Hastings's words, was an inquiry into "the modern conception of Landscape as the *field of vision*."[216] Townscape was intended as a modern version of "landscape," a word that in the eighteenth century came to mean a view of scenery with particular elements and compositional qualities commonly seen in the landscape paintings of the

[215] Cullen, "A Visual ABC," 359.

[216] De Wolfe, "Townscape," 362.

seventeenth-century painters Claude Lorrain, Salvador Rosa, and the like. In those paintings, landscape was intricately linked with the technique of perspective and contained both a certain realism and naturalism.

Perspective has offered a predetermined entry and relationship to seeing, experiencing, and shaping landscape illustration since the Renaissance. Without tracing the complicated etymology of the English word "landscape," it could be argued that when "land" became "landscape," land changed from being a site of labor to a site of visual consumption—or, from a lived phenomenon to an aesthetic one.[217] Before being "scaped," the land could not, in effect, be "seen." Seeing a landscape required psychological distance and special equipment that imposed a flattening effect (i.e., painting, lens, mirror, or screen). This transition took place during the Renaissance, when the concept of landscape as an object of contemplation and sensorial pleasure, rather than an object of intellect, was born. The genre of landscape painting and the use of perspective also arose at this time.

Cullen transported the sensorial pleasure inherent in the landscape perspective to the postwar anti-modern city, fusing landscape with city. However, Cullen loathed Renaissance perspective for its fixity, calling his drawing technique "post-perspective, . . . a three-dimensional space in which we occupy the 'here' and are attracted to the 'there,'" instead.[218] In a 1955 personal journal entry, he made a rough sketch of the Albrecht Dürer's painting *Alberti's Veil* (ca. 1500), which paraphrased the Renaissance architect Leon Battista Alberti's perspective

[217] The word "landscape" has its roots in the sixteenth-century Dutch *landchap* and *landskip*, which denoted a Dutch painting with certain rural elements, and in the German *landschaft*, which referred to a geographically small administrative unit. First introduced into the English language in 1603, "landscape" took on the Dutch meaning of a painting of a view with common compositional elements of water, forest, mountain, and grass. By 1725, it meant simply "view." *OED*, 2nd online ed.

[218] Cullen made this comment in a film about him titled, *Gordon Cullen, Townscape: The Language of Place*, prod. Richard Grebner (Minneapolis, Intermedia Arts, 1990), VHS tape.

device, showing a linear perspective demonstration of a method for transferring points seen through the vertical gridded veil to points on the canvas. [Figure 3.18]

It is no surprise that Cullen chose this sketch to encapsulate the main idea of the book. In his landmark treatise *Della Pittura* (*On Painting*, 1435), Alberti had translated the mathematical and optical principles of perspective for practical use by artists. According to E. H. Gombrich, Alberti helped move art in the deductive direction, from artistic theory to artistic practice, and from artistic practice to artistic feeling. Gombrich showed that Alberti was the first to see paintings "not as illustrations and decorations" but as images that had "a psychological effect on the mind."[219] Like Alberti, Cullen imagined that his art—and, subsequently, Townscape—would have wide practical use *and* would generate sensorial response in viewers, an approach that diverged from both Hastings's and Pevsner's. But Cullen also broke away from the Albertian paradigm on two counts. First, Cullen promoted the use of perspective in architecture, in contrast to Alberti, who developed the rules for artists but specifically asked architects to avoid perspectives, since precise measurements cannot be taken from foreshortened lines. Second, Cullen rejected the distance created by Alberti's perspective. Discussing the one-point perspective, he wrote: "Both the introduction of lines . . . in map making and the discovery of perspective had the effect of organizing space regardless of the occupying residents."[220] The invention of Renaissance perspective led, according to Cullen, to oversight of the human dimension and to detachment from the human body. This misguided approach, he added, was intensified in the use of perspective in baroque planning through the absolute focus on city monuments: "A]s a method [of constructing a solid illusion in 2 dimensions [it] is a useful tool,

[219] E. H. Gombrich, *Norm and Form: The Renaissance Theory of Art and the Rise of Landscape*, 3rd ed. (New York: Phaidon 1978), 111, 118.

[220] Gordon Cullen, personal archive, journal, "Old Men forget," circa 1950s, #907.

[a] good servant. When it is used to organize space it becomes a bad master[,] the divine [vanishing point] becomes incarnate as a monument or a town hall whilst houses are built on either side of the sight line."[221] Cullen believed that such blind devotion to one-point perspective led planners to focus on a single point or structure in a city rather than on the way the city is perceived by a person. Instead of these traditional perspectives—fixed in place, fixated on an object, and detached from the body—Cullen promoted the changing view of the picturesque: a sequence of perspectives embodied in the subject.

If the Renaissance city provided the fixed-picture plane, and the eighteenth-century picturesque garden mobilized it, then the mid-twentieth-century modern-picturesque city (Townscape) demanded that Cullen borrow and, at the same time, modernize the eighteenth-century perspective. In his drawings for Tunnard's modern gardens in the 1930s, Cullen shifted landscape representation from its English romantic phase to the modern age by mixing traditional perspective with flatness and cartoon sensibilities. In the 1940s, Cullen advanced landscape to its postmodern urban phase, both by intensifying the flatness and by locating it in a mobile spectator. When he sat down to draw the urban landscape for the modern age, Cullen incorporated two seemingly contradictory, yet ultimately complementary, elements: he abstracted the traditional perspective and, alternately, anchored it to the mobile spectatorial body. He continued holding in check the urge to create the distance needed for aesthetic appreciation, or to *defamiliarize* the world through abstraction, and the urge to render the same world familiar, three-dimensional, in perspective, and surrounded by space. He thus proceeded to both flatten and embody the perspective.

[221] Ibid., ##907-08.

Flattening the Perspective

In its utter antinaturalistic flatness, Cullen's own perspective is akin to elevation. His focus on both the picturesque sensibility and the vertical plane prompted him to discard symmetry, orderliness, and the grid. He freed the plane from the a priori plan-image, even as he remained cognizant of the plan. Whereas in his early architectural drafting work Cullen developed his drawings from a plan to an elevation, as a Townscaper he reversed the order, starting with a horizontal perspective and moving subsequently to a plan. Each study involved a walk or a drive, photography, and only then connection to a map.

The flatness Cullen insisted on was central to Townscape because it concerned the face of things, the site of the spectacle. After all, landscape is first and foremost a problem of appearance, of surface. It is a facial trait, of which a painter is continually aware. Cullen's act of flattening the city into surfaces, of extricating depth from urban space and striving after abstraction in order to see things objectively, was consistent with his modern propensities. At the same time, much like his modernist predecessors, Cullen used flatness to heighten the visual experience, to treat the city with the sensibility of atmosphere and locate it in the field of *affect*, or mood.

The primary focus on surface was a criticism regularly leveled against the AR's Townscape policy. Joseph Rykwert in particular criticized as superficial the AR's preoccupation with surface instead of structure, and with symptoms of urban problems rather than causes.[222] Rykwert's characterization of both Townscape and of Cullen's work as "surface" is apt, and yet is part of what makes both so powerful and what enables Cullen to rise above the superficial. In

[222] Rykwert, "Review of a Review," 15.

other words, it is precisely the concern for surface that made Townscape marketable and Cullen a true distiller of the society of spectacle.

Floorscapes and Wallscapes

Cullen's fixation on the surfaces of the city resulted in seven authored essays and three columns on wallscapes and floorscapes, in which he depicted surface in numerous illustrations and journal covers. In expounding the most apparent of urban surfaces, the building façade, Cullen explicitly stressed its qualities of abstraction and affect. He wrote in "The Wall" that "If walls are looked at as pictures, then to a large extent they become pictures, abstract to be sure, but no longer trivial or empty." He explained further: "Suppose we put ourselves in the position of a house painter asked to redecorate a building . . . He charges his brush and paints away . . . The creation of scenery, first of all, springs from the simple pleasure in 'bringing out' and heightening the abstractions we call wall."[223]

By "heightening the abstractions," he sought to exploit the affective possibilities, both planned, like a tapestry or mural, and unplanned, like a cast shadow. Cullen treated city walls and floors with the same ease, ingenuity, and detailed technique with which he treated the surface of the page. And it was with the same emphasis on a wall's flatness and play on visual depth within this flatness and through form, color, and lettering that he animated city space. All of these design decisions made his work akin to advertisements, a fact that was not lost on him. He publicly attested to an interest in "supergraphics," including billboards and wall advertising,

[223] Gordon Cullen, "The Wall," *Architectural Review* 112, no. 671 (November 1952): 295.

which he considered to be full of decorative potential and, like murals, animators of urban space.[224] [Figure 3.19]

While the verticality of a wall readily lends itself to an artist's perspective, the horizontal field of landscape, or the floor, lends itself to the choreographer of movement, the designers of space. It is therefore no surprise that his first authored publication, "Legs and Wheels," focused on the floor. (This essay was also the first that Cullen wrote for *The Review*'s new essay series under the title "Townscape.") For Cullen, the floor was a continuous, unifying field on which to organize the relationships between buildings and spaces. But the aspect of the floor Cullen most valued was its capacity to evoke emotions and to generate both physical and perceived motion through pattern and texture. The dynamics created by visual patterns was ultimately to "move the emotions" of city pedestrians, as he wrote in a 1951 notebook entry, in preparation for his essay "Focus on the Floor": "[T]he floor is a dramatic scene in its own right. . . . This imparts liveliness and vitality to it."[225] In his illustrations for the essay, Cullen offset the floor's flatness and abstraction with materiality and animation. The reader of "Legs and Wheels" becomes intimately engaged with the floor. In the photos and drawings accompanying the essay, the city floor occupies at least half of the image, and the camera and viewpoint are focused downward. The images emphasize textures and patterns, the tactile qualities that both monitor traffic and animate city space. Cullen displays these sensorial qualities, and the cartoonish people populating the drawings, to bring out the buoyancy of the city. The work emphasizes the fact that both the images and the city are lively places in which to reside. [Figure 3.20]

[224] This preoccupation was first articulated in Cullen's essay "Outdoor Publicity," which countered criticism about the pervasiveness and vulgarity of façade and billboard advertisement. He returned to the topic in fourteen additional essays between 1946 and 1959.

[225] Gordon Cullen, personal archive, journal, 1950, #845.

His view on floors did not limit his attention simply to that subject, but also extended to similar landscapes. The surface of a country road, for example, becomes an exciting scene under Cullen's hand, as the striking drawings for "Switch On" demonstrate. (This essay was one of a series on "roadscape.")[226] The series of road views were framed by a windshield, in comic strip style. This and the diagrammatic plan of a mile-long section of road contracted in time firmly position the perspective on vertical and horizontal planes. Cullen used the resulting flat forms, which could be mistaken for modernist paintings, to explore the capacity of pavement material and design to replace conventional traffic signs. Not only did Cullen turn an otherwise technical essay and mundane road landscape into a visual feat to excite readers, but he also showed the unexpected emotional intensity that flatness could generate. His typical whimsy with wordplay also entered the work, with painted letters on pavement, spelling "ON" from one direction (giving vehicles permission to cross the line dividing lanes) and spelling "NO" from the opposite direction (thus forbidding passage). [Figure 3.21]

Cullen's own pocket garden at the 1951 Festival of Britain site emphasized his devotion to flatness, even in built space, as well as to mixing affect and playfulness. The garden is one of a mere handful of Cullen's built works. [Figure 3.22] Located outside of the Homes and Garden Building, where the AR had a small exhibit, it made room for the utmost symbol of conviviality: an inviting round table with a pair of chairs (a recurrent motif in Cullen's drawings). As if projecting out of one of his elevation perspectives, the garden took a vertical, planar form. Nine pairs of potted plants hung in three tiers and were attached to a grid of nine lattice panels, which were themselves attached to a stone wall. A small overhead canopy and a side partition completed the space. The richness of materials and textures was a visual-tactile feat that further

[226] Gordon Cullen, with Michael Regan, "Switch On," *Architectural Review* 121, no. 722 (March 1957): 186–93.

animated the garden with a complicated web of shadows. Only an estranged and humble fragment of white picket fence brought tradition into the otherwise modernist garden. (The whimsical bit of fence reflected Cullen's affinity for collage, and recalled Lubetkin's caryatids in "Highpoint II.")

Straddling the two-dimensional and the three-dimensional, and the abstract and the affective, Cullen's work readily marketed Townscape to architects and town planners, who thought and drew on paper, as well as to the average consumer, for whom the real world became spectacle.

Tones, Tints, and Other Tools

Aided by new devices, Cullen produced flat and affective perspectives through the articulation of form and color. To abolish any hint of modeling, he treated solids and voids, buildings and open spaces as equal compositional forms. He eliminated light sources so that shadow could enter the frame only as an independent gray or black form. To maximize drama and depth, black and white tones were juxtaposed, and all tonal gradations were presented in uniform values of gray, black, white, or texture. Cullen also discovered the Zip-a-Tone, an intriguing new device consisting of an adhesive shading film printed with dots or lines. [Figure 3.22] Invented in 1937, the Zip-a-Tone was popular for producing cartoons, and Cullen quickly found it to be an ally. Its uniform texture and quick cut-and-paste application to the back of vellum or tracing paper (carrying a drawing) proved ideal for Cullen's fast production needs and desire for flat impressions.

To achieve flatness, the emancipation from the likeness and temporality of the world, Cullen also had to reject symbolic color references. In fact, most of his drawings entirely eschew color. The monochrome line drawing could focus on form and simplify the image. Yet when

Cullen did use color, mostly in the first period through 1953, he avoided harmonious and naturalistic color palettes. To retain the flatness of the image and simultaneously charge it with the vitality necessary to make Townscape a compelling product, Cullen used modernist art and cartoon color schemes and techniques. Léger, Paul Gauguin, Henri Rousseau, and Le Corbusier, among others, shaped Cullen's techniques, though Léger's interest in the intensities of color, its visual and psychological effects, and its impact on the modern street, town, and landscape held special appeal. Cullen preferred industrial, bright, and pure tints, uniformly and mechanically printed. Unlike Humphry Repton, whose watercolor perspective renderings imitated the "natural" colors of landscape, Cullen chose the antinaturalistic palette of industrial tints from the AP printing press chart, applying it to selective parts of his perspectives. He would pencil the number of each tint on the area in the drawing, and hand it to the colorist and printer, often accompanied by a note reading "Handle with care." [Figure 3.23] For "Westminster Regained" (November 1947), his first color perspective, he used a dozen tints from the "stable color" palette favored by Cubists, which included such muddier, earthier tones as orange-red, olive drab, burley wood, dark salmon, black and white, and two values of gray.[227] In the same essay, however, he used the pure and more artificial bright green and red tints for the comic strip of six cartoons to explicate the function of a town district. It is this second choice that would ultimately define his personal color palette.

From 1949 onward, beginning with "Bankside Regained" (January 1949), *The Review*'s unsolicited design proposal for the 1951 Festival of Britain, Cullen relied mostly on the same primary industrial colors—blue, red, green, and yellow—promoted by the De Stijl and Bauhaus

[227] This color palette was promoted by the post-purist Amédée Ozenfant in a series of articles on the pages of *The Review* between January and August 1937. For example, see Amédée Ozenfant. "Colour: The English Tradition." *Architectural Review* 81, no. 480 (January 1937): 41-44; Amédée Ozenfant. "Colour in the Town." *Architectural Review* 82, no.486 (July 1937): 41- 44.

schools. He laid them flatly against a field of black and white.[228] [Figure 3.24] Colorful ephemera and décor could then shine over the discolored urban landscape, but only for scant effects. Colors were applied to selective elements of "exterior décor," such as signs, murals, posters, banners and flags, and mobile artifacts (e.g., riverboats and buses). By doing so, Cullen eschewed the signification of color in favor of affect.[229] Color turned into an object floating in space, a stylistic choice that emulated Léger's color concept, in which color became a plastic activity of its own, not bound to any object. The names Cullen gave his colored elements, "exhibition pieces" and "moving colors and shapes," imply that he considered the city not just an urban theater but also one he could set in motion.[230] Cullen thus permitted the pulse and the ephemeral qualities of landscape to invade the austere modernist city through color. In this way, he imbued the city with pleasure and theatricality.

But his use of color was constrained by his need for a practical and efficient mode of production, which in turn was wedded to the printing technology and apparatus available at the press. *The Review*'s color line printing technique, also known as "letterpress," printed only one color at a time, and produced planar and industrial effects that aligned with Cullen's preferred modern aesthetics. In the short essay "Colour Line," published in *The Penrose Annual* in 1950, he focused specifically on his color reproduction method and provided unique insight into his

[228] Gordon Cullen, "Bankside Regained," *Architectural Review* 105, no. 625 (January 1949): 15–24. Occasionally, Cullen treated an entire wall surface or the sky with a single and flat color in lieu of stronger contrast and compositional depth. In diagrammatic drawings, he employed bright red and yellow accent for lines of movement and connecting arrows as well as for décor and ephemera, such as lettering, signs, clothing, vehicles, and flags.

[229] For a historical perspective on color in architecture, see Sylvia Lavin, "What Color Is It Now?" *Perspecta* 35 (2004): 98–112.

[230] Cullen, "Townscape Casebook," 368.

work. Illustrated with six of the eight "Westminster" perspectives, the essay relates the advantages and limitations of the color line technique.

Cullen opens the essay, characteristically, on a practical note. "It is usual to adopt a fairly modest colour scheme," he writes, "particularly if the drawings are to be reproduced in a magazine, because every additional colour means considerable added expense."[231] Color choices, he further explains, are constrained by technology and the need for efficiency:

> I like colour line because the effects are clean and clear, and although there may have to be changes at the proof stage, these may be an advantage because one feels that the results are under control. Whereas in ordinary colour work the artist is in the hand of the reproducer, in colour line it seems that one is laying colours on paper by machinery. This is much more direct than making a painting with pigments and water and handing them over to the engraver to reproduce by photographic methods.[232]

In short, Cullen derived his aesthetics from the technology available and the efficacy of the working method.[233] He used the mechanical printing process both to imbue the city with artificiality and modernity and to represent its vitality and playfulness.

Flatness and affect alone, however, cannot account for Cullen's filmic and landscape-centric way of seeing the city. Anchored in a body strolling through the landscape, the city turned into a filmic experience through his signature "serial vision," a technique of putting sequential views in perspective drawings. Cullen neither conceived of the technique nor linked it to Townscape. Despite its two-century-long intertwined pedigrees and numerous manifestations, the concept it harbors came to be associated in modern urban design with Cullen, becoming his

[231] Cullen, "Colour Line," 57.

[232] Ibid.

[233] For the image caption in "Colour Line," Cullen describes his preparation for the colorist and printer, explaining the separate drawings that must be made for each color and prepared on the printer's blue proofs, many examples of which can be seen in his archive. [Figure 3.25]

most celebrated technique and the trademark of Townscape. This graphic concept would stand against modernist construction, and made Cullen an eminent producer of postwar urbanism.

Shifting Viewpoints: Serial Vision

Serial vision is essentially an organizing device for the exploration of the urban landscape, a pedestrian way of seeing the city. Many have attempted to convey it, but as the architectural critic James Morris insisted, Cullen employed it better than anyone: "Nobody has ever analysed more precisely the particularly urban fascination of the moving viewpoint that shifting of perspective and allure that strikes the imagination so powerfully when you watch the Doge's Palace slide majestically behind the Campanile, or the lovely panorama of the High unfolding sinuously before your windscreen."[234] Cullen's technique proved superior to that of his predecessors because of his grafting process, and because he clearly showed the way to apply the technique to city design.

Intertwined Trajectories

It appears that two interrelated representational trajectories, both of which began in the eighteenth-century picturesque garden stroll, intertwined the various techniques popularized by Cullen: the first passed through modern film and was enmeshed in art and architecture; the second circulated through modern town planning and was related to urban form. Both trajectories concern an aesthetic experience generated through motion in space and use the device as a means to explore that space. However, the first was employed for novel production in new media, including architecture, while the second resurrected the original technique from its picturesque landscape past and applied it to the city without further advancing the idea. The first, filmic trajectory began with Repton's picturesque landscape garden strolls, passed through early

[234] James Morris, "A Moving Viewpoint," review of *Townscape*, by Gordon Cullen, *Architectural Review* 132, no. 785 (July 1962): 6–7.

modern film and the works of Serge Eisenstein, and ended in the 1920s with the experimental work of Moholy-Nagy's conception of "vision in motion" and Le Corbusier's "architectural promenade." The second, planning trajectory also began with the eighteenth-century picturesque, but it passed through the nineteenth-century town planning work of Camilo Sitte and Raymond Unwin; then appeared in *The Review* in essays on streets and roads by P. Norman Shand, H. C. Riley, and Piper in the 1930s; and ended with the photographic itineraries of Pevsner and Sharp in the early 1940s. Unlike the second trajectory, the first displays a constant reinvention of the technique through representation. Cullen's technique, like all his work, became a crossroads for a vast array of visual devices. His version of serial vision was based on his colleagues', infused (as was the rest of his work) with modernist and traditional sensibilities, and it applied his favored bricolage operation by mixing both highbrow and lowbrow references. Though the work is referential, the end product of his amalgamations differs markedly from the original presentation of his source materials. Cullen was driven by motives quite unlike those of the planners, painters, scholars, or even architects who preceded him. His predilection was that of an image maker within a society of spectacle, and it was his work that ultimately shaped Townscape into an appealing and popular consumer product.

From Architectural to Urban Promenade

Cullen's first perspective sequence in *The Review*, later known as "Serial Vision," appeared in "Westminster Regained" (November 1947); however, the first time he published the technique was in the "MARS New Architecture" exhibition catalog in 1938, in which he illustrated five interior exhibition spaces based on and keyed to a plan.[235] [Figure 3.26] It demonstrated the sequence and line of movement that a prospective visitor would follow. This

[235] See MARS, "New Architecture," exhibition catalogue. Cullen included four of the drawings in his portfolio of the late 1930s.

first perspective series decidedly echoed Le Corbusier, who was himself an heir to filmic montage.[236] Cullen was citing Le Corbusier's famous meandering itineraries in the proposals for the interior of Villa Meyer, Neuilly-sur-Seine, in France (1925–26), also known as "architectural promenades," a series of eight perspectives Le Corbusier had generated to sell his design to his client. Cullen's 1938 piece used spare lines, selective detail embellishments, and a flat, modernist manner.[237] In his Townscape studies after joining *The Review*, Cullen departed from the Corbusian model and moved outdoors, a space that Le Corbusier preferred to watch through a wall opening or framed window.[238] Cullen set out to explore the everyday urban landscape, no longer relying on the architectural plan as the source of his perspectives. "The distinction between indoors and out of doors should be one of degree and not kind," Cullen wrote in a 1951 journal entry in preparation for the essay "Focus on Floor."[239] Thus, he moved freely between interior and exterior, reversing the roles of the plan and the perspective in prefiguring the design of the city, even while he remained conscious of the plan as a reference. Cullen drew his perspectives from photographs, or sketched them while in a landscape. He used a plan only to

[236] Yve-Alain Bois shows that Le Corbusier inherited the technique from the nineteenth-century French engineer Auguste Choisy and admired the film director Eisenstein, who also studied and emulated Choisy's work and "montage study" of the Pantheon. See Yve-Alain Bois, introduction to "Montage and Architecture," by Sergei M. Eisenstein, *Assemblage*, no. 10 (1989): 110–15.

[237] For the ways in which Le Corbusier's inquiry in painting led to innovations in architectural space, see Bruno Reichlin, "Jeanneret-Le Corbusier, Painter-Architect," in *Architecture and Cubism*, ed. Eve Blau and Nancy J. Troy (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1997), 203.

[238] Le Corbusier stopped the architectural promenade in the villa's roof garden in front of a horizontal wall opening or, in other cases, in front of a multipanel glass wall that framed an allegorical landscape view. He invited the landscape inside. His modern city censured the picturesque's fluid and irregular mobility. On Le Corbusier's metaphorical-mythical landscape, showing such features as a classic ruin or a rustic rock by the lake, see Michael Graves, "Le Corbusier's Drawn References," in *Le Corbusier: Selected Drawings*, ed. Michael Graves (London: Academy, 1981), 22. On Le Corbusier's dread of the picturesque in the city, see Sylvia Lavin, "Sacrifice and the Garden: Watelet's 'Essai sur les Jardins' and the Space of the Picturesque," *Assemblage*, no. 28 (December 1995): 16–33.

[239] Gordon Cullen, personal archive, journal, 1951, #379.

show the paths and points from which the views were taken. Le Corbusier's influence gave Cullen modern spare lines, and opened for him a way to depart from a plan and head into a landscape. At the exact graphic point at which Le Corbusier's architectural promenade ended, Cullen's urban promenade began.

Although the term "serial vision" first appeared in Cullen's book (it is unknown who coined it), both Thomas Sharp and Nikolaus Pevsner have linked movable pedestrian viewpoints to Townscape before Cullen.[240] But both conveyed it through photography alone—neither could draw.

Serial Vision Regained

When Cullen published his first *Review* pedestrian view sequence in "Westminster Regained," he essentially illustrated Pevsner's ideas. During that time, both Pevsner and Sharp were busy at work on their own Townscape books—Sharp on *Oxford Replanned* (for which Cullen designed the dust jacket), Pevsner on his unfinished *Visual Planning and the Picturesque* (recently edited and published)—making serial vision the central methodology of Townscape.[241]

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[240] Both Sharp and Pevsner compared the idea to the motion of a movie camera. Sharp referred to his High Street sequence in Oxford as "railway-carriage photography" and "panorama." Thomas Sharp. *Oxford Replanned*. (London: The Architectural Press, 1948). Pevsner discussed the pictorial pedestrian tour in his manuscript as "pictures" taken along a continuous walk. Nikolaus Pevsner, *Visual Planning and The Picturesque*, ed. Mathew Aitchison (Los Angeles: Getty Research Institute, 2010), 51.

[241] Pevsner began his inquiry into English town planning with an essay in 1939, but after joining the AR in 1942, and upon Hastings's request, he intensified his research into the origins of the picturesque. Subsequently, he began examining areas in London and Oxford and commissioned a photographer to take pictures according a certain line of movement. His book manuscript, written between 1945 and 1946 and recently edited by Aitchison, displays several of these sequences. See Pevsner, *Visual Planning and the Picturesque*, 2010. Sharp collaborated with Hastings and published a series on English town planning in 1935, leading to his book *English Panorama* (1936). Cullen prepared the dust jacket for its second edition (1950). In 1945, when Sharp was appointed to "replan" Oxford, he invited Hastings to join him and the two began collaborating on a book to promote the Townscape approach, leading to Sharp's 1948 book, *Oxford Replanned*. Sharp. *Oxford Replanned*, 1948. For a full account of their collaboration and of Pevsner's early photographic sequences, see Erdem Erten, "Thomas Sharp's Collaboration with H. de C. Hastings: The Formulation of Townscape as Urban Design Pedagogy," *Planning Perspectives* 24, no. 1 (January 2009): 37–38, 47 n. 18.

Cullen borrowed the method from his two colleagues, who in turn were greatly influenced by the British planner and architect Sir Raymond Unwin. Unwin based his ideas on those of the Austrian architect Camillo Sitte, the first to apply picturesque principles to urban form in the late nineteenth century. Unwin had published a number of perspective series as seen by a moving spectator in his book *Town Planning in Practice* (1909); one involved traveling around a cathedral square in the town of Buttstedt, Germany (depicted in a series of drawings), and another involved walking along High Street in Oxford, England (shown through photographs).[242] The photographs of the five sequences that Pevsner selected for *Visual Planning* and the two sequences in Sharp's *Oxford Replanned* were shot by the photographers Mark Oliver Dell and H. L. Wainwright (Dell and Wainwright), who were commissioned by Hastings and directed by Pevsner. In fact, Pevsner's and Sharp's photographic sequences of High Street, which used some of the same photographs, were based on the same viewpoints used in Unwin's book forty years earlier.

In "Westminster," *The Review*'s first exposition of the visual methodology of Townscape and first application to an urban precinct, Cullen was still experimenting with two radically different techniques. [Figure 3.27] The first, in the form of seven stacked elevation views composed neatly on one page, was a new and original technique at the time. The second, a series of eight drawings and one photomontage, part of a larger sequence of twenty-one views of individually framed eye-level perspectives that were paired with black-and-white photographs

[242] See Raymond Unwin, *Town Planning in Practice: An Introduction to the Art of Designing Cities and Suburbs* (1909; reprint, New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 1994), 216–20, 261–67. Unwin's engravings display highly textured and detailed drawings. The views were taken not in sequence but rather from different points around a square. The location of the views is keyed to a plan to be understood.

and spread across five essay pages, took a more familiar form.[243] Both sequences were keyed to a plan. It would be the latter technique, the traditional yet modernized serial vision technique (minus the "before" photo), that would develop within a few years into Cullen's popular template.

The first sequence is akin to filmic space. Like a filmstrip, it shows visual change in equal increments, resulting from a seamless movement of a film camera but without the individual frames. It lucidly conveyed the idea of the parallax, showcasing the changing views of the façades, towers, and spires of Westminster Cathedral, captured in a curved line of motion around the buildings. [see Figure 3.27] Conversely, the second drawing sequence is akin to pedestrian space. It shows selected key observer views—an illustrated tour within the spaces in the Westminster precinct. It also depicts the proposed transformation of the district. The latter was thus the first time in which serial vision was used to show proposed rather than existing views in *The Review* and, with the exception of Repton's and Le Corbusier's promenades, the first time it was directly employed as a design tool.

Labeled "Panorama of the Westminster Precinct," the first series takes the form of flat elevations meticulously stacked according to the alignment and progression of the viewpoints in time. Cullen's original preparatory field sketches of this series (found in an undated notebook) show that he was intent on keeping six of the seven views flat, thereby avoiding oblique perspectival lines, but he shifted to a perspective in the seventh and final drawing: there the spectator is positioned inside a space and surrounded by buildings, instead of looking at the buildings from the outside. [Figure 3.28] With this technique, Cullen combined the traditions of architectural elevation drawing with filmic scenography, creating the same dynamic effect seen

[243] In the essay, Cullen is credited with "the realization of the Architectural Review plan." AR editors, "Westminster Regained," *Architectural Review* 102, no. 611 (October 1947): 159–70.

in filmstrips. In is no surprise that he reprinted the drawing two years later in "Townscape Casebook" under the category of "Eye as Movie Camera."

Cullen borrowed the concept of "parallax" from film, which in turn is indebted to the landscape gardener Repton, who had employed this picturesque principle that called for "intricacy" for his garden path. The technique of intricacy entailed an oblique approach to a building or other built object, a wavy line instead of a straight line, and thus implied a changing, partial, and uncertain back-and-forth perspective shifting between concealment and revelation.[244] Like Repton, Cullen stressed a meandering line (and several other picturesque principles, such as variety of view-framing devices and spatial contrasts) for the creation of drama. Unlike Repton, who had explored his garden estates in perspective, Cullen did not attempt to create a naturalistic impression and instead explored the townscape using modernist devices.

Parallax was also used in the late nineteenth century by filmmakers as they borrowed sequencing techniques from the illustrators of eighteenth-century picturesque gardens. The link of film to picturesque garden design, and in turn the link of the urban landscape to the motion picture, has been noted by several scholars, including the art historian Giuliana Bruno.[245] In her chronicle of the evolution of the motion picture from landscape films to urban films, Bruno argues, "The urban landscape is a product of its filmic incarnation, which becomes a part of its geography. A city becomes activated on the screen as much as it does on the street."[246] The work

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[244] In his book manuscript "visual planning and the picturesque Pevsner," Pevsner referred to Repton as the origin of the concept of changing and partial views. See Pevsner, *Visual Planning*, 146. For an intriguing analysis of this concept, also known as "parallax," in the work of the sculptor Richard Sera, see Yves-Alain Bois, "A Picturesque Stroll around Clara-Clara," *October* 29 (Summer 1984): 37–38.

[245] See Colomina, *Publicity and Privacy*, 77.

[246] Giuliana Bruno, *Atlas of Emotion: Journeys in Art, Architecture, and Film* (New York: Verso, 2002), 28.

of the film director Sergei Eisenstein, whom Le Corbusier admired, likewise had its pedigree in the works of nineteenth- and eighteenth-century architects and was linked to the picturesque.[247] Cullen's interest in film, and the link he made to serial vision, is quite explicit in his graphics, some of which show the filmstrip itself framing a series of stills. As his early work demonstrates, he was well aware of the versatility of the movie camera in manipulating perspective through close-ups, panning, and other motions. When he sought to portray the urban landscape, as in the turn-of-the-century motion film, visual experience came to be bound in motion. Yet Cullen's interests in film went further than simply depicting movement in space to transferring the sensorial-immersion of film, as he fashioned ways in which the optic could become haptic and visual space sensorial. Here, the virtual-yet-immersive experience of film, achieved through the editing process (or cinematic montage), was his guide. As Eisenstein suggested in his text "Montage," written between 1937 and 1940, Cullen arranged sequenced "shots" to produce another meaning, which was not actually recorded on the film, by adapting film editing techniques such as cuts, fast-forward, flashback, diverse motion speeds, focus, angles, and framing to graphics.

As its caption states, the stacked view series is "the view of a town as a piece of moving scenery [that] *hardly enters the head of the man in the street*" (emphasis added).[248] The image is revelatory, conveying an experience that only an artist may notice or communicate. Yet to the average architect and planner, it looks sophisticated and hard to emulate. The flatness of the drawing and its focus on the buildings alone, without people and everyday details, make it more

[247] See Eisenstein, "Montage and Architecture."

[248] AR editors, "Westminster Regained," 70.

draftsmanly and less friendly. Despite its originality and artistry, this novel technique is rarely seen again in Cullen's work.

By contrast, the second series of fragmented and individually framed perspectives echoed the familiar human perception of being within the landscape, and was labeled as such ("The Pedestrian's Viewpoint"). The eight line drawings and single photomontage were part of a larger sequence of twenty-one views that took the observer on a tour within the spaces in the Westminster precinct. As if he were using a film story board, Cullen created a story out of selective highlights. He drew five views at eye level and three from a bird's-eye view, the latter enabling him to further emphasize floor and space over building façades. In contrast to the first series, this sequence depicted the proposed design for the precinct, and each drawing rested against a smaller photograph of the existing view. The drawings were generated from photographs shot by staff photographers (mostly by Alfred Cracknell). Here, Cullen followed Repton's technique of sequential perspective by pairing "before-and-after" views, which Repton had drawn along a proposed path of movement from the estate gate to the manor house for each of his patrons (though Repton's landscape perspectives were drawn onsite, in pencil and watercolored). But in rejecting Repton's deception of "natural" illusion and disguise of the artificial landscape, just as he had done in his 1938 "Clermont Lake" project, Cullen innovated the technique by increasing his emphasis on the artificiality of the city and of the design intervention (see "Drawing the Modern Landscape" in chapter 2). Thus each of Cullen's proposed flat and tinted perspectives prominently contrasted with the existing scene in the black-and-white photograph, leaving no space for illusion. Beyond the clear references to Repton, however, it is quite likely that Cullen derived the second perspective series of Westminster more

directly from his close *Review* circle and from graphic techniques previously featured in the magazine.

Vision in Motion in *The Review*

A marked fascination with the development of film and its implication for architecture, and with the parallel idea of vision in motion characteristic of city streets and countryside roads, is evident in the pages of *The Review* as early as the early 1930s—especially through photography. The magazine featured essays in which film and photography, demonstrated by the work of Moholy-Nagy and of the artist John Piper, figured prominently. Various essays on films by the architect Serge Chermayeff and theorist Morton Shand, among others, as well as on city walks (for example, by the architect H. C. Riley), began the magazine's focus on the visual landscape, as they displayed graphic design ideas related to this new way of seeing.[249] An actual imprint of filmstrip contact, panoramic and succeeding views of street façades formatted horizontally across the page, spread in vertical filmstrip fashion as a pedestrian itinerary with a parallel column of running text. [Figure 3.29] Essays on roads followed that explored the territorial overlap of film and highway design and also addressed the visual clutter of advertising billboards. These, too, used the vertical filmstrip format, and even actual filmstrip images, with

[249] The earliest essay series on filmic perception and technicalities in the *Architectural Review*, "Film Inquiry" (published 1931–32), was contemporaneous with cinematic layouts of architecture taken directly from recorded filmstrip and printed in its form. The ex-journalist and architect Serge Chermayeff used a horizontal filmstrip layout in his filmic survey of modern architecture in Germany in an essay in October 1931, and his captions took the form of notations. Chermayeff, Serge. "Film Shots in Germany." *Architectural Review* 70, no. 418 (October 1931): 131-2; The theorist Morton Shand wrote about experimental film and its relations to architecture, especially singling out the pioneering work of Moholy-Nagy in January 1934. P. Morton Shand, "New Eyes for Old," *Architectural Review* 75, no. 448 (January 1934): 11–12; C. H. Riley's series used a vertical film layout with running commentary and was titled "Street by Street: A Critical Tour of Famous Thoroughfares." It was featured in the *Architectural Review* 79, January through March 1936.

perforated edges.[250] Piper had borrowed the graphic and, for the first time (before Cullen's arrival), had drawn a sequence of thumbnail view sketches in the 1938 essay "London to Bath," which he wrote and illustrated [Figure 3.30]. Piper, like Cullen, drew his sketches after the photographs he had taken, laying them out in a vertical column of frames, like a filmstrip, and added road distance charts in parallel fashion.[251] However, Piper's sketchy line drawings—with hasty lines, open forms, and variable ink line weight—produced an impression devoid of the spatial and visual lucidity needed to effectively reach the mainstream postwar consumer and practitioner. Cullen continued *The Review* tradition but rejected Piper's technique, subsequently diverging from his predecessor.

Finally, Cullen's departure from his contemporaneous influences—the photographic sequences of Pevsner and Sharp—further explains why his Townscape work surpassed that of his colleagues. Of course, the most obvious difference between these photographs and Cullen's drawings is in their visible content: Pevsner's and Sharp's serial vision photos were shot in early morning light, specifically to exclude people and display a hazy and mystical atmosphere; Cullen made people and the street vibrantly central to his drawings.[252] To better control the reader's visual experience, Cullen "edited" the photographic content during his process of drawing after

[250] Paul Rotha, "Roads across Britain: Films of Purpose," *Architectural Review* 85, no. 511 (April 1939): 133–34. It is a review of a documentary film shown one month earlier at the RIBA Roads Exhibition.

[251] John Piper, "London to Bath: A Topographical and Critical Survey of the Bath Road," *Architectural Review* 85, no. 5 (May 1939): 229–46. An offshoot of the "Shell Guide" series—travel guides to England's counties paid for by the Shell Oil Company—Piper's essay displays a wide range of graphic techniques, including thumbnail photographs and architectural lithographs. For an extended discussion of this publication, see Macarthur and Aitchison, "Oxford versus the Bath Road."

[252] For his High Street views, Pevsner used some of the same photos that Sharp had used, though mostly focus on buildings facades. See Erten, "Thomas Sharp's Collaboration with H. de C. Hastings," 37–38. Pevsner, in turn, shot his photographs from viewpoints similar to those published by Raymond Unwin in his tour of Oxford in *Town Planning* (1909), a work that Pevsner clearly knew well. According to Macarthur and Aitchison ("Oxford versus the Bath Road," 23), Sharp took the idea of a photographic walk from Pevsner.

the photograph, excluding, reducing, adding, and distorting elements to create the focus and atmosphere of his choice, and thereby altered viewers' comprehension. In contrast, to guide viewers to specific elements within photographs, Pevsner and Sharp would mainly restrict the frame by cropping out unwanted material. Moreover, Cullen's serial vision drawings not only revealed the qualities of the place but also envisioned what the space could be. The floor and the spatial containment in "Parliament Square" are evident in the drawing, but only implicit in the photograph. The drawings thus both enabled the layperson to visualize future possibilities and provided a tool for the designer to envision and produce such possibilities.

Distinctions, however, go beyond the image's content and mood to several other devices that shape its impact on the reader. Although it can be enjoyed for the visuals alone, for its meaning to be understood the photograph requires additional visual and textual aids. Specifically, the photograph gains its meaning from layout on the page in relation to other images and to the text.[253]

Pevsner and Sharp, whose layout skills were limited, preferred large photographs that were printed one or two to a page, thereby forcing the reader to turn pages in order to move along an itinerary. Breaking the visual flow made it difficult for the reader to "implace" herself within and to follow the line of movement.[254] [Figure 3.31] In contrast, Cullen, who aimed for logical page spreads that were easy to follow and for a maximum impact that went beyond the visual to the emotional, modeled his serial vision layout on the itinerant experience. He drew his

[253] Colomina, *Privacy and Publicity*, 100.

[254] Sharp included two photographic itineraries keyed on a plan and linked to captions of factual street names and direction, and to running text on a different page in the body of the book. According to Erten the second itinerary was done by Hastings. Its images are lined up vertically, like a filmstrip, and thus more closely mirror previous *Review* essay strategies. See Erten. "Thomas Sharp's Collaboration with H. de C. Hastings."

images small enough to fit several on each page, and laid them out to form a line of progress, thereby leading the reader's eye across the double-page spread along the metaphorical pedestrian path. [Figure 3.32]

The accompanying caption and its style also shaped its meaning. Sharp chose to include minimal and purely factual captions; the latter required the reader to have already digested the running text to grasp the meaning of a sequence as a whole. Pevsner included running commentary that went beyond description to analyze the experience of the walk's progress and the architectural elements and styles in sight—thus turning the visual tour into an educational session with instructions on things to see and do. Moreover, his text is written with the authorial voice of a guide and architectural expert, and with a scholarly touch. Pevsner was therefore wholly dependent on the reader's complicity in agreeing to share his knowledge and the pleasure he derived from wandering the streets of Oxford. Conversely, Cullen's text typically was conversational and descriptive, and merely an accessory—not required for comprehension. His disinterest in history and interest in visual experience are made explicit in a 1946 notebook description of a walk along a typical London block: "The reader will actually KNOW the block, he will have developed an architectural eye to appreciate grouping, the large view, the intimate view, the textures. *It is this which is just as essential as knowledge of history*" (emphasis added).[255] In contrast with Pevsner's historical, cerebral approach, and with Sharp's rational approach, Cullen's message could be felt through the senses.

Finally, the reliance of the images on a plan to be understood proved to be a crucial design element. Like Unwin before him, Pevsner for his manuscript had used the precinct map to show the locations from which the pictures were shot (but without the little arrows indicating the

[255] Gordon Cullen, personal archive, journal, 1946, #440.

direction of the views).[256] Pevsner's introduction explained that both diagrammatic plan and running commentary were necessary to convey the spatial significance of the pictures. Similarly, both of Westminster's serial vision sequences were keyed to a plan, likely under Pevsner's direction; however, in later perspective sequences Cullen made the plan an unnecessary accessory. He positioned the views strategically and linked them visually—each view contained hints of the next; or, as is explained in the next section, "Extramural Affairs," he turned the plan into an aerial perspective-axon. [Figure 3.33]

Cullen incorporated abstract modernist drawing techniques from Le Corbusier, learned to move across boundaries and along a variable line of movement from Repton, and took montage techniques from motion film. He also took note of Piper's filmstrip-like sketches along England's highway, which followed a long line of graphic experiments in *The Review*, and emulated the mobile pedestrian view method of his colleagues Pevsner and Sharp (who, in turn, had been influenced by Unwin). Informed by these multiple sources, Cullen set out to reinvent an effective technique for representing Townscape. He would appropriate the technique for a younger generation familiar with comic books and animated film.

Reduced to spare lines and enclosed forms, which produced greater flatness and clear formal composition, Cullen's drawings were highly communicative to architects and planners who conceived their ideas through drawings. When the editors of the *AJ* featured the "Westminster" essay's images in their special issue looking back over their ninety-year history, they wrote: "Gordon Cullen's drawings were admirably clear compared with the plethora of

[256] Macarthur and Aitchison ("Pevsner's Townscape," 21) explain that the original maps in Pevsner's archive were unfinished. They therefore modeled the illustration for the published manuscript on a later version, which they believed likely captured his intention.

town plans drawn by professional planners in the *AJ*."[257] Building further on the *AJ*'s praise, one could argue that Cullen's cartoonish characters and red buses, straight out of toyland, made the drawings enticing to all audiences—especially to a generation that grew up browsing comic books and watching animated cartoons. Cullen essentially appropriated the genre of animated cartoons to architecture. As a result of honing serial vision, Cullen engineered a body of work that had enormous impact on landscape and urban representation (a topic developed further in Chapter 5) and on the consumerist propensity for the spectacular city that is Townscape.

The drawings for "Westminster" marked a milestone in the Townscape campaign and *Review* history, and they were reprinted in numerous publications. Although Cullen's perspective drawings became increasingly popular and influential for British practitioners and students (soon after the same occurred in Europe and America), it took several more years before his serial vision congealed into a colloquial form that could be easily emulated. Only when Cullen achieved that form would he establish serial vision as the trademark of Townscape and create a landmark in architectural representation.

Extramural Affairs

In the years following "Westminster," serial vision was noticeably absent from the pages of *The Review*, despite the many Townscape essays and columns that Cullen illustrated with perspectives. Serial vision next appeared in the August 1951 special issue on the Festival of Britain South Bank Exhibition, though it was composed primarily of photographs mixed with a few perspective drawings and diagrammatic axons.[258] Since the site design was considered by *The Review* to be the first built realization of Townscape, the sequence purported to illustrate the

[257] AJ editors, "A View of Architects and Architecture, Ninety Years On: Everything Severely Practical." *Architects' Journal* 179, no. 26 (June 27, 1984): 78.

[258] AR editors, "Exhibition as Landscape," *Architectural Review* 110, no. 656 (August 1951): 80–107.

way in which it was conceived and, therefore, the way that the exhibition ought to be viewed by a prospective visitor. But it was with "Prairie Planning" (July 1953) that serial vision returned in earnest.[259] The essay that followed Richards's first assault on New Towns planning marked the moment in which *The Review*'s Townscape policy turned aggressive and proactive, seeking to appeal to a broader section of the population.

This return coincided with the AR's quest to conquer a new frontier: the audience that *The Review* had targeted after the war had changed again, shifting from large-scale postwar government planners and policy makers in charge of the reconstruction and expansion of Greater London to the private developers and local town councils with political clout among the conservative government that returned to power in October 1951. The early deployment of the Townscape effort had sought specifically to influence and reach central government bureaucrats, professional town planners, and engineers; but the battle shifted to the public policy arena as *The Review* appealed to public opinion. The AR calibrated its focus by, as Richards claimed, "aim[ing] at influencing town and county councilors and their technical officers rather than architects' policy and improvement projects."[260] The editors announced that they intended "to spread the townscape gospel throughout some of the mid-land towns . . . that come under its sphere of influence," dismissing the idea that Townscape was about cobbles and Victorian lettering.[261] Again, Cullen proved indispensable.

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[259] Cullen, "Prairie Planning in the New Towns," 33.

[260] J. M. Richards, *Memoirs of an Unjust Fella*, 191.

[261] Gordon Cullen, "Midland Experiment: Ludlow," *Architectural Review* 114, no. 681 (September 1953): 101. For complete account of *The Review*'s outreach programs, see Erten, "Shaping 'The Second Half Century,'" 100.

As a result, from early 1953 onward, Townscape was presented as a more pragmatic approach to town planning, and Cullen, together with several colleagues, was dispatched to teach communities firsthand on their home turf. The campaign to influence New Town corporations on the pages of the journal therefore took to the field, morphing into a number of AR outreach projects to institutionalize Townscape. It was in this period that Cullen worked to shape serial vision into the primary graphic technique and basic methodological tool of Townscape. He relied on this tool to educate the public about Townscape, and to brand it.

Out in the Field

Cullen participated in a number of outreach programs, including collaborations in 1951 with universities in Birmingham and Bristol, where he helped create pedagogical exercises for students; these were followed by a more substantial collaboration with the extramural department of the University of Birmingham in 1953 and 1954. In this latter part of the project Cullen conducted six of eight town studies, which were subsequently published as essays.

This work environment was radically different from the press office and drafting table. For the first time, Cullen directly engaged his audience in workshops with local communities, town councilmen, and planning technicians, as well as participating university students. Despite the change in scenery, Cullen operated in much the same way, continuing to use his magic pencil to do the talking. With scant available resources and time, the drawings he did were basic, appealing, and effective.

The ensuing publications reflected this graphic shift. Instead of displaying the finished quality and "draftsmanly" mechanical ink line drawings he had become known for, the drawings took on a raw, sketchy look.[262] [Figure 3.34] The new, unassuming drawings echoed the basic

[262] Gordon Cullen, "Basildon Town Center," *Architectural Review* 114, no. 682 (October 1953): 245–50; Gordon Cullen, "Casebook Precedents," *Architectural Review* 115, no. 687 (March 1954): 191–94;

pedestrian tour method that Cullen used to study towns—a method everyone could practice. Cullen's journals are filled with notes describing the technique he used to study towns with the goal of proposing a Townscape "improvement." The published essays of the studies retained the idiom and syntax of the notes, clearly conveying the field study method, as in the following description of the town of Evesham: "Pedestrian way and traffic road divided; the path leads to the wedge, the road avoids it . . . Turning round in place the expected view back along High Street is screened off . . . Leaving the place, which is lovely, compact and important . . ."[263] He thus takes his reader's hand and guides her along a path, asking her to look for basic space elements.

Cullen began using methodically basic, sketchy line drawings with no ambition to impress. By using rough-looking sketches Cullen intended to encourage his reader to follow him, to see the town for herself, and, perhaps, to try her own hand at illustration. A few of his drawings of this period were made with chinograph pencil—a wax pencil (originally made for writing on China glass) whose dense, black line is good for publishing—with occasional textures added with Zip-a-Tone. Many drawings appear in *The Review* as field sketches, hastily published without further refinement. The essays, too, read as reports from the battleground on the character of English towns. "Midland Experiment," his essay series of four town studies published in 1953 and 1954, includes serial vision crayon sketches he created onsite during town

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Gordon Cullen, "Dursley," *Architectural Review* 120, no. 714 (July 1956): 21–23; Gordon Cullen, "Trowbridge," *Architectural Review* 123, no. 733 (February 1958): 114–16.

[263] Cullen, "Midland Experiment: Evesham," 129. The notes Cullen took in his personal journal while in Evesham read much like the printed version, using a simple description of bodily movement and views: "The Centre of Evesham presents one of the subtlest pieces of urban scenery I have yet encountered. Briefly the High St and Market Place form the main compartment of the scheme. Neither can be seen from the others. . . . High St ended by walls a, b c [referring to letters on a drawing], Coming through narrows and under arched view. . . . Inside one looks to High St but blocked by K," and so on. Gordon Cullen, personal archive, journal, 1951, #382.

meetings and field demonstrations. These drawings look like dummies—prototype pages intended for final review, rather than finished drawings ready for print. The sequence of the town of Evesham (1954) is even titled "Selling the Dummy."

Originals from his personal archive clearly show Cullen's hasty yet efficient work process during this stage. Back at the press, Cullen cut out the sketches directly from his original field sketches drawn on trace and vellum, added Zip-a-Tone adhesive patches to the back for tonal contrast, and pasted them onto a large leaf for the printer. He then cut and pasted short, typewritten notes over the sketches, laying them out as a continuous text across the individual drawings, and added arrows to link words in the text to specific visual features. The machine-written typeset provided and intentional contrast with the essay's more refined press type. [Figure 3.35] Often, Cullen included an aerial perspective view, and occasionally plans, to serve as locator for the views. The technique of aerial perspective view incorporated the familiar Cullenesque cartoonish three-dimensional model-like look, and thereby offset the abstraction of the plan.

This effort resulted in the milestone special issue "Outrage" (June 1955) and its sequel, "Counter-Attack" (December 1956), which were edited by Nairn and designed and illustrated with Cullen's powerful drawings.[264] They were later published as books by the AP, were widely circulated, and became highly influential on conservation policies and on early preservation groups. As public response began to pour in, the AR announced the opening of the "Counter-Attack Bureau." This "combatant" unit operated as "a centre from which outrage may be

[264] Ian Nairn, ed., "Outrage," *Architectural Review* 117, no. 702 (June 1955): 365–451; Ian Nairn, ed., "Counter-Attack," *Architectural Review* 120, no. 719 (Dec. 1956): 354–531. See Erten, "Shaping 'The Second Half Century,'"124-25. It is unclear why Cullen was not credited in either publication. Additional contributors were credited in "Counter-Attack," but Cullen received no credit for "Visual ABC," his visual essay that opened the issue.

combated . . . on a nationwide scale, and with coordinated effort," according to the June 1957 cover of *The Review*. For this cover, Cullen designed a filing cabinet full of "outrages and their antidotes."[265] The AR received two hundred requests for advice from town councils in 1958 and, as a result, produced a handful of projects and a series of publications. By the time Cullen left for India in 1959, he had been involved in four of the cases. Cullen was central to the formation of the AR's newly ambitious campaign to institutionalize and spread Townscape directly to communities; his serial vision was integral to its teaching method and appeared as a regular feature in the monthly Townscape essays. Yet, as he noted later in his diary, his contributions to the counterattack project were downplayed, and the project marked the beginning of the end of his production for the AR.[266]

The specific oversight to which Cullen referred was perhaps largely a symptom of deeper professional pressures and broader cultural shifts that ultimately led to his departure. But the experience that he had gained in the outreach and extramural town projects became invaluable for the post-*Review* consulting work and educational endeavors he would soon embark on.

A Fading Era

In the second half of the 1950s, both the AR editors and Cullen felt at odds with two opposing yet complementary contemporary cultural trends: the art and architectural avant-garde, on the one hand, and average practitioners at large ,on the other hand. As American consumer goods flooded Europe, both groups gradually caved in to consumerism, though in different ways, and rejected the kind of social and nationalist ideology upheld by *Review* editors. In London, the

[265] AR editors, cover caption, *Architectural Review*, 121, no. 725 (June 1957), table of content page.

[266] Cullen jotted these words in his notebook: "When I took the initiative and founded Counter Attack with Ian Nairn (it was probably the failure of this to produce any prizes of money or kudos which marked the beginning of my eclipse)." Gordon Cullen, personal archive, journal, 1960, #674.

architectural and art scene had plainly changed by the 1950s, giving rise to a newly formed avant-garde cadre—the Independent Group at the Institute of Contemporary Art and Team X, which broke away from CIAM (International Congress of Modern Architecture). These groups staged an opposition to Townscape and bluntly rejected the nationalist and conservative views of *The Review*. For the architectural avant-garde, Townscape displayed the kind of vernacular practice of those who had no ambition to create originality, at least in the traditional architectural sense of the word. The rivalry came to be known as New Empiricism versus New Brutalism. The magazine *Architectural Design*, which provided a platform for the voices of the avant-garde, became *The Review*'s main competition. As a result *The Review*, and more broadly the authority of the journalistic establishment, weakened and grew increasingly irrelevant to the new generation of architects with whom it could not keep pace. At the same time, professional architects who sided with the general consumer embraced the romantic visual taste of *The Review* yet could not care less about the editors' idealism and reformist social goals.

Nonetheless, as one of the earliest and most distinct reactions to modernist urban models, Townscape served as a bridge between modernism and postmodernism, and became the model to fight against or to embrace. As the visual planning approach of Townscape began spreading in the United States—not surprisingly through the work of *The Review*'s dilettantes Nairn and Cullen—it coalesced with new urban design models and began to take on different forms (see "Townscape Goes Global" in chapter 5).[267]

[267] In the United States, some of CIAM's leading members—José Luis Sert, who was dean of the School of Architecture at Harvard, and Sigfried Giedion—were planting the seeds for the first conference on urban design in 1956, working to shape the concept into a discipline. For the diffusion of Townscape in the United States, see Clément Orillard, "Townscape" Origins: Some Relationships between a British Editorial Policy and an American Academic Field in the 1950s," *Urban History* 36, no. 2 (2009): 284–302. Also see Erik Ghenoiu, "The Resurgence of Visual Urbanism in the American Architectural Discourse, 1954–1972," *Journal of Architecture* 17, no. 5 (October 2012): 791–806.

Although Cullen did not share many of *The Review*'s beliefs that alienated the avant-garde, he too was caught up in the very myth he created. Cullen shared with AR editors the idea that spontaneous social encounters in public space were still possible, when they had in fact already evaporated. He conceived of space as real and stable, even when the real was no longer present. Like the works of eighteenth-century picturesque painters who taught the nascent bourgeoisie the aesthetics of a disappearing rural world during the shift to an industrial, capitalist economy, so too Cullen's work depicted a world long gone, albeit briefly glimpsed in the microcosm of the Festival of Britain on the South Bank—a world of street bunting, joyous Londoners drinking in outdoor cafes, and crowded markets and squares. His depiction of possible life in English towns therefore began to miss its mark, corresponding less to real life and falling more in line with the desire he sought to instill in his audience. He also refused to accept the spatial transformations brought about by cars and highways, the technology at the center of the new economy that had given it rise. He certainly did not share postmodernity's appetite for the commodification of place. Cullen, together with *The Review*, lost control over the original Townscape message, precisely as it acquired ever more divergent meanings and forms.

The external pressure coupled with tensions within the press circle—most notably, a rift with Banham and competition with Kenneth Browne. Cullen had one foot out of *The Review*'s door. By 1956, according to his own résumé, Cullen was no longer officially a *Review* staff member. His 1955 marriage to Jacqueline de Chabaneix du Chambon may have given him the additional push that persuaded him to seek an entirely new career. He subsequently contracted with *The Review* on a freelance basis, continued to publish uninterrupted, and maintained his official title as art editor through October 1959.[268] In the intervening years, Cullen straddled two

[268] There were three exceptions to this rule. Browne and Cullen are listed together as art editors from February 1959 through September 1959.

careers—as a private consultant and as *The Review*'s art editor and occasional writer. His decision to decrease his dependence on the press and to gain consultant status also transpired when Townscape gained track in Britain within the general architectural community, and reached Europe and the United States. With newly recognized international acclaim, new clientele, and increasing numbers of book commissions, Cullen was ready to embark on a new career path as a Townscape consultant. He was also eager to take on private commissions.

He worked concurrently on several projects: publications for the British Interior Ministry, contributions to American magazines, and consultations with town councils and private corporations. At the same time, he maintained a full presence at and continued publishing in *The Review*, as well as in the *AJ* and in American magazines such as *Fortune* (see "Townscape USA" in chapter 5). Among his most prestigious projects was a town study of New Delhi, India, in March 1959, sponsored by the Ford Foundation. A book project funded by a research grant from the Rockefeller Foundation took him to the United States with publication in mind. Despite pursuing what seemed to be a promising new career, Cullen was uneasy with his disengagement from the press. It was a natural habitat and professional lifeline for a commercial artist and architectural draftsman, who had by nature depended wholly on creative visualization, the printed page, and mass media.

The "Old Boy" Speaks Up

On a boat en route to the United States in April 1960, Cullen recounted the events of the months surrounding his breakup with the AR in a personal diary. "Now I would like to set down the events in case I forget" was the opening of a detailed, candid, and bitter account that shed light on Cullen's professional dilemmas at a difficult moment in his career. Upon returning from New Delhi, he had hoped to publish three feature essays on his foreign experience and possibly

to be promoted to the position of feature editor, or at least receive some kind of additional financial compensation. Instead, his return marked, in his words, "the beginning of a year-long downfall." He was asked to perform the layout of the upcoming issue on the "Common Wealth." He wrote: "It was not really my job, for a man who had done my kind of job in India. This was a waste of time, but as Nikolaus Pevsner nicely put it, 'we thought it might bring you back to earth.' . . . I pondered over this was it meant as a joke . . . It was in any case the first real sign that I was 'out.'" [269] Subsequently, Kenneth Browne was made feature editor, and Cullen was relegated to doing layout. Although Cullen felt deservedly ready to shed off the draftsman label and climb up the professional ladder, his colleagues saw him the same as before: as an illustrator who needed to be brought back to earth.

Other incidents further degraded Cullen, especially when people at *The Review* "began the process of demolishing [his] personality."[270] When, in the summer of 1959, Cullen asked Hastings for a short break, Hastings was agreeable, adding that "as long as he was in charge, there would always be a place for 'me old boy.' He said it in a tired and ill kind of way."[271] Cullen resigned in October 1959 after working as staff member for fourteen years and as for-hire illustrator since 1935.[272] The "old boy" label that Hastings uttered was the final attack against Cullen. At age forty-six, he was still a boy at heart, but Hastings's remark that the boy was "old" revealed the assumption that he had simply stopped growing, and could no longer produce the

[269] Cullen characterized his job at the time as "the chap who does all the donkey work on the layout," and was paid a "ridiculous . . . £1,450 a year with no pension scheme, and no prospect of improvement." Gordon Cullen, personal archive, journal, April 15, 1960, ##665–680. The notes refer to events in October 1959

[270] Gordon Cullen, personal archive, journal, 1960, ##670, 667.

[271] Gordon Cullen, personal archive, journal, April 15, 1960, ##670, 667.

[272] Cullen negotiated a new contract and began working again in the summer of 1960, but resigned just a couple of months later in September 1960.

type of innovative work necessary for promoting the new projects that the AR was embarking on.

Cullen considered these final events at the AR to be personal attacks, fueled by jealousy. What he did not grasp was that the influence he had amassed occurred precisely because of what he truly was—an image maker—and that shedding this identifier was neither possible nor likely to improve his professional standing.

Conclusion

Cullen's departure from *The Review* in 1959 marked a significant break in his career. It coincided with new changes at the editorial board as part of a generational shift that took place at the dawn of the new decade. It was the same year that Richard Hamilton provoked the debate on the new game rules for art and architecture in a capitalist consumer economy in "Persuading Image." It was also the fulcrum of the new era of radical architecture founded on technology and consumption that was championed in Reyner Banham's book *Theory and Design in the First Machine Age* (1960), and carried out a few years later by Archigram against the neo-romantic and nationalist ideas to which *The Review* editors had subscribed. And it was the decade in which Debord published *Society and The Spectacle*, in which he decisively proclaimed: "Images detached from every aspect of life merge into a common stream, the former unity of life is lost forever[.] . . . The spectacle is not a collection of images; rather, it is a social relationship between people that is mediated by images."[273] The essential role of images of which Debord wrote and that Cullen had produced in the previous two decades would make Cullen's work central to the production of the postmodern urban landscape in the society of spectacle.

[273] Debord, *Society of the Spectacle*, 12.

Now widely disseminated in the stream of professional print media, Cullen's images and texts were ready for their final act in a bound volume. Though he lost the prime AP publicity platform that he had helped to popularize, Cullen embarked on a new platform—the *Townscape* book that packaged his sensibilities—and subsequently emerged as a spokesman of Townscape. *The Review* editors, by then seen as the "old guard," held on to their cause for another fifteen years as they steadily lost their media primacy, along with their ideological battleground.

A recent testament to the potency of Cullen's work is provided by a retrospective 1996 centenary special issue of *The Review* in which the editors recount the major landmarks in the life of the journal. It features nine drawings by Cullen, among them a before-and-after drawing pair taken from the 1955 special issue, "Outrage," printed on an entire page devoted to Cullen and aptly inserted among the advertisement pages. [Figure 3.36] A statement by Peter Davey, the journal editor at that time, laments that *The Review*'s denunciation of the visual desecration of towns in that 1955 landmark issue was still relevant forty years later. Davey reckons that the message is not yet understood, taken instead as promoting superficial street beautification and "dead streets paved with cobbles and bricks"—essentially reiterating Cullen's own statement in his introduction to *The Concise Townscape*. Davey acknowledges Nairn's contribution to the Townscape cause, and then directly addresses Cullen: "Cullen, thou should'st be living this hour to draw a third picture that will expose the trite standardize hypocrisy of what passes for architecture and planning in some of what were the finest villages in England."[274] The curious location of the page is not meant to advertise the out-of-print volume of "Outrage" so much as, perhaps, to expose the irony of the ad on the facing page—for cobblestone paving by BDC Concrete Products. Whether he intends a mockery of the Townscape campaign or a potent

[274] Peter Davey, "Outrage," in "The First 100 Years," special issue, *Architectural Review* 199, no. 1191 (May 1996): 23–25.

demonstration of the editor's point that the Outrage message has fallen on deaf ears, Davey underscores Cullen's primacy in the campaign. He borrows Cullen's canny use of the image as a cross between ad and message, with a marked facility to deliver a message and, at the same time, sell.

Figure 3.1. Gordon Cullen, illustrations, *The Kynoch Press Diary and Note Book for 1940*.

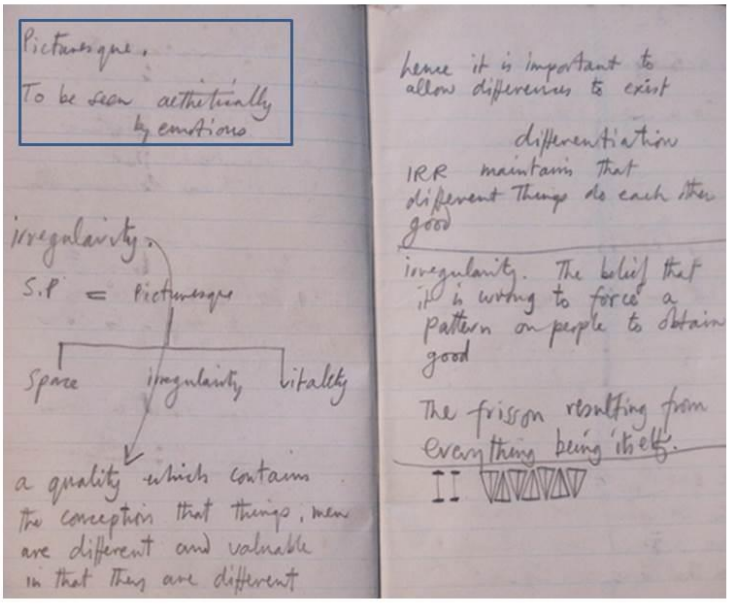

Figure 3.2. Gordon Cullen, working interpretation of the term "picturesque," journal entry, 1951. From Cullen's personal archive.

COLOUR IN THE PICTURESQUE VILLAGE

By John Piper

Figure 3.3. John Piper, page spread from "Colour in the Picturesque Village," *Architectural Review*, May 1946.

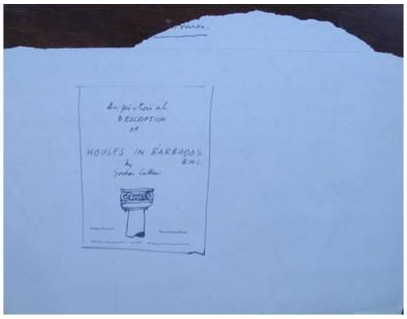

Figure 3.4. Gordon Cullen, sketch for an unrealized book cover ca.1945 (*top*); a dummy for a townscape study of Bridgehampton, 1960s (*bottom*). From Cullen's personal archive.

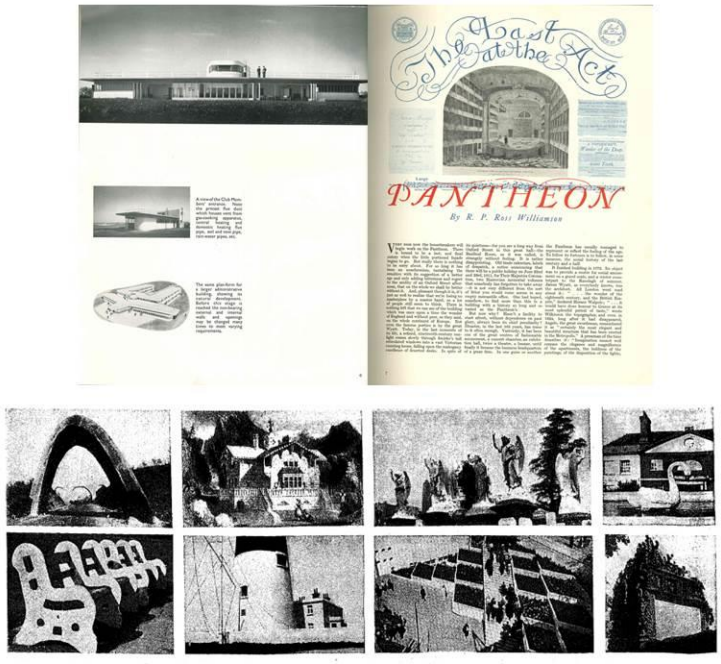

Figure 3.5. The eclectic design of the *Architectural Review* in the 1930s: a double-page spread, July 1937 (*top*), and illustrations of "The Second Half Century," January 1947 (*bottom*).

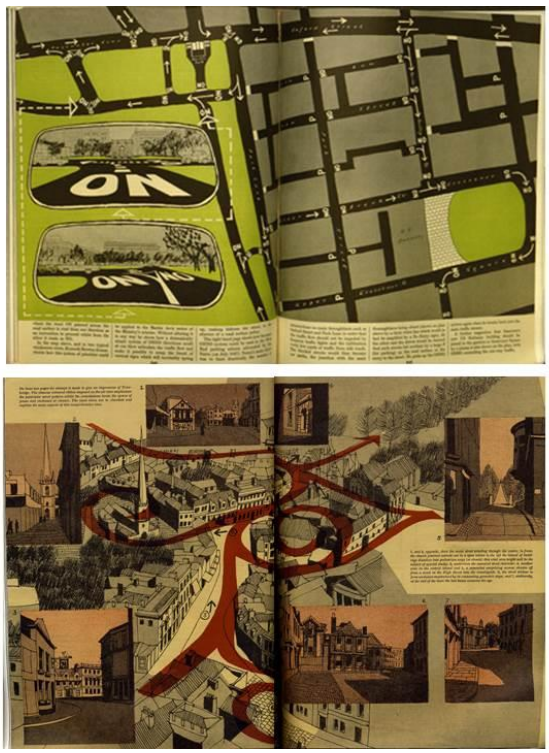

Figure 3.6. Gordon Cullen, double-page spreads from "Highway Code," *Architectural Review*, November 1957 (*top*), and "Trowbridge," *Architectural Review*, February 1958 (*bottom*).

Figure 3.7. Gordon Cullen, advertisements in *Architectural Review*: for Marley floor tiles, January 1950 (*left*), and for Pilkington Brothers Ltd. apartments, November 1958 (*right*).

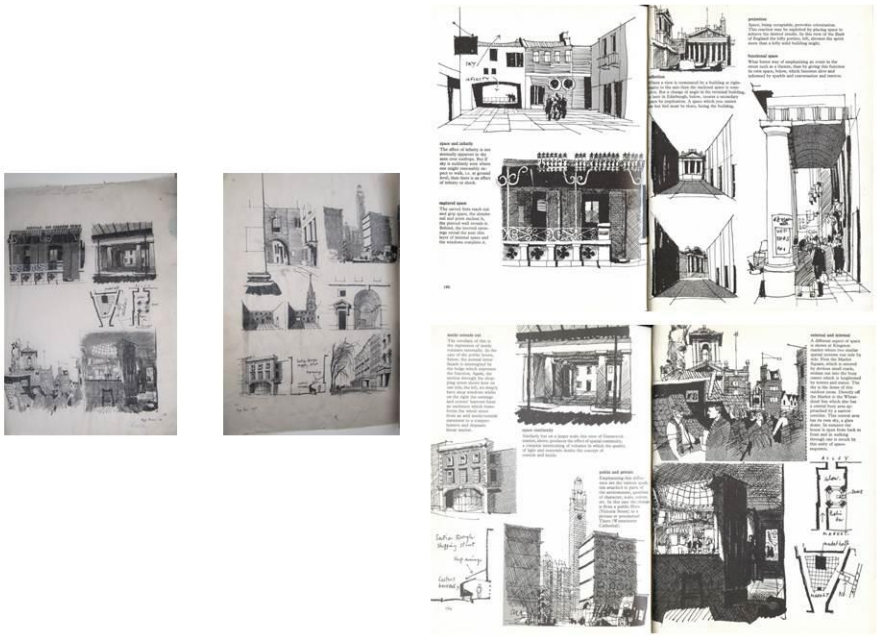

Figure 3.8. Gordon Cullen, two double-page spreads from "Here and There," *Architectural Review*, November 1958 (*right*), with preparatory sketches on tracing paper in preparation (*left*). Sketches from Cullen's personal archive.

Figure 3.9. Gordon Cullen, page spread from "Common Ground," *Architectural Review*, February 1954 (*left*); working layouts of Town of Ludlow, contacts pasted-on leaves in preparation for "Common Ground," 1954 (*right*).

Figure 3.10. Gordon Cullen, photographs showing attention to detail. Contact leaf, from Cullen's personal archive, ca. 1947 (*right*); page spread from the Casebook section of *Townscape*, 1961 (*left*).

Figure 3.11. Gordon Cullen, illustrations from "Westminster Regained," *Architectural Review*, October 1947 (*left*), and "Outdoor Publicity," *Architectural Review*, May 1949 (*right*), compared with Le Corbusier, photograph, Nestle pavilion, 1928, in his *Oeuvre Complète de 1910–1929* (*bottom left*).

Figure 3.12. Gordon Cullen, double-page spread on outdoor lettering from "The Functional Tradition," *Architectural Review*, January 1950.

Figure 3.13. Gordon Cullen, new *Architectural Review* masthead of lowercase Clarendon initials featured on three covers—January 1954, July 1955, and April 1959 (*center, right to left*), with letters made of clay, from Cullen's personal archive (*top left*). The clay letters are displayed on the October 1954 cover (*Bottom left*).

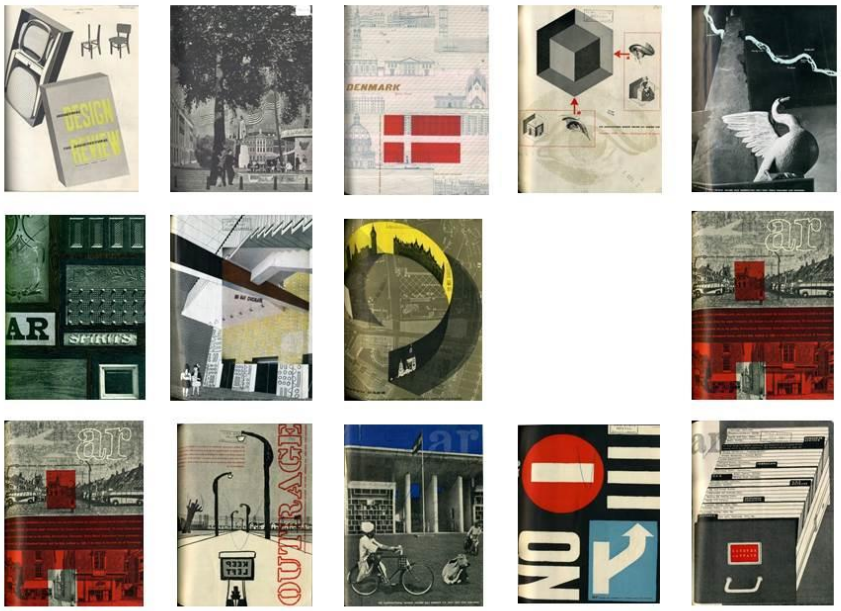

Figure 3.14. Gordon Cullen, a sample of *Architectural Review* cover designs, 1946–59.

Figure 3.15. Gordon Cullen, three facing illustrations for *Architectural Review* articles: "Exploding Metropolis," April 1958 (*left*); "Dublin," September 1954 (*middle*); and "Prairie Planning in the New Towns," July 1953 (*right*).

Figure 3.16. Gordon Cullen, two *Architectural Review* covers, December 1958 (*left*) and July 1944 (*upper right*), compared with László Moholy-Nagy, photoplastic, *Joseph and Potiphar's Family*, 1926 (*lower right*).

Figure 3.17. Gordon Cullen and D. Dewar Mills, *Architectural Review* cover, special issue on the Festival of Britain, August 1951 (*upper left*); it was reprinted as the cover of Nikolaus Pevsner, *Visual Planning and The Picturesque*, 2010 (*lower left*). The design recall's Paul Outerbridge's photo-advertisement for "Ide collar," 1922 (*top center*), and Herbert Bayer's cover of *Bauhaus* 1, 1928 (*top left*).

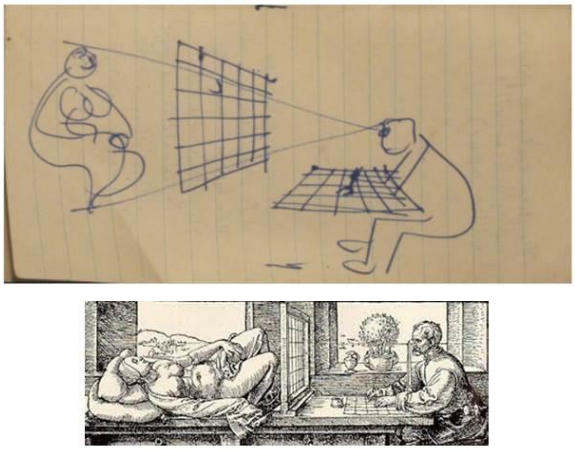

Figure 3.18: Albrecht Dürer, woodcut, *Alberti's Veil*, ca. 1500s (*bottom*), with Gordon Cullen's sketch of it, journal, 1955 (*top*). Dürer, from *Underweysung der Messung*, second edition, 1538; sketch, from Cullen's personal archive.

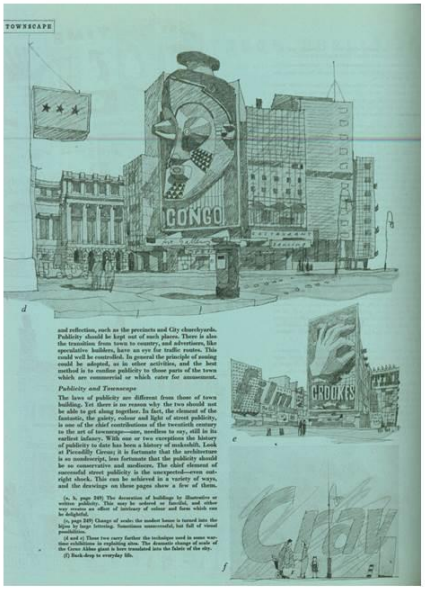

Figure 3.19. Gordon Cullen, page spread "Outdoor Publicity," *Architectural Review*, May 1949.

Figure 3.20. Gordon Cullen, drawing on tracing paper, in preparation for "Legs and Wheels," *Architectural Review*, August 1948 (*left*); illustration from "A Square for Every Taste," *Architectural Review*, October 1947 (*right*). From Cullen's personal archive.

Figure 3.21. Gordon Cullen, two double-page spreads from "Switch On," *Architectural Review*, March 1957 (*top*), with preparatory drawings from Cullen's personal archive (*bottom*).

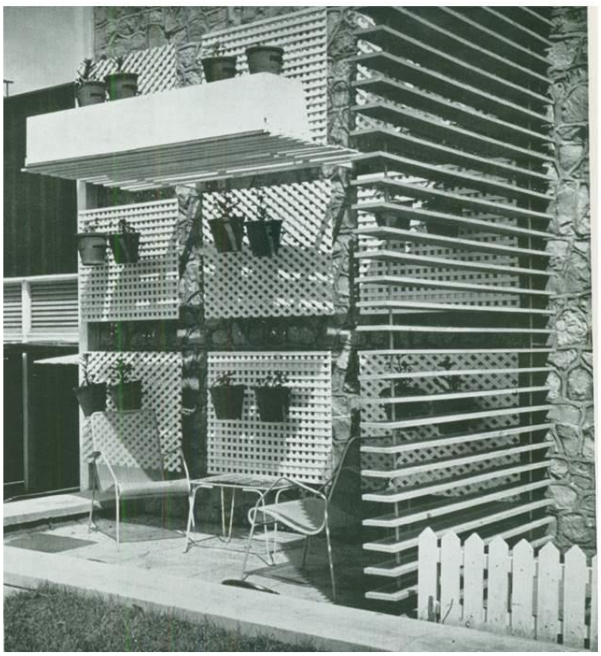

Figure 3.22. Gordon Cullen, pocket garden, Festival of Britain, 1951, in *Architectural Review*, August 1951. From Architectural Press Archive. Photo by Gawley.

Figure 3.23. Gordon Cullen, preparatory drawing for "Shrewsbury," *Architectural Review*, May 1954, showing the use of Zip-a-Tone on vellum. From Cullen's personal archive.

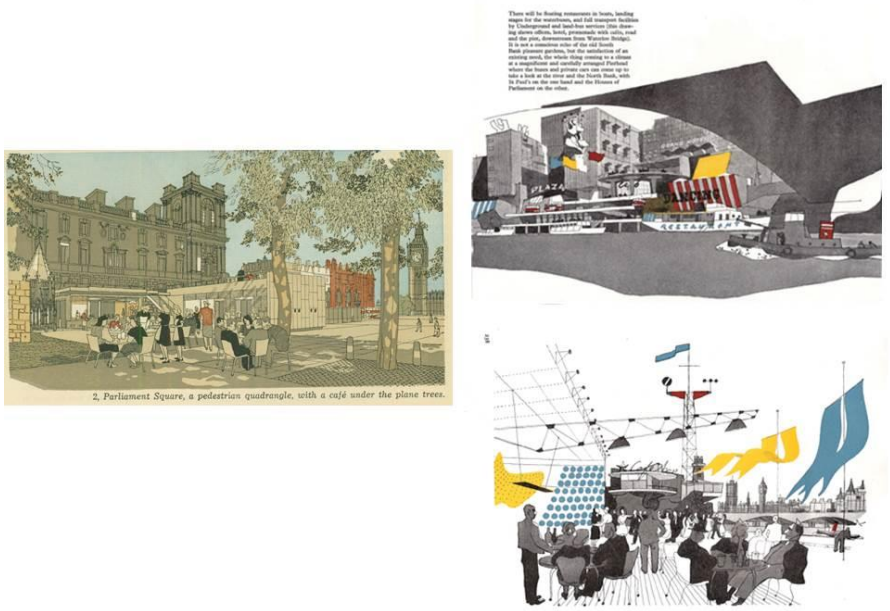

Figure 3.24. Gordon Cullen, color drawings from "Westminster Regained," *Architectural Review*, November 1947 (*upper left*), and "Southbank Regained," in *Architectural Review*, January 1949 (*upper and lower right*).

Figure 3.25. Gordon Cullen, layered drawings for separate tints prepared for the colorist and printer, ca. 1950. Black is used to mask parts of the image and block out the tint. From Cullen's personal archive.

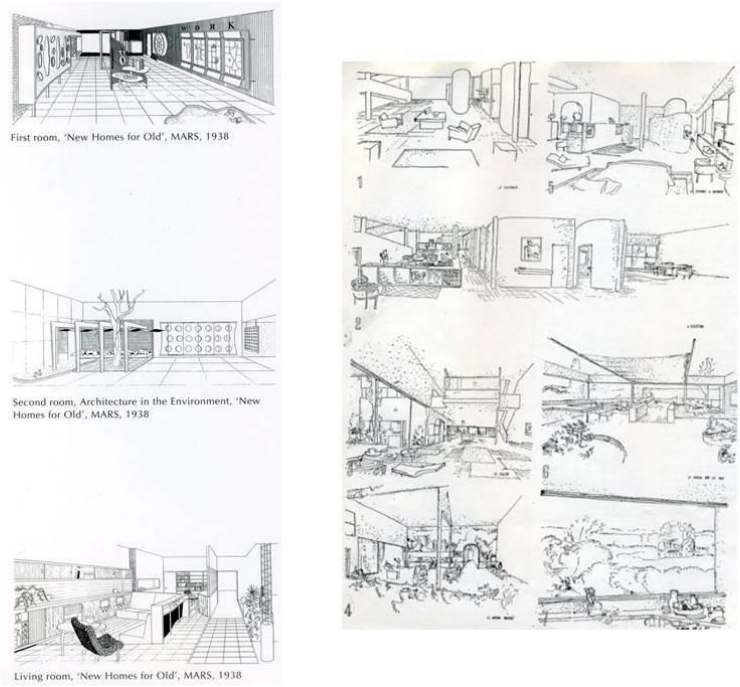

Figure 3.26. Gordon Cullen, sequence drawings, "New Architecture, " in MARS exhibition catalog, 1938 (*left*), with Le Corbusier, sequence drawings for Villa Meyer, 1925, in his *Oeuvre Complète de 1910–1929* (*right*).

Figure 3.27. Gordon Cullen, serial vision, “Panorama of the Westminster Precinct” (*left*) and four drawings of the sequence “A Pedestrian Tour” (*right*), from “Westminster Regained,” *Architectural Review*, November 1947.

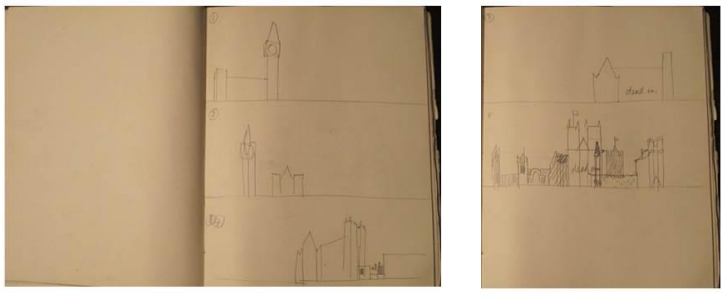

Figure 3.28. Gordon Cullen, sketches for “Panorama of the Westminster Precinct” in “Westminster Regained,” *Architectural Review*, November 1947. From Cullen’s personal archive.

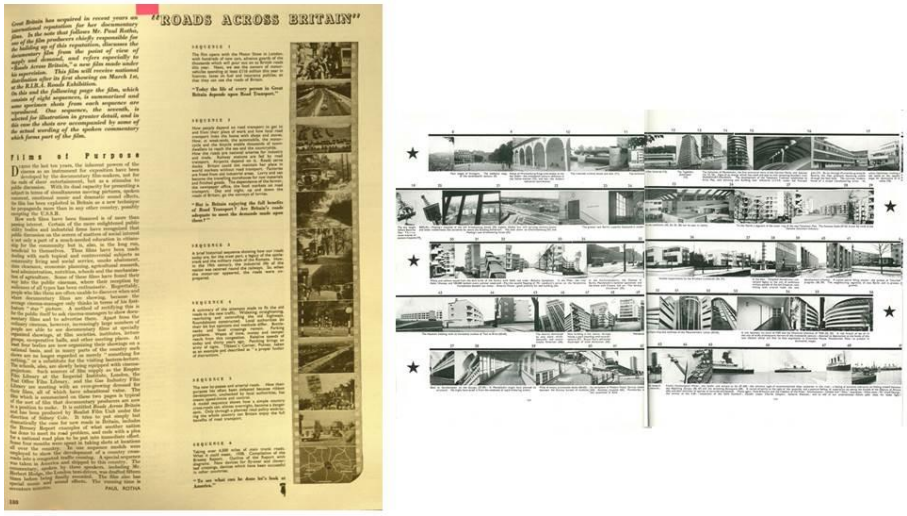

Figure 3.29. Paul Rotha, filmstrip illustration from "Roads across Britain," *Architectural Review*, April 1939 (*left*); Serge Chermayeff, double-page spread of modern architecture in Germany, *Architectural Review*, October 1931 (*right*).

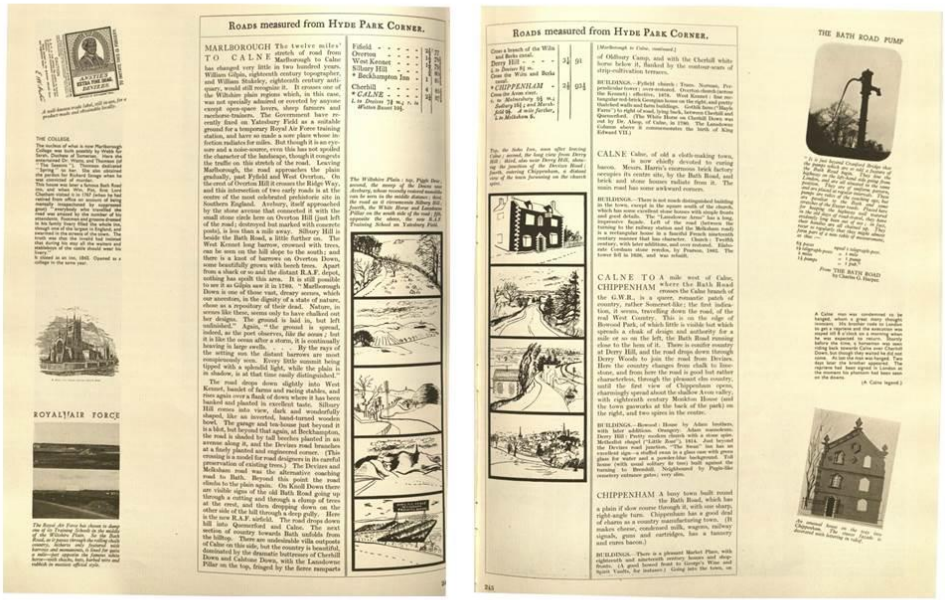

Figure 3.30. John Piper, thumbnail sketches in "London to Bath," *Architectural Review*, September 1938.

Figure 3.31. Photographs of Oxford's High Street by Mark Oliver Dell and H. L. Wainwright. From Nikolaus Pevsner, *Visual Planning and the Picturesque*, 2010 (*left*), and sequence in Thomas Sharp, *Oxford Replanned*, 1938 (*right*).

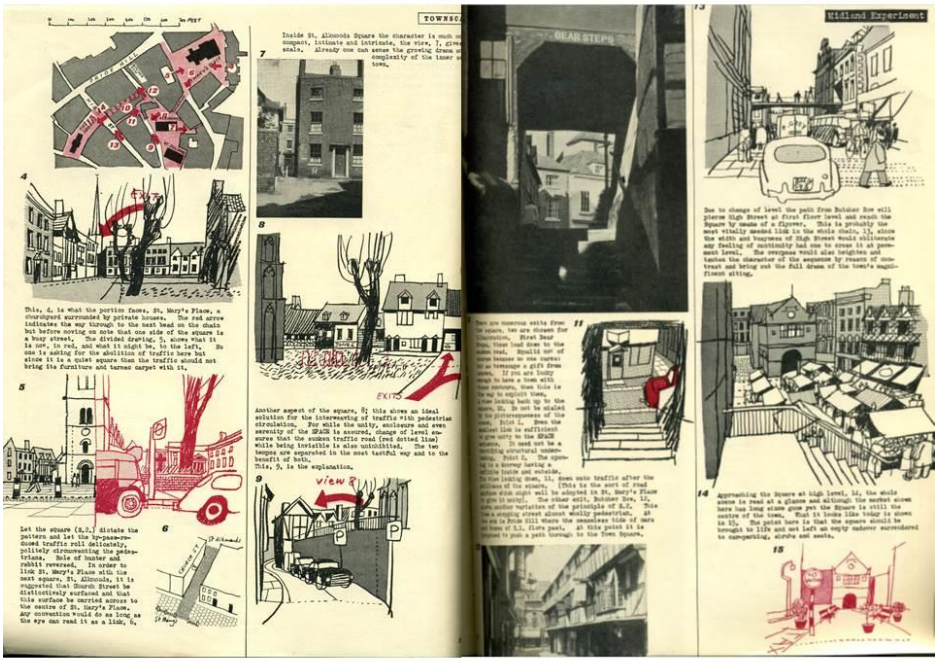

Figure 3.32. Gordon Cullen, serial vision, double-page spread from "Shrewsbury," *Architectural Review*, May 1954.

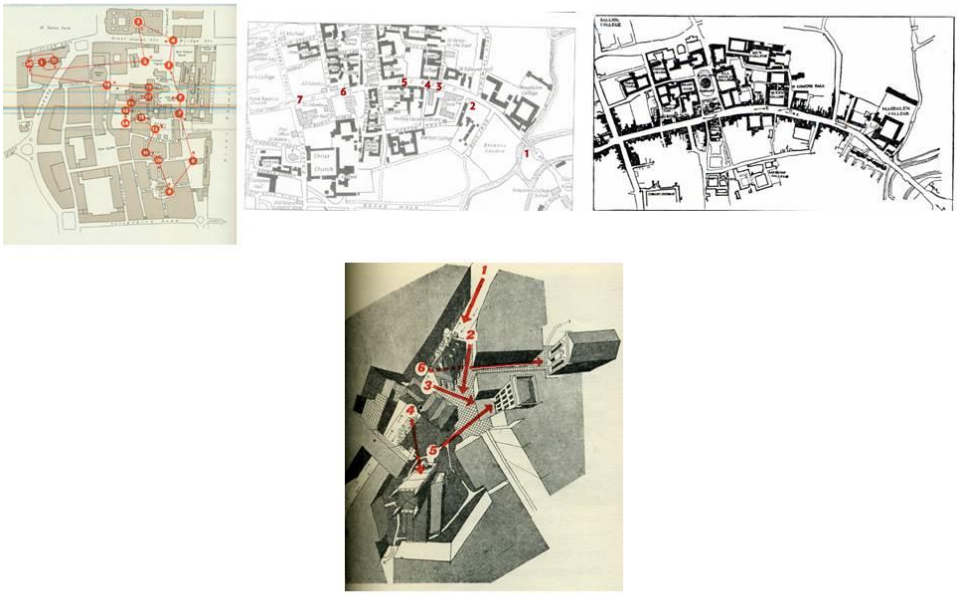

Figure 3.33. Serial vision with location keyed in plans. Gordon Cullen, "Westminster Regained," *Architectural Review*, November 1947 (*upper left*); Nikolaus Pevsner, *Visual Planning and the Picturesque*, 2010 (*upper middle*); Raymond Unwin, *Town Planning in Practice*, 1909 (*upper right*); and Gordon Cullen, "Dursley," *Architectural Review*, July 1956 (*bottom*).

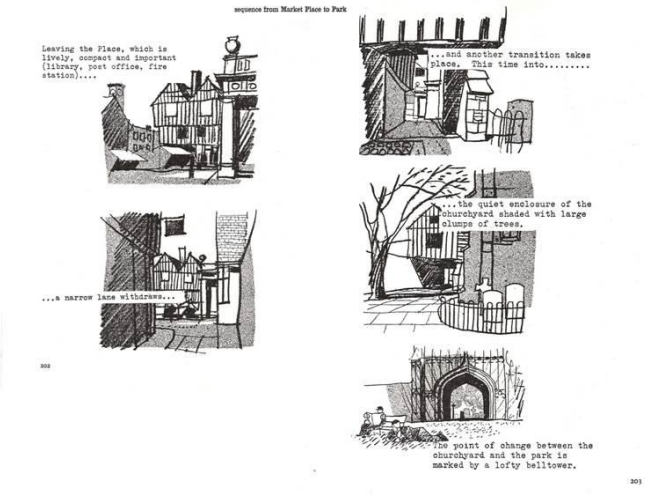

Figure 3.34. Gordon Cullen, serial vision in "Evesham," *Architectural Review*, February 1954.

Figure 3.35. Gordon Cullen, serial vision, town of Eltham, in Casebook Precedents," *Architectural Review*, March 1954 (*Bottom*); final layout of pages for the essay (*top*). Layout from Cullen's personal archive.

Figure 3.36. Double-page spread—illustration by Gordon Cullen, text by Peter Davey—juxtaposing a before-and-after drawing from "Outrage," a special issue of *Architectural Review* (June 1955), with an advertisement for pavers. From "The First 100 Years," a special issue of *Architectural Review*, May 1996.

CHAPTER 4. PACKAGING THE BOOK FOR POPULAR CONSUMPTION

> *The modern power of the identical came to an end with rise of digital technologies. All that is digital is variable[.] . . . In architecture this means the end of notational limitations, of industrial standardization, and, more generally, of the Albertian and authorial way of building by design.*
>
> *Nonstandard seriality . . . already contains the seeds of potentially different approach.* —Mario Carpo[275]

Townscape, published in 1961, branded the two-decades-long campaign of Townscape under the single authorship of Gordon Cullen. The original edition was released by the Architectural Press (AP) in London, the birthplace of the idea, and in New York by Reinhold Publishing Corporation. [Figure 4.1] Although numerous Townscape-related *Review* essays were written by dozens of other contributors, the name Cullen came to be synonymous with the idea Townscape.[276]

Townscape gained an iconic status in urban design literature, alongside two other books on urbanism published at that time: Kevin Lynch's *Image of the City* (1960) and Jane Jacobs's *The Death and Life of Great American Cities* (1961). The original edition has been reprinted four times; the abbreviated edition, *The Concise Townscape* (1971), has appeared in more than thirty

[275] Mario Carpo, *The Alphabet and the Algorithm* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 2011).

[276] Aitchison has counted hundreds of Townscape-related essays and numerous contributors. See Aitchison, "Townscape: Scope, Scale and Extent," 627.

editions, including translations into at least seven languages.[277] Yet it remained Cullen's only book, despite his attempts to publish other manuscripts.[278]

Composed of editorial salvage of nearly thirty-seven essays that Cullen had published in *The Review* between 1947 and 1959, *Townscape* is nonetheless a cohesive, stitched-together body of work under one cover. The primary editorial task involved repackaging his ideas and creating the book design—activities as natural as they were essential to Cullen, for whom everything was grist for the publicity mill. *Townscape* reveals Cullen's mastery of a precise complementary relationship between drawings, photography, text, and layout. Cullen himself viewed this last as more than a method for positioning the images on the page and organizing pages in a bound volume: layout amounted to both metaphorical and filmic operations that appealed to the postmodern consumer. Cullen expanded to the entire volume the picturesque city metaphor that guided his magazine design and the urban promenade metaphor that shaped his essays. Moreover, by opting for these metaphors in the very making of the book, Cullen continued the practices of bricolage, the borrowing and assembling anew of readymades and newlymades.

Thus, his metaphors find their ultimate expression in a three-way symbolic relationship—between the making of the book, the making of the urban landscape, and the experience of the book by the reader. The book demonstrates the graphic side of Cullen's creative genius, but it also showcases his ways of turning the *idea* of Townscape into a *product* for postwar consumer

[277] See the WorldCat database (www.worldcat.org), which lists Reinhold's, *The Concise Townscape*, translations into Italian, German, Japanese, Spanish, Chinese, Polish, and Serbian.

[278] Cullen's archives contain several sketchy book manuscript written from the 1930s onward, none of which got published. WorldCat lists nine books authored by Cullen besides *Townscape* and *The Concise Townscape*, but six are townscape study reports issued as softcover stapled booklets and three are books that Cullen only illustrated (despite being listed as coauthor).

markets. Much like Cullen's previous products, the book is made up of a hybrid of existing genres, including a standard manual, an illustrated book, a drawing guide, and the case book on which it is modeled. In seeking to reconcile expert knowledge (through pictures) with the everyday processes of city making, and to conceive of the urban landscape in a consumerist light (in fact, asking the reader to co-conceive the urban landscape), *Townscape* intentionally informs, involves, entertains, and seduces a wide range of audiences.

Far from simply delivering Townscape ideology and aesthetic, the book introduced a new genre of architectural literature for a changed audience that consumed and reimagined architecture in new ways. *Townscape* anticipated a different kind of reader and authorship. Conceived in the predigital era, it nonetheless exhibits characteristics of digital-era products—variable reproduction and nonstandard seriality—as described by Mario Carpo in his recent book, *The Alphabet and the Algorithm* (2011). Carpo notes that digital technology has shaped a world that eschews identical copies and breaks the modern authorial system of the industrial era.[279] *Townscape* fits this mold. It invites its readers to create multiple variations of its content and, thus, concedes to them the authorship of the end product (even when its original author did not agree with the outcomes).

This chapter explores the book's genesis, material characteristics and structure, layout, and reading practices, once more locating Cullen firmly within the province of image maker—but for a new audience's sensibilities. I interpret *Townscape* both as a new system of representation and a new product schema. Cullen's innate ability to synthesize, along with his apt representational system, made the book the finest Townscape product, and made Cullen its spokesman. Since the book explicitly stokes consumer aspirations of a spectacular city-in-the-

[279] Carpo, *The Alphabet and the Algorithm*, 3.

making, it allows for an examination of larger cultural issues. It invites reflection on how the mingling of literary genres and graphics styles in postwar commercial architectural publishing and discourse coincided with changes in readership, and shows that the role of designers in postwar consumer economy involved not just architectural *products* but also an idea of a new lifestyle. This chapter end on a personal note, with an assessment of Cullen's perhaps less glamorous career after the publication of the book, as he downshifted to Townscape consultant, educator, and practicing architect. It was a shift that removed him from the pressure and stimulation of the press, from the core function of image making, and, therefore, his creative energy source. Nevertheless, Cullen's canonical status was assured by his authorship of *Townscape*.

A New Kind of Genre for a New Kind of Audience

The book's publication at the threshold of a new decade should be seen against an upsurge of affluence in 1960s Britain that produced two complementary tendencies: the expansion of consumption habits and private urban development driven by consumer markets, and the emergence of conservationism, driven by historic preservation societies, in reaction to the environmental changes brought about by the first trend (e.g., the construction of suburban New Towns, highways, shopping malls, and entertainment enclaves).[280] Governmental organizations, like the Historic Building Councils (founded in 1953), and nongovernmental organizations, like the Civic Trust (founded in 1957), launched effective campaigns including numerous publications on preservation. Toward the end of the decade, planning legislation spurred the creation of national conservation areas, placing entire city neighborhoods and natural

[280] Erdem Erten contended that these two trends essentially represented a clash over the evolving character of British society and the environment. Erten, "Shaping 'The Second Half Century,'" 1.

areas off-limits to development (see the extended discussion in "Uniquely British: Conservation Takes Hold of Townscape," in chapter 5).[281]

Curiously, the two trends met at nostalgia-based consumerist development; this sold faked historicism, such as quaint Italian hill towns (e.g., the village of Portmeirion in North Wales, designed by Clough Williams-Ellis between 1925 and 1974) and their American counterparts, entertainment resorts (e.g., Disneyland of California, built in 1955), which became models for others. Though it claimed the mantle of environmentalism and protected worthy architectural assets, the grassroots conservation movement in Britain was itself part of the consumer economy, mass culture, and the society of the spectacle. Its denizens were not so different from the flocks that gravitated to expensive themed resorts, shopping malls, and Disneyworlds. Townscape itself was both an expression and fusion of these mind-sets.

Conditioned by television, radio, and film, mass culture came to depend increasingly on visual persuasion and entertainment. The status of media personalities, journalists, and image makers, who gained prominence in the immediate postwar decades, accelerated the demand for works by certain artists. Richard Hamilton's collages, Eduardo Paolozzi's screen prints, and Ian Nairn's nostalgia-infused guidebook series, *Nairn's London*, all appealed to the new taste and were designed for mass consumption. Shows by the great comedian Max Miller (whom Cullen mentioned in the introduction to the concise edition of his book) also played to the new majority.

Townscape amid Popular Consumer Culture

As a result of these cultural processes, it became increasingly difficult for professional journals to impose taste or aesthetic theories on the general public. A social and ideological

[281] The Civic Amenities Act of 1967 introduced conservation areas, and other provisions followed in 1968 and 1971. The government also enacted the Town and Country Planning Act and the National Trail System Act in 1968.

chasm between the mass audience and the architectural establishment (and its publishing institutions) radically undercut the latter's authority. Many manufacturers began to look to mass values to redefine the parameters of good architecture and to rethink its relevance.[282] Architectural publishers, the AP included, began to look to popular literary genres—such as illustrated books and comics—to address a different reader.

Over at the AR, hard-core architectural theorists were replaced by amateur writers. Popular, nonacademic, largely photojournalistic products—including combinations of everything from fine art to comics, and prescriptive text to fictional tale—were expanded into architecture books in the 1960s. Such hybrids, Marshall McLuhan observed in *The Mechanical Bride*, increasingly dominated magazines.[283] Heavily illustrated books and volumes with multiple textual styles changed the publishing industry and, in turn, reading practices. Gone were the tomes of architectural theory. Discourse about architecture took on a more journalistic, pictorial, and empirical form and gradually moved to encompass travel books, architect monographs and project portfolios, photographic city albums, and practical manuals. These texts increasingly shaped the popular notion of architecture and became popular consumer culture's products and means of self-definition.

Originally, *Townscape* was not an autonomous development but rather sprang up together with popular architectural literature and pedagogy. Cullen, Nairn, and de Maré promoted the various editors' Townscape ideas by developing their own products. But Cullen's most notable product, his book, trumped his colleagues', and not simply because of his rhetorically persuasive visual presentation (as researchers such as John Macarthur and Mathew Aitchison claimed): he

[282] Sparke, *An Introduction to Design and Culture*, 117.

[283] Philip B. Meggs. "Introduction to the Fiftieth Anniversary Edition." In *The Mechanical Bride*, [1951] by Marshall McLuhan. Corte Madera, CA: Gingko Press, 2002, xi-xiii.

also fully exploited the marketing tactics required to win broad appeal and shape popular architecture. Furthermore, like many architectural books that later became historical reference points, *Townscape* was less the result of careful planning than of apt and fortuitous collaboration. The book sprang not just out of the collaboration of Cullen and Hastings but out of a convergence of architectural agenda and commercial opportunism. Hastings had the message and means of dissemination, but he needed the messenger, the person who could shape the *product*. Cullen was that messenger, the communicator; he reaped his fortune when he needed it most, at the moment the umbilical cord to *The Review* was cut.

Tiny Beginnings: The Genesis of the Book

According to Susan Lasdun, sometime between 1955 and 1957—and after he gave up on Pevsner, who had discontinued his own manuscript—Hastings briefed Cullen and asked him to collect material for a book on Townscape.[284] This claim is corroborated by a 1955 journal entry in Cullen's archive. The journal notes take the form of a rough book outline and table of contents: "1. Introduction (The Idea); 2. The schemes (30) and articles; 3. Illustrated glossary of terms."[285] [Figure 4.2] The notes, either in preparation for a conversation with Hastings or from an independent plan scheme, indicate a general intent to produce a full-fledged manuscript assembling Cullen's own publications for a book. This table of contents roughly coincides with the structure of the eventual book, which was composed of four parts: Casebook, General Studies, Town Studies, and Proposals. It is possible that the thirty "schemes" refer to the number of existing *Review* essays intended for the "Proposals" and "Town Studies" parts of the book, the

[284] Susan Lasdun, "H. de C. Reviewed," *Architectural Review* 200, no. 1195 (September 1996): 68. For a detailed account of the development of Pevsner's manuscript, see Macarthur and Aitchison, "Pevsner's Townscape," in *Pevsner's Visual Planning and the Picturesque*, ed. Mathew Aitchison (Los Angeles: Getty Research Institute, 2010), 6-10.

[285] Gordon Cullen, personal archive, journal, 1955, #466.

"articles" to those compiled in the "General Studies" part, and the "glossary of terms" to the Casebook.

Highly esoteric, fragmented, and incomplete, Cullen's subsequent journal notes take an apolitical position about the nature of the book, placing it solidly in the realm of rhetorical communication and education. They read: "The dramatization of politics (not politics when it is a hit of moment). [T]he answer is explanation . . . The entry of the lyricist . . . i.e., communication."[286] These hasty notations reiterate an inherently Cullenesque mixture of explanatory, lyrical, and rhetorical communication. Cullen lists four principles, among which he includes the need to communicate things "not taught at school" and, more specifically, the art of townscape as embodying "imaginative relationships."[287] The focus on imaginative and creative art suggests Cullen was extricating himself from the politics of the editors, and abandoning Hastings's intellectual and idealist tone.

The journal notes were illustrated by Dürer's sketch *Alberti's Veil*. In illustrating "The Book" (as it is titled) with Alberti's codified central projection, Cullen paid tribute not only to Alberti's invention but also his ability to convey its rules to artists and his promotion of the perspective along with sensation, as discussed in "Drawing the Townscape" (in chapter 3). The sketch of Alberti's machine perhaps points to Cullen's grasp of the moment and, with it, the seeds of a potentially different authorial approach. Cullen's book preceded yet anticipated the

[286] Ibid.

[287] Cullen explained that the raw material—writing, talking— is taught in schools, but the technique of Townscape is not taught.

digital turn. Indeed, Cullen departed from Alberti's notion of the imitation and graphic reproducibility his machine had made possible (as well as authorial control).[288]

The origin of *Townscape* also has its roots in an earlier undated draft in Cullen's archive titled "A Tiny Beginning of How to See."[289] The eleven-page handwritten and illustrated booklet on heavy card paper was likely written between 1947 and 1949, during which time Hastings was laboring on his Townscape philosophy, backed by Pevsner's research. [Figure 4.3] My hypothesis is that "How to See" was a predecessor of "Townscape Casebook," which was published in December 1949 (immediately after Hastings's "Townscape" manifesto) and itself prefigured *Townscape*, as many scholars have argued. It is also possible that Cullen created the "How to See" draft with a book in mind.

The draft was essentially an introduction in three parts to a pictorial body of the work, as its last sentence suggests: "This should be sufficient to indicate the sort of channel to be used when examining the pictures in the body of the book."[290] Either Cullen had undertaken his own book project in response to *The Review*'s refocus on the visual or he had been asked by Hastings to develop an essay on visual education. In any event, "How to See" and Cullen's, "Townscape Casebook" have much in common. But they also have their differences. In fact, the draft,

[288] In *The Alphabet and the Algorithm* Carpo lays out his concept of nonstandardized seriality to make the analogy between the premechanical artisanal world and the digital computerized world, using Alberti's invention of the perspective as a hinge to the age of visual identicality and, more generally, to what he calls "the Albertian authorial way of building by design." The Albertian authorial system placed the author in complete control of the end product, and the architect in control of the building. The digital age, he argues, puts an end to the notions of single authorship and standardization. Carpo, *The Alphabet and the Algorithm,* 41–43.

[289] Gordon Cullen, personal archive, "A Tiny Beginning of How to See," ##2403-08. The draft booklet is an eleven-page introduction in three parts. The pictorial body of the book was not completed.

[290] Ibid., #2408

perhaps even more than the published version, allowed Cullen's signature approach to visual education to crystallize.

The convoluted draft ended up as the half-page and edited introduction of the published version. The central message of the introductions in both "How to See" and "Townscape Casebook" is the need to shift from subjective (or associative) intake to objective intake: that is, to a way of seeing based purely on visual-formal properties, including the discernment of mass, space, line, color, and so on. Furthermore, both "Casebook" and "How to See" maintain that it is possible to teach and develop visual perception through experience and education. Thus, they were intended as aids to train the eye of town planners to see the environment in "visual terms." The two documents also share a cover and opening image—an illustration of an improvisation on the optical illusion of Gestalt psychology's well-known Necker cube, and of the two ways to perceive it. [see Figure 4.3]

The introduction to "Casebook" was most likely written by Hastings and Pevsner, and it echoed the 1947 editorial policy on visual reeducation. It called for a visual art foundation and a vocabulary for the physical environment "to isolate and communicate our feelings."[291] "How to See," in contrast, considers sensations as a way to induce feelings rather than merely to communicate them or develop a vocabulary. Cullen writes:

> The sensations normal to experience in this world are difficult to describe. . . . Consequently in the remainder of this book I intend to . . . [give] a special reference to such parts which seem rich in the aesthetic quality and hope that by this method *the feeling may be induced rather than described* [emphasis added].[292]

[291] Cullen, "Townscape Casebook," 363.

[292] Gordon Cullen, personal archive, "A Tiny Beginning of How to See," #2408.

The distinction between reliance on words and a cerebral response to visual stimuli—and trust in visuals, with a visceral response—set Pevsner apart from Cullen. Guided by Pevsner, "Casebook" therefore privileges the effect of the object over the response of the viewer, while Cullen's "How to See" privileges the psychological reaction—intense passion or the emotional response that Cullen named "aesthetic emotions." Whereas the editors shifted perceptual sensibility to a privileged domain reserved for the specialist, Cullen suggested that while not every person could articulate her feelings, everyone *can* feel.[293] This is precisely what made Cullen's Townscape, and not Pevsner's, most favored by the average architectural consumer.

These tiny beginnings of *Townscape* also reveal Hastings's role in spearheading the project, which inevitably became a "collaboration" of sorts between Cullen, Hastings, and Pevsner. Cullen continued to combine ideas of his colleagues with his own, while shaping the most fitting ones into a product for mainstream culture. Surprisingly, though, the book mentions neither *The Review*, its chief editor Hastings, nor any other author of the Townscape idea, except in photographic credits. This exclusion is especially puzzling in light of a statement Cullen made in his obituary of Hastings: "H. de C. was an editor who wanted material on the desk for publication: on the one hand, he did the work himself, for example, he more or less wrote *Townscape*, although I must say, I may have clarified one or two points."[294] This line has been repeatedly quoted by those who maintain that Cullen hijacked the idea from the editors and contributed little to the project.[295]

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[293] For additional study of the difference between Cullen and Pevsner, see Macarthur, *The Picturesque*, 205.

[294] Cullen, "H. de C. Hastings," 5.

[295] In his memoir J. M. Richards wrote: "Cullen's ideas were furnished by de Cronin [Hastings] and stimulated by him; in fact they were initiated by him; de Cronin stretched Cullen." Richards, *Memoirs of an Unjust Fella*, 41. This notion has been perpetuated by a number of recent researchers.

The omission of Hastings's name is a subject of curiosity as well as conflicting accounts, but it is unlikely that Hastings was unaware of the snub. After all, he owned the publishing powerhouse and the copyright, and he controlled all its moves.[296] This omission also may be attributed to three other reasons: first, Hastings preferred to work behind the scenes (he had always published under the pseudonym Ivor de Wolfe); second, he may have preferred to dissociate himself from a book that appeared to lack theoretical merit; third, he may have had his mind on his own Townscape book.[297] At any rate, the philosopher-cum-commercial publisher must have given Cullen his blessing for the project. And, as the introduction's date indicates, by 1959 the plan for the book was well under way.

Whatever the case, neither its origins nor its true author concerns the consumers of the book—nor this study. These facts are secondary to the liberating and absorbing impact of Cullen's inimitable visual and textual program, which derived from his bricolage and montage operations. These methods—composites of eclectic "found" material—pertain to grafting and repackaging ideas conceived by the editors, including Hastings's case-based methodology, which Cullen adopted first in his "Townscape Casebook" essay and then in the Casebook chapter of *Townscape*.

[296] Erten noted that based on his interview with Priscilla Hastings, "Hastings wanted to produce 'Townscape' by himself but it was more convenient to collaborate with Gordon Cullen." Erdem Erten, "Thomas Sharp's Collaboration with H. de C. Hastings, 47, note 19. Alan Powers instead suggested that on the basis of information from Priscilla Hastings, Hastings was taken by surprise at *Townscape*'s appearance, and that his own book *The Italian Townscape* (1963) was his way of regaining some ownership of the concept. See Powers, "Townscape as a Model of Organized Complexity," 702.

[297] In 1958 Hastings was working on a manuscript titled "The Unnatural History of Man," later published as *The Alternative Society* (1980). Another manuscript, first published as an essay "The Italian Townscape" (1962) in *The Review*, was published a year later as a book of the same title.

Reconfiguring the Casebook

According to Erdem Erten, the concept behind the "Casebook" essay was most likely the brainchild of Hastings. It relied on a collection of exemplary visual cases, or precedents, found in the urban landscape or, as Hastings called it, "Out-There." Hastings borrowed the concept from the idea of precedent in English law, "the Common Law founded upon a multitude of single cases."[298] He applied it to make concrete his theory of the environment. By borrowing the idea of precedent, Hastings implied that the proven cases of good practice he featured were worthy of replication, enabling him to enforce his conservative idea of cultural continuity by looking to the tried-and-true, rather than the newly invented.[299] The pictures acted as a visual database to be emulated and completed by professionals. [Figure 4.4] Each precedent became a concept that was labeled, thereby providing a vocabulary for the environment. Finally, the concepts were organized under eleven casebook categories that coincided with different occupational lenses, or ways of seeing, such as fan dancer, matchmaker, sculptor, painter, traffic cop, and poet. The categories underscored the notion that each person's way of understanding the seen world can be traced to an acquired professional worldview—which suggests that it is possible to train the eye to see in a specific desirable and objective way.

For his part, Cullen provided the "artistic eye" and the popular tone, format, and idiom necessary to explain this Townscape theory to the average practitioner. He shaped the essay's forty-two visual precedents according to the format of which he was enamored—photographs and drawings accompanied by expanded captions. The language of the captions preserved

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[298] See de Wolfe, "Townscape: A Plea for an English Visual Philosophy," 358. Also, see the discussion in Erten, "Shaping 'The Second Half Century,'" 70–75.

[299] The case study method, already established in education and research in such professions and fields as law, business, medicine, engineering, and public policy, expanded to sociology, economics, and psychology in the 1960s.

Cullen's associative and trope-rich writing style. At least some of the colloquial labels may have been his invention. Thus the labels that derived from the terminology of eighteenth-century picturesque aesthetic theory (e.g., fluctuation, undulation, foil, intricacy) most likely can be traced to Hastings and Pevsner, while the everyday labels (e.g., change of level, publicity, pedestrian way, hazards, floorscape) came from Cullen.

By the time Cullen turned the "Casebook" essay into the foundation of his book *Townscape*, he had already repeatedly hammered out its idiom and format in *The Review*. The term "casebook" surfaced a month later in Richards's "Functional Tradition" special issue (January 1950), in which Cullen was involved, though its categorization of landscape elements, such as structures, walls, and rails, was simpler than the specialized-eye categorization of the "Casebook" essay—something that was not repeated in future versions. The term also appears in the title of a 1954 essay composed of a series of townscape studies by Cullen, "Case-book Precedents," though here it referred to applied examples of practice. So, Cullen readily adopted both the concept and term "casebook"—it became shorthand for a work that was pictorial and practical, required short captions, and made concrete generalizations or supplied purely anecdotal information about projects and processes.

Then, while designing a book for mainstream consumers, Cullen retained the expanded pictorial-caption format of "Townscape Casebook" and kept its idiomatic language, but he also departed from the essay in thematic structure and content. [see Figure 4.4] He doubled its length, expanding it to a third of the entire book. He borrowed 40 percent of the eighty-nine precedents from previous essays, and added nearly fifty new ones. He then created three subheadings that express the three principles of the *Townscape* book—"Serial Vision," "Place," and "Content." These titles focus on the sensory experience of movement, body position in space, and sociality

and function of space, respectively. (Of the three, Cullen elevated serial vision to the most important visual category.) To these three, he added a fourth, "The Functional Tradition," under which he put nine precedents from Richards's essay of the same name, to which he originally contributed. Whereas the borrowed precedents remained focused on place, character, and qualities intrinsic to objects, the predominance of the new precedents in the Casebook chapter shifted the book's overall focus to the subject's response and to perceptual qualities of space.

Cullen took the liberty of swapping illustrations among the concepts that he recycled, often rewriting the original captions. He retained a few of the original labels, jazzed up the language of others, and tagged the new precedents with idiosyncratic catchwords. The labels he created express his signature mix of everyday and imaginary language, of literal and poetic styles, and they certainly amuse. Their unconventional single words and composites—"thereness," "thisness," "here and there," and "pinpointing"—as well as the multiple neologisms using the suffix *-scape* (e.g., "floorscape," "wallscape," and "roofscape") depart from the traditional Townscape shopping list of street pavement, lighting, and furniture, thus giving visual concepts the freshness required to see the landscape anew, while sounding like street slogans. The labels he chose—"the maw," "the white peacock," and "the tell-tale"—boast of more lyrical musings. They also operate as headlines do in newspapers: they shout in order to grab attention. The Casebook chapter therefore remains more linguistically alluring, illuminating in its ideas, and easier to understand than "Townscape Casebook," its predecessor.

As importantly, Cullen conceived of the Casebook section as a kit of parts, or of game set pieces, and the book as a container, or game box. In the book's remaining three parts—General Proposals, Town Studies, and Proposals—he added the game moves or gambits, turning *Townscape* into a new kind of literary genre: a game everyone could play. By mapping the

empirical world onto its space and reconceiving the Casebook section, Cullen produced a book that necessarily transformed its reader into an explorer of the city, a voyeur in search of visual precedents, a participant in the postmodern project.

A Game Everyone Can Play

Since it targeted a diverse public, *Townscape* eluded the familiar classification of twentieth-century architecture volumes: the practical handbook that displayed normative codes for practicing architects, the how-to-do manual that constructed step-by-step guides for building, the documentary books of roadside treasures and city panoramas for tourists and travelers, the coffee-table photojournalistic album aimed at general consumption, the monograph that advertised an architect's work for potential clients, the theory-driven books informing current academic discourse and attempting to change how architects design, and, finally, the how-to-draw guidebooks for students and aspiring architects.[300] *Townscape* conformed precisely to none of the above categories. As with his drawings, the book mixed and matched genres, changing the proportions in the ingredients, and ultimately producing an entirely new kind of concoction.

The postwar period had seen the emergence and rise to dominance of the first two genres: practical manuals for professionals and picture books for laypeople. [Figure 4.5] It was an era marked by a major structural change in professional practice: individual architectural offices were replaced by largely anonymous public firms under the thumbs of local authorities, whose attention turned to urgently needed housing and school projects. Architecture books now needed to provide both the practitioner and the public official with excellent practical information.[301]

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[300] For an excellent account of the development of architectural book genres over time, and especially in the twentieth century, see Marco de Michelis, "Ceci Tuera Cela." In *Modern Architecture Books from the Marzona Collection*, ed. Elizabeta Bresciani (Vienna: Schlebrügge, 2003), n.p.

[301] J. M. Richards, *Memoirs of an Unjust Fella*, 193.

With simple graphics and clear information in a handy book form, manuals became reference books for creating regulations on building standards. Printed and widely distributed by the central government, they were the most widely read architectural publications at the time.[302] Given the simultaneous growth of planned communities and theme towns, as well as the rise in environmental advocacy groups, books also had to offer both private developers and civic activists the building blocks for their environmental ambitions. Illustrations, especially photojournalism, were key. So, another kind of book—the illustrated architecture volume—slowly replaced direct experience. Books themselves became the reality. Cullen had been involved in both of these genres since before the Second World War.

His work with government offices as propaganda exhibition designer, poster designer, and publication illustrator, for example, can be seen in his contribution to "Homes for Today and Tomorrow" (1961), a handbook issued by the Ministry of Housing and Local Government.[303] [Figure 4.6] This influential guide, an outcome of the Parker Morris Report, established spatial standards for social housing, which became mandatory for all housing built in New Towns in 1967. Two years later, its standards were extended to all town council housing. But Townscape marked a departure from such illustrated guides.

Cullen's cartoonish axonometric drawings provided relief from the packed and densely written guidelines (the document was fifty pages long). They found no equivalent in the sober diagrams that illustrated many contemporaneous manuals of standards in Britain and Europe.[304]

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[302] Marco de Michelis, "Ceci Tuera Cela," n.p.

[303] Ministry of Housing and Local Government, "Homes for Today and Tomorrow," planning guide (London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office, 1961).

[304] The most notable early handbooks are *Le Modulor*, by Le Corbusier (published in 1948 with many subsequent reprints), and the German architect Ernst Neufert *Architects' Data* (published in 1936, also with many reprints). Le Corbusier's book is filled with diagrams and charts but very few drawings and,

Townscape, however, served as counterpoint to the standard handbook; far from prescribing specific measurements or codes, it promoted *a way of thinking*. Similarly, Cullen's involvement in illustrated books in the late 1950s and early 1960s, which can be seen in the full-page illustrations of the booklet "London Airport" (1956), did not serve as model for his book.[305] *Townscape* was not designed for passive enjoyment of pictures; rather, it offered a model and a stock of tools.

It is no surprise, then, that *Townscape* eluded scholars who tried to classify its genre. They labeled it everything from handbook, glossary, manual of standards, and manual of styles to reference book, copy book, pattern book, and picture book—and even psalm! The architectural critic James Morris called it "a sort of *Vade Mecum*, in an almost literal way, to the principles of good urban design," but added that it was neither textbook nor chronicle; rather, it was a poem or a psalm. J. H. Napper called it a copy book and a picture book. Walter McQuade highlighted its "indexical words," and Robert Maxwell referred to it as a glossary.[306] Finally, and more specific to the casebook model that prefigured *Townscape*, Erdem Erten argued that it could be understood as a postmodern revival of the architectural eighteenth-century pattern book, pointing out that like the pattern book, a casebook delivers expert knowledge of everyday

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except for the human model of the modular, no people. In contrast, Neufert employed many illustrations showing people in relation to space and functions. Yet, compared to Cullen's people, Neufert's were initially drafted with straight "architectural" lines, and work and home spaces seem lifeless and austere. Only in the later editions, after 1960, have figures been drawn using softer cartoonish lines, and spaces filled with details from life.

[305] John Chandos (text), Gordon Cullen (arch drawings), and Feliks Topolski (drawing), "The London Airport," promotional brochure (London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office, 1956).

[306] Morris, "A Moving Viewpoint," 6; J. H. Napper, review of *Townscape*, by Cordon Cullen, *RIBA Journal* 69, no. 243 (June 1962): 243; McQuade, review of *Townscape*," 155; Robert Maxwell, "The Failure of the Townscape Tradition," in *Sweet Disorder and the Carefully Careless: Theory and Criticism in Architecture* (New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 1993), 125–30 (originally published as "An Eye for an I," in *Architectural Design* 46 [September 1976]).

architectural practice through pictures, thus assuming the role of educating both laypeople and practicing professionals.[307]

While each assessment is acceptable, none entirely encapsulates the book. *Townscape* combines all the above and more. The titles of non-English editions of *The Concise Townscape* illustrate the point. The German edition, *Townscape Das Vokabularder Stadt*, translates in English to "Townscape: The Vocabulary of the City"; the Italian edition, *Il Paesaggio Urbano: Morfologia e Progettazione*, means "The Urban Landscape: Morphology and Projects"; and the Spanish title, *El Paisaje Urbano: Tratado de Estética Urbanística*, translates to "The Urban Landscape: Treatise of Urban Aesthetics." The emphasis of each translation is different, falling respectively on vocabulary, form, and aesthetics.

In seeking to teach professionals and laypeople ways of seeing, *Townscape* required a more delicate operation than simply copying "correct styles," as did the pattern book, or following prescribed standards, as professional manuals still do today.[308] In pursuing a more subjective, consumerist world, *Townscape* does not produce repetitions or unity of style. Its associative language does not befit a reference book, yet it is also too purposeful to be a psalm or poetry. Cullen may not have consciously contemplated questions of genre, but he clearly knew how to sell the Townscape message to the average architectural consumer *and* produce the

[307] Erten, "Shaping 'The Second Half Century,'" 73–74. Erten referred to an article Pevsner wrote on pattern books and the need to fill the void caused by their disappearance. See Peter F. R. Donner [Nikolaus Pevsner], "The End of Pattern Books," *Architectural Review* 93, no. 555 (March 1943): 75–79.

[308] Dell Upton shows the profusion in the 1800s of practical architectural publications aimed at builders and clients, which were known as pattern books, was linked to the effort to inject expertise and standardization into the process of everyday architectural design and the building industry. Dell Upton, "Pattern Books and Professionalism: Aspects of the Transformation of Domestic Architecture in America, 1800–1860," *Winterthur Portfolio* 19, nos. 2–3 (Summer–Autumn 1984): 107–50. This goal changed drastically in the postwar era, when corporations became the arbiters of good taste and the mass consumer their subject of manipulation.

greatest impact. *Townscape* critics may have dismissed the volume as a picture book, but Cullen made clear his own higher mission in the "Endpiece" of the concise edition: "I have not combed the world just to make a picture book that can be picked up and put down. The examples are assembled for a purpose. The purpose is to expose the art of environment."[309] He variously referred to the book as an atlas, a reference library, and a complicated cookbook. "Our first move in creating a system," he wrote, "must surely be to organize the field so that phenomena can be filed logically in an Atlas of the environment[.] . . . If we consider the atlas as a reference library of (visual) words then organization is the art of putting this word with that to make a lucid statement which is inherent in the particular design problem."[310] For Cullen, clearly, the atlas and the library expanded possibilities. The atlas metaphor suggested an arrangement of parts in space; the library metaphor implied a repository of visual texts of words that required specific arrangement according to rules of grammar and syntax to form a statement. He also conjured up a recipe assembling ingredients to produce a dish; yet he insisted that Townscape was an *art* and therefore could not be produced from a given prescription.

However, Cullen's most favorite metaphor for the book was that of the game, which shapes not only the underlying structure of the book but also how the text should be read. In the introduction to *Townscape*, he explained his theory of the game: "The most difficult part lies ahead, the art of Playing. As in any other game there are recognized gambits and moves built up from experience and precedent."[311] In the succeeding pages, Cullen provided the playing parts (the precedents in the "Casebook" essay) and charted possible moves (the principles in the

[309] Cullen, *The Concise Townscape*, 193.

[310] Ibid., 195.

[311] Cullen, *Townscape*, 15.

essay). As in the original essay, the Casebook section, too, encouraged the reader to assemble her own personal photographic collection, whose indiscriminate subjectivity and essential arbitrariness do not lessen its value. The Casebook section supplies the playing parts and vocabulary, while the individual essays in the following three sections provide the "gambits" or syntax to organize and play the game of the environment.[312] Here, though, there are no ordered steps or prescriptions and no dice; the play instructions are but principles. Cullen invites his audience to construct customized paths for playing the game of the environment.

In trying to reach the greatest number of people and to bridge the gap between professionals and the broad public—intentions he overtly expressed—Cullen conceived of a new literary genre, and dedicated it to "the people."

The Audience Is the People

Cullen packaged his products for the broadest possible appeal and with a goal of linking designer and consumers. He called *Townscape* audience variously "the people," "lay population," and "people like you." As the final sentence in the endpiece to the concise edition reads, "The audience is the people."[313] Earlier in the text, Cullen refers to the "lay population" and directly addresses readers as "people like you": "The reason for this book is to reach out to people like you to try to show you what you are missing[;] . . . the art of putting the environment together has now to be more clearly defined, its rules stated and its typical products familiarized over a broad field of the lay population."[314] Specifically, the four readership groups for whom the book had relevance, according to the text on the back cover of *The Concise Townscape*, are the

[312] The index of *Townscape* contains more than two hundred terms, largely composed of the Casebook chapter's caption labels, which establish the vocabulary for playing the environment game.

[313] Cullen, *The Concise Townscape*, 196.

[314] Ibid., 193.

practitioner, the researcher, the artist-designer, and the layman—in short, "anyone who has any kind of visual sense."

Cullen locates himself in the professional group and uses the trope of "weapon," calling the book "a weapon with which we can hack our way out of isolation and make contact with the educators, with the mass media and so to the point of the story, the public."[315] He first addresses an undefined "we," which could refer to trained architects, planners, artists, and possibly journal editors and publishers, and then the ultimate audience conceived as an inclusive totality, without clear qualification.

Perhaps Cullen's tenor is somewhat condescending and aggressive, but it is an attitude motivated in large part by the competitive world of consumer advertising. "The people" in the quote above are construed as belonging to an ignorant crowd who lack a critical understanding of planning and design. By contrast, the professional is enlightened. Calling the book a "weapon" implies an explosive impact, the most powerful one imagined. And both mass media and educators appear to be crucial messengers. The book is thus a weapon to be delivered through the educators (who train future generations) and the mass media (which shape the mind of the populace). The book also links the "we" and the "them"—those who understand and everyone else—with the optimism of creating a consumer-designer.

The environment, Cullen implied, is everyone's business. Its degrading visual conditions demanded modification of traditional means of acquiring the skills to bring about change through the political process. Cullen had hoped to pass the power of change to the individual consumer who could embrace and advance the Townscape message. He shared Hastings's goal of

[315] Ibid., 196.

motivating everyone—an aim Hastings best captured in his *Italian Townscape* book, published two years after Cullen's *Townscape*:

> Townscape is an art which demands no expertise, no training, no professionalism, no effort, no discipline, no mental feats. Not even strength of character. Here, for once, is a mystery to which one can dedicate oneself at a moment's notice—and become by the same token an expert, partly because there are no other experts, and partly because no greater skill is required of the adept than an ability to let events OUT THERE bounce off the retina of the eye, which they do anyway.[316]

For Hastings, as for Cullen, the eye should be positioned at the center of the assault, and both also shared the assumption that everyone can and would want to practice the art. (This is a position that critics like Robert Maxwell would later condemn as aesthetic determinism.)

The cost-effective packaging of the abridged version of *Townscape* appeared to complete Cullen's mission. [Figure 4.7] Published ten years after the original by Van Nostrand Reinhold Company in New York, this edition left out the original's last two parts, Town Studies and Proposals, which demonstrated the application of the concepts in specific projects. Having been trimmed to two-thirds of the original length (from three hundred pages to two hundred), reduced to a smaller trim size, and produced in paperback and without color, the new edition gained both a lower cost and a wider circulation, particularly among students. It was an exact copy of the first two parts of the original book, adding only two and a half pages of new introduction and three and a half pages of the conclusion. As such, the book had a huge advantage in the market. Whether based on production exigencies or calculation, its condensed, consumable size aligned with Cullen's goal to popularize the message.

In his new introduction, Cullen alluded to having been told to consider adding material or new examples: "It has been said that a new edition of *Townscape* should rely on modern work

[316] Ivor de Wolfe, *The Italian Townscape* (London: Architectural Press, 1963), 21. The book was also published in by George Braziller (New York, 1966).

for its examples instead of these being culled from the past." He then justified his refusal on practical grounds, arguing that there were few new good examples in postwar construction, and that tracking them would have made the investment of time "quite uneconomical."[317] He was also compelled, he added, to try again to reach the same audience, since "the original message of *Townscape* has not been delivered effectively."[318] It is unclear why Cullen thought the message was lost on his intended audience; however, his use of the word "delivered" conveys his belief that it had missed its target, and in the introduction he argued that it was misunderstood as surface beautification. Accordingly, Cullen put his trust in the same product, this time trimmed of excess.

But archived documents of his ambitions around the time the concise edition was readied point to hopes for a more ambitious book that were foiled. In one letter to a potential project supporter drafted around 1970, Cullen conveys his intent to write a new book, or at least a version of the original with new material. [Figure 4.8] The draft of a lengthier letter in the same archive file specifically sought financial support and an advance on royalties for a condensed paperback version: 'Townscape' my original book, is out of print . . . a successor is needed."[319] He went on to explain that the new book would focus on the art of relationships (essentially the same message as *Townscape*), since it was not yet understood by educators and the public, and he argued that it was perfectly possible to teach this art in a way that could be understood by a schoolboy. But he also described new material for the book, including "Townscape in Action Articles" and "Visual Structure Propositions," as well as possible new examples from the Isle of

[317] Cullen, *The Concise Townscape*, 13.

[318] Ibid.

[319] Gordon Cullen, personal archive, #340.

Man, Calcutta, Peterbourgh, and the Bux villages.[320] It ended on a note of conviction: "There will be no difficulty in finding a publisher or in finding a competent body to administer any funds." To the request he attached an outline, an introduction page, and one-page curriculum vitae. Since it indicated no addressee, he may have used it as a template for several people.

In yet another letter, he explained the plan for a book project and requested funds administered through a university, should he be successful.[321] Though it remains unclear why the intention to produce a significantly altered edition went unrealized, the most likely reasons are lack of financial support and failure to find a publisher. So, whether through Cullen's choice or by default, he produced a trade edition. He clearly believed that the fast-track facsimile reproduction would revitalize his undelivered message. He was hardly disappointed.

The Concise Townscape may have compromised on cost and quality, but it seized a large unfulfilled market, and did so through highly calculated product design, the "physique" of the book.

The "Physique" of the Book

The construction of the book as material object corresponds exactly to Cullen's entire montage operation, a relationship that agrees precisely with the subject of *Townscape* and the experience of the reader. With no new graphic innovation over those of the publications from which it was assembled, the book's novelty resided in its design, which reconceived Townscape in an entirely new consumerist light. Readers could freely circulate about the text and were

[320] In the letter, Cullen indicated that the book would take more than a year to write and might require a research assistant.

[321] This letter was typed on Cullen's personal stationary and dated March 1970. The addressee's name was not typed, but it was addressed to a colleague associated with a university. At the bottom corner was a name scribbled in pen: Richard Llewly-Davies, Bartlett, Univ. College. Cullen may have sent similar letters to other academic acquaintances. In the letter Cullen also mentioned that he had already contacted Peter Shepheard, dean of architecture at the University of Pennsylvania.

encouraged to envision and co-conceive of the urban landscape as a dynamically created space, one in which experimentation with various elements was possible.

From the iconographic program of the page and the entire volume to the structural assemblage of the book's parts and the typography, all the elements over which Cullen had control (and there were a few cost-effective elements over which he had no control) were carefully configured to promote reader immersion and participation.

The Iconographic Program

Generously illustrated, the book uses photographs and drawings not only to "teach" the art of the environment but also to make Townscape "look good," as in advertising. Photography, though, is the driver of the book's imagery. Altogether, the book contains 660 illustrations, of which 410 are photographs. The 250 drawings were mostly composed after the photographs. Because the majority of the photographs were reprints of the original publications and taken from the AR archive, the production was cost-effective. But close to eighty photographs were shot by Cullen, a few of them specifically for the Casebook section.

Cullen's use of his Leica to take a snapshot of everything that might help him teach the art of Townscape was by now a habit. The new lines of low-cost cameras and prints in the 1960s, including the extremely successful Polaroid cameras, meant that students and the average consumer were likewise able to collect pictures. For Cullen, photography became a device to record good and bad visual examples, to supply Townscape's adherents with a casebook, and to entice other people to do the same—to "collect" visual precedents and create their own casebooks (a goal mentioned by Hastings in introducing the original "Townscape Casebook," more than a decade earlier). The book therefore took advantage of a decade when photography

became commonplace, when photographic libraries filtered architectural practice, and when collections of photographs in casebooks, as in the Casebook chapter, could act merely as bait.

The only credits given in the book are to photographic sources—a list of forty-six names of highly diverse groups, including mass media outlets, advertising companies, public organizations, private companies, and professional and amateur photographers with whom Cullen had become personally acquainted over the years and whose photographs were stored in the *Architectural Review* archive. Standing out are The Times and Radio Times Hulton Picture Library (from mass media), the Press and Publicity Photographic Co. (advertisers), the Roads Campaign Council (public organizations), and General Electric Co. (private corporations). Among the well-known professional photographers are Alfred Cracknell, Jack Howe, and the duo Mark Oliver Dell and H. L. Wainwright; the amateur photographers included *Review* staff and editors such as D. Dewar Mills, Ian McCallum, Ian Nairn, and Eric de Maré (who had become a professional despite his lack of training). Hastings, a keen photographer himself, has nearly thirty photographs in the book.

Despite being shot by many contributors, most of the photographs share modernist characteristics of the interwar period. A few of the common features of this approach, also known as New Photography, are the tipped bird's-eye and worm's-eye viewpoints, characteristic of Russian and German constructivism; the daring cropping and framing of elements outside their context, typical of surrealism; and the contrasting effects of light and shadow that new filters and reproductive technology made possible.[322] The aesthetics of Cullen's photography had not changed since the period when he shot for *The Review*, but his distinct photographic choices had become all the more apparent in the book, where his images appear next to those taken by

[322] Robert Elwall, *Building with Light: The International History of Architectural Photography* (London: Merrell, 2004), 120–52.

others. His new photography displays the effects of contrast and drama found in the New Photography, and includes some of the same discordant or empathetic elements as those of his colleagues. Yet it continues to employ the enticing tactics of photo-advertising, while counteracting these tactics with an emphasis on materiality and images of convivial space.

Despite photography's predominance, however, the drawings are the hallmark of the book. In a world saturated with photographs and a book market flooded with photojournalism, Cullen's drawings serve as a counterpoint, demonstrating how well drawings imagine and render a new reality. Since they are almost entirely reprints from *Review* publications, the drawings transport to the book familiar Cullenesque features, which are produced through montage operations, and display a wide range of quality, from refined studio shots to rough field sketches. To avoid excluding a nonspecialized audience, Cullen eliminated a number of plans and diagrams from the original essays, making nearly all of the drawings eye-level perspectives. Only a dozen are orthographic plans, diagrams, and aerial axons (none of which use a mechanical line, and which were mostly included in the town studies and proposals; the two sections that do tend to appeal to professionals were removed from the concise edition). The drawings typically get more space than the photographs, with twenty of them enlarged to a full page, bleeding off the margins, and thirty of them in color. Eight of the colored drawings, the proposals for the Festival of Britain site and the coastal town New Marlow, are assembled into two picture galleries (also omitted from the concise edition).

Townscape's original dust jacket announces the mix of photographs and drawings. For its front, Cullen chose a drawing from "Legs and Wheels" (August 1948). Its back features a photograph by Jack Howe of the cob at Blakeney, England (originally published in

"Immediacy," April 1953).[323] [see Figure 4.1] The focus on the floor and pedestrianism—and the fact that "Legs and Wheels," was the first article to appear under the title "Townscape," and the first for which Cullen was credited as author—may explain his choice. The concept of sensory connection to the environment in the essay "Immediacy," in which the photograph was initially featured, may clarify the reasons for Cullen's selection. It is curious, though, that he chose a photograph not his own, given that his way of pitching Townscape was unique and he consistently sold it through his own work.[324]

Other than rich and varied iconography, however, one finds no graphic surprises in *Townscape*. Compared with the adventurous graphic positions of other original publications at the time, the book is almost unambitious. In fact, Cullen's imagery and page design markedly oppose the dynamic designs of the avant-garde, including the new aesthetics seen in architecture and urbanistic publications of the late 1950s and 1960s. *Townscape* noticeably contrasts with a new brand of architectural "little" magazines. These publications of noncommercial operations, all with small circulations, made their mark in the 1960s; they included *Archigram*, which launched a whole new spectrum of radical graphics.[325] [Figure 4.9] While the experimental little magazines of the 1920s—for instance, *The Bauhaus* and *l'Esprit Nouveau*—were precursors to Cullen's representation during the 1930s, the latter crop stood in contrast to his later productions.

[323] The photograph on the jacket (which appears in the book, on p. 81) is uncredited; however, it is similar to the one taken by Jack Howe.

[324] Cullen had other shots of the Cob at Blakeney. It is known that Jack Howe was a good friend of his.

[325] See Beatriz Colomina and Craig Buckley, eds., *Clip/Stamp/Fold: The Radical Architecture of Little Magazines, 196X to 197X*, (New York: ActarBirkhäuser, 2010).

Even Moholy-Nagy's *Vision in Motion* of 1947, and Le Corbusier's *Ville Radiese* and parts of his *Urbanisme,* published three decades earlier, had more daring graphics and layouts.[326]

This format was deliberate, however. Cullen set aside his artistic drives in favor of the aesthetics of the average reader he sought to reach, repressing any vanguard expression that would have stood in the way of mass appeal. The photographs sustained his aesthetic positions, and the drawings maintained the blend of genres and graphic techniques that he espoused during his stint as art editor. But that intention did not preclude innovation. The book's novelty resides in the expansion of Cullen's primary mode of production montage to all aspects of book making.

A Montage of Purely Editorial Salvage

The book itself is a montage of mostly reused publications bound together; the printed page stitches together texts and images. Similarly, the art of townscape is a montage procedure, itself produced through a sequence of views through time. Finally, the reader is asked to pick and choose pieces from the book and put them together anew. By linking the designs of built space, material object, and the space of the page, and by joining the production and consumption of the book, Cullen fuses his ideas with the objects he makes, the city he envisions, and the reader experience he imagines. Made in the image of its subject, *Townscape* functions on experiential and metaphorical levels. Thus, once more, and in book form, a composite of readymade and fabricated elements would appear to be one of the foundations of Cullen's personal creative dynamic. From this standpoint, *Townscape* comes across as paradigmatically Cullenesque. The publishing procedure that governed this reassembly—the putting together, in the broadest sense, of a book—called in equal measure on the skills of commercial artist, a graphic designer, and an industrial designer—all mobilized toward a new creative act.

[326] For a study of early new avenues in modern book layout, see de Michelis, "Ceci Tuera Cela."

The first characteristic of this book concerns its content, which was almost exclusively composed of fragments of earlier publications. Seen from this angle, the book, a total of 315 quarto pages, 12″ 9.5″ × 7.25″, can almost be summed up by a list of reuses: composed of an 80-page Casebook section made up of eighty-nine visual codes, of which twenty-eight are borrowed from the original "Casebook" essay and nine from "The Functional Tradition"; and 220 pages of essays, of which thirty-six were recycled from the fifty that Cullen had authored for *The Review* (to which was added one from the weekly *AJ*).[327] Only the 7-page introduction was newly written, and of course the front- and back-matters. This principle of editorial salvage, which is consistent with Cullen's operational mode, was also common in architectural publishing among other savvy authors who enjoyed commercial success. Le Corbusier, Cullen's primary model, was renowned for his procedures of editorial salvage, which yielded over two dozen re-formed books. As the art historian Catherine de Smet had shown in *Le Corbusier, Architect of Books*, Le Corbusier had lifted whole pages from his previous volumes, repackaging and republishing them while maintaining close links with their original contexts.[328] The reuse of material in newly packaged books was intended to reach new and expanding markets, a strategy of which Cullen was plenty aware.

The AP had reproduced special *Review* issues, such as Nairn's "Outrage" (1955) and "Counter-Attack" (1956), as independent volumes before. However, unlike these reprints, which were conceived as independent and cohesive volumes with a mind toward prospective publication, Cullen's book contained articles written individually across thirteen years. Unlike

[327] Cullen's essay from the *Architects' Journal* was "St. Paul's Churchyard." *The Concise Townscape* contains only the Casebook and eighteen essays.

[328] Catherine de Smet, *Le Corbusier, Architect of Books*, trans. Deke Dusinberre (Baden, Switzerland: Lars Müller, 2007), 113–14.

the special issues, which were reproduced in facsimile, *Townscape*'s recycled essays were assembled, reformatted, and edited anew for optimal visual effect. Moreover, many of the salvaged articles in *Townscape* were originally presented as mere applications of a preceding theoretical essay by one of the editors.[329] Yet, as the assembled volume makes evident, *Townscape* reads as a cohesive body of work, in which the essays are construed in two ways: they become independent pieces, and, therefore, can be read separately; and, at the same time, they constitute supportive and interrelated parts, encouraging the reader to freely create connections between them.

Editorial salvage had its practical and even philosophical motives. Postwar innovations in printing technology only underscored the conceptual shift that was occurring in the market economy. The economy of reproduction and the expediency of printing had been Cullen's guiding principles since his early career in the interwar Depression era. While the degree to which Cullen had agreed (or acquiesced) to the publisher's economic decisions—book dimensions, inexpensive paper choice, print run, and printing techniques—remains unclear today, it is evident that Cullen's artistry and practicality were always in agreement.

Aside from economic decisions, Cullen was involved in every aspect of *Townscape*: selecting the essays and illustrations, writing the introduction, designing the dust jacket (and the book cover in the paperback edition), and structuring the volume, as well as designing each page, including the typeface and typographical layout. His close attention to every facet of the book was aimed at maximizing its selling capacity. For him, print media, like posters and public exhibitions, were propaganda devices intended to shape and satisfy the mainstream consumer.

[329] Several of the special issue reprints that Cullen illustrated were J. M. Richards, "The Functional Tradition," Architectural Review 107, no. 637 (1950); Ian Nairn, "Outrage" (1955); and Ian Nairn, "Counter-Attack" (1956).

Assembling the Book

Cullen's most significant task regarding the book was to assemble individual pieces into a cohesive whole, a creative task at which he had a natural talent. His main decision for establishing the oeuvre of the book was to transport the presentation strategies of his editorial work to the entire volume. Thus all the pages were created to be predominantly visual, with the exception of a dozen pages that were exclusively text (including the seven-page introduction). The pages of the Casebook section intentionally preserved the relatively ordered appearance of the original "Casebook" essay, and even kept the more eclectic display of their original counterparts. Overall, therefore, the book replicated the tactile pattern and picturesque quality seen in *The Review*: the organization and the size of images, the varying relationship between the text and the images from page to page; compositions that are never centered or symmetrical. [Figure 4.10]

The Casebook section and the essays received different treatments. To add dynamism to the more regimented geometry of the Casebook section, rectangular framed photographs predominated. Cullen laid out the page in two unequal columns—to the left, the wider column contained the images and, to the right, the narrower column contained mostly captions. Conversely, he reformatted pages of the original essays, positioning the many freehand drawings in highly irregular compositions; at the same time, to counteract the chaotic impression he placed the text in two equal columns. Thus, the succession of dissimilar pages in the book was intended to evoke the chaos and sedimentation specific to the picturesque city, and the eye of the reader leafing through the volume should necessarily scan the page, as it would if it were looking at the townscape.

Just as importantly, Cullen transferred the spatial strategy of the urban promenade from his essays to the entire volume, making the urban promenade the primary metaphorical ambition of the book. Of course, *Townscape*'s conception as an urban promenade corresponded with the production of serial vision, a technique to construct itineraries through an assortment of visual "fragments" or urban "events" in reading the book—walking along streets or designing the city.

Not surprisingly, the book opens with a four-page chapter in the Casebook section headed "Serial Vision." [Figure 4.11] A drawing of eight sequential views, keyed to a plan, demonstrates the conception of a particularly dramatic itinerary whose sudden contrasts could "bring a plan to life." According to Cullen, the drawings are not based on a real place. He invented an "evocative plan, on which to base the drawings."[330] Made of ink line and Zip-a-Tone shades, it encapsulates *Townscape* in a nutshell. It asks the reader to follow the fictive path and, if she so chooses, track the progress in the plan. The image therefore announces the manner in which the book ought to be read and, as Cullen envisioned, reveals the game that ought to be played. (Drawn especially for the book, this serial vision became Cullen's single most reproduced drawing—one of two he chose for the cover image of the paperback concise edition.) The book thus envisions, demands, and, in effect, molds readers who are active participants whose actions in and on the text and image implement the book's spatial strategy and layout.

But *Townscape* prescribed no single or predetermined path for its reader. Cullen, who had earlier used the path metaphor to construct linear progression across pages, intentionally omits it from *Townscape*. For example, Cullen structured the sequence of the special issue "Outrage" (1956) by using the outline of the four-hundred-mile road from Southampton to Carlisle, which he and Nairn had taken to examine the dire visual conditions of sprawl along

[330] Cullen, *Townscape*, 17.

England's roads. [Figure 4.12] It appears as a continuous line at the top of the almost fifty-page "The Route Book" section, moving and locating the reader in critical points along the road. In contrast, in *Townscape* he uses specific tactics to discourage linear progression through the book. He maintains the picturesque metaphor of the page through the entire volume, permitting multiple reading sequences (unlike Le Corbusier's *Les Plans de Paris*, in which the bazaar metaphor of the page is abandoned and turns into a prescribed path, a "green trail" made of green shapes that run throughout the volume).[331] Cullen's picturesque city and its experience promote multiple paths and meandering within the city, as in the book. Hence, the graphics and layout of both page and volume of *Townscape* reflect Cullen's vision of the city as well as of his reader's experience.

Though it is unclear if Cullen knew of it, a similar manner of reading, also associated with landscape metaphor, had shaped *The New Landscape in Art and Science* (1956), a book edited by the art historian Gyorgy Kepes. Examining postwar developments of vision in art and in science, Kepes opened his book with a statement that might well qualify as *Townscape*'s missing preface: "This book is meant to be looked at more than read. . . . The 'text' of the book is not its message. . . . Pictures are content; verbal statements are illustrations. They do not constitute a connected systematic account. . . . [T]he visual images [form] the basis of the interrelated structure that alone tells a connected story."[332] Much like Cullen, Kepes inverted the typical relationship between narrative and image. Unlike Cullen, however, Kepes created an

[331] As Catherine de Smet shows, the metaphor of the linear path of *Les Plans* (which Le Corbusier makes outright explicit in the book's introduction) instructs the reader to take the "green trail" and follow it to the end of the book. Catherine de Smet, "The 'Other Side' of the Architecture Books," in *Modern architecture from the Marzona Collection*, ed. Elizabeth Bresciani (Vienna: Schlebrügge, 2003), 505.

[332] Gyorgy Kepes, ed., *The New Landscape in Art and Science* (Chicago: P. Theobald, 1956), 17.

indirect relationship between the text and the image on the page, thereby making them independent of one another.

Cullen employed a different strategy but produced a similar reader experience. Instead of relying on text-image misalignment, he relied on the semi-independence of the visuals—the visuals may be understood to be independent of the text. But to understand the text, one needs to look at the visuals—specifically, at a highly calculated graphic and typographic program to level the visual terrain of the book, to downplay divisions, and to erase hierarchy among book sections, headings, and subheadings. Both books, using different strategies, ultimately produced a new experience for the reader as an observer who proceeds from one encounter to another in a nonlinear sequence, sampling images in isolation from the text. Both targeted an altogether different experience of reader and authorship and anticipated the variable seriality of the digital age that Carpo so astutely analyzed.

The Hypertext

Cullen organized the book contents in a uniform, tight fashion. He employed a deliberate set of structural and typographic tactics intended to negate hierarchy and divisions throughout the book. This layout thus facilitated the act of "wandering" through the imaginative landscape that Cullen prescribed, even while they were free to choose their destinations as they wandered within that landscape. Like equal fragments strewn in a box, the visual codes composing the Casebook section, and the essay chapters in the Studies and Proposals sections, were treated evenly throughout.

There are no discrete separations or white leaves between book parts, no spacing between essays, and very little distinction of typeface for book part titles, chapter headings, and subheadings. The four parts (or chapters) and four Casebook headings are intentionally

inconspicuous. [Figure 4.13] The visual codes read as a continuous list, and the essays as one long article with multiple subheadings. This seamless flow is further supported by the absence of book conclusions and references.

The typography of the book is extraordinarily conventional and the opposite of ornate. The text is set in the serif Clarendon font, Cullen's favorite. A direct inheritance from the eighteenth-century English publishing tradition, it is consistent with *The Review*'s typographic choices. Except for the four part titles, which are set in 14-point, boldface *Clarendon* capital letters, there is only one lower heading level, that of the Casebook headings, also set in *Clarendon* capitals, only in 12-point size regular font.

Cullen adopted 10-point Clarendon for all running text and captions. He increased the essay headings and the Casebook caption headings to 11-point, in bold, and chose not to capitalize the first letter of the caption headings. These subtle variations were made even harder to discern by the lack of divisions between book parts and essays.

Without page breaks and distinct headings, the book seems an indiscriminant continuum of equal parts, devoid of hierarchy. This lack of hierarchy, this uniform appearance, produces flexible contextual tactics, which in turn promote nonlinear reading. In *Townscape*'s introduction, Cullen tells the reader: "All that remains is to join [the pieces of the book] together into a new pattern created by the warmth and power and vitality of human imagination" in the realm of the text.[333] This passage suggests that he meant for the book to be read in something other than standard successive fashion (from left to right, beginning to end). Instead, the reader is responsible for choosing the order. The book is intended to be sampled randomly by the reader. The result, even more than a network of possibilities, is a form that could be regarded as a

[333] Cullen, *Townscape*, 15.

precursor to the hypertext of the current digital age, in which sequential reading can be replaced by a journey forward and backward through the book, as one skips pages and chooses individual textual and visual segments of interest. Much like today's computer users who surf the Web, the book user could construct multiple, individualized readings and apply them to the city. The reader could, for example, pick the visual codes of "mystery," "continuity," and "pedestrian ways" evident in "Casebook," and expressed by the concept articulated in "Here and There," to produce her own urban design. Or if he chose to read the town study of Dursley, the reader could find and then link to visual code references of "truncation," "punctuation," and "closure." Cullen's structural and typographic tactics elicit the reader's tactile and mental involvement in the book and, subsequently, with the city.

Finally, the textual "openness" of the original publications, together with a similarly trope-rich and conversational introduction and new captions, further prompts reader participation (see "The Painterly and Conversational Text," in chapter 3). The book's only reproduced painting, *Saint Jerome in His Study* (1475) by Antonello da Messina (which Cullen may have seen in the National Gallery in London), illustrates its essentially open textual position.[334] Captioned "Indoor Landscape and Outdoor Room," it features a succession of exterior and interior spaces as it traverses from outdoors to indoors, and to the outdoors again, depicting Cullen's sensibility of spatial exchangeability and progression from "here to there." [Figure 4.14] But the choice of the da Messina painting, not coincidently, reaches beyond concepts of space to the symbolism of its figure and to his work. Umberto Eco attributes to *St. Jerome*—which depicts the medieval poet writing in a studio—the very essence of openness, arguing that the painting's allegorical figures and emblems are "open" to a multiplicity of meanings for which the

[334] Cullen, *Townscape*, 28.

medieval viewer should hunt and find.[335] Like St. Jerome's encyclopedias, bestiaries, and lapidaries, *Townscape*, with its allegorical combinations, invited the postmodern reader to seek out her own meanings.

Townscape changed the conception not only of the book but also of the reader and author. It invited a different mode of reading, and therefore of understanding the city. But more broadly, it constructed a mode of acquiring and distributing knowledge. Just as the idea of Townscape broke from the order and unity of the modern city, so the book *Townscape* broke from the universality and authority of modernist forms of knowledge, introducing subjectivity and multiplicity to the postmodern world. In contrast to prewar books that purported to create a public unified by universal taste, *Townscape* was tailored to diverse reading publics, and was intended to stoke different tastes.

While *Townscape*'s pliability constituted simple faith in the average practitioner and layperson, architects who fancied themselves visionaries scorned the book's simplicity as belonging to popular (in a pejorative sense), or conventional, media. They mostly ignored it. Alternately, architects affiliated with the establishment received it with a mix of rejection and fascination. It is the latter reaction that would prove to illuminate the lure of the book upon its release.

Of Critics and Competitors

Townscape had its critics and its fans. Reviewers of the book in the established professional journals in Britain and the United States expressed a certain tension—a mix of excitement and unease with its language and format. They received *Townscape*, therefore, with both disdain and fascination, and the latter won in the end. The outcome, though, was precisely

[335] Eco, *The Role of the Reader*, 1979.

the kind of impact that Cullen had hoped for from his readers, one that would lead to an irresistible desire to buy and own the book.

Townscape had its competitors, too. Cullen's colleagues published their own versions of *Townscape* between 1963 and 1974. Several of these books are heavily illustrated and use a similar case-based methodology and a casebook format. Yet, as the discussion below shows, *Townscape*'s contemporaries never matched its popularity.

The Lure, the Praise, and the Scorn

The British architectural establishment was clear in expressing its quandary with the book. Reviewing the book for *The Review*, the architect James Morris wrote: "My first reaction to this volume was one of affronted irritation, . . . [the same response I had to] Sharp's Oxford, with all its worthy but somehow school-marmy dogmatism."[336] Morris called Cullen fanciful, referred to the book as airy-fairy, and complained about its lecturing, chastising tone. But he ended up submitting to its allure: "Apostasy keeps breaking in: for gradually, as you digest more thoroughly the purpose of this book and realize the astonishing prolificity of Mr. Cullen's ideas, it dawns upon you that you are hearing the voice of an aspirant and enlightened oligarchy."[337] Morris's reaction exemplified the fact that Cullen's genius could not be ignored, even when people somehow were rankled by him. Morris's tone lacked the aesthetic distance expected of a critic, and was instead intense and emotional. Reflecting an overpowering spell, the kind for which Cullen's drawings are known, he wrote: "Mr. Cullen is almost a paragon. If I cannot stomach all his fancies, I can only honour the blazing respect for beauty that infuses every line of

[336] Morris, "A Moving Viewpoint," 6.

[337] Ibid., 7.

Townscape."[338] Morris's metaphor-rich text, like that of Cullen, ran short of descriptors, resorting to dead-end words like "beauty" and extending them to every line (text and drawing) of the book. Other critics had similar, if less poetically expressed, reactions—they rejected the book's unconventional architectural language, and then submitted to its magical drawings. Reviewing for the *Town Planning Review*, for example, Weddle concluded that the book was impractical, and the text hardly sustaining—"particularly in its statement and analysis of the problems of case studies." Yet he admired Cullen's "brilliant drawings upon which the whole description, analysis and understanding depend."[339]

Reactions in the United States were comparable, if less lofty. The architectural critic Richard Dober wrote in *Progressive Architecture* that the book would not extend the professional reader's boundaries of knowledge since "as a concept or even a program for action[,] *Townscape* lacks precision."[340] He credited Cullen for conveying the book's basic design ideals—somewhat underhandedly—in a humanistic, engaging, and thoughtful manner, adding: "Whenever words are insufficient and photographs impractical, Cullen uses his pen and pencil in the facile manner that marks him as a master in the design of atmosphere."[341] Finally, in the *Architectural Forum*, McQuade called the book, "brilliant"—not for its apparent literary style or content, but for its drawings' style, which he deemed "Cullen's own secret."[342]

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[338] Ibid., 6.

[339] Weddle, review of *Townscape*, 239.

[340] Richard Dober, "Structure and Content in Urban Design: Townscape," *Progressive Architecture* 43, no. 179 (November 1962): 172–88.

[341] Ibid., 188.

[342] McQuade, review of *Townscape*, 155.

The words "secret" and "magic" were often used in book reviews to describe the persuasive quality of Cullen's drawings. The architect J. H. Napper plainly expressed this sentiment in his review in the *RIBA Journal*: "Indeed it will not need a review to persuade people to buy it, for it commends itself to all who care about civilised space. I intend to buy the book and use it."[343] And Dober concluded his own review with the following recommendation: "Townscape is a thoroughly enjoyable book, illuminating[,] and well worth owning as a prod for ideas."[344]

Perhaps because of its growing popularity and use as a textbook in numerous urban design and planning schools (mainly after the concise edition was released in 1971), academicians in the fields of architectural theory and art history intensified their attacks on the book's conceptual weakness and on ideological grounds. Alan Powers called it a "diluted form (devoid of philosophy) of manual of style" (though he would later find Cullen's contribution to be quite valuable as a bridge between the idea of Townscape and the public).[345] Richard Williams called it a "declamatory and bizarre text."[346] Macarthur described it as hardly intellectual, labeling its poetic metaphors and animism-filled text "pathetic fallacy: . . . the moment when description fails the object and turns to the subject's feelings instead, after Ruskin."[347] Erdem Erten called the book pragmatic and incoherent, yet ultimately considered it

[343] Napper, review of *Townscape*, 243.

[344] Dober, "Structure and Content, 188.

[345] Alan Powers, "Landscape in Britain," in *The Architecture of Landscape, 1940–1960*, ed. Marc Treib (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2002), 69; Powers, review of *Gordon Cullen, Visions of Urban Design*, 89.

[346] Williams, *The Anxious City*, 34.

[347] Macarthur, *The Picturesque*, 205.

to be among the canonical texts of urban design discourse and an important pedagogical academic reference.[348]

Erten was also the first critic to attribute the success of the book to its exclusion of ideological references to neo-romanticism, and acknowledged its autonomy of thought and appeal to contemporary thought regarding psychology and perception. Other critics argued otherwise. Aitchison and Macarthur, for example, maintained that the abridged version of the book shed the modernist agenda of the original book, and more generally of *The Review* editors, , displaying instead a postmodernist tone of historicism in building design.[349] Others, including Richard Williams, Andrew Law, and Joe Moran, blamed Cullen for simply hiding a different kind of ideology—purporting to speak to a popular crowd while hiding an ideological ambition of control, among other claims[350] ("Tossed in Academic Discourses: Supple References, Adaptable Meanings," in chapter 5).

By blaming the book for shaping a popular notion of architecture and participating in consumerist culture, recent critics merely validate the book's insight, and thus become irrelevant. *Townscape* participated in the larger trend that produced the kind of architecture and urbanism people wanted. It was visually alluring, highly informative and useful, and participatory. As chapter 5 of this study reveals, Cullen's images empowered people, many of whom were students and practitioners, urging them to take a pencil and try their hand at drawing and imagining the city. The features that made *Townscape* such a consumable product become all the

[348] Erten, "Shaping 'The Second Half Century,'" 294, 103.

[349] Macarthur and Aitchison, "Pevsner's Townscape," 14.

[350] Williams, *The Anxious City*, 40; Law, "English Townscape as Cultural and Symbolic Capital," 217; Moran, "'Subtopias of Good Intentions,'" 410.

more evident when it is compared to the other, less successful Townscape books of Cullen's *Review* colleagues.

Of Other Townscape Books

By the time Cullen's abbreviated edition was published in 1971, at least four other Townscape books were circulating in the market. Hastings's two books published by his own press, *The Italian Townscape*, which came out in 1963 under the pseudonym Ivor de Wolfe, and *Civilia: The End of Sub Urban Man*, in 1971, under the misnomer Ivor de Wofle; Ian Nairn's book, *The American Landscape: A Critical View*, was brought out in 1965 by Random House in New York. And Thomas Sharp's *Town and Townscape* was published in 1968 by John Murray in London. [Figure 4.15] Nairn's book was the product of the Rockefeller grant that he and Cullen initially had received—but Cullen's contribution was dropped, reportedly because Random House's Jason Epstein disliked the graphics.[351] Collectively, these books share with *Townscape* a visual approach to town planning and a message of opposition to suburbia. They all celebrate the aliveness of cities, and preserve distinctions between town and countryside. But approach and message alone do not lead to success. While other Townscape books collected dust on library shelves, *Townscape* remained the only viable messenger of the idea.

Three interrelated components distinguish Cullen's *Townscape* from the other Townscape books and account for its impact: authorial tone, reader engagement, and typographic program. Whereas text and discrete chapters occupy a subordinate position in *Townscape*, its contemporaries uniformly rely on substantial text and multiple chapters to construct a central, progressive narrative.[352] The professional content and intellectual tone of the other Townscape

[351] Darley, "Ian Nairn and Jane Jacobs," 743.

[352] *Townscape* has a brief introductory text. The concise edition has, in addition, a two-page new introduction and four-page conclusion. By contrast, *The Italian Townscape* has a fifteen-page general

books demand specialized attention and thus appeal to select readership. They orchestrate a conventional linear progression through the volume that forces readers into a passive role, following the path from beginning to conclusion. Their closed and complete texts further refuse to engage the subjective agency of their audience and the multiplicity of potential reading publics. The final and most obvious element distinguishing *Townscape* from its contemporaries is the form of its illustrations. Unlike *Townscape* and *Civilia*, the other Townscape books rely almost entirely on photography. The few mostly plain and mechanical maps, diagrams, and sectional drawings they do contain demand a specialized eye. The only nontechnical drawing that appears in *The American Landscape*—a bird's-eye view of a grandiose super-scale development lifted from a previous publication—is, not surprisingly, by Cullen and his American colleague Helmut Jacoby.[353]

Additional lessons can be learned from a closer comparison between Cullen's *Townscape* and the two books by Hastings, specifically because the two authors saw eye-to-eye on several Townscape matters (indeed, the Casebook portions in *Townscape* and *The Italian Townscape* are quite similar). [Figure 4.16] Both use a visual database or precedents to build a vocabulary specific to Townscape, a kind of a photographic thesaurus. *The Italian Townscape*, however, uses examples from Italian Renaissance and medieval cities, and therefore frames its subject both culturally and historically, thus overtly embedding it in neo-romantic ideology. Much as in *Townscape*, the precedents of *The Italian Townscape* are accompanied by expanded captions.

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introduction, a conclusion, and a two-page introduction to each of the ten chapters; *Civilia* has a twenty-page general introduction, a two-page conclusion, and a two-page introduction for each of the ten chapters; *The American Landscape* has a sixteen-page introduction, and ten chapters with running text; and *Town and Townscape* has a six-page introduction, a two-page conclusion, four book parts, and twelve chapters with running text. None of the books includes references.

[353] The illustration was taken from *Fortune* magazine's *The Exploding Metropolis* (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1958), 139.

Unlike their counterparts, though, they are divided into ten picture galleries, which follow introductory remarks for each. The limited number of diagrammatic and impressionistic sketches (by Kenneth Browne) and the reliance on picture galleries make *The Italian Townscape* a photographic album of sorts. Not surprisingly, critics' response to the book was muted.[354] The review in *Urban Studies* is positive, but finds the richest chapter to be the one that addresses streets—which, as Hastings suggests, is the chapter that owes the most to Cullen.[355]

Even in comparison to *Civilia*, which was deemed significant by Erten as Hastings's "final act," *Townscape*'s superiority persisted, and that despite the lavishness of *Civilia*'s production. *Civilia*, a case study proposal for an alternative future town, primarily addressed planners and, as a result, had limited impact. Even its hefty illustrations—color site analysis drawings, printed on pull-out leaves, multiple axons, and above all photomontages, all by Browne—did not change its fatal fate.[356] The book required a professional eye to decipher, and Browne's collages felt severe and uninviting, lacking the simplicity, playfulness, and vitality found in Cullen's drawings. [Figure 4.17] Unlike Cullen's early photomontages, which combined drawings and photos to transcend the information provided by either medium alone,

[354] For an extensive discussion of critics of the book, see Erten, "Shaping 'The Second Half Century,'" 105–8.

[355] S. McLaeod, review of *The Italian Townscape*, by Ivor de Wolfe, *Urban Studies* 3, no.1 (February 1966): 77–78.

[356] For an extensive discussion of *Civilia*, see Erten, "Shaping 'The Second Half Century,'" 159–60. The single print edition of the book was criticized both for its odd imagery and its lack of economic feasibility. Many ridiculed the plan as a utopian dream.

Browne's photomontages exclusively assembled photographic fragments from an odd variety of sources, which, more than anything else, raised eyebrows and were readily ridiculed.[357]

The supremacy of *Townscape* over its contemporaries is soundly articulated by Hastings himself. In his conclusion to *The Italian Townscape*, Hastings called Cullen's work a "big book" and "one of the seminal books of the century," adding, "Anyone whose emotions are involved in a home-town or adopted city is advised to build a poacher's pocket inside his jacket to carry the big book around until he knows each of its many morals by heart."[358] Hastings not only extolled Cullen but also undermined his own book. This must have been the best compliment Hastings had ever bestowed on his "draughtsman."

Thus, although *Townscape*'s equivalents used some of the same tactics, by eliminating cerebral text, rejecting distinct chapters, encouraging multiple reading paths, and adding its signature drawings (in addition to photographs) it defined its new genre, advancing it to the postmodern age. Cullen's pervasive influence was far more profound than his contemporaries gave him credit for. Even when they tried to ignore him, they could not—his sensibilities crept into their own work and into the ways they made sense of and tried to pitch Townscape. Whereas the other books on the movement are buried in the dust of history, occasionally resurrected by scholars to prove a point or two, *Townscape* is still alive and in practice, as the discussion in the final chapter of this study shows.

The last section in this chapter briefly turns to examine Cullen's post-*Townscape* period. While it presents an unsettled and personal side of his final three decades of his career, it also

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[357] The sources of the photomontage fragments include Hastings's book *The Italian Townscape*, an essay on the Festival of Britain from the pages of *The Review*, cutouts buildings by famous modernist architects Moshe Safdie and Paul Rudolph, and many others.

[358] De Wolfe, *The Italian Townscape*, 277.

confirms the broader point of this study regarding the role of image makers in the postmodern world. When Cullen left the press and shifted from image making to consulting and from a concern for sales to that of principle, he lost his leading motivation and stagnated. This result can be seen in his wavering career path, as well as in his bitterness about over the aftermath of *Townscape*. At the same time that the self-motivated and creative postmodern consumer found her own voice in the book, Cullen could not recover his.

The Post-*Townscape* Quandary

Despite *Townscape*'s success, Cullen continued to believe that his book was misunderstood, as he complained in his introduction to the concise edition: "[T]he Environment Game itself, is still locked away in its little red and gilt box."[359] Today, however, it is clear that his disappointment had little to do with the success of the book, and was instead rooted in his own change of heart. Continuing to believe that people could be educated to specific ends, Cullen was disappointed to find that they would use his message differently than he had intended. He understood the power of giving control to readers, but was naive about the possible ways in which people would put that sensibility to use. *Townscape* was immensely influential precisely because of its openness to interpretation. It supported varying itineraries and destinations. Its pliability in the hands of the consumer was exactly the source of its success.

The difficulties Cullen faced when he returned to private practice, this time wearing the new hats of consultant and educator, seem to have hinged on his continual frustration at being suspended between vocational categories. It was a vexation that plagued his entire career. The title "author," made possible through the status of image makers and the spectacle, also gave him a false sense of purpose. This is not to say that Cullen lacked profound ideas and goals for the

[359] Cullen, *The Concise Townscape*, 13–14.

human environment. Nor does it imply that consulting or education was superior to drawing and advertising. Rather, it means that the status of consultant and educator demanded of him a kind of production for which he was not well suited.

Cullen's print medium was his message, to paraphrase Marshall McLuhan's aphorism.[360] His art and writing introduced new ways seeing and thinking about the city and, in the book's case, new ways of reading. His work changed the old ways of producing and consuming architecture. The message was less significant. In the mid-1950s, however, Cullen became increasingly committed to the message of Townscape, instead of to the medium and the technology that delivered it. This was a fundamental conceptual and operational shift that weakened the imperatives of his vocation and sidestepped his proficiency. Following his departure from *The Review,* Cullen struggled to secure the clientele and sponsorship necessary for steady income and continued publicity. Indications of his floundering are several abortive or short-lived attempts to pursue publishing, consulting, film production, and teaching.[361]

His plans to create a book with Nairn on the application of the principles of Townscape to American cities, under their Rockefeller grant of the early 1960s, came to nothing.[362] His subsequent individual commission to develop a book on the core of six American cities in 1962 failed as well (Ian McHarg, the Rockefeller grant liaison at that time, could not find a publisher

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[360] Marshall McLuhan, *Understanding Media: The Extensions of Man* (New York: Signet Books, 1964), 23.

[361] For an extensive account of Cullen's commissions and projects, see the last two chapters, covering Cullen's career between 1974 and 1994, in David Gosling, *Gordon Cullen: Visions of Urban Design,* 1996.

[362] The book was to be written together with Nairn and was tentatively entitled "Townscape USA," Cullen was on a tour to the USA under a grant by the Rockefeller Foundation. For a detailed account on the unfolding of the project, see Clément Orillard, "Townscape Origins," 299. Also see Darley, "Ian Nairn and Jane Jacobs," 741.

willing to accept the completed manuscript).[363] Cullen was unable to attract a publisher for a new Townscape book in 1970, and ended up with a shortened reprint of the first edition. The new book, to which Cullen had alluded in the "endpiece" to the 1971 edition, and which he had wanted "to fashion [as] a much more realistic tool," went unrealized.[364] Also at that time, he had another manuscript, "The Draughtsman," in the works—this time commissioned by Oxford University Press—but it never got off the ground.[365] Finally, in conjunction with a prestigious award he received in 1976, the *AJ* featured new drawings by Cullen, and announced on its pages that the drawings were from "Cullen's long-awaited follow-up to *Townscape* which is being published by the Architectural Press next year," under the title, *Small Places*.[366] For unknown reasons, that book, too, failed to materialize.

It is beyond the means and purpose of this study to speculate on these failed attempts. But looking further into other ventures Cullen unsuccessfully attempted suggests a possible explanation. Cullen opened independently and with former acquaintances a number of private consulting offices over the remaining three decades of his career, and all were short-lived. Cullen knew full well the value of corporate identity, and from the standpoint of a graphic designer, his private practices were markedly well packaged. As the different stationeries and letterheads in his archive show, he created at least five companies. In the early 1960s, he opened a company together with Browne and Nairn, naming it "Cullen, Browne & Nairn." Working subsequently

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[363] Ian McHarg to Gordon Cullen, May 24, 1963; this letter informed Cullen that Random House rejected his manuscript on the basis of cost and tried to find him another publisher, to no avail. Rockefeller Foundation Archive, Sleepy Hollow, New York, Box 456, folder 3902.

[364] Cullen, *The Concise Townscape*, 193. It is unclear whether Cullen was alluding to the same book project for which he sought funds in the 1970 letters mentioned earlier or to a different plan.

[365] Gordon Cullen, personal archive, curriculum vitae 1970, #339.

[366] AJ editors, "Small Places," *Architects' Journal* 48, no. 164 (December 1, 1976): 1010.

with Donald Dewar-Mills, a *Review* colleague and illustrator, and two other associates in 1963, he named his new office "Gordon Cullen Associates." In the early 1970s, he called his business "Gordon Cullen, Townscape Consultant," using what looked like a section of a chestnut as its logo. [Figure 4.18]

Cullen understood that the consumption of Townscape in a culture increasingly shaped by the mass media (especially TV and film) could be sustained only insofar as it fed this commercial expansion of the printing and publishing trades. Hence, the goals of "Gordon Cullen Associates" in the mid-1960s were ambitious:

1. To publish, to promote, to commercialize and to exploit the works, writings, drawings and paintings of Thomas Gordon Cullen and persons associated with him and in particular to introduce the same into schools and universities in all parts of the world.
2. To carry the business of printers, publishers, photographers, slide and film makers generally and in particular for the purpose of education and instruction in the fields of visual art, architecture, building development and town and country planning.
3. To carry on business as art printer . . . , engravers . . . newspaper proprietors . . . , journalists[.][367]

This agenda encapsulates Cullen's phenomenal understanding of the working economic and cultural apparatuses, encompassing all its essential producers, consumers, and mass media. The new letterhead of the company shows its name written in a picture of a roll of film. Job listings under the business name show between twelve and nineteen possible film projects, many of which were a synthesis of the studies Cullen had made in the 1960s; only two were developed in any depth. Of those two, only one led to the production of a reel and a frame-by-frame commentary, but it was never shown to an audience.[368] Discussions about making a film on

[367] Orillard, "Gordon Cullen beyond *The Architectural Review*," 726.

[368] Ibid., 327.

Townscape with Dudley Shaw Ashton, a documentary director, in March 1962 also failed. Cullen aborted his filmmaking dream around 1965. His remarkable insight into the causal relationship between design and affect, which are in turn affected by the processes of modern economies, could not suffice to make him a successful businessman.

Cullen knew well the ingredients necessary for making a successful product, and the steps to incorporate the ideas that would make it marketable, but he was somehow less adept at actually making those products. His consulting work took a much more mundane form, involving documentation and analytical drawings for historical and town studies commissioned by private development corporations, towns, and county councils. And there was always an architect in the lead position to realize the project (e.g., his collaboration with Graeme Shankland on a study on Liverpool, or with Frederick MacManus on a study of Tenterden for the Kent County Planning Council). Having to support a family with three young daughters, Cullen needed to make a living, and town planning—to which the consultation was allied—rather than commercial art or graphic design was his chosen source of income.

A Townscape consultant, however, is a specialization within town planning and historic architectural preservation: undertaken in the name of service, but not a pursuit involving creative visual skill. As consultant, Cullen occupied the status of an expert, not an artist. To facilitate communication with his professional clients and their planners and architects, Cullen continued his method of town studies from a moving pedestrian viewpoint and through perspectives, but he also had to use more plans, sections, and diagrams. The end result of this work essentially took the form of reports and booklets that described, in his best way, the human experience of place. [Figure 4.19] But these texts, entirely devoid of Cullen's associative style, were authored by more proficient writers and supervised by architect consultants for each job. Cullen went beyond

the limited circle of his clients by exploiting his ties with *The Review* and the *AJ*. And by returning to that medium, he published about two dozen more articles, thus continuing to feed the magazine's editorial policy.[369]

The most notable of these products were four illustrated studies of visionary and existing towns prepared from 1964 through 1968 for the Alcan Industries Company, which produced aluminum products for the building industry. This extended commission brilliantly restored Cullen to his basics. [Figure 4.20] It began in 1964 as an advertising campaign for Alcan, and evolved into an educational planning document. According to the publicist in charge of this campaign, Cullen was contacted because of his reputation as commercial artist but convinced the company to turn its campaign into a planning scheme. Upon the art director's recommendation, Alcan contacted Cullen and asked him if he would be interested in providing some illustrations for an campaign advertising campaign that would demonstrate good uses of aluminum in the building industry. "Mr. Cullen's response," the publicist recalled, "was a total surprise. Instead of sending us some specimen drawings he sent several paragraphs of text which indicated he could offer something on the subject of urban planning!"[370] Cullen readily marketed his acquired expertise to Alcan, and Alcan promoted its aluminum goods through a politically correct planning document. Publishing booklets, Cullen produced his typical rhetorical requirements—a more widely understood image without compromising technical knowledge—to reach professionals and general public alike.[371] "A Town Called Alcan" and "4 Circuit Linear Towns"

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[369] Cullen also published essays in foreign journals such as *Domus* and *Connection*. In addition, articles about his work, including work he did with David Gosling and David Price in the early 1980s, appeared in the *Architects' Journal*.

[370] Quoted in Orillard, "Gordon Cullen beyond *The Architectural Review*," 729.

[371] All were initially published by the Alcan Industries as booklets: "A Town Called Alcan" (1964); Gordon Cullen, "Four Circuit Linear Towns" (1965); "The Scanner," with Alun Jones, Ward and Partners

opened the series with evocative drawings. The last two publications in the series, "The Scanner" and "Notation: The Observant Layman's Code for His Environment," followed with cartoons and a fictive narrative, but also included a new analytical element not seen before in Cullen's work—a table that codified environmental and human factors, or what he called "the total environmental sphere of influence."

This rational attempt to tabulate the entire world occupied Cullen for several years. [Figure 4.21] Echoing the work of planners and environmental psychologists at the time, it was not germane to his work—in fact, it was its antithesis.[372] Though the effort was appreciated by some, it was an unsuccessful attempt at analytical thinking, which was not Cullen's greatest strength. Moreover, it was an attempt at universality, a standard method by which everything could be measured, at a time during which the ideology of universality was dying.

Cullen had benefited from firsthand engagement with communities during *The Review* outreach programs. Now, however, facing town council clients independently was a different matter (see "Extramural Affairs," in chapter 3). As a private consultant, Cullen positioned himself within the politically charged terrain of urbanism, seeking to prove in the course of the work his expertise in that domain, though he was unprepared to enter into intellectual discourse or communicate verbally. In fact, he did not like to talk, period! As Peter Rees recalled, "It was obvious from early on that Gordon did not like talking. Gordon did the drawings; I did the

(1966); and "Notation: The Observant Layman's Code for His Environment," (1968). They were later reprinted as series of articles in the *Architects' Journal*.

[372] For Cullen's notation system, see, Gordon Cullen, "Notation: The Observant Layman's Code for His Environment" (London: Alcan Industries, 1968).

talking, research and reports."[373] And despite his widespread reputation, his verbal inadequacy kept him from becoming an effective consultant to either private developers or town council members.

Finally, Cullen shifted his career focus to education. When in the 1970s jobs dried up and his eyesight deteriorated, he suffered from depression. A sizable number of universities were using his book and method, though, and student inquiries from around the world promised a new source of income. As an educator, Cullen kept doing what he knew best, except now in the presence of aspiring professionals: he taught through drawings. Landscape and planning students from Europe and America arrived for two- to three-week workshops at his school in the small town of Biot, France, where he owned a little house in which the family spent their summers. As soon as students arrived, he took them out to the streets of Biot to draw.[374] [Figure 4.22] His protégé Rees, who joined Cullen during his apprenticeship, recounts: "Gordon was revered as a great guru. His method of teaching was pollination. He was not organized; there was no plan."[375] Other personal accounts of Cullen make it clear that he was disorganized and impatient, qualities that do not make for an effective educator. Gosling, who was inspired by Cullen's drawings when he was a student in the 1950s and became chair of Landscape Architecture at the University of Sheffield, brought Cullen to teach there intermittently between 1974 and 1979.

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[373] Peter Rees, interview with the author, July 25, 2010. This point is also corroborated by his good friend Eric de Maré, who wrote in his eulogy to Cullen: "Cullen was a poor speaker, shy, modest. The drawings spoke for him." De Maré, "Gordon Cullen, My Friend and Colleague," 84.

[374] Cullen's archive contains journal notes in preparation for the workshop. Gordon Cullen, personal archive, notes on a seminar on visual literacy and notation, #726; archive, Biot workshop 1983, #698. For Cullen's work in Biot, see two essays by Gordon Cullen: "06 Biot," *Architectural Review* 156, no. 934 (December 1974): 363–71; "Cullen's Campaign for Visual Literacy," *Architects' Journal* 161, no. 22 (May 28, 1975): 1110–13. Also see Gosling, *Gordon Cullen: Visions of Urban Design*, 228–30.

[375] Peter Rees, interview with the author, July 25, 2010.

Gosling also arranged for a number of major project contracts, providing Cullen with much-needed financial and moral support at a critical moment.[376] But Cullen's educational venture culminated in an educational graphic product. He called it a campaign for "visual literacy," essentially continuing the visual vocabulary from his *Review* work. In 1975, he packaged several signed color photo lithographs. Each print drew attention to a word or concept that communicated the "silent language" of the city. This education was for sale, at £20 per lithograph.[377] [Figure 4.23] His tenure at summer school lasted for ten years, but in 1984 Cullen made a final shift to return to creative work, opening an architectural consulting office in partnership with a young student from Sheffield: David Price. There, he would practice through the late 1980s, until succumbing to strokes and poor vision.

The decades that followed the publication of his book show that Cullen's drawings remained alluring but did not change. He held a few exhibitions of his drawings, yet his graphics repeated worn out technique—the same eye-level perspectives, often using more naturalistic crayon colors.[378] Merely husbanding his acquired skills without developing his creative impetus did not ensure that his work would remain fresh. Cullen was lost in a bygone world.

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[376] For an account of Cullen's collaboration with Gosling, see David Gosling, "The Fifth Decade," in *Gordon Cullen*, 100–146.

[377] By "silent language" Cullen meant the muted signs of the environment with which he wanted people to connect, hoping that his drawings, similarly filled with muted signals, would serve as guide. In the 1976 exhibition catalog (see n. 42, above) Cullen explicitly wrote: "The purpose of this exhibition is to draw attention to the silent language of our environment." "Muted Signals" was also the title of the lecture he gave upon receiving an honorary doctor of engineering degree at the University of Munich, and close to the title of Cullen's essay in the Italian magazine *Domus*. Gordon Cullen, "Mute Signals: The Alphabet of the City," *Domus* 543 (February 1975): 1–7.

[378] Exhibitions of Cullen's work included "Gordon Cullen: Artist and Illustrator," Royal Academy, London and Paris Salon, in 1972; "Small Places," Wraysbury, in May 1975 (see n. 366, above); Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA), in December 1976, in conjunction with his receipt of the AIA award (the exhibition was shown in Germany, in October 1976, and traveled to the United States, in 1977); and a retrospective exhibition in London Building Center, in June 1984 (see n. 42, above).

For some reason, Cullen functioned less well as a solo operator than as part of the AR team, even though he was underprivileged and underappreciated at the time. In part, this was because of his temperament. He was not the intellectual who continued to evolve new theories; he was the one who managed to translate the ideas of others into a look and feel that appealed to a new audience. He also lacked the verbal facility to articulate ideas. At the press, Cullen was in his element; he was in step with his curiosity and creativity, and with the professional moment. His ability to function better within the AR team than on his own may also have been due in part to there being truly something magical between Hastings and Cullen—they seemed to have a symbiotic relationship, in which Hastings conceived the ideas, assembled the team, and then trusted that Cullen understood what to do with them as no one else could. But when Cullen no longer had this symbiotic partnership, a critical piece was missing. And in part, his performance may have been a reflection of the times. His particular sensibilities perfectly matched the moment. His ability to sense the moment in his early career contrasted with his out-of-date impressions later in his career. An actor in the production of architecture and urbanism in postwar consumer economy, Cullen sensed the role of image making, found his optimal workplace and team, captured the cultural gestalt, and advanced it. Yet, as these elements changed, Cullen did not change enough.

This eclipse may also be true to other image makers. Augustus Charles Pugin, Harvey Ellis, Hugh Ferriss, and Julius Shulman are all viewed as one-hit wonders, associated with a specific time, place, and architecture. They all actively participated in the transformation of architecture by way of the edifice through the very images of their drawings.

Conclusion

The honorary professional, civil, and academic distinctions conferred on Cullen in the 1970s both crowned and capped his career. He was elected Honorary Fellow of the Royal Institute of British Architects in 1970; he was awarded the American Institute of Architects' Gold Medal in 1976; he was nominated Royal Designer for Industry by the Royal Society of Arts in 1977; and received a CBE for his contributions to architecture from Queen Elizabeth in 1977.[379] Yet his reputation hinged primarily (if not solely) on his one book. Cullen failed with the wide variety of artistic and business ventures beyond *Townscape*, but his status and legacy as image maker were ensured by the book—and both would grow as a result of the spectacle of his drawings.

The statement that accompanied the AIA Gold Medal is a testament to the influence of Cullen's book on architecture [Figure 4.24]: "The words, viewpoints, and graphic images of this fifteen-year-old work have made a singular contribution to our professional language, and its message has become a universal statement about people and their environment." The tribute marked the apex of appreciation for Cullen, yet it was also a harbinger of Townscape's demise as a distinct idea. And as the message of the book spread widely, it would develop an afterlife quite distinct from that of its host.

Townscape reconceived the genre of the architectural book for mass consumption in ways that went beyond simply updating the handbook, picture book, or history book traditions. It was reconfigured for multiple reading publics and, as a result, became the equivalent of an architectural literary genre in a consumerist economy. Cullen's book points to a pre-canonical

[379] Cullen also received honorary doctorates from the universities of Sheffield, UK, in 1974, and Munich, Germany, in 1973. Information on these awards is taken from on several vitae found in the archive and exhibition catalogs, including a 1970 vita from his archive and two exhibition catalogs from 1976 and 1984. He was made an Honorary Fellow of the Society of Industrial Artists and Designers in 1968.

sense of postmodern architecture, not as a style but as a pliable consumer product of many authors and for many ends. It marks a significant moment in the dispersion of the scholarly and polemic literary traditions of Cullen's *Review* editors and a widening of the reading circle that revolved around Hastings, Pevsner, Richards, and the like. Derived in large measure from the book, Cullen's staggering influence both reflected and helped construct a new type of architectural audience and discourse and, thereby, a new type of city.

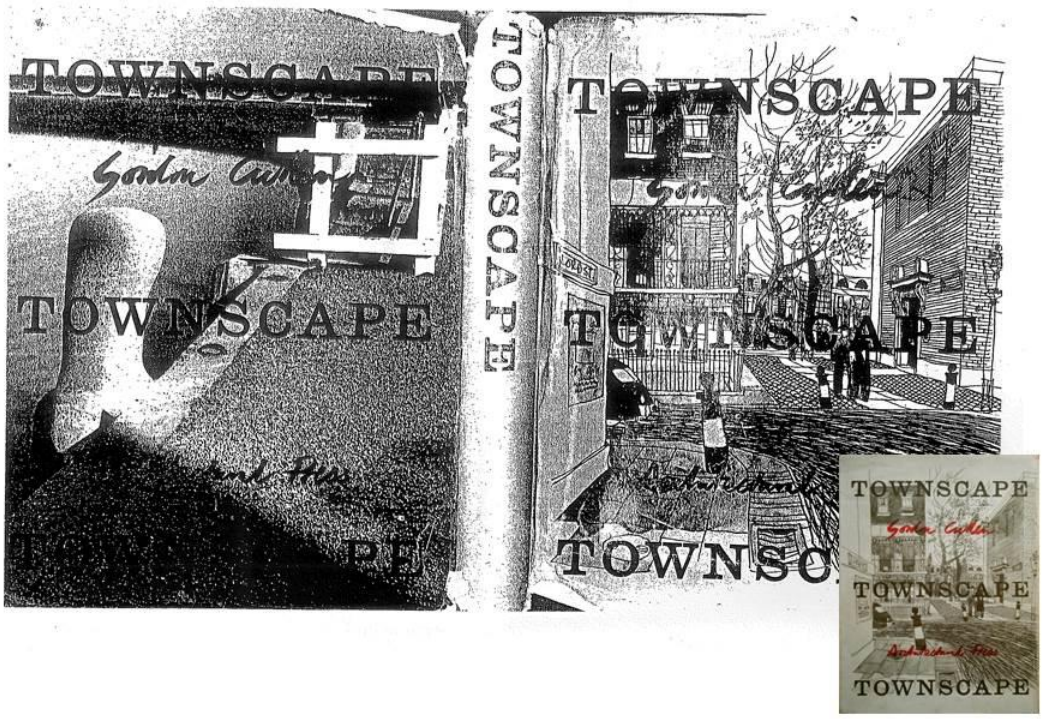

Figure 4.1. Gordon Cullen, dust jacket, *Townscape*, 1961. Photo courtesy of Bob Jarvis.

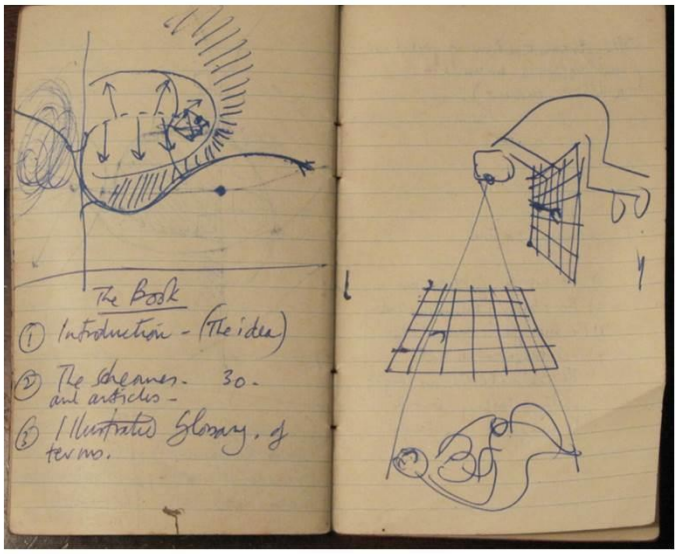

Figure 4.2. Gordon Cullen, rough book outline, journal, 1955. From Cullen's personal archive.

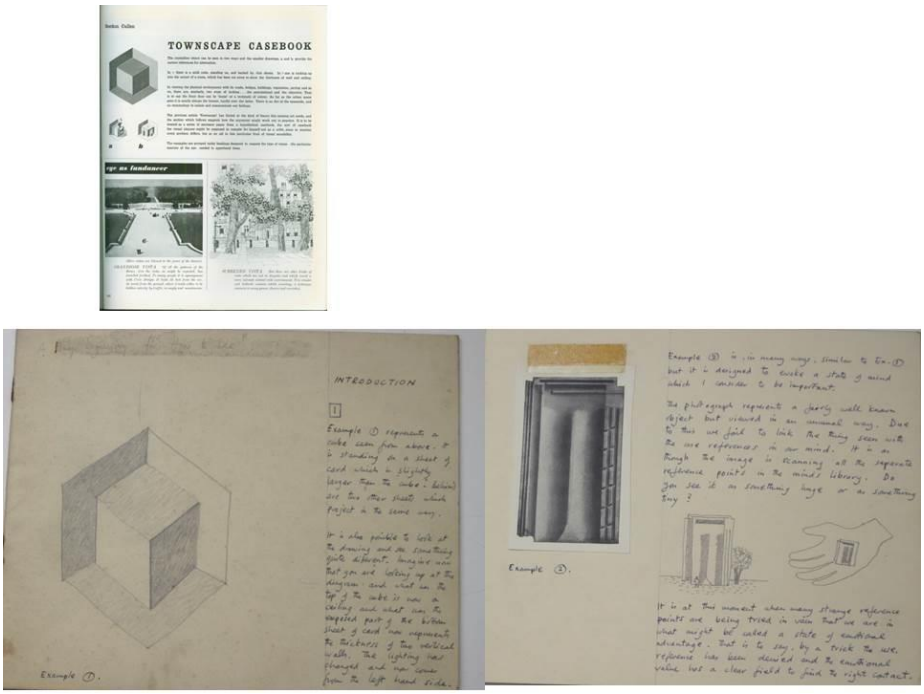

Figure 4.3. Gordon Cullen, opening page spread, "Townscape Casebook," in *Architectural Review*, December 1949 (top); Gordon Cullen, opening first two pages of draft, "A Tiny Beginning of How to See," ca. 1947–49 (bottom). From Cullen's personal archive.

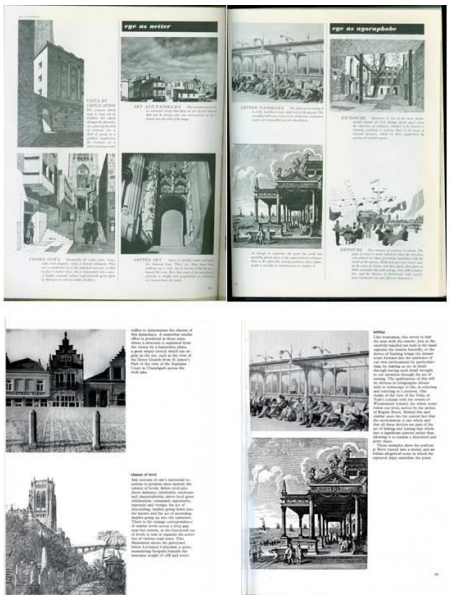

Figure 4.4. Gordon Cullen, double-page spreads from "Townscape Casebook," *Architectural Review*, December 1949 (*top*), double-spread page, and the Casebook section of *Townscape*, 1961 (*bottom*). Image size is proportional to its source.

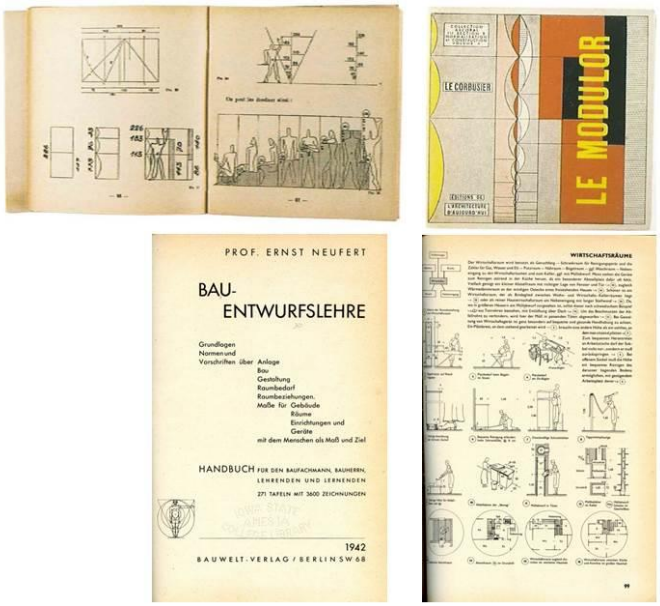

Figure 4.5. Two popular practical manuals. Le Corbusier, *Modular*, 1950 (*top*); Ernst Neufert, *Bau-Entwurfslehre*, 1942 (first ed., 1936) (*bottom*).

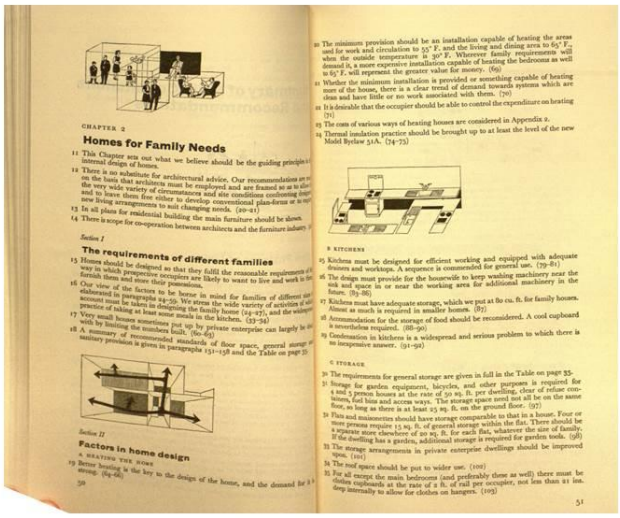

Figure 4.6. Gordon Cullen, illustrations for "Homes for Today and Tomorrow," by the Ministry of Housing and Local Government, 1961.

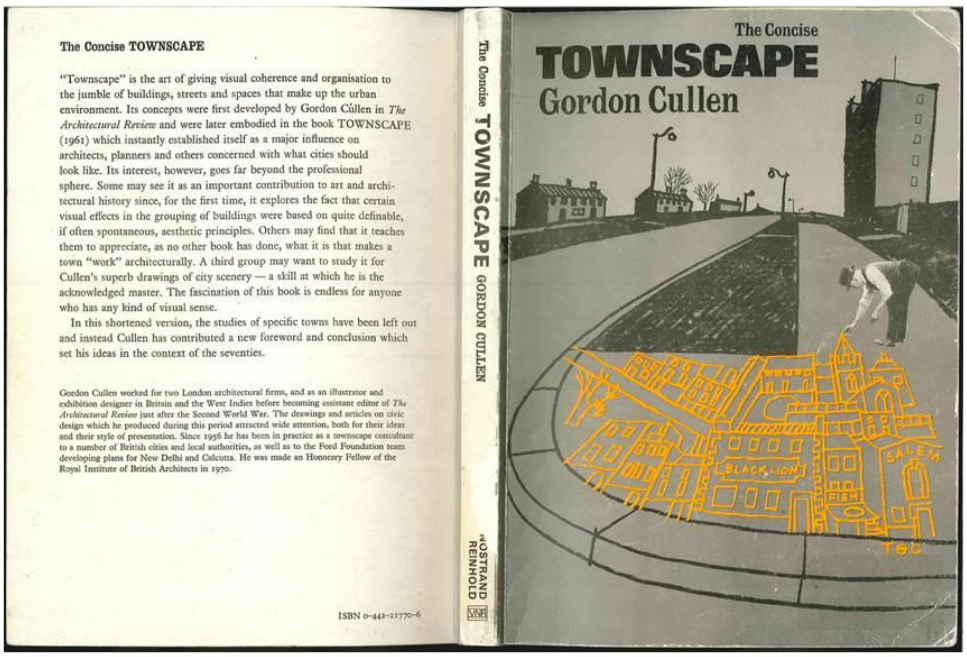

Figure 4.7. Gordon Cullen, front and back covers of paperback edition, *The Concise Townscape*, 1971.

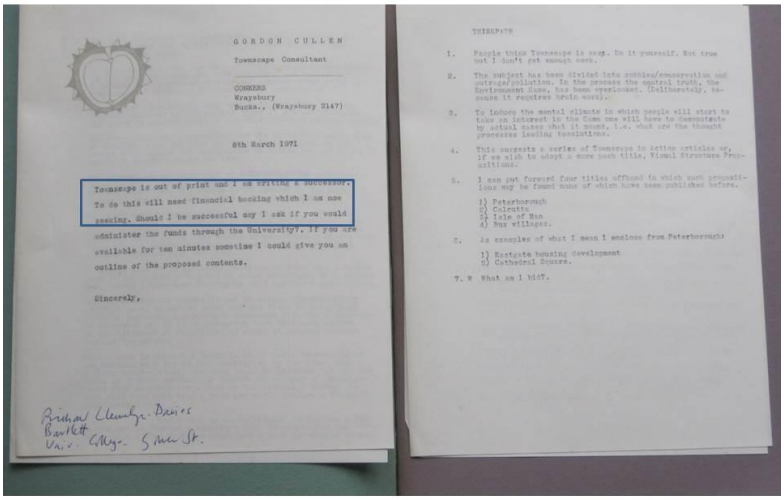

Figure 4.8. Gordon Cullen, letter addressed to potential financial contributors for a sequel to *Townscape*, accompanied by "thinkpath" overview, March 8, 1971. From Cullen's personal archive.

Figure 4.9. Covers of little magazines, 1964.

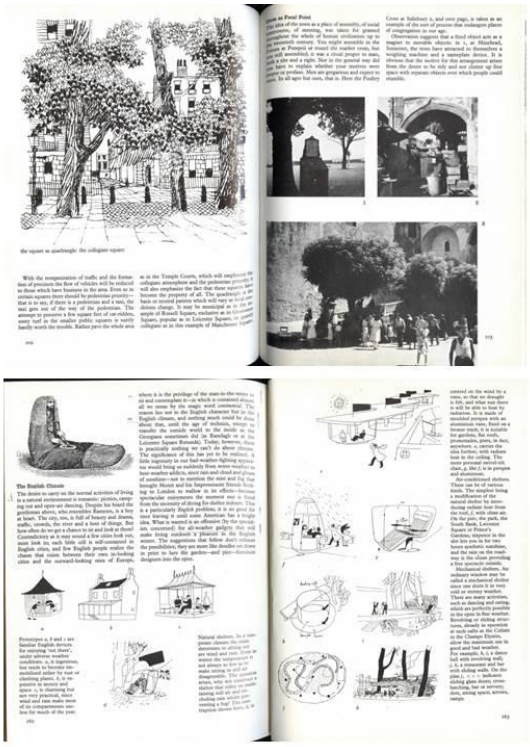

Figure 4.10. Gordon Cullen, two double-page spreads from *Townscape*, 1961.

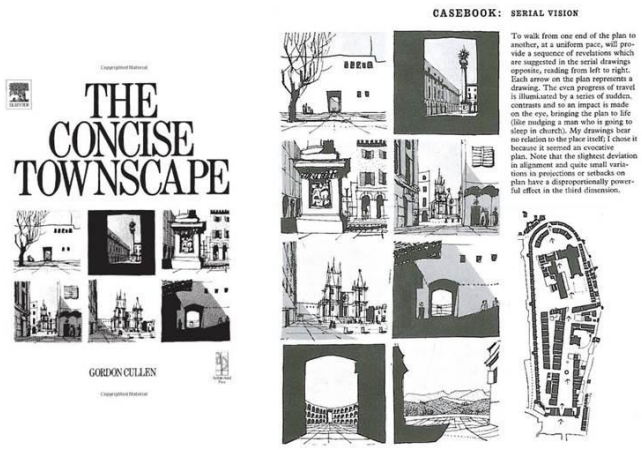

Figure 4.11. Gordon Cullen, one of the paperback covers of *The Concise Townscape*, 1971 (*left*); "Serial Vision," the opening page of the Casebook, section of *Townscape*, 1961 (*right*).

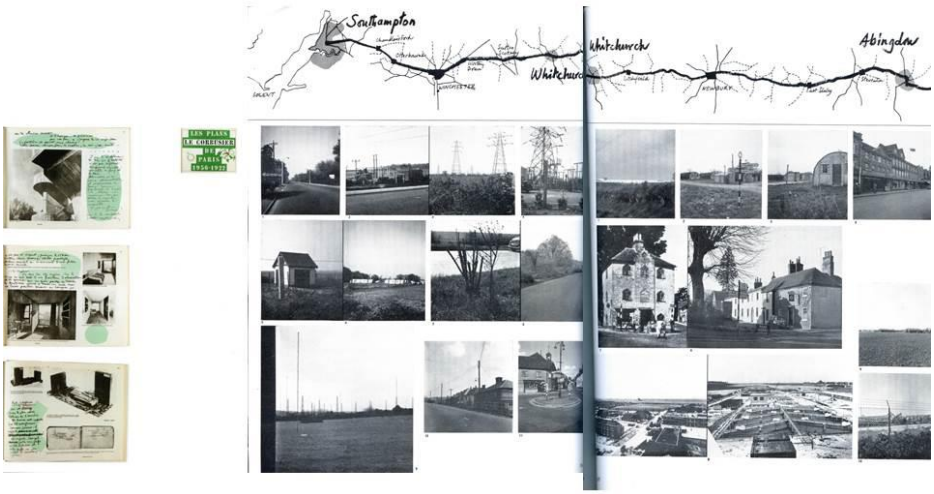

Figure 4.12. Gordon Cullen, illustrations of "The Route Book" section of "Outrage," a special issue of the *Architectural Review*, June 1955 (*right*), compared to Le Corbusier, "The green trail," in *Les Plans de Paris*, 1956 (*left*).

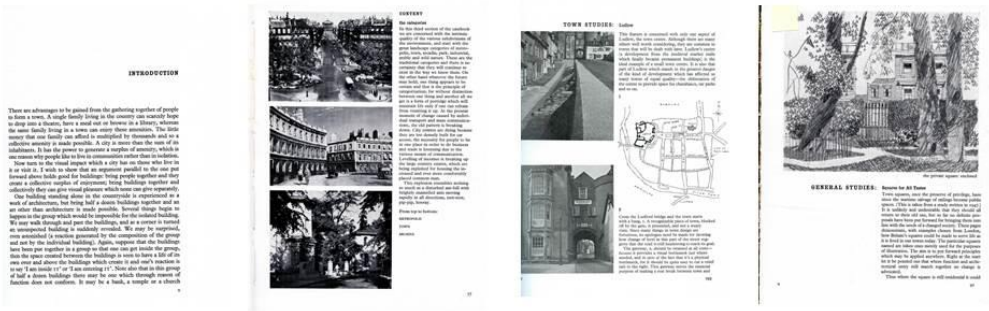

Figure 4.13. Gordon Cullen, page spreads from *Townscape*, 1961.

Figure 4.14. Antonello da Messina, painting, *Saint Jerome in His Study* (1475), as placed by Gordon Cullen in double-page spread, "Indoor Landscape and Outdoor Room," in the Casebook section of *Townscape*, 1961.

Figure 4.15. Four book covers. Ivor de Wolfe, *The Italian Townscape*, 1963, and *Civilia: The End of Sub Urban Man*, 1971 (*upper left and middle*); Ian Nairn, *The American Landscape*, 1965 (*upper right*); and Thomas Sharp, *Town and Townscape*, 1968 (*lower left*).

Figure 4.16. A comparison of double-page spreads. Ivor de Wolfe, *The Italian Townscape*, 1963 (*top*), and Ian Nairn, *The American Landscape*, 1965 (*bottom*).

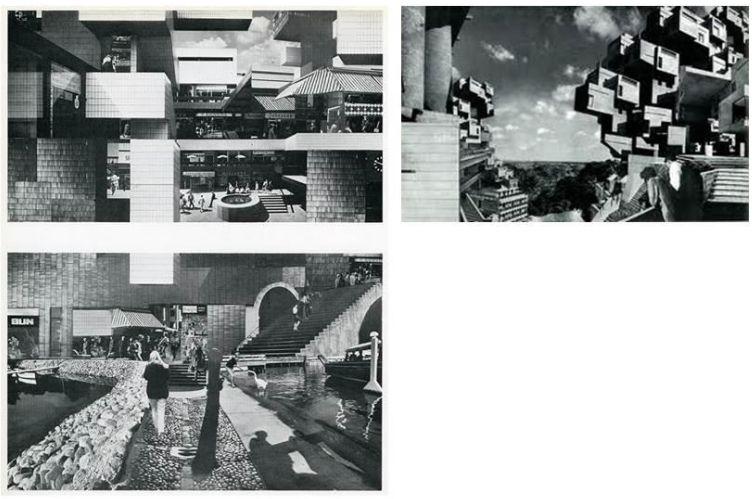

Figure 4.17. Kenneth Browne, illustrations in Ivor de Wofle, *Civilia*, by Ivor de Wolfe, 1971.

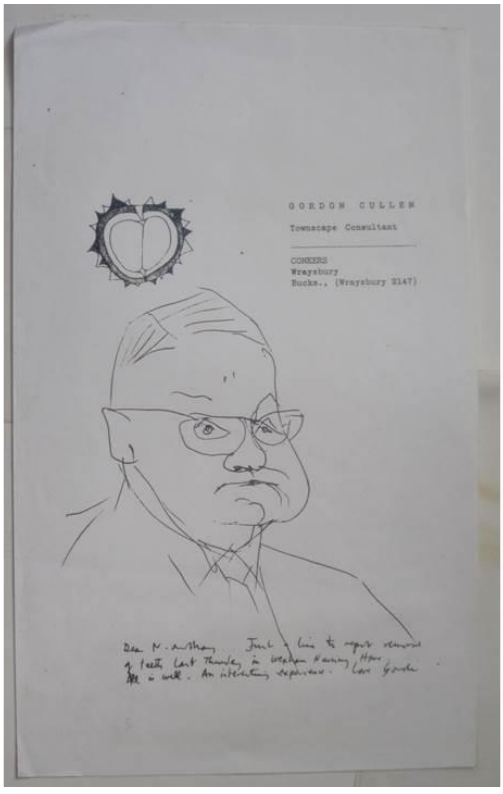

Figure 4.18. Gordon Cullen, sketch on letterhead, ca. 1964. From Cullen's personal archive.

Figure 4.19. Gordon Cullen, dummies prepared for townscape study reports, 1970s. From Cullen's personal archive.

Figure 4.20. Gordon Cullen, from the Alcan series. A dummy for "Notation," 1966 (*left*); two pages from "A Town Called Alcan," 1966 (*center and right*). From Cullen's personal archive.

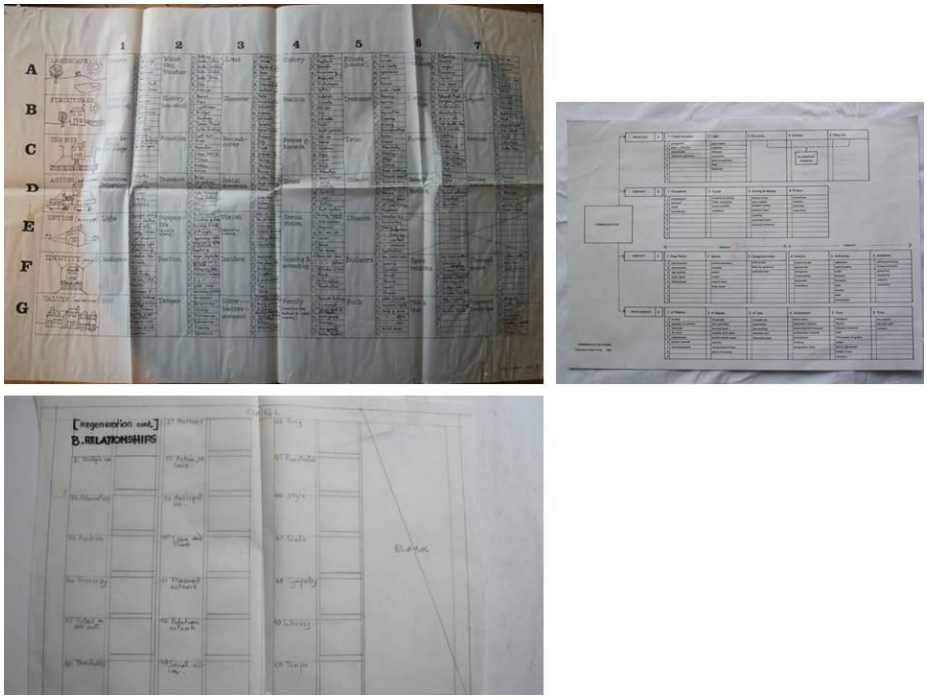

Figure 4.21. Gordon Cullen, various tables for codifying elements of human behavior and the physical environment, ca.1966–1980. From Cullen's personal archive.

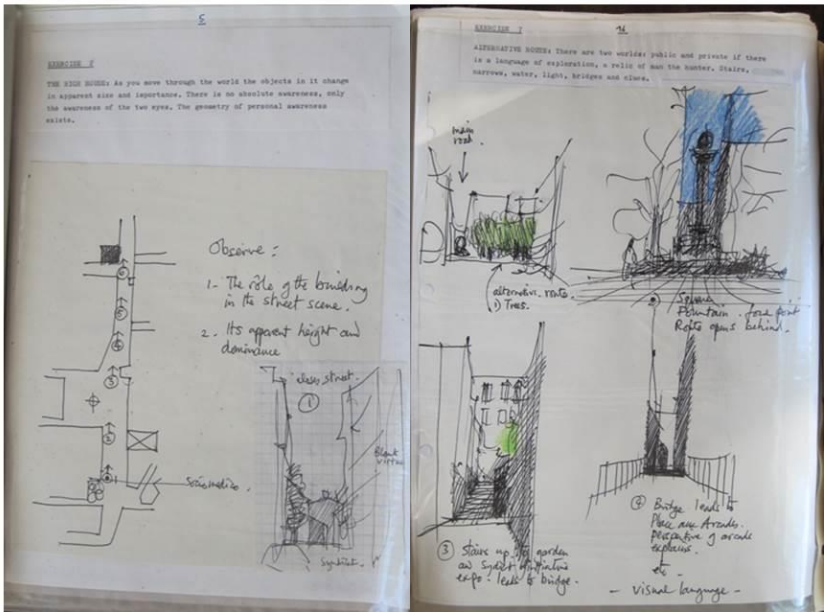

Figure 4.22. Gordon Cullen, notes and sketches from his summer school in Biot, France. From Cullen's personal archive.

Figure 4.23. Gordon Cullen, advertisement for lithograph, "Visual Literacy" marketing campaign. From David Gosling, *Gordon Cullen: Visions of Urban Design*, 1996.

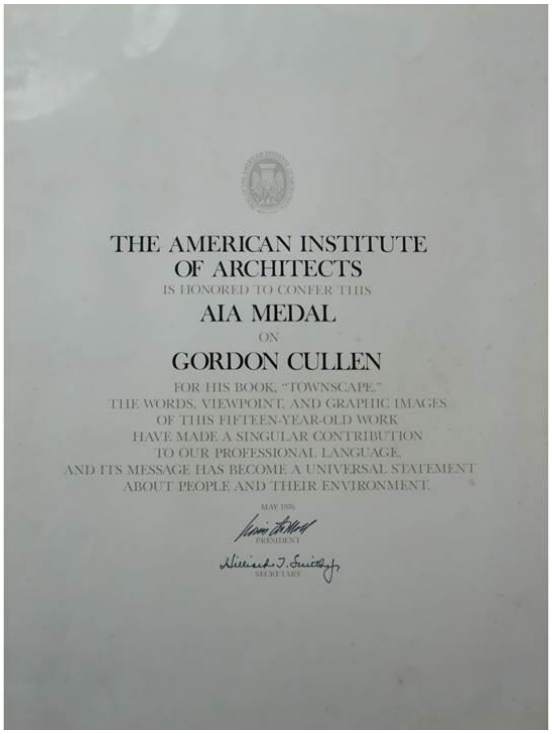

Figure 4.24. Gordon Cullen's AIA Gold Medal Award, 1976. From Cullen's archive.

CHAPTER 5. FREE-FLOATING IMAGES, TAKING ON A LIFE OF THEIR OWN

> *The book should be carefully watched, read, and read again, later, we could read, watch, understand, and sketch our own townscape.*
>
> — Juan Maria Josa, in a Spanish urban fanzine[380]

> *Following Gordon Cullen's theory on "Serial Vision," the Web space can be split into two elements: the existing view (i.e., the view of the current locations or page and the emerging view (i.e., the view of locations or pages directly accessible from the current one). By moving through the Web site, the user is exposed to a chain of events experiencing a constant change of view.*
>
> —David Benyon, web designer[381]

Gordon Cullen continues to inspire designers and architects to this day. As recently as the year in which this is written, the urban designer and landscape architecture educator James Richards's *Freehand Drawing & Discovery: Urban Sketching and Concept Drawing for Designers* (2013) praises Cullen's influence in personal terms: "In my first couple of years out of school, I spent hours tracing and copying sketches of Bill Johnson and Gordon Cullen to build my skills and help internalize the lessons I could learn from their spare, elegant style."[382] Richards's sketches, as well as those of several of his book collaborators, explicitly bear Cullen's distinctive quality and message by using (in Richards's own words) freehand sketching as a way to discover the world. As a member of the board of directors of the worldwide Urban Sketchers Network, Richards urges the network's members and his readers to follow Cullen's lead in

[380] Juan Maria Josa, "Biblioteca/Lybrary: The Concise Townscape," in *Sketcher*, no. 2, May 2013, 49; http://issuu.com/usk.spain/docs/fanzine_2_b_issu (accessed June 13, 2013).

[381] David Benyon, "Navigating Information Space: Web Site Design and Lessons from the Built Environment," *PsychNology Journal* 4, no. 1 (2006): 7–24.

[382] James Richards, *Freehand Drawing & Discovery: Urban Sketching and Concept Drawing for Designers* (Hoboken, N.J.: Wiley, 2013), 242.

collecting visual material and then tracing and analyzing these models. In fact, Richards is so devoted to "keep[ing] the Cullen flame burning" that he explicitly referenced the man and his mission by naming his urban design firm "TOWNSCAPE, Inc."

Like Richards, many architects who were educated between the 1950s and 1970s were infected by the Cullen bug. They still occasionally consult their copy of *Townscape*. This cohort came to see and imagine the city in Cullen's way—from a pedestrian, moving viewpoint—and through his drawing style—freehand, spare, and elegant. Cullen's drawing mannerism and techniques have become so commonplace in landscape and urban design that his successors may even scarcely consider the origin of their graphic routine. Likewise, Cullen's serial vision method has become assimilated into mainstream practices of urban and landscape design. The word "townscape" has become both professional rubric and commonplace term in spoken language. *Townscape*, the book, has gained canonical status (it is still used in a number of college landscape and urban design curricula, for example). And Cullen is inextricably associated with Townscape by the general public and by average practitioners.

This chapter explores Cullen's influence through the diffusion and reception of his work. It is neither possible nor desirable to completely map the geography of his influence over the past six decades or to attempt an exhaustive list of the print and digital sources in which his images and words landed. Rather, this chapter identifies the agents and apparatuses of this diffusion, and the nature and extent of his impact. It examines both the permeation and the permutation of his work as it traveled through cultures and geographies to achieve multiple goals. To that end, I tap into and synthesize recent scholarship about his initial influence in specific geographies: Britain and along the Anglo-American axis, followed by western Europe and along the Spanish–Portuguese–South American axis during the 1960s and 1970s. I then sample and analyze formal

and informal sources that have used, have reviewed, and were affected by his work, and analyze how his work was received.

This chapter therefore weaves together the voices of academic authors who cite and refer to Cullen's images and ideas;[383] critics who wrote reviews of his book and projects; students and professionals who recorded their personal sentiments and acknowledgments through eulogies and personal websites; acquaintances of Cullen who relayed personal recollections in interviews and conversations; and my acquaintances author who commented on their experiences with Cullen. To this set of explicit evidence I add yet another, elusive and conjectural form of evidence—the uncredited and (by far) more pervasive inculcation of his images and, to a lesser degree, words through others' work.

These perspectives show that Cullen's bountiful offspring have shaped academic discourse, education, and professional practice in urbanism and landscape design, and now pervade a digital-visual global culture. Though references to Cullen's work in scholarly and professional publications in these academic fields have fluctuated in number, they have remained robust. They peak in the 1970s, suffer a slight dip in the 1980s and 1990s, and increase considerably after 2003. This steady presence not only shows his continued influence in the education of designers and in academic discourse but also, as importantly, points to the very nature of architectural education and discourse in the postwar era. It is a pedagogy and a discourse in which a non- (and even anti-)academic image maker shapes the conversation and practice.

[383] In Britain, Cullen also has been referenced in a range of professional practical literature, including local planning guides, town council townscape reports, civic organizations newsletters, and land development brochures. Research into this type of literature requires tedious examination of central and local government archives and is not likely to yield significant evidence that goes beyond the available literature. It is, therefore, outside of the scope of this study.

Moreover, this chapter shows that his work has been interpreted and employed in support of diverse, often opposing arguments in scholarly discourse. For example, his work has been employed for design according to human scale and human experience, or for the enhancement of place character and place attachment, on one end of the spectrum; conversely, it has been considered an approach that is merely optical and superficial and, therefore, also manipulative and consumerist, as well as being mostly regressive and thus unfit for addressing contemporary urban problems. Scholars are also divided about whether Cullen's work belongs in the late-modernist or postmodernist bracket; whether it is steeped in, devoid of, or simply hides its romanticism; whether it is elitist or populist; and whether it is objective or subjective—and thus it is beyond the reach of generalization.

Outside of academia, Cullen's sway is seen in professional practice, and even in the nonprofessional world. Cullen's images have been subject to countless imitations. These sources show that Cullen's work did not merely spread its stylistic graphic traits, rhetorical tactics, and message; its influence can also be understood in the ways that people touched by his work came to explore and see the city. Cullen liberated architects from rigid draftsmanship and legitimized freehand drawing as a design tool in landscape and urban representation, thereby affecting the design process itself. The book *Townscape* also influenced the design of a number of postmodern books that sought to construct a vocabulary of visual concepts, and to encourage the reader to sample elements and program variable design outcomes.

The Internet is filled with his images—not always properly credited! Many other images unknowingly bear Cullen's style. More significantly, the line between the tactile effect that Cullen created for print media and the immersive environment created by digital simulation is becoming blurred. Specifically, Cullen's midcentury "serial vision" is a precursor to today's

three-dimensional computer animation. On the one hand, it has been readily recast in digital form; on the other hand, it offers today's generation of designers a real-world alternative—freehand sketching—to digital creation.

Because his visual concepts were conceived as building blocks for practicing Townscape, and his method was their assemblage through multiple paths, Cullen's work was, and is, easily appropriated by the consumer in myriad ways.

Detachable Images

With the growth of two corresponding developments—(1) the rise of the postmodern individual, demanding for participation and self-expression, and (2) the technological capacity for sharing information and networking—fleeting images are readily detached from their original context and meanings as they circulate in the stream of print and digital mass media. They become versatile in the hand of the consumer.

Foregrounded in the idea of pastiche, an image removed from its context, the implementation of the Townscape campaign occupied a place where a conceptual statement was demanded by the material, yet where ideologies were easily evaded. Cullen removed the initial political message of the AR editors through his drawings (and texts), investing his works with shelf appeal—benevolent and entertaining messages about urban pleasures that attracted the average consumer. These reproduced images, in turn, have taken on lives of their own.

Townscape's city emerged from the print media of its era. Carried by the power of the press and the status of *The Review*, the mechanically reproduced images of Cullen's essays and book first saw their diffusion through print media—professional journals and books. Cullen's work at this time coincided with the advent of photography and the rise of television and film. The effect of photography on the displacement of the original image in time and space with each

reproduction was expounded by Benjamin in the 1930s. Photography, Benjamin argued, emptied the meanings of the original artwork, leaving it open for manipulation to serve political and propagandistic ends.[384] The same logic of detachability applied, then as now, to Cullen's artwork—a logic that he fully exploited, of course.

The original imagery Cullen created for Townscape through a process of montage represented a new modernity characterized by high-speed expandable icons: advertisements, cartoons, film stars, and comedians. Cullen's images of the city enabled producers and consumers to imagine the city, and thereby bred a city of images. Baudrillard called this phenomenon "the hyperreal." He wrote, "The real is not only what can be reproduced, but that which is always already reproduced: that is, the hyperreal . . . which is entirely in simulation."[385]

In this way, images do not just become a means for representing things—signs—but also are conflated and confused with the things themselves. Divorced from content, free-floating and fleeting images on television, in film, and on the computer are absorbed instantaneously. They resist contemplation and appeal directly to the senses, inviting the spectator's participation. This participation, argued Baudrillard, results from the process of selecting images, thereby creating "a montage, from a point-of-view."[386] Images in postmodern works therefore become realized through the process of montage. This idea can be translated to the urban condition, if in creating the city through montage and codification, "the receiver construe[s] and decode[s] by observing the same procedure whereby the work was assembled."[387] Accordingly, assembled through

[384] Benjamin, "The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction," 217–20.

[385] Baudrillard, *Simulations*, quoted on the back cover.

[386] Ibid., 120.

[387] Ibid., 119–20.

montage, Cullen's images invite the viewer to become townscaper-participant and image maker–consumer.

The consumers' appetite for images of their own reflection (the "spectacle," in Debord's terms) lately seems to have reached its apotheosis with the visual deluge wrought by an omnipresent stream of digital media, in which Cullen's detachable images (among a plethora of others) float in the world of the Internet. For designers, the Internet at large—and in particular Google Images, Pinterest, Tumblr, Flikr, and other sites that store images—supplies a constant stream of visual stimuli, a vast and ever-growing source of inspiration, for plagiarism and for bricolage and montage operations ("cut-and-paste") of all varieties. Manipulated Internet images resemble nothing more than products of the Cullen-inspired bricoleur who scavenges on readymades to reassemble them and create new meaning.

Today's repurposing of digital images is therefore not unlike the repurposing of print media images for collages and montages in the predigital age, or the repurposing done by E. V. Lucas and George Morrow from cut-out images from manufacturers' catalogs for their pictorial essay, "What a Life!" (which *The Review* reprinted in February 1933; see "Cartoons and Advertising" in chapter 2). Constructed montages built with today's digital databases and software tools manifest the shift in the process of reproduction, as expounded by Carpo, from identical mechanical prints to variable digital imagery.

Anticipating a multiplicity of readers and authors in the digital age, Cullen "programmed" *Townscape* for a variety of reproductions, a vision that has given his work a new life. Now, some sixty years later, Cullen's present-day emulators create their drawings (freehand, digital, or combination of both) with his same cut-and-paste bricolage procedure—scavenging the indelible repository of images on the Internet and pasting together their designs. With the

pastiche mentality of Internet memes and design software accessible to professional and amateur alike, it is not a stretch to say that Cullen's influence has become increasingly relevant in this digital age. Created in the spirit of the photograph, the reproductions of Cullen's drawings currently are being consumed, multiplied, and reappropriated by Internet users who revise their meaning with each use.

Bountiful Offspring

Although *The Review* and the *AJ* published Townscape essays regularly until Hastings's retirement in 1974, most references to Townscape nod to ideas in Cullen's pre-1960 *AR* essays and illustrations that ended up in his book.[388] The four most frequently cited Townscape ideas are (1) the definition of Townscape as an art of relationship, from Cullen's 1953 essay, "Prairie Planning in New Towns"; (2) the pedestrian, "serial vision," method of exploring the city, which was featured in numerous *Review* issues and was the focus of the Casebook section that opened Cullen's book; (3) his 1949 "Townscape Casebook" essay, especially its idiom and its case-based visual methodology, which foregrounded later essays in *The Review* by others; and (4) the harsh criticism of the landscape conditions along England's roads in the special 1955 issue, "Outrage," and the call to action in the 1956 sequel issue, "Counter-Attack," both of which Ian Nairn had edited and Cullen had illustrated. The last is the only commonly cited issue on Townscape that did not appear in Cullen's book. The two special issues, later republished as

[388] For the ways in which Townscape was understood by 1977, see William M. Whistler and David Reed, "Townscape as a Philosophy of Urban Design," *Urban Design Quarterly*, no. 52 (October 1994): 16–20 (first published in *Exchange Bibliography #1342* [Monticello, Ill.: Council of Planning Librarians, [1977], 1–9).

independent volumes, mostly have been credited to both Nairn and Cullen—despite the fact that Cullen originally received credit in neither ("Out in the Field," in chapter 3).[389]

Regardless of whether he is explicitly cited or credited, almost every mention of the Townscape campaign (or movement, as several authors have called it) involves Cullen by name or image. Therefore, one could persuasively argue that Cullen, not *The Review* or Nairn, is the true face of Townscape. This status gained traction with the publication of *Townscape* in 1961, at which point Cullen's reputation no longer depended on promotion by *The Review*, and his exchanges with other journal editors, sponsors, government officials, and developers no longer passed through the AR editors. With the publication of the 1971 abridged edition of his book, Cullen cemented his status as the standard-bearer of Townscape.

Townscape spawned academic discourses, and it created a context for general design practice and new adaptations of the Townscape concept across the world. In each part of the world Townscape coalesced with various local sentiments and thereby was into distinctly regional forms. Cullen's influence therefore is explored, first, on his British home turf and, then, along the Anglo-American axis; a more limited account follows of his impact on Italy, Germany, and Spain-Portugal—the European-American axis. These geographies, in particular but not exclusively, were central to urban design discourse in the Western Hemisphere during the 1960s and 1970s. The enthusiastic response to Cullen's early work through *The Review* in Britain and the United States was instantaneous and almost simultaneous. Other European and South American counterparts had to wait until republications and, in some cases, translations of the

[389] For example, Anthony Tugnutt and Mark Robertson, *Making Townscape: A Contextual Approach to Building in an Urban Setting* (London: Mitchell, 1987), 18–19; Jane Jacobs, *The Death and Life of Great American Cities* (New York: Vintage, 1961), 390.

books reached their shores. But in each country, the work took on a different flavor, as it mixed with local circumstances and sentiments.

Uniquely British: Conservation Takes Hold of Townscape

In Britain, Townscape provided the conservation lobby with an approach—conservation of town character in visual and landscape terms—and with tools for analyzing problems and devising solutions.[390] As town planning and architecture literature shows, the rubric "Townscape" was incorporated into numerous local conservation reports beginning in the early 1960s.[391] Many of these studies credit *The Review*'s Townscape campaign—specifically, "Outrage" and "Counter-Attack"—for sowing the seeds of interest in "planning control" activities related to the visual environment. Historians often link the formation of the Civic Trust in 1957 to the publication of these essays.[392] The Civic Trust, in turn, fostered the foundation and growth of numerous local societies; these built up the political clout and led to the Civic Amenities Act of 1967 and to the establishment of "conservation areas," whole precincts targeted for conservation in the following years.[393]

The Review's picto-journalistic essays on Townscape during the 1950s, in which Cullen was central, in combination with the editors' political connections with public officials, enabled

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[390] Alan Powers, "The Heroic Period of Conservation," In *The Heroic Period of Conservation*, ed. Alan Powers and Elain Harwood, *Twentieth Century Architecture* 7 (London: Twentieth Century Society, 2004): 10–11.

[391] Robin Bloxsidge, "Conservation Reports and Studies: Continuation List and Commentary 1981–82," *Town Planning Review* 53, no. 4 (October 1982): 460–78.

[392] John Punter, "A History of Aesthetic Control: Part 2, 1953–1985: The Control of the External Appearance of Development in England and Wales," *Town Planning Review* 58, No. 1 (January 1987): 42, 11. The Civic Amenities Act came to fruition in 1966 under Secretary Lord Kennet, who, according to Punter, was influenced by "Outrage." Also see Erten, "Shaping 'The Second Half Century,'" 295.

[393] Punter, "A History of Aesthetic Control," 16–18, 43.

Townscape to shape the conservation movement and its outcomes, specifically changing its emphasis from the preservation of individual buildings to conservation of coherent areas of townscape (though other architectural journals and organizations, such as RIBA, pressed for similar ends). In fact, Nairn was the AR's most visible and engaged advocate of the grassroots conservation movement. Following his departure from *The Review* in 1962, he produced several key books and essays, and engaged in public debates on the issue.[394] Cullen had no such public ambition. He declined speaking engagements and avoided politics. Nonetheless, *Townscape* became the chosen textbook of local groups, subsequently foregrounding the conservation approach of several other key conservationist books—despite his indifference to the conservation movement!

Cullen's role in conservation literature is often lumped together with *The Review*'s campaign. Still, he has been widely and increasingly acknowledged independently—by scholars and designers in particular. Cullen's Townscape, in distinction to that of *The Review*, defined its approach as an art of relationships that translates to the need to move beyond preserving one building to saving a group of buildings and whole neighborhoods, and it therefore devised a concrete visual assessment method.[395]

But Cullen did express concerns for Townscape's reception and potential misappropriation that were connected to conservation. In the introduction to the concise edition, he complained that the message of Townscape had been mistaken for "a superficial civic style of

[394] For Nairn's prolific production in the 1960s and 1970s, see Gavin Stamp, "Ian Nairn," *Twentieth Century Architecture* 7 (2004): 19–30.

[395] Shiela T. McDonald, "The Scottish Development Agency and the Scottish Townscape," *Town Planning Review* 55, no. 3 (July 1984): 354; Colin McWilliam, *Scottish Townscape* (London: Collins, 1975). McWilliam concludes his book with a chapter on conservation and a series of ten short descriptions of townscape walks in Aberdeen.

decoration using bollards and cobbles" and linked to "traffic-free pedestrian precincts and . . . the rise of conservation[,] . . . neither of which is germane to townscape."[396] For Cullen, then, a conservationist attitude meant leaving things as they were. It was a timid approach that left little room for innovation or excitement. Cullen and conservationists had shared several objectives, notably a desire to maintain the character of place formed from the fabric of a neighborhood and existing architectural styles, as well as means to realize these objectives.[397] Yet his motives and ultimate goal were different: he was interested in sensorial effects. Just as before his *Review* stint, so too after, Cullen did work for projects whose tenets he did not necessarily share.

Just like his images, Cullen's book was easily appropriated for various purposes: political, social, and industrial. *Townscape*, for example, was used as a rudimentary "manual," providing conservationists with an agreeable and empowering language, with they could use to fight for their causes. Its agreeable visuals and texts appealed to members of conservation societies more than did the plain and didactic guides of town planners or the theoretical works of scholars. It was a language that people in local conservation groups could use to define and imagine their needs. As local councils, civic groups, and private development corporations joined forces to salvage the uniqueness of their towns through "development control" studies, Cullen's visual concepts and method resonated with them. In several dozen cases, he also was called to the project, and teamed up with an architect or a planner to produce townscape studies and visual reports. For instance, his visual analysis for the town of Tenterden, Kent (with the architect Frederick MacManus), provided the Kent County Council with a town building vision that was "intent on striking the right balance between development and preservation," and guided

[396] Cullen, *The Concise Townscape*, 13.

[397] Powers posited that conservation has become the chief (if inadequate) means of attaining Cullen's objectives. Alan Powers, review of *Gordon Cullen, Urban Visions*, 91.

"development control" planning measures."[398] Several of these works were published in *The Review* or the *AJ*. Cullen's notes from his work for the City of Liverpool in 1965 (with the planning consultant Graeme Shankland) were published under the title "A Liverpool Notebook."[399] In their preface to the publication, the editors wrote that in their own analysis, "roughly a third of Cullen's ideas are directly applicable [to physical planning]; a third, less directly, set us and our colleagues off tangentially in pursuit of our own thought; and a third were interesting but not feasible or relevant to the particular problem at the actual moment." They concluded, "This was a notable achievement; nobody has a right to expect more."[400] In this way, the editors pinpointed the nature and the power of his work. Presented with typical Cullenesque sketches and prose and with peculiar labels, such as, "A Duologue," "An Idiosyncrasy," "Serial Mood," and "Against Conformity," Cullen's Liverpool visual analysis gave the editors something concrete, something to think about to appropriate as their own, and something to use in their imaginings. Moreover, in their preface, the editors also made a revelation of sort, claiming that this project was probably the first time in England that a townscapist had been incorporated into a planning team. This milestone status is another indication of Cullen's more direct influence on British conservation practice.

[398] Gordon Cullen, "Tenderten Explored, an Architectural and Townscape Analysis" (Kent County Council and Tenderten Borough Council, 1967). Other works Cullen did as a townscape consultant on development control and conservation area studies include Lantrisant (1967), Castletown and Peel (1968), Peterborough (1970), and Wraysbury (1975). Gordon Cullen, personal archive, résumé 1970, #339.

[399] Gordon Cullen, "A Liverpool Notebook," *Architectural Review* 137, no. 821 (April 1965): 281–88.

[400] Ibid., 281.

Townscape's influence on other key texts of conservation and practical planning furthered Cullen's credibility and authority.[401] Roy Worskett, for example, an influential architect, planner, conservationist, and Cullen disciple, worked closely with the Ministry of Housing and Local Government. His influential book, *The Character of Towns: An Approach to Conservation* (1969), is heavily steeped in Cullen's ideas and imagery. *The Character of Towns* appropriates not only Cullen's ideas and drawing techniques, but also *Townscape*'s book design. The first chapter opens with a suggested urban design framework for conservation that explicitly builds on Cullen's definition of the art of townscape: "One building is architecture but two buildings is townscape."[402] Worskett subsequently extrapolates the concept of conservation from one building to a group of buildings as a means of retaining a neighborhood's fabric and architectural styles and, therefore, its character. Similar ideas had already been implemented by the late 1960s by conservationists in France and the Netherlands but Worskett explicitly ties his concepts to Cullen.

In addition to its overarching ideas, Worskett's book also borrows *Townscape*'s idiom and page layout. *The Character of Towns* uses a pictorial and expanded-captions format with simple text: a typical Cullen casebook format. It even borrows Cullen-specific visual concepts and vocabulary, such as "change of level" and, "enclosure of space," as well as before-and-after

[401] By the 1980s, Cullen also became central to town planning practice and pedagogy in Britain. His practical bent made his work well-suited for practitioners less interested in discussion than in methods and techniques, as evidenced in a number of works. See, for example, Matthew Carmona and Steve Tiesdell, eds., *Urban Design Reader* (Oxford: Architectural Press, 2007), 26–27, 36, 179, 181–84; Cliff Moughtin, Rafael Cuesta, Christine Sarris, and Paola Signoretta, *Urban Design: Method and Techniques* (Oxford: Architectural Press, 1999), 22, 43, 51, 52. Also see David Gosling's explication of Cullen's Townscape application to practice in David Gosling, "Techniques of Analysis and Communication in Urban Design," *Landscape and Urban Planning* 26 (October 1993): 215–30.

[402] Roy Worskett, *The Character of Towns: An Approach to Conservation* (London: Architectural Press, 1969), 19, 28–31.

and serial vision techniques. [Figure 5.1] The drawings themselves in *The Character of Towns* could be mistaken for Cullen's, owing to Worskett's use of spare, freehand, eye-level perspectives, and his rejection of both the technical line and austere quality of illustrations typical of conservation-promoting works. Worskett employs wax crayon for loose and irregular framing and texture, and cartoonish lines for buildings—all tools from Cullen's kit. His perspective drawings, like Cullen's, draw attention to context and everyday details, emphasizing the liveliness of city streets. Worskett's perspectives are also drawn from photographs and accompanied by three-dimensional diagrams, instead of abstract plans. The only thing that distinguishes Worskett's drawings from Cullen's is the people: they look more anonymous and sketchier than Cullen's distinctive and animated characters.

Because of his connections with government officials, Worskett was also responsible for indirectly disseminating Cullen's influence to key preservation officers. Lord Kennet, who supervised the historic building designation in the Ministry of Housing and Local Government around 1965, credited Worskett's ideas for showing "firm judgment and wily tactics [that] have saved more towns than we'll ever know from fates worse than death."[403] Kennet's praise of Worskett for exerting influence on conservation of towns that was fundamental to success in saving certain buildings, and even districts, from extinction must be extended also to Cullen.

But Worskett was not the only agent to pull from Cullen's drawing style or from ideas of Townscape. Cullen's work was echoed in other landscape and town planning books, and even in government guides and reports, including *People and Planning*, a 1969 parliamentary report on the public's participation. Here, too, the freehand line drawings (by David Knight) bore striking

[403] Quoted in Powers, "The Heroic Period of Conservation," 11.

resemblance to Cullen's in "Outrage."[404] [Figure 5.2] Like Cullen, Knight's line-work and composition brought out the specific details needed to make a persuasive case against the visual clutter created by signs.

Beginning in the 1960s and on through the 1970s and 1980s, Cullen's ideas continued to gain traction in planning books, including those by Gerald Burke, Anthony Tugnutt, and Mark Robertson, all of whom also maintained close ties with the government and, therefore, influenced planning legislation and local council design guides.[405] In their book *Making Townscape* (1987), Tugnutt and Robertson call Cullen "[o]ur best known exponent of townscape in the post-war years."[406] Like Worskett, these authors established their planning niche in conservation, labeling their theories as a "contextualist approach" that involved the idea of fitting new development into an existing architectural context. Within the conservation terminology they developed clearly sit several of Cullen's concepts, such as "juxtaposition," "roofscape," and "street closure." These terms appear in a chapter titled "Contexture: The Art of Weaving Together" (the title itself expresses Cullen's definition of Townscape as "art of relationship").

Though Tugnutt and Robertson cited Cullen in their work and borrowed some of his ideas (mostly without acknowledgment), they favored a different drawing style. Like Cullen, they advocated eye-level perspective drawings in conservation design, but they preferred the hyperrealistic drawing to what they call "the 'economical' line." Their rejection of Cullen's favored spare line drawing could be taken as an implicit criticism, and avoidance, of a style so

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[404] Great Britain, Committee on Public Participation in Planning, *People and Planning: Report of the Committee on Public Participation in Planning* (London: HMSO, 1969); cited in Powers, "The Heroic Period of Conservation," 15.

[405] Gerald Burke, *Townscapes* (New York: Penguin Books, 1976); Tugnutt and Robertson, *Making Townscape*, 7.

[406] Tugnutt and Robertson, *Making Townscape*, 7.

closely associated with him. The authors argued that the spare line drawing was limited in its ability to convey ideas to clients and members of the public, who, in their view, were "less familiar with abstractions."[407] Thus, they favored the photomontage, which completely blended the design proposal with the photographic context (seen in their example comparing the photomontage drawing and the photograph after construction of the Gracechurch Street project in London). [Figure 5.3]

Although they argued that their hyperrealist technique was easier for laypeople to understand, in fact Tugnutt and Robertson created a distance between designer and client; their endorsement of the "make-believe" image excluded the client from participating in the act of design, positioning the act of creation solely in the realm of the expert. Any serious observer of Cullen's attitudes could, of course, identify his resistance to such an implied hierarchical relationship between designer and consumer even in his earliest work. In contrast, Cullen labored to bridge the client-designer divide with his simple line drawings, and insisted on making explicit the proposed design change. His images empowered people, inspiring them to take a pencil in hand and attempt both drawing and imagining.

Shaping a Generation of British Architects

Although conservation practices in the 1960s and 1970s are perhaps Cullen's most noted legacy of influence in Britain, examples of his drawings inspiring his British *Review* readers may be found as early as 1947. The AJ editor Colin Boyne noted early on that practicing architects and planners were immediately attracted to Cullen's serial vision drawings in the 1947 essay "Westminster Regained."[408] They were lucid, effective, and exciting. In the 1950s, a client

[407] Ibid, 170.

[408] Boyne, "H. de C. Hastings," 1986, 4.

offered old copies of *The Review* to a young Norman Foster, at that time an aspiring architect assisting a building contracts manager—and it was then that he discovered Cullen: "[I] could hardly tear myself away from the images and writings," Foster wrote.[409] Decades later, still entranced with the drawings, Foster added, "I, like so many others[,] owed to him even down to the way that we pushed our pencils and so much more that lay behind the lines."[410] One critic observed that Cullen's influence may also be seen in Foster's site analyses and the siting of his buildings.[411] As the visuals and texts of Cullen's *Review* essays began circulating in the 1950s, cross-pollination between practitioners, educators, and students spread widely.

Similarly, Cullen's book, which packaged these same qualities under one cover, also attracted the attention of educators and students. Bob Jarvis, an urban design professor at London Southbank University, bought his first edition of *Townscape* in 1966, when he was studying urban design at the University of Newcastle. Jarvis would later recount Cullen's popular appeal over a field of competing urban design texts, concluding that no one else quite measured up: "All the rest of the books were stuffy and uninteresting."[412]

By 1961, it was clear that Cullen had transformed the drawings of a generation of architects and town planners. In profiling Cullen, A. E. Weddle observed that "A generation of architects whose sketching medium was primarily dependent upon pencil drawing[,] and the use of cast shadows to show modeling and texture, has been superseded by a generation using pen

[409] Foster, "Obituary: Foster Remembers Cullen," 11.

[410] Ibid.

[411] William Slack, "Cullen's Place," *Architectural Review* 178, no. 1061 (July 1985): 37–40.

[412] Bob Jarvis, interview with the author, July 23, 2010.

and ink and mechanical tone or tint techniques."[413] Thus Weddle pinpointed Cullen's legacy: Cullen had effectively liberated architectural representation for a new crop of architects. Monochrome and freehand line drawing replaced the colored and shaded hard-edged drawings, with laborious textures and minute detail giving way to spare lines and strategic details (see "The Freehand Landscape Drawing Liberation," below). With these fundamental and technical changes came an entirely new "pedestrian" way of seeing and designing the postwar city as a landscape.

A good example of this pedestrian vision comes from the architect Francis Tibbalds—once a student at the Regent Street Polytechnic (now known as the University of Westminster), where Cullen studied architectural drafting in the 1930s—who incorporated Cullen's drawing style and message. In Tibbalds's book *Making People-Friendly Towns* (1992), which refers to *Townscape*'s basic concepts and "wonderful sketches," the drawings emulate Cullen's loose sketch technique and his typical framing and composition of perspective, with its focus on floor and materials.[414] [Figure 5.4] Of course, for many professionals and laypeople, people-friendly towns and conservation of older neighborhood fabrics went hand in hand. Tibbalds's work therefore epitomizes the intermingling of Cullen's work and conservation in Britain. It also demonstrates the manifold path—direct, circuitous, and open-ended—by which Cullen's work traveled through works of others', as is the case in publications by Worskett, Tugnutt, and Robertson.

[413] Weddle, review of *Townscape*.

[414] Francis Tibbalds, *Making People-Friendly Towns* (Harlow, Essex: Longman Group, 1992), 36.

Entangled in the Postmodern Project:

Charles Jencks, Colin Rowe, and Collage City

As the period of conservation wound down in the second half of the 1970s, *Townscape* gained currency in the scholarship of postmodernism. Cullen had not produced anything new since *Townscape*'s original publication, yet academics readily adopted *Townscape* to support emerging postmodern theories during this new phase in architectural history. Postmodernism in architecture was crystalized by and entered into the architectural dialogue with *The Language of Post-Modern Architecture* (1977),[415] a book by the British theorist Charles Jencks. It postulated an entirely new era in architectural practice, one that began in the 1960s and trumped modernism. Although neither *Townscape* nor *The Review* were mentioned in the book, a number of key concepts from *The Review*'s Townscape (vaguely represented through Nikolaus Pevsner, who is cited) figure heavily in Jencks's theory, including a return to historicism, stylistic eclecticism, the picturesque, ad hocism, and the acceptance of ugliness, decay, and banality. Later critiques of the postmodernist project would single out its historicist bent, linking it to regression and romanticism.

Cullen is implicated in this postmodern discourse, initially through key urbanism books written in the 1990s—notably, Geoffrey Broadbent's *Emerging Concept in Urban Design*, (1990) and Ellin Nan's *Postmodern Urbanism* (1996),[416] which unambiguously placed Townscape and Cullen in the postmodern arena—and more recently through the writing of Mathew Aitchison and John Macarthur. The latter specifically blamed Cullen's concise edition

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[415] Charles Jencks, *The Language of Post-Modern Architecture* (New York: Rizzoli, 1977), 65.

[416] Geoffrey Broadbent, *Emerging Concepts in Urban Space Design* (New York: Van Nostrand Reinhold, 1990); Nan Ellin, *Postmodern Urbanism* (Cambridge, Mass.: Blackwell, 1996). Broadbent taught at Portsmouth Polytechnic, in England; Ellin taught at the University of Cincinnati, together with Gosling.

for having erased the modernist agenda of AR editors and dragged the Townscape campaign down the road of postmodernism, hence introducing a romantic tone of historicism into building design.[417] Accordingly, the main pretext for linking Cullen with the postmodern project was Jencks's precept of historicism or traditional urban form, though contextualism also played key role.

Cullen and his references expressed these links in various ways. Although Cullen was allied with only selected historicist and picturesque ideas, and in private he expressed his dislike for the word "picturesque," nonetheless, many consider him to be carrier of *The Review*'s picturesque.[418] Conversely, although he did not use the term "contextualism," he certainly embraced at least one of its meanings—namely, continuation of the existing urban fabric when new development occurs. A well-established concept in conservation by that time, contextualism was directly associated with Cullen. Since Jencks's main proponents of contextualism were the British theorist Colin Rowe and the architect duo Rob and Leon Krier, in later literature Cullen's name would be associated with theirs, despite key differences among them.[419] This association ultimately led to another common assumption that links his *Townscape* with a neotraditionalist

[417] Macarthur, *The Picturesque*, 204; Macarthur and Aitchison, "Pevsner's Townscape," 29. Macarthur writes: "The 'revenge of the picturesque' began to unfold in 1961 when Hastings decided to publish Cullen's Townscape through the Architectural Press, rather than the *Visual Planning* book he had commissioned from Pevsner. In 1971, Cullen showed how prescient Banham's 'Revenge' essay was by abridging Townscape so as to remove all the AR's modernist urban design schemes of the 1940s and to leave only analyses of traditional urban forms." John Macarthur, "The 'Revenge of the Picturesque,' Redux," *Journal of Architecture* 17, no. 5 (2012): 643.

[418] David Watkin, *The English Vision: The Picturesque in Architecture, Landscape and Garden Design* (London: John Murray, 1982); David Matless, *Landscape and Englishness* (London: Reacktion Books, 1998). Through this concept he has been also linked with practicing contemporaries—including Martin Richardson, J. Sterling, and Norman Foster—by Nicole Pertuiset, "The Floating Eye," *Journal of Architectural Education* 43, no. 2 (Winter 1990): 7–13.

[419] Jencks, *The Language of Post-Modern Architecture*, 85–87, 9, 121–22. For example, Spiro Kostof lumped together the Kriers and Cullen in relations to the "Sitte-esque" visual approach. Spiro Kostof, *The City Assembled* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1992), 181.

urban school (which came to be known as New Urbanism in the 1980s) whose manifestation can be found in Poundbury, Dorset (1989, designed by Leon Krier and Andre Duany), and which would later become pervasive in the United States.

The Cullen–Rowe connection, through Rowe's acclaimed 1978 book *Collage City*, written with Fred Koetter, passed through *The Review*.[420] The synopsis of *Collage City* was first published in *The Review* in 1975, uncomfortably mirroring the editors' Townscape on several counts and providing fuel for comparisons and criticism by several foes of Townscape.[421] This exchange, which took place on the pages of *The Review* between the AR editors, Rowe, and the anti-picturesque faction, left Cullen out. To British theorists and critics, who knew *The Review* editors and the development of Townscape from the pages of the magazine, Cullen was still the draftsman who visualized the editors' ideas. Yet outside this discourse, scholarly references to Cullen in the company of Rowe on the grounds of contextualism, as well as bricolage, have persisted.[422]

This connection is no surprise, considering that four of Cullen's townscape images are featured in *Collage City*, where they take up 75 percent of a double-page spread.[423] [Figure 5.5] Yet Rowe mentions Cullen only in the captions, relegating him to the status of illustrator. In the

[420] Colin Rowe and Fred Koetter, *Collage City* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1978), 34–35. Rowe conceived of the concept of "contextualism" in the early 1960s at Cornell University, where he taught, to imply the correspondence of new development within existing contexts.

[421] Colin Rowe and Fred Koetter, "Collage City." *Architectural Review* 158, no. 941 (August 1975), 66-91.

[422] Ellin, *Postmodern Urbanism*, 45.

[423] Rowe and Koetter, *Collage City*, 35–36.

text, Rowe explicitly critiques and ridicules *The Review*'s Townscape for being elitist, merely optical, and regressive—labels that Cullen would acquire through Rowe and others.[424]

Furthermore, a section of *Collage City* is a version of Cullen's Casebook in *Townscape.* The "Excursus" of the book, an addendum containing a photographic collection of "an abridged list of stimulants" or "*objets trouvés*" with which to construct the city, is conceived of as a casebook of visual precedents and vocabulary-building captioned images.[425] [Figure 5.6] This last resemblance reveals the logic of urban collage that the two promoted—a logic in which visual building blocks are assembled variously in space and time to create visual stimulation and surprise. Of course, the differences between Rowe and Cullen—most notably a reflection of Rowe's philosophical grounding in Karl Popper's concept of "the open society"—is readily apparent, and a number of writers have commented on them.

Differences between Rowe and Cullen are irrelevant, however. The salient point here is that Cullen permeated even the theoretical discourse in architecture in Britain, and those who later referred to him would place his, and not *The Review*'s, Townscape in the company of Rowe, even though theorists and critics continued to dismiss him.

His sway in Britain also extended from architecture and planning to the field of urban morphology in geography. Writing in the *Geographical Journal*, the geographer T. R. Slater analyzed the changing attitudes in historic town planning, claiming that "The only other theme of consequence in the British geographical literature is the artistic approach of Ewart Johns (1965)

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[424] While remaining focused on *The Review*, Rowe categorically denounced Townscape's utopianism as passé, though he acknowledged its pioneering status as an essential benchmark for all subsequent postmodern urban theories. Rowe, like Cullen, eschewed references to utopianism.

[425] Rowe and Koetter, *Collage City*, 151–81. It is interesting to note that in his essay "Who's Afraid of Ivor de Wolfe?" Aitchison pointed out that Rowe owned a copy of *The Concise Townscape*. That Rowe, the intellectual, owned a copy of such a nonintellectual book suggests that he appreciated some of its aspects and, possibly, was influenced by it. Aitchison, "Who's Afraid of Ivor de Wolfe?" 39.

and Gordon Cullen (1961)."[426] As it searched for a new postmodern paradigm to replace its traditional, analytical approach, geography came to embrace more subjective methods of analyzing the environment. Accordingly, several urban morphologists shifted from the planemetric and totalist viewpoint of the map to the vertical and fragmented eye-level perspective, and from rationalism to aesthetics. This was precisely Ewart Johns's thesis in *British Townscapes* (1965), where Cullen's incremental and partial series of serial vision views set the tone for the new approach. Thus, Johns, who was a painter but wrote the book out of his academic interest in urban design to point to an architectural influence on the geography of towns, reproduced Cullen's "Serial Vision Casebook" page spread in his book, as well as using this concept to advance his own argument about a subjective, human perspective on urban form. Johns also endorsed Cullen's production of pleasure and promotion of "aesthetic enjoyment of our urban surroundings."[427] Aside from urban morphology, the field of cultural geography, which emerged in the United States in the 1950s, came to have significant links to Cullen.

Cullen's influence in Britain, then, apparent from this sample of significant people who have referred to his work in theoretical and applied texts on urbanism and geography, helped architects and planners see beyond individual buildings and the plan view. He shaped people's perception of spaces between buildings, their entire cities, and even the act of looking at a map. Cullen's image-making vision has therefore influenced how people see the world as a whole. As the next section argues, this pedestrian perspective, conceived in landscape and art terms, has been consummated in and through global consumer culture.

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[426] T. R. Slater, "Preservation, Conservation and Planning in Historic Towns," *Geographical Journal* 150, no. 3 (November 1984): 323.

[427] Ewart Johns, *British Townscapes* (London: Edward Arnold, 1965), 8–10.

Townscape Goes Global

Beyond Britain, Cullen's work spread simultaneously through formal and informal avenues. Personal connections between AR editors and their peers in other countries were key, at least following the publication of *Townscape*, and led to several publications in the United States. This dynamic changed afterward when editors of trade magazines in several European countries took notice of and praised *Townscape* highly. At the same time, Cullen's acclaim spread as effectively through the informal channels of students and instructors migrating between universities as it did through English magazines in academic libraries. American students had discovered Cullen via his drawings in *The Review* during the mid-1950s, and he came to the attention of those in other countries mainly when *The Concise Townscape* was translated into several languages in the mid-1970s. The mainstream professional audience, in turn, learned of Cullen or of his drawing style through the early work of the first graduates employed in key landscape architecture offices and, of course, through his book in the early 1960s.

Townscape USA

Several key scholars in urbanism research have attempted to pinpoint the moment when Townscape became a significant topic in American architectural circles, drawing on archival documents and texts from institutions (e.g., journals and grant foundations). In their research, and in these formal sources, Cullen occupies a subordinate place, overshadowed by *The Review*'s Townscape and by Nairn. The British writer Gillian Darley maintained that it was not until the publication of "Outrage" and "Counter-Attack" (which she attributed to Nairn alone) that a meaningful Townscape discourse and a productive exchange between the two countries took place.[428] Clément Orillard argued that Townscape made its transatlantic leap in the context of the

[428] See Darley, "Ian Nairn and Jane Jacobs," 743.

emergence of the field of urban design in the mid-1950s, specifically at two academic programs: one at MIT, led by Lynch and Gyorgy Kepes, and the other at Yale University, led by Christopher Tunnards (the author of *Gardens for Modern Landscape* [1938], which Cullen had illustrated).[429] Alternately, Erdem Erten and Erik Ghenoiu viewed the interest of American academic research and trade journals in Townscape as part of a turn to visual planning that occurred when the country experienced a wave of suburban sprawl and a subsequent decline of city centers in the mid-1950s.[430]

These four scholars also identify the *Architectural Forum* (*AF*) editor Douglas Haskell's interest in recruiting Nairn and Cullen as the spur to Townscape's popular appeal finally reaching across the Atlantic. Haskell was greatly concerned about the cluttering effects of automobiles on the roads and of billboards dotting the countryside landscape, not unlike his English counterparts. Seeking help in exploring this issue, Haskell recruited his colleague William White, editor of *Fortune*, the sister business magazine of the *AF*, and the two turned to Nairn and Cullen to seek guidance from their British colleagues, whose campaign over similar landscape adversities was well under way.

This initial interest from Haskell around 1957 enabled both Nairn and Cullen to extend their reach into the United States. But Cullen's reputation in the United States had already taken root by then: his reliance on Haskell's invitation and on Nairn's writing to make the transatlantic leap was more limited than these four scholars suggest. At the time that Haskell and his staff writer Jane Jacobs (who by 1956 had become the urban renewal specialist of the *AF*) were approaching Nairn and Cullen, asking for their impressions of selected American cities for a

[429] Orillard, "Townscape Origins," 291–93.

[430] Erten, "Shaping 'The Second Half Century,'" 101; Ghenoiu, "The Resurgence of Visual Urbanism," 791.

prospective series in *Fortune*, Cullen's illustrations had already appeared in *Fortune*. With a series of extravagant, full-page color drawings for *Fortune*'s June 1957 essay about Britain's changing culture, "Britain: The Crust Is Cracking," Cullen's artistry was officially introduced to the American public.[431] [Figure 5.7] Meanwhile, Nairn had flown to the United States to study and photograph several cities; Cullen produced drawings from his photographs, and these illustrations—with captions by Nairn and arranged under the title "The Scale of the City"—were printed the following year as a parallel picto-journalistic accompaniment in Jacobs's essay "Downtown Is for People," which appeared in *Fortune*'s April 1958 issue, part of a series of essays on urban centers.[432] [Figure 5.8] White then reprinted the essay series in an edited volume, *The Exploding Metropolis* (1958), and placed "The Scale of the City" in a seven-page insert preceding Jacobs's essay.

In her introduction to the illustrations, Jacobs describes Nairn and Cullen as a team. "Mr. Cullen," she wrote, "who likes to draw cities the way people actually see them, from eye level, has done the drawings; Mr. Nairn who did the walking, has written the captions."[433] Cullen's alluring serial vision drawings of New York's Rockefeller Plaza and downtown Louisville, Kentucky, among others, worked in unison with Nairn's journalistic descriptions. (The first and only drawing that intentionally depicts a large-scale urban development from a bird's-eye view, which contrasts with Cullen's pedestrian perspective, is credited to both Cullen and the American architectural draftsman Helmut Jacoby, who occasionally borrowed Cullen's line for

[431] Gilbert Burck, "Britain: The Crust Is Cracking," *Fortune*, June 1957, 123–29.

[432] Jane Jacobs, "Downtown Is for People," *Fortune*, April 1958, 133–39.

[433] Ibid., 134. Jacobs's text appeared later in *The Exploding Metropolis*, picture gallery insert between pages 1938 and 139.

his drawings).[434] So before even having set foot on American soil, Cullen's visuals in American trade magazines gave a voice to his (versus *The Review*'s or Nairn's) conception of Townscape—that is, the pedestrian view of the city.

Yet Cullen's reputation hardly hinged on this formal entry. His drawings had already proliferated in American universities through *Review* essays on Townscape in the early 1950s. By the middle of the decade, Cullen's work was circulating in classrooms and landing on the desks of students in the country's major architecture programs. Cross-Atlantic exchanges of professors and students between universities in Britain and the United States, along with the first edition of *Townscape*, further rooted Cullen's work in landscape architecture and burgeoning urban design programs.

Students of architecture and landscape architecture across America had learned of Cullen's essays by the mid-1950s from their professors, British expatriates and Americans alike. Cullen's vision would go on to influence these students to reimagine design for everyday environments. In his book on Cullen, David Gosling, who completed his master's thesis in 1954 at MIT under the supervision of Kevin Lynch (whose work would be paired with Cullen's more often than with anyone else's), recalled Lynch's use of Cullen's essays in his courses. Gosling eagerly studied and attempted to draw like Cullen, and he used Cullen's visual study methods in his thesis on Boston's city center.[435]

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[434] *The Exploding Metropolis*, facing page 138. Although it is unclear to what degree the two collaborated on this drawing, it is possible that Cullen redrew over an original done by Jacoby. Jacoby mastered a range of drawing styles, including those displaying the minimal and freehand line-work of Cullen (e.g., drawings for Marcel Bruer's *St. Francis de Sale Church* in Michigan (1961) and ink illustrations for the book *Life for Dead Spaces* for the architect Charles Goodman (1962). See Helmut Jacoby, *Architectural Drawings* (New York: Frederick A. Praeger, 1965), 71, 82–83.

[435] See Gosling, *Gordon Cullen: Visions of Urban Design*. When David Gosling moved to the United States to teach at the University of Cincinnati in the 1980s, he was instrumental in spreading Cullen's legacy.

But the influence of Cullen's drawings, however, was not limited to the prestigious colleges on the East Coast. Ron Lovinger, who studied landscape architecture in 1958 at the University of Illinois in Urbana-Champaign (and who was my mentor in Israel in the late 1970s), was taught by the Englishmen Patrick Horsborough and Brian Hackett, both whom moved to Illinois from Newcastle upon Tyne. Both drew like Cullen, having seen Cullen's drawings in Britain, where they were educated. Later, during Lovinger's graduate work at Penn from 1961 to 1963, his classmates included a British entourage, all of whom were already drawing in Cullen's style. The chairman of the landscape architecture department, Ian McHarg (Scots by origin), not only promoted Cullen's work and brought to Penn avid British instructors who passed on Cullen's legacy but also invited Cullen to a studio review when Cullen toured several American cities in May 1960, under the sponsorship of the Rockefeller Foundation and upon McHarg's recommendation.[436] Lawrence Halprin, who decided to become a landscape architect after seeing Tunnard's book containing Cullen's illustrations, and who had become a key figure in urban landscape practice during the postwar period, employed a number of Cullen aficionados in the early 1960s, all of whom produced Cullen-style drawings.[437] These men are just a handful of the prominent postwar landscape architects in the United States and Britain who were influenced by Cullen's work, both in academia and in practice.

According to the critic Walter McQuade, writing in 1962, "Many American architects, particularly students (even those who never had seen his work in *The Architectural Review*), found themselves trying to draw like Cullen, perhaps because other people they admired had

[436] Gordon Cullen, personal archive, journal, May 1960, #673.

[437] Ron Lovinger, interview with the author, June 8, 2013. Lovinger worked in Halprin's office in 1963–34 together with his classmates Dennis Wilkenson and Roger Osbaldeston. Halprin's 1970 book *RSVP Cycles* has been mentioned in connection with Cullen by several writers.

begun more consciously to try."[438] Cullen's drawings were infectious, and those who saw them learned about Townscape as soon as their eyes hit the page. Perhaps it was no surprise, then, that a hungry audience already existed for *Townscape* when it was published in 1961.

Cullen's work in the United States was in demand not only by the academic and trade journals but also by wealthy foundations that funded research projects on the city. Having taken notice of *Fortune*'s publications, Chadbourne Gilpatric, a friend of Haskell's and associate director of the Rockefeller Foundation's Humanities Division, invited Nairn and Cullen (through McHarg) to study American cities. The resulting work led to Nairn's book, *The American Townscape,* which failed to include a contribution from Cullen (see "The Post-*Townscape* Quandary," in chapter 4). But it was the British-facing *Townscape*, rather than Nairn's book on American cities, that garnered rave reviews in professional American journals.

Cullen's *Townscape* joined the discourse on the American city in a way that went beyond the visual landscape, coalescing with other emerging urban design models even as it took on different meanings. Unlike in Britain, Townscape's arrival in America had no effect on historic preservation practices or on the environmental movement that would later emerge during the 1970s. Cullen's spectacular and humanized urbanism first found its allies in Kevin Lynch and Jane Jacobs, two influential thinkers of urbanism in the 1950s. The three had developed their theories during an era suspended between modernism and postmodernism. Their books had debuted around the same time, becoming intertwined in the theoretical discussions of the era, and were often subsequently cited together (see the extended discussion below in "Discourse 1: Embodied or Disembodied Eye? Crossing Paths with Kevin Lynch and Jane Jacobs").

[438] McQuade, review of *Townscape*, 155.

By the time the abridged edition of *Townscape* was published, Cullen was already well known in the United States, and his audience continued to grow in the 1970s.[439] In 1976, Cullen won the prestigious American Institute of Architects Gold Medal Award, and by the end of that decade he became well known around the world.

A Warm Embrace in Europe and South America

Only after the translation of his book into Italian, German, and Spanish in the mid-1970s did Cullen become a fixture in the more popular architectural world. The academic discourse of Townscape, of course, had begun earlier. Following the war, as in Britain, architects in European countries expressed growing concern about the detrimental effects of postwar modern development on the traditional city, and architectural magazines waged their own versions of townscape campaigns. By inviting international dialogue, that larger conversation took different forms in different countries. Yet Cullen's vision would eventually find a home in townscaping efforts around the world, as individual countries' architects integrated his work into their own regional sensibilities.

The concept of *preesistenza ambietali* (loosely translated as "architectural continuity") was Italy's equivalent of Townscape in the 1950s; it took root largely because of the influence of Ernesto Rogers, who was the editor of *Casabella-Continuità*, one of Italy's leading architectural magazines at the time. In hindsight, the mutual affinity of Italy and Britain for the picturesque element of townscape is understandable, considering that *The Review*'s townscape took picturesque Italian hill towns as its model (as evidenced in Hastings's later book, *The Italian*

[439] Evidence of his influence goes up to the 1990s and beyond. For example, the landscape architecture professor Richard Pollistor at the University of Minnesota not only used *Townscape* in his curriculum in the 1990s but also produced a film titled *Gordon Cullen, Townscape: The Language of Place* (1990). Even today, excerpts of *Townscape* and the serial vision method are taught in many urban design programs in the United States and elsewhere—at the University of Tennessee, Southbank University in London, and the University of Rio de Janeiro, to name a few.

Townscape). The editors of both journals—*Casabella-Continuità* and *The Review*—shared similar aesthetic sentiments, and they continued to monitor and report on the work of their peers.[440] From the late 1960s onward, Cullen's *Townscape* anchored the conversation, and he was featured in an essay aimed at intellectuals in *Casabella* (the new name of *Casabella-Continuità*) in 1969, and was invited to write an essay aimed at a professional audience in *Domus* in 1975.[441] In 1976, *Townscape* was translated into Italian and given the title *Il Paesaggio Urbano: Morfologia e Progettazione* (literally, "The Urban Landscape: Morphology and Projects").

Not only did Cullen come to anchor Italian townscaping, but his drawings also inspired an entire generation of architects in Italy. In the 1990s, the managing and art director of the magazine *Abitare*, Italo Lupi, eulogized Cullen. He had first encountered Cullen during his time as an architecture student two decades earlier, and his eulogy praised Cullen's influence on reimagining townscapes in Italy:

> His fluent, thickly-penciled line and abundant use of superimposed shading, which presented the general outlines of a problem both intuitively and effectively but also contained a host of telling details, were far removed from the mawkish architectural drawing style of his contemporaries which unfortunately has never gone out of fashion and has actually gained in popularity over the years in renderings of architecture that has never been built, only drawn. . . . Gordon Cullen's drawings summed all this up.[442]

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[440] Silvia Micheli "Ernesto N. Rogers and the Principle of 'Preesistenze Ambietali': A Methodological Lesson on Architecture and Townscape," paper presented at the Townscape Symposium, London, July 22–23, 2011.

[441] Agosti, Ettore, Maraemma Cioni Mori, and Franco Grossi. "Approach to the Urban Form: Gordon Cullen." *Casabella*, nos. 339-340 (August-September 1969): 24-25; Cullen, "Mute Signals: The Alphabet of the City," 1–7.

[442] Italo Lupi, "In Memory of Gordon Cullen," *Abitare* 340 (May 1995): 116–17. Lupi had earlier intended to work with Cullen on a new project for *Abitare*, but by then Cullen had already fallen seriously ill.

Lupi further attested to the power of Cullen's drawings in helping him and other architects to rediscover the building detail traditions of their own towns: the pavement of streets, textures of walls, and decorum of roads. Beyond his vivid tribute, Lupi's account is a testament to the capacity of Cullen's abstract drawing to surpass the photograph in bringing about clarity and focus to details, a fundamental aspect of artistic vision necessary for any student to realize her potential as an architect.

In contrast to their counterparts in Italy, journal editors in German-speaking countries did not pay attention to Townscape until *Townscape* was released. For them, *The Review*'s Townscape was too nationalistic in its English picturesque philosophy. Devoid as it was of nationalist and ideological overtones, Cullen's *Townscape* was therefore their first introduction to *The Review*'s long-promoted campaign. The book was enthusiastically welcomed, and its concepts acted as a logical complement to the half-century-old German visual planning tradition known as *Stadtbaukunst*. Defined as "the art of city building," Stadtbaukunst was the brainchild of Camilo Sitte. In fact, as the architectural theorist Jasper Cepl suggested, the local discourse that began with Sitte's book at the turn of the century was forgotten in the wake of *Townscape*.[443]

Bauwelt's editor, Ulrich Conrads, ostensibly reviewing Hastings's *Italian Townscape*, turned instead to Cullen's *Townscape*, according to Cepl. Conrads described *Townscape* as "one of the most important books of the postwar period," and complained bitterly that it had caused a sensation across Europe, but not in Germany.[444] It was therefore not long afterward that Cullen was invited to write essays for *Bauwelt* and other German magazines. In 1973, he received an honorary doctorate of engineering from the University of Munich. His book was translated into

[443] Jasper Cepl, "Townscape in Germany," *Journal of Architecture* 17, no. 5 (2012): 780.

[444] Ulrich Conrads, review of *The Italian Townscape*, by Ivor de Wolfe, *Bauwelt* 54 (1963): 1394.

German in 1975 with the title *Townscape: Das Vokabular der Stadt* (Townscape: The Vocabulary of the City).

In Switzerland, the book was widely discussed and evaluated. One of the first editors to embrace the idea was Lucius Burckhardt, from the Swiss periodical *Werk.* In 1963, *Werk* published an issue on *Stadtlandschaft* (city and landscape), in which the editors stated that the idea of Townscape had "electrified" them.[445] In the 1970s, Burckhardt developed the concept of "strollology," or the study of the city through strolling—a key aspect of *Townscape* design.

The Netherlands and Spain also warmly welcomed *Townscape*.[446] The Spanish edition of the book, titled, *El Paisaje Urbano: Tratado de Estética Urbanística* (The Urban Landscape: Treatise of Urban Aesthetics), was originally published in 1974, had been reprinted four times by 1978. From there, it did not take long before the Spanish translation reached South America. In Argentina, Jorge Royan, an architecture student at the University of Buenos Aires, recalls the bond he felt with Cullen's drawings through both their portrayal of subjects and their techniques:

> We used to go to the street to sketch, even while the sketching tools and attitude of today was inexistent and unthinkable, we did our best. I couldn't care less about the text itself, since the analysis GC makes of Italian piazzas, small city nooks or green masses, is so far from the reality of a grey Latin American city that there was little to infer from there. But the illustrations . . . Small, monochrome and heavily patterned . . . I believe now, the magic came from that. . . . [I]n the 70's, at this far corner of the world, and seen with the distance of the years, I realize Gordon Cullen's illustrations opened a small window through which I perceived a world, which, years later, I traveled widely. And he was so right.[447]

[445] Cepl, "Townscape in Germany," 781.

[446] A Dutch professor from Rotterdam, Rudi Kegel, and another from TU Delft University, P. K. A. Pennink, introduced Cullen to their students in the 1970s. Pennick also published a treatise about Cullen. P. K. A. Pennink, *Gordon Cullen* (Delft: TU Delft, Afdeling der Bouwkunde, 1976).

[447] Jorge Royan, e-mail correspondence with the author, June 13, 2013.

Royan's account, like Lupi's, is vivid and passionate. The "magic" of Cullen's drawings compelled them to go out, sketch, and see the world through Cullen's eyes as an exciting place where distinctions between the real or imagined were unimportant.

In Brazil, *Townscape* influenced the urban design ideas of Vincente del Rio, a professor at the Federal University in Rio de Janeiro, who passed on Cullen's legacy to many of his disciples through his own popular urban design textbook. In a 1999 review of Gosling's monograph on Cullen, del Rio noted that much of the teaching of contemporary urban and landscape design in schools of architecture had been based on Cullen's notions and techniques.[448]

The warm embrace of Cullen throughout the world hinged on the detachability and, therefore, flexible adaptation and interpretation of Cullen's visual (and textual) representation. This feature is apparent in the many ways in which it was employed in literature to press different arguments, including those he often did not necessarily espouse, as well as in expected and unexpected literary sources. The diverging meanings and perspectives that his work acquired around the world, not just in England and the United States, are a testament to *Townscape*'s great adaptability, are as telling as their counterparts and the ways in which Cullen's Townscape became a sort of image-making zeitgeist that could morph with places and times. As in Britain, the reception of his work in the rest of world mirrored several emerging postmodern theories.

Tossed in Academic Discourses: Supple References, Adaptable Meanings

Cullen's name and images circulated broadly through a wide range of intellectual and theoretical circles. How was it possible for a nonintellectual to have had such an extensive reach?

[448] Vincente del Rio, *Introduçao ao Desenho Urbano: no Precesso de Planejamento* (São Paulo: Brassinter SA Editora Pini, 1990), 86–88; Vicente del Rio, review of *Gordon Cullen: Vision of Urban Design*, by David Gosling, *Journal of Architectural and Planning Research* 16, no. 1 (Spring 1999): 80–82.

With the exception of a few invited publications, and brief correspondence and collaborations with the prominent academics who referenced him, *Townscape* was the only "active" agent and pollination source of his work. It was mostly a one-way transaction. The images and, to a limited extent, the words in his book were alone responsible for the transmission of his ideas and the construction of his persona. Cullen the man, though, remained mostly in the background, refraining from actively participating in intellectual and academic discourse. Nonetheless, his name is now intricately bound with the turn-of-the-century town planner Camilo Sitte and his disciple Raymond Unwin, with postwar British conservationists Worskett and his allies, and with almost every significant architectural urban theorist in the 1960s and 1970s: Kevin Lynch, Jane Jacobs, Robert Venturi, Denise Scott Brown, Peter and Alison Smithson, Colin Rowe, and Christopher Alexander, to name a few.

Moreover, the web of interrelated architectural discourses, of which Cullen's work was naturally a part, expanded and permeated other academic fields in the process of developing their postmodern theories. Hence, in addition to appearing in the allied disciplines of urban design, planning, and landscape architecture, references to Cullen have surfaced in the fields of cultural geography, with Grady Clay; behavioral psychology, with Amos Rapport and Steven Kantor; phenomenology, with Christian Norberg-Schulz; and semiotics, with Venturi and Scott Brown. Many other references ensued.[449]

[449] Applications of Cullen's work are also found in ergonomics design (Nicolas Beucker and Ralph Bruder, "The Emotional Townscape—Designing Amiable Public Places," University of Essen, Ergonomics in Design. http//socialdesign.hs-niederrhein.de/fileadmin/user_upload/pics/downloads/beucker_emotional_townscape.pdf); website design (Benyon, "Navigating Information Space"); and wayfinding in graphic design (Anna Gouveia, Paula Silva, Priscila Lena Farias, and Patrícia Souza Gatto, "Letters and Cities: Reading the Urban Environment with the Help of Perception Theories," *Visual Communication* 8 [2009]: 339–48), among other disciplines.

This section examines the particular dynamics of Cullen's relations with these figures—whether a brief exchange, a collaboration, or a lack of them—while it considers the range of diverse meanings acquired by Cullen's work as it entered several key debates in architectural discourse. In the following discussion, I sketch three thematic discourses in which Cullen's name is tossed around on both sides of the debate: "embodied-disembodied eye," "elitist-popular-ordinary aesthetics," and "realistic-romantic-absurd." Of course, these themes also have been central to the ongoing discourses concerning *The Review*'s Townscape campaign since it began in the 1950s, with which Cullen is intricately entangled. This thematic taxonomy has its corollaries and overlaps. It is also but one of several possible ways of sketching the trajectories of Cullen's multifaceted legacy being employed in support of opposing arguments, and the ways in which younger scholars have long appropriated his techniques and perspectives (up to this day). This appropriation has been operating in full force since Cullen's alliance with Lynch and Jacobs.

That Cullen was tossed into each side of these multisided debates was to be expected, due primarily to the malleability of image-based theory and the phenomenon of detachability. Cullen, the image maker, comfortably found himself on each side of arguments in numerous debates.

Discourse 1: Embodied or Disembodied Eye?

Crossing Paths with Kevin Lynch and Jane Jacobs

The eye, being his main object of interest, places Cullen firmly and firstly in the "embodied-disembodied eye" debate. The thrust of this debate concerns the isolation of sight from and, alternately, its integration with all the other senses. The ensuing criticism of the "disembodied eye" position is that the tendency to make vision primary while neglecting the others senses leads to an aesthetic viewpoint of mental detachment from the environment. A

corollary of this argument is the privilege of "look" over social, political, and urban structure that, in turn, leads to a skewed and superficial world of manipulation and surface treatment. As stark as the differences are between Cullen, Jacobs, and Lynch, the three figures nonetheless play instrumental roles in the debate.

Usually, all three are cited together because their work is based primarily on an empirical methodology, which deems human perception at the pedestrian-level to be central to urban design. Most scholars have placed all three on the "embodied eye" and socially concerned side of the debate, concluding that the three have privileged sensory and mobile pedestrian experience over the visual and static. Specifically, many critics have closely aligned Cullen with Jacobs on social grounds—his affinity with the ordinary life of traditional city streets and his focus on human scale, as well as his opposition to urban renewal, suburbia, and the disruption of the pedestrian urban core by the automobile—on one side of the debate.[450] He also has been linked to Jacobs on the basis of pure vision, an argument that places their work on the surface of things.[451] With Lynch, Cullen is often grouped on the "embodied eye" side of the debate on semi-scientific grounds, with arguments related indirectly to Gestalt visual psychology and to the display of a constant oscillation between the psychological and the visual or between the objective and the subjective.[452] But he is also matched with Lynch in the context of the picturesque—on the

[450] For arguments related to the "embodied eye" side of the debate, see, for example, Jon Lang and Walter Moleski, *Functionalism Revisited: Architectural Theory and Practice and the Behavioral Sciences*. (Farnham, Surrey, England: Ashgate, 2010), 270–75.

[451] For an argument related to the "disembodied eye" side of the debate see, for example, John McMorrough, "Good Intentions," in *Harvard Design School Guide to Shopping*, ed. Chuihua Judy Chung and Sze Tsung Leong (Cologne: Taschen; Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard Design School, 2001), 372.

[452] Among those placing Lynch and Cullen on the "embodied eye" side of the debate are Clément Orillard, whose PhD dissertation compares Lynch's and Cullen's work—Clément Orillard, "Kevin Lynch and Urban Design Representation: The Perception of the City (1951–1964)," PhD diss., University of Paris 8, Vincennes Saint-Denis, March 2010 (in French); Broadbent, *Emerging Concepts in Urban Space*

"disembodied eye" side.[453] While key differences between Cullen and colleagues like Lynch or Jacobs exist, most scholars tend to view these differences as trivial in light of their overarching similarities.

Their interactions, or lack thereof, shed further light on the debate as well as on the specific perceptions of these individuals. Jacobs, of course, knew Cullen from their collaboration on the "Exploding Metropolis" series, and she was clearly fascinated by his drawings. In "Downtown Is for People," as well as in her celebrated 1961 book, *The Death and Life of Great American Cities*, she cited Cullen and Nairn's two joint publications for their capacity to "picture and explain" the problem and solutions of specific places.[454] In extreme contrast with Cullen, Jacobs's book was devoid of real illustrations. In fact, the first page in her book bore the title "Illustrations" but (perhaps pointedly) listed none. She wrote, "The scenes that illustrate this book are all about us. For illustrations, please look closely at real cities."[455] [Figure 5.9] Jacobs's attitude toward illustrations is elusive. Though in her book she repeatedly used the word "look," and argued that "the look of things and the way they work are inextricably bound together," she is skeptical of the prevailing interest only in "how the city 'ought' to look" and the failure to seek

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Design, 217, 230; Roger Transick, *Finding Lost Space: Theories of Urban Design* (New York: Van Nostrand Reinhold, 1986), 116; del Rio, *Introduçao ao Desenho Urbano*, 86; Gosling, *Gordon Cullen: Visions of Urban Design*, 222; Henry Plummer, "Strata Via: The Street as a Mode of Existence," review of *On Streets*, by Stanford Anderson, *Journal of Architectural Education* 41, no. 4 (Summer 1988): 58–64. The focus and theoretical grounding of each scholar vary greatly.

[453] Scholars and practitioners who link them on the basis of picturesque theories and place them on the "disembodied eye" side include, for example, Ákos Moravánszky, "Camillo Sitte: Romantic or Realist? The Picturesque City Reconsidered," *East Central Europe* 33, nos. 1–2 (2006): 305, and David Gosling and Barry Maitland, *Concepts of Urban Design* (London: Academy Editions, 1984).

[454] Jacobs, "Downtown Is for People," 135; Jacobs, *The Death and Life of Great American Cities*, 390.

[455] Ibid., frontispiece.

out an understanding of its working.[456] Hence, she assigns the latter job to herself and provocatively leaves her book picture-less, giving the job of illustration to Cullen. Jacobs may have considered Cullen's work to be plainly the visual display of her socially based urbanism.

Clearly Jacobs had a complicated relationship with visuals, and maybe even with Townscape. Perhaps to fend off criticism of her own work, or to warn others, Jacobs ends her clarification about her picture-less book with sharp criticism: "To seek for the look of things as a primary purpose or as the main drama is apt to make nothing but trouble."[457] And although neither Cullen nor the Townscape campaign are mentioned in her statement, it could be construed as a criticism of sorts of both. Still, in a letter sent to Hastings in 1964 following the publication of his *Italian Townscape*, Jacobs attested to her esteem for Hastings's and Cullen's books by writing that she enthusiastically referred her students to both.[458]

Whether she adored or downplayed Cullen, or both, is less significant. The point is that Jacobs could afford to issue a book without illustrations. The nature of her discipline and argument allowed for such exclusion: without illustrations, Jacobs could still be the same great author. However, without illustrations, there could be no pedestrian, reflexive Townscape à la Cullen—or, quite simply, no Cullen. His work was his drawings, and his drawings were his reputation.

Lynch was caught up to a lesser degree in the "eye" debate but never collaborated with Cullen. Despite having drawn noticeably from Cullen (as evident in his use of Cullen's essays in his courses), Lynch was quite selective about how he acknowledged Cullen, giving him a nod in

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[456] Ibid., 14.

[457] Ibid., 14.

[458] Quoted in Erten, "Shaping 'The Second Half Century,'" 102.

two books.[459] He used Cullen's vision for his own purposes, but still distanced himself from Cullen, to reinforce their differences. Lynch's distancing of Cullen, as he perhaps anticipated, did not prevent the greater majority of scholarly citations from placing Cullen in his company.

The Image of the City, which preceded the publication of *Townscape*, contained no mention of Cullen or *The Review*.[460] Later, in his book *Theory of Good City Form* (1981), Lynch referenced Cullen, along with Arthur Kutcher and Camilo Sitte, characterizing all three as sources of studies that concerned historical cities and isolated visual objects. Conversely, in focusing on large urbanized regions where most people lived, and in seeing a more scientific approach to urban research, Lynch distinguished his work from Cullen and his like on the subjective-objective and the retrogressive-progressive divides. He further argued that his counterparts focused on the legibility of the city through *their* own eye (and the tourist's eye), instead of through the eyes of the inhabitants, whose mental maps he solicited and probed.[461]

But Lynch's interest in devising new systems of representation of human perception intersected with Cullen's sensibilities, a fact acknowledged in *The View from the Road* (1964). In collaboration with Donald Appleyard and John R. Myer, Lynch referenced Cullen, but only in the bibliography—despite the fact that the visual sequence of *The View from the Road* is rooted in Cullen's series of essays on roadscape and, more generally, in his serial vision.[462] [Figure

[459] Clément Orillard noted that one-third of the bibliography consisted of the Townscape articles. See Orillard, "Townscape Origins," 292.

[460] Kevin Lynch, *The Image of the City* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1960).

[461] Kevin Lynch, *A Theory of Good City Form* (Cambridge, Mass: MIT Press, 1981), 146.

[462] Donald Appleyard, Kevin Lynch, and John R. Myer, *The View from the Road* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1964).

5.10] Lynch's mostly diagrammatic notational system concurred with his scientific approach, but his larger reluctance to acknowledge Cullen's substantive influence remains intriguing.[463]

Like Lynch, many of his followers and collaborators also drew from Cullen, including the urban planners Donald Appleyard and Peter Bosselman and the environmental psychologists Amos Rapoport and Robert Kantor. Appleyard and Bosselman referenced Cullen in their work, and both credited Cullen for his contribution to representation from the perspective of the man on the street while simultaneously criticizing his work for its visual superficiality and historicism.[464] For their part, Rapoport and Kantor refer to Cullen's *Concise Townscape* as the physical and visual edification of their own theories.[465] They hypothesized a human need for complexity in the visual environment and built on several of Cullen's visual concepts, including "anticipation" and "mystery." Likewise, evolutionary biologists, who link environmental responses to innate human instincts, tapped Cullen's work. Geographer Jay Appleton referenced Cullen in his hugely influential "prospect-refuge," *The Experience of Landscape* (1975). He

[463] Among those linking *The View from the Road* with Cullen are: Susan Robertson, "Visions of Urban Mobility." *Cultural Geographies* 14 no. 1 (January 2007), 81; and Gosling, *Gordon Cullen: Visions of Urban Design*, 67.

[464] Appleyard's interest in revitalizing streets also aligned with Cullen's. Donald Appleyard, *Conservation of European Cities* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1979), 24. In this book, Appleyard applauded Cullen's and Worskett's work for contributing to the preservation of historic streets, yet is leery of the outcome—what he considers to be essentially a "picturesque, genteel, and veneer approach." Peter Bosselman noted that Cullen's notion of popularizing the "art of the environment" was a bit naive, and that despite being criticized—for being aligned with the historicism and optical treatment of Sitte—his contribution to representation is important. Peter Bosselman, *Representation of Places: Reality and Realism in City Design* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998).

[465] Amos Rapoport and Robert Kantor, "Complexity and Ambiguity in Environmental Design," *American Institute of Planners Journal* 45, no. 4 (July 1965): 17; Eduardo Lozano, too, belongs to this group. Eduardo Lozano, "Visual Needs in the Urban Environment," *Town Planning Review* 45, no. 4 (1974): 18.

introduced Cullen's description of spatial enclaves from architecture and urban design to the natural landscape, calling it "the essence of the prospect refuge complement."[466]

Cullen's alignment on the "embodied eye" side of the argument with these figures, despite being criticized by Lynch, Jacobs, and several of their colleagues, extended from urban and landscape fields and through sociological, psychological, and biological theories that linked vision to human behavior and sensorial response to the field of phenomenology via the related concept of empathy, an emotive response to the environment.[467] Nonetheless, many theorists placed Cullen's work with the exact opposite argument—the "disembodied eye" and socially irresponsible.

This classic critique, which began with Joseph Rykwert in the 1950s, reduced Townscape to the purely visual, and it continued with the caustic attack initiated by Robert Maxwell. Maxwell had denounced Cullen's work, simultaneously with *The Review*'s Townscape policy, for promoting a superficial perceptual system that "denies the complexity of actual perceptions and the extent to which they are governed by cultural and social conditioning."[468] Maxwell considered "utterly false" the presumption by Hastings and Cullen that visual art, properly understood, would enable feelings to be brought into play and to alter perception.

Rykwert's and Maxwell's arguments opened the door for other critics who would place Cullen in the "superficially visual" camp, where such figures as John Jakle and Peter Blake

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[466] Jay Appleton, *The Experience of Landscape* (London: John Wiley, 1975). Also see Raymond, J. Curran, *Architecture and the Urban Experience* (New York: Van Nostrand Reinhold, 1983), 78, 81–82, x.

[467] Gosling noted that support for *Townscape* may be found in the phenomenology of perception of Merleu-Ponty. Gosling, *Gordon Cullen: Visions of Urban Design*, 222. Macarthur aligned him with Christian Norberg-Schulz on the basis of his concept of empathy. Macarthur, *The Picturesque*, 205.

[468] Maxwell, "The Failure of the Townscape Tradition," 127.

mingled.[469] This side of the "embodied-disembodied eye" debate leads to yet another debate on aesthetics, and one that has three positions—elitist-genteel sensibilities, popular-vanguard taste, and ordinary-everyday. In this "elitist-popular-ordinary aesthetic" debate, Cullen is caught up on the side, respectively, of Peter Blake, Robert Venturi and Denise Scott Brown, and Grady Clay, despite his direct interaction with only two of these figures.

Discourse 2: Elitist, Popular, or Ordinary Aesthetics?

Caught between Peter Blake, Robert Venturi/Denise Scott Brown, and Grady Clay

At the heart of this three-sided debate lies the question of landscape aesthetics, a question muddled in morals, class, and politics. The debate between the architects Peter Blake and the pair Robert Venturi and Denise Scott Brown is shaped by the deep rivalry between the genteel aesthetics of Blake and the pop-inspired aesthetics of his counterparts. Each side accuses the other of having a damaging effect on the vitality of the environment. Of course, Cullen can be found in both. He is also closely linked to the ordinary landscape viewpoint of cultural geography and, especially, the work of the landscape journalist Grady Clay, with whom he had substantial exchange. This viewpoint, in which Cullen is implicated, occupies an uneasy position next to the editor Richards's "Functional Tradition."

Whereas cultural geographers do not distinguish among the three types of non-self-conscious commonplace aesthetics—the popular landscape of the commercial strip, the ordinary landscape of trailer parks and highways, and the vernacular architecture of silos and barns or American-Indian mounds—architects have made these distinctions overt. Architectural theorists have commonly argued that devotees of the popular target the more recent consumerist

[469] John A. Jakle, *The Visual Elements of Landscape* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1987). This camp of the debate also includes names linked with Cullen, such as Christopher Tunnard and Berfs Pushkarev.

manifestations of commercial strips and freeways; followers of the ordinary landscape focus inclusively on the more mundane places, where most people live; and vernacular enthusiasts look to the past with a semi-romantic eye and with a tourist-heritage designation in mind.

Cullen has been linked to Peter Blake, who edited *Architectural Forum* in the 1960s, through Blake's photographic book, *God's Own Junkyard* (1964).[470] [Figure 5.11] In crusading against the clutter along the highway and attacking the vulgarity of the commercial strip, the book was considered to be the successor of Nairn and Cullen's "Outrage." Blake's section titles in *God's Own Junkyard*—"Townscape," Roadscape," "Carscape," "Skyscape," and so on—frankly duplicate Townscape's neologism, without acknowledgment. Other critics did take notice of this mimicry, and linked Blake with his Townscape colleagues on grounds of a romantic and genteel visual approach that sought to return to the sign-free pre-automobile landscape.[471]

At the same time, several critics and architectural scholars have lumped Cullen with the provocative strain of commercial strip popular architecture advocated by the collaborators Robert Venturi and Denise Scott Brown to promote the commonplace and common taste of popular culture.[472] Robert Venturi openly attacked Blake. In fact, *God's Own Junkyard* supplied

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[470] Peter Blake, *God's Own Junkyard: The Planned Deterioration of America*, (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1964). Two early essays that Blake wrote in The Review in 1961 and 1963 and 1964, he later expanded upon in the book. As one might expect, the book was reviewed favorably in *The Review*. See, Orillard, "Townscape Origins," 296.

[471] Ibid.; Aitchison, "Who's Afraid of Ivor de Wolfe?" 38; Ghenoiu, "The Resurgence of Visual Urbanism," 799.

[472] Robert Venturi gave this notion a theoretical statement in *Complexity and Contradiction in Architecture* (New York: Museum of Modern Art, 1966), when he signaled his aesthetic acceptance of the picturesque and the ugly, as well as of the strip and the roadway, veering off from the visual-formal to the cultural systems that produce these features. Critics who cited them together include Broadbent, *Emerging Concepts in Urban Space Design*, 217, 235 (on the basis of empiricism); Charles C. Bohl and Jean-François Lejeune, "Introduction: The Never-Ending Debate," in *Sitte, Hegemann and the Metropolis: Modern Civic Art and International Exchanges*, ed. Charles C. Bohl and Jean-François Lejeune (London: Routledge, 2009), xiv (on the basis of disrupting the modern project).

Venturi with fuel for this attack on Blake's "elite" approach—Blake's disdain for the signs in Times Square and along highways, which Venturi admired in his first book, *Complexity and Contradiction in Architecture* (1966), and Blake's ridicule of a duck-shaped building, which Venturi and Scott Brown turned into an icon to validate a counterargument in their renowned book *Learning from Las Vegas* (1972), written with Steven Izenour. Scott Brown and Venturi are known proponents of a broader disruption of the modern project, and *Learning from Las Vegas* explicitly attacked modern architecture elitism while instead endorsing popular appraisals of the Las Vegas Strip.[473] [Figure 5.12]

That Cullen's name was employed to support either argument—not to mention that he subscribed to neither—is perhaps just as compelling a claim for Cullen's prominence over commonly praised architects as if he had established a uniform vision to which everyone subscribed. The academic discourse that aligned Cullen with Blake and his traditional landscape aesthetics, on the one hand, and that which aligned Cullen with Venturi and Scott Brown and their "pop-guard" aesthetics, on the other hand, could not be more different.

Finding Cullen positioned with this architect-duo is especially odd given the theoretical grounding of their work in semiotics.[474] Although it is possible to ascertain these as well as several other connections between the three—those related to the promotion of a filmic way of seeing (the automobile sequential views), as well as of iconography and decoration—this alignment is another evidence of the malleable appropriation of Cullen's work. Scott Brown and

[473] Robert Venturi, Denise Scott Brown, and Steven Izenour, *Learning from Las Vegas: The Forgotten Symbolism of Architectural Form* (1972; reprint, Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1997). For a discussion of the dichotomies and complementarities of these and other strains of everyday landscapes, see Dell Upton, "Architecture in Everyday Life," *New Literary History* 33, no. 4 (Autumn 2002): 707–23.

[474] See Gosling, *Gordon Cullen: Visions of Urban Design*, 32.

Venturi conspire with semiotics specifically to disrupt relations between sign and referent—a project in which Cullen had absolutely no interest.

Yet Cullen did settle comfortably even in the far-removed field of semiotics. In a little known move that might have surprised a number of academic architects, Cullen collaborated with Scott Brown on a long essay on semiotics for the special issue of the magazine *Connection* in 1967.[475] [Figure 5.13] But even as Scott Brown found common ground for a shared project with Cullen, the essay in no way bridges the gap between the two. Their essay wove together a reprint of Scott Brown's essay "The Meaningful City" (which had appeared at the AIA journal two years earlier) with excerpts and illustrations the Casebook section of Cullen's *Townscape*, featuring his concepts "outdoor publicity," "here and there," "serial vision," and others. The two texts and the images worked in unison across several themes, such as "Perception and Meaning" and "Messages." Their language came across as simple and conversational: they aimed to elucidate the messages people "gather" from the environment, how they interpret them, and, in Scott Brown's words, "how the 'messages' given us by streets and buildings as we move through the city tell us about the city; help us to know and use it, and understand its meaningful order."[476] This statement rings true for Cullen. Indeed, in this essay, Scott Brown codified Cullen's visual ideas and gave them a semiotic grounding, something that he intuitively called "muted signals."

[475] Denise Scott Brown and Gordon Cullen, "Messages," *Connection* 4 (Spring 1967): 12–15. Scott Browne studied in London at the Architectural Association School of Architecture (AA) between 1952 and 1955, when she became acquainted with Cullen's work.

[476] Ibid., 7.

It was therefore an interest in signals—in empathetic-embodied meanings—rather than in signs, or surface image, that linked the two.[477]

Whereas this onetime collaboration offers a concrete example of a direct link to her work, Scott Brown's later work with Venturi proves they did not share all of the same views. Beyond their indirect reproach of Cullen through their criticism of Blake's work, Venturi and Scott Brown's *Learning from Las Vegas* veers away from Cullen's spatial-sensorial approach to the environment to a highly rational and polemic one, promoting instead an anti-spatial architecture, an architecture of communication over space. This argument undoubtedly made Cullen bristle, given his advocacy of people-friendly pedestrian streets.

The differences separating *Townscape* from *Las Vegas* are murkier still if one considers another element that ironically unites Venturi and Scott Brown with Cullen: the democracy of consumer taste in a capitalist market. Venturi and Scott Brown clearly have advocated "realistic" consumer taste as part of their bid to topple modernist elitism. Robert Maxwell's critique of Cullen positions him in the same spot, though for a different ideological reason. Maxwell has argued that Cullen's work holds a covert capitalist ideology because it uses two strategies akin to advertising: manipulative rhetorical tactics in journalism and the dull form of mass media found in shopping malls and theme towns.[478] As a result, Maxwell's pointed (and partly correct) appraisal fueled the derision that several scholarly critics from the younger generation, including Richard Williams, feel toward Cullen. Specifically, Williams has homed in on Cullen's proclivity for the strategies of advertising, claiming that *Townscape* "promotes the pleasure of

[477] The notion of empathetic-embodied meanings is closer to the argument that Dell Upton articulated in his reassement of *Las Vegas*. See Dell Upton, "Signs Taken for Wonders," in "Relearning from Las Vegas," ed. Michael Golec and Aron Vinegar, special issue, *Visible Language* 37, no. 3 (2003): 332–51.

[478] Maxwell, "The Failure of the Townscape Tradition," 127.

spectacle detached from any function or history, for the educated public," and faulted it for purporting to speak to a popular crowd, while hiding an ideological ambition of control.[479]

Williams's accusation opens a corollary debate within the "elitist-popular-ordinary aesthetic" discussion to which Cullen's work can be readily traced. This side of the triangular discourse within of the broader category of the commonplace is occupied by proponents of the ordinary-everyday landscape. Cullen is directly linked to the ordinary landscape through Grady Clay, and through him to the school of cultural geography that has made ordinary landscapes its subject. This side of the landscape aesthetic debate is similarly enmeshed in its internal conflict with proponents of vernacular architects, to whom Cullen is indirectly linked through J. M. Richards.

Although Cullen is generally cited far less often alongside Clay than with Lynch, Jacobs, Blake, Venturi, and Scott Brown, Clay has explicitly argued in favor of Cullen's influence on, and prominence in, his work. In his landmark book *Close-Up: How to Read the American City* (1973), Clay writes that Cullen's "firm hand and penetrating gaze" inspired him to see and explore the city through motion.[480] [Figure 5.11] Unlike Cullen, Clay, who is a journalist by training and a former editor of *Landscape Architecture* magazine, has aimed to promote new experiences and understanding of the significance of ordinary built environments. Like *Townscape*, *Close-Up* develops a vocabulary for reading the everyday landscape.

[479] Williams, *The Anxious City*, 40.

[480] Grady Clay, *Close-Up: How to Read the American City* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1973), 29–30.

Clay corresponded with Cullen during the process of writing his manuscript, after which the publisher asked Cullen to review Clay's book proofs.[481] *Close-Up* specifically credited Cullen for developing a new sense of mobility in the city through serial vision and for including the visual context. Clay thereby placed Cullen in the company of other architects who devised new ways to explore the city, including the American landscape architect Lawrence Halprin.[482] In his second book, *Real Places: An Unconventional Guide to America's Generic Landscape* (1994), Clay developed a broader lexicon for "America's generic landscape," listing Cullen's influence on him immediately behind that of J. B. Jackson, the mastermind of the field of cultural geography, and placed Lynch as third.[483] As Cullen did with his word lists "Casebook," in *Real Places* Clay uses simple and playful titles, ranging from "Back There" and "Perks" to labels such as "Lover's Leap" and "Speed Trap/Zone," a tactic that attracts and amuses the reader. Clay borrowed these and other rhetorical devices from Cullen to teach laypeople ways of reading and seeing, thereby making the ordinary visible.

An outcome of Cullen's close association with the ordinary environment in combination with the long-established "functional tradition," a theme of anonymous early industrial structures promoted by *The Review* editor J. M. Richards, is that Cullen has been indirectly enlisted to join a discussion concerning the commonplace and the common man.[484] [Figure 5.12] This

[481] Gordon Cullen, personal archive, #8325; letter, March 1974, #9328. It is, however, unclear to me whether Cullen proceeded to review the book.

[482] Clay referred to Halprin's concept of scoring movement through the environment, described in his book *The RSVP Cycles: Creative Processes in the Human Environment* (1970).

[483] Grady Clay, *Real Places: An Unconventional Guide to America's Generic Landscape* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994), x.

[484] Rudofsky's later book, *Streets for People: A Primer for Americans* (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1969), which he dedicated "[t]o the unknown pedestrian," more directly links him to Cullen.

categorization, of course, is also made evident in Cullen's direct appeal to the common man in his book and in his work for *The Review*. Cullen—champion of the everyday environment in the name of ordinary people—garnered further scorn from the media theorist Joe Moran and the architectural theorist Andrew Law, among others.

Joe Moran considered Townscape's everyday notion to be an idealized vision of a supposedly naturalistic and popular aesthetic. Siding with Moran, Andrew Law argued specifically that *Townscape*'s crusade against ugliness and for the everyday landscape tended to hide its own elitist politics, when in reality it not only was a campaign to construct elitist aesthetics that rejected the suburban middle class as a new form of social identity, but it also failed to accept mass culture commercialization.[485] Cullen's connection to the indiscriminately ordinary landscape argument that Clay upheld and to the exclusive vernacular landscape argument, more directly aimed at Richards, proved to be as dual-sided as in all the other debates that appropriated him. Thus his name can be found in the company of Clay's ordinary aesthetics, Scott Brown and Venturi's vanguard popular aesthetics, and Blake's genteel taste, against which Venturi harangued.

Just as critics leaned toward lumping him together with Venturi and Scott Brown—whose *Learning from Las Vegas* would go on to garner early fame as one of the pillars of American postmodern architecture—they would later associate him with other architectural postmodernists, such as Charles Moore and Michael Graves of the neo-romantic bent (even as the debate over whether Cullen was late modernist or postmodernist continued, as it does to this day). Having been implicated in a neo-romantic tendency to envision the city, Cullen naturally would later surface in the "realistic-romantic-absurd" debate.

[485] Moran, "'Subtopias of Good Intentions,'" 410; Law, "English Townscape as Cultural and Symbolic Capital," 217.

Discourse 3: Realistic, Romantic, or Absurd?

Reyner Banham and Alison and Peter Smithson

This debate concerning the proclivity to romanticize or idealize the city, versus the need to approach it realistically or looking forward rather than backward, is part of a broader architectural postmodern discourse that was prompted by *The Review*'s Townscape. Proponents of the realist approach argue that the romantic-nostalgic perspective glosses over reality, often because reality is difficult to accept, and therefore it cannot resolve the real urban problems. Cullen entered into this ongoing classic debate about Townscape with his *Townscape*, and it has picked up intensity in recent scholarship. He has been placed on both sides of it, yet, as one writer discerned, Cullen has introduced a third side, with peculiarly Cullenesque nuances—a shade that hovers between the real and the imagined, or the real and the absurd.

This far-ranging debate is encapsulated through the interpretively rich episode of Cullen's collaboration with Peter and Alison Smithson. Perhaps it takes on special significance because of the heavy weight of the famed architectural theorist and most vocal critic of Townscape Reyner Banham (with whom Cullen had the great displeasure of working at the AR), who declared this collaboration to be the end of the brutalist architectural era. Banham coined and promoted the term "brutalism" for an architectural doctrine describing the use of *bèton brut* (exposed concrete), whose primary proponents were the Smithsons. Cullen created the drawings used by the Smithsons to promote their famed Economist building in London (designed 1962 through 1964). Disappointed with the Smithsons' subscription to two concepts of Townscape—the attention to context and the privileging of space over object in "siting" a building, which Banham considered a romantic and regressive idea—Banham chalked up their collaboration with Cullen to complicity with the establishment. He wrote, "Symbolically, the gap between the

Brutalists and the Picturesque Townscape movement may be said to close in 1962, when the Smithsons employed Gordon Cullen, the greatest of the *Architectural Review*'s 'Townscape' draughtsmen[,] to prepare the perspectives of their Economist building."[486] Alas, this was the only time that Banham, who mostly addressed his criticism of Townscape to Pevsner, mentioned Cullen's name.

Cullen confirmed the status of an equal collaborator and a representative of the establishment assigned to him by Banham's reproach of the Smithsons with his subsequent favorable review of the Economist project for *The Review*, written at the request of Richards, the editor.[487] [Figure 5.14] Of course, neither Cullen's essay nor his drawings of the building for the Smithsons dealt the fatal blow to brutalism (in their defense, the Smithsons argued for the consistency of their siting approach). Cullen's position at a symbolic juncture of an epochal era elevates the draftsman to the official position of the spokesman for Townscape—and it also could be taken as an implicit acknowledgment of the role of illustrations, and illustrators in general, in shaping ideas, rather than merely representing them. Yet the end of brutalism, an era which Banham posited and many modernists considered an alternative to both modernism and to the picturesqueness of Townscape, also renders Cullen a romantic, and brings us back to the "realistic-romantic" debate.

But several scholars who have made *Townscape* their primary study clearly disagree over its attitude toward romanticism. Erdem Erten is the first critic to have attributed the success of *Townscape* to its exclusion of ideological references to neo-romanticism (originally in *The*

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[486] Reyner Banham, *The New Brutalism: Ethics or Aesthetics* (London: Architectural Press, 1966), 75.

[487] Gordon Cullen, "The 'Economist' Buildings, St. James's," *Architectural Review*, 137, no. 816 (February, 1965): 114–24. The Smithsons also worked with Cullen on the Cherry Garden Pier project in London, in 1972. Alison and Peter Smithson, *The Charged Void—Architecture* (New York: Monacelli Press, 2001).

Review), and to have acknowledged *Townscape*'s autonomy of thought and appeal to contemporary thought regarding psychology and perception. Other critics have argued to the contrary. Macarthur and Aitchison, as noted earlier, have contended that in fact it added the neo-romantic dimension, and thus skewed the perception of the original Townscape campaign.[488]

Most others scholars, however, drag Cullen to the romantic side of the discourse through the same picturesque slant as *The Review*. For example, in his exploration of the architectural idea of the street, the sociologist and critic of architecture Robert Gutman placed Cullen in the nostalgic romantic camp that breeds absurdity with regard to the reality of modern public life in the absence of the close-knit community, maintaining that "conditions of contemporary life do not support the feelings [Cullen's] architecture is intended to illicit."[489] He added that people (and tourists) appreciate these community-like sentiments that Cullen's pictures arouse, but that is because we are culturally conditioned to recover some of these feelings we associate with close community and public life in streets. Yet Cullen has also gained the status of a realist in this debate, assigned by the same critic that attacked Townscape for its superficiality. In his more recent critique, Joseph Rykwert singled out Cullen when he discussed the Townscape "movement" as a campaign that, in fact, "accepted the bipartisan political realities of postwar Britain, and did not quibble with the architecture of their time." In a political sense, Rykwert argued, *this was the reality*, and he then went on to reiterate his early critique, reproving *Townscape* for overlooking social and economic facts.[490]

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[488] Macarthur and Aitchison, "Pevsner's Townscape," 29.

[489] Robert Gutman, "The Street Generation," in *On Streets*, ed. Stanford Anderson (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1978), 259.

[490] Joseph Rykwert, *The Seduction of Place: The History and Future of the City* (New York: Vintage Books, 2000), 148–49.

Again, Rykwert seems to nail things down. Yet Timothy Hyde's comments in relation to the same Economist project add a new dimension to the debate. Whereas Banham considered Cullen's romanticism to have influenced the Smithsons, almost five decades later Hyde described Cullen as someone whose drawings—along with the Smithsons' plans—shrewdly oscillated between the real and the surreal, or absurd.[491] He argued that the drawing of the inside of the Banking Hall, for instance, brought out the complex dialectics at which the Smithsons aimed—a mix that reinforced the mutual existence of the proper and the absurd. For Hyde, the real-absurd dialectic was the reality with which Cullen had engaged. The crucial point, however, was that Cullen himself infused his work with his own complex sensibility of real and imagined, proper and absurd, as his 1934 essay "Infernalismus" made plainly evident (see "Cartoons and Advertising," in chapter 2).

It is this susceptibility to multiple interpretations that Cullen's work displayed all along. Not only did it enable him to work across theoretical camps, it also allowed his work to be employed by architects of all schools. Moreover, it is a sensibility that made him a perfect graphic and product designer within postwar consumer culture, in which he had to fulfill the contradictory consumer demands of comfort and genuineness, on the one hand, and gratification and deceit, on the other. In this task, he proved masterful.

Perhaps the alignment of Cullen with the varied forms of "strolling"—surrealist promenades, Baudelairean *flâneur*, and psychogeography of the Situationists' *dérive*—is also a testament not only to his promotion of the experience of the city through walking but also to his suspension between the real and imagined. Furthermore, it demonstrates, once more, the

[491] Hyde, "Bowlers Hat," 41. Hyde compared Cullen's drawings with a 1964 photo by Michael Carapetian and a film still from Michelangelo Antonioni's *Blow-Up* (1966) to illustrate his discussion of the real and the absurd in architecture.

appropriation of his work to support seemingly similar, but in fact dissimilar, ideas.[492] The three forms of walking are foregrounded in very different philosophies and are undertaken in search of different goals. The surrealist promenade refers to the age-old problem of illusion versus reality, which was lucidly captured in René Magritte's painting *The Promenades of Euclid* (1955). Baudelaire's *flâneur* is the modern man who strolls urban streets in voyeuristic manner, observant and aloof. The Situationists' *dérive* (or drift) led to the formation of a field in geography called psychogeography and to a global practice by citizen groups today who are promoting a deeper psychological connection with the city.

In concluding this discussion of Cullen's real or perceived "place" in the above three broad discourses of the city—embodied-disembodied, elitist-popular-ordinary, real-romantic-absurd—the impossibility of neatly categorizing him shows that understanding his work remains a process entangled in contradictions, which in part stem from the flexibility of a mostly pictorial work and, in part, from his disengagement from the conversation, preferring to remain in the shadow of his pictures. It also demonstrates that Cullen's influence has become ever more far-reaching, gaining currency in numerous disciplines and movements concerned with the city, as scholars and practitioners appropriate and weigh in on his legacy. His legacy is not found only in intellectual discourses, however. In fact, it finds its most natural place in the literature of visual representation.

[492] Bob Jarvis uses all three characterizations. Jarvis, "Townscape Revisited," 22. Matthew Hynam compares Cullen's gaze with that of Baudelaire's or Walter Benjamin's *flâneur*. Matthew Hynam, "Filmic Space: Developing a Palette of Transitions for Urban Designers," 15, www.matthewhynam.co.uk/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2011/10/Filmic-Space-060411.pdf (accessed May 2013). Richard Williams compares Cullen's vision with Breton's promenades and Baudelair's *flâneur*. Williams, *The Anxious City*, 39–40.

A Legacy of Visual Representation in Print and in Word

Cullen's drawings solidified the embedded intelligence of "townscaping" as a perspective for creating spectacular and humanized environments—not unlike the Smithsons and, a few years earlier, the modernist American architect Paul Rudolph who typically drew with hard edges and repetitive, closely drawn lines in ink, appropriating Cullen's softly inscribed pencil lines to project the human quality of the space around project such as his Blue Cross/Blue Shield building in Boston (designed 1956 through 1960). According to Timothy M. Rohan, Paul Rudolph had mentioned Cullen in an AIA talk, and in his critique of Rudolph's work for *Architectural Forum*, he wrote, "Though not as gracefully executed as Cullen's drawing, Rudolph's image is precise in its particulars and indicates a similar desire to provide information about a real place."[493]

Thus, Cullen's techniques could be copied to a degree, and they were integrated into others' projects specifically for their capacity to project a human space (regardless of the true condition or nature of the project). This talent is one reason Cullen is so frequently cited in literature on visual representation, and not only on architectural illustration. Citations of Cullen range from drawing books aimed at designers of all walks—architects, landscape architects, urban designers, graphic designers, and typographers—from those directed at individuals with the urge to sketch.

Cullen's drawings are also featured in books both of theory and of practical drawing display a wide range of representational genres—from basic architectural drafting manuals to freehand sketching, design concept drawings, and digital rendering. For example, Cullen is featured in the frontispiece of the fourth edition of Fraser Reekie's classic textbook, *Reekie's*

[493] Timothy M. Rohan, "Challenging the Curtain Wall: Paul Rudolph's Blue Cross/Blue Shield Building," *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians* 66, no. 1 (March 2007): 91.

Architectural Drawing (1996), which Reekie dedicated to Cullen two years after Cullen's death. Reekie used a 1988 sketch by Cullen, a perspective drawing of his design for the Greenwich Peninsula project—a typical Cullenesque line drawing, made with a fiber-tip pen, a wax-oil crayon, and a chinograph pencil on tracing paper—to illustrate his idea that "a drawing need not be laborious in order to convey the designer's message powerfully." [494] This assertion implied that a freehand line drawing does not have to be complicated to be effective. Ironically, Cullen's is the only freehand drawing in the book, which otherwise addresses hardline drafting. In fact, Reekie's commentary precisely pins down the significance of Cullen's representation, one that goes beyond its highly legible and "humanized" quality to an entirely new mode of drawing—the liberation of architectural drawings from traditional laborious routines.

The Freehand Landscape Drawing Liberation

Cullen produced a milestone in the liberation of architectural representation from the nineteenth-century laborious drafting of the Beaux-Arts tradition. The history of this development began in the interwar period and paralleled the growth of modern painting, as well as discoveries concerning visual stimuli in visual psychology. Le Corbusier, Ludwig Mies van der Rohe, and other instructors at the Bauhaus and other modern experimental design schools laid the groundwork for this liberation. They encouraged students to make hundreds of quick sketches during the design process. While Le Corbusier and his peers moved architectural drawings before the Second World War into the modern age using freehand sketches as a design tool, Cullen fit it to the postwar age. He appropriated architectural representation for the visual field of landscape by embracing not only the modernist drawing techniques but also the latest postwar technology of the camera and the sensibilities of animated cartoons and advertising.

[494] Fraser Reekie, *Reekie's Architectural Drawing*, 4th ed., rev. by Tony McCarthy (New York: Halsted Press, 1996), xiv (first ed. published in 1946, as *Draughtsmanship*).

Although he was not alone in undertaking this process, he was the most notable contributor to postwar landscape and urban representation.

Appearing at a critical juncture between the emergence of the urban design discipline of the 1950s and the expansion of landscape design to urban projects, Cullen's imagery filled up a huge gap as well as bridging the gap between architecture and landscape. He reinvented landscape representation. The traditional Reptonian landscape perspective, often in a before-and-after pair (generally useless in architecture), that Cullen started to alter in the drawings for Tunnard's modern garden book and continued to modify for the postwar city of Townscape was a much-needed change in landscape representation and in the emerging field of urban design.

Urban design was a field in which architecture and landscape architecture converged. For their modern creations, modernist landscape architects such as Dan Kiley and Garrett Eckbo the axon borrowed from modern architecture, yet the axon could not fully account for such landscape design.[495] The axonometric technique was too rational for a discipline engaged in a largely experiential phenomenon, wherein the observer was inside and surrounded by space often so vast that an axon could not capture it. Eckbo's residential landscape axon was shown from a bird's-eye view, a position inconsistent with the observer's feel of being inside the space. It also required measurements and accurate dimensions, which were less suitable in landscape (where vision is privileged over structure). While his contemporaries were simply borrowing ideas that did not advance the field, Cullen offered a new perspective within the landscape tradition. His innovations were hungrily seized by landscape architects who had long been deprived of new tools, as well as by urban designers itching to reshape the city.

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[495] See Garrett Eckbo, *Landscape for Living* (n.p.: F. W. Dodge, 1950); Dan Kiley, *Dan Kiley: The Complete Works of America's Master Landscape Architect*, ed. Jane Amidon (Boston: Little, Brown, 1999).

Cullen presented a new generation of practitioners, students, and educators a salient way forward using the latest postwar technology. The affordable camera and low-cost prints left reality and details to the photograph. Generated from a photograph or sketched on the street, the drawing no longer needed to be a rigid and precise realistic depiction; it could relax and become simultaneously personal and analytical, extracting key details of the composition. Cullen freed drawing to capture the exuberance of the creative process. With an image maker like Cullen to serve as a model, students could escape hunching over a drawing board; the freehand line flaunted the dexterity of the hand—delicate or overpowering, agile or steady, and always imprecise, the line became a personal signature of its maker. It displayed the human touch and promoted both self and design exploration.

Cullen's blend of high- and low-pictorial genres, in particular, greatly appealed to the postwar generation. For a cohort whose view of the world was shaped by comic books, film, and animated television cartoons from Walt Disney, his mix of traditional architecture and contemporary cartoonish animation techniques joined the landscape view with the postwar zeitgeist. Cullen spoke the same language as his successors' heroes, a sentiment echoed by the landscape architect Jim Richards in *Freehand Drawing & Discovery* in describing his attraction to Cullen's work. Growing up in the golden age of *Mad Magazine*, enamored of Ronald Searle's cartoons and fantastic cityscape drawings in *Paris Sketchbook*, and devoted to the TV satire Mort Drucker, among others, Richards immediately connected with Cullen.[496]

By mixing the severe lines of technical drafting with the legibility and affability of children's comic books, Cullen simplified drawing, thereby encouraging others to draw. As Richards put it, "It felt like 'I can do that!'" Only to discover in the process that "it's harder than

[496] Richards, *Freehand Drawing & Discovery*, 8.

I thought."[497] [Figure 5.15] Although it might have looked effortless, the simplicity that Cullen's drawing attained by casting aside unnecessary details proved difficult to accomplish without much training (something that his followers learned through hard practice). But Cullen wanted people to try and, he hoped, in the process to discover and see things anew, while developing their own personal drawing styles.

Aside from making his illustrations look easy, he also made them look fun to create and fun to imagine inhabiting. As a student in the 1970s, the Argentinian Jorge Royan attempted to emulate the spirit of Cullen's drawings. "Life flowed intensely from those small monochrome streets and shadows and figures," wrote Royan. "At GC sketches, it was St Patrick's parade every day. You wanted to sit 'al fresco' near that fish shop and feel the breeze."[498] Royan is now a member of the Urban Sketchers World Network, a group that represents one arm of a freehand-sketching renaissance. This rebirth of freehand sketching coincided with the advent of digital drawing programs. Such a concurrence implies not a rejection of the computer but rather the enjoyment of the freedom to push freehand drawings into a new phase of evolution by combining old tools with the new.

Cullen's modernized perspective forms an essential component of landscape architectural and urban design representation to this day. As numerous examples of print and digital literature, as well as oral accounts, reveal, Cullen's influence is evident through the bountiful offspring that now pervade the digital-visual culture.

[497] James Richards, phone interview with the author, June 12, 2013.

[498] Jorge Royan, e-mail correspondence with the author, June 14, 2013.

Cullen in the Age of Digital Simulation

Anticipating the shift from hand-drawn sketches to computer drawings, Cullen attempted to turn his "lyrical concepts" into codes for the computer age, developing a system in the form of notations accompanied by symbols. Cullen meant it "to be a model for practice[,] that soon the computer will produce the real thing. And the end product of all is not simply efficiency, speed or economy. It is *passion*" (emphasis added).[499] Unfortunately, Cullen's notational system would fail (see "The Post-*Townscape* Quandary," in chapter 4).

Although Cullen's computer-model notation system failed, his focus on immersive environments through serial vision, as well as the programmed variability of his Townscape methodology, proved prescient for a digital age. The predigital animated and immersive environments that Cullen created through his images have fully materialized in a visual world now dominated by computers. Today, popular games and design programs offer designers and laypeople alike what Cullen had offered through print media since the mid-1940s—a filmic, spatial experience in motion or a streamlined serial vision. His serial vision has been prolifically reproduced and emulated. The imagined sequence of eight individually framed views—the first image in his book and one of two that Cullen used for the softcover edition—is the single most reprinted and circulated of his drawings in books, articles, and websites (e.g., Google Images, Flicker, Pinterest, and Tumblr) that store images or create collages.[500] [Figure 5.16]

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[499] Cullen, "Notations," 21.

[500] Examples of serial vision in books include Lang and Moleski, *Functionalism Revisited*, 271; Brian Edwards, *Understanding Architecture through Drawing*, (London: E & FN Spon, 1994), 62–63; and Transick, *Finding Lost Space*, 121–22. Examples of serial visions on the Web include Blake Roberts, "Serial Vision: The Dynamic Downtown," *Downtowns Plus* (blog), April 17, 2012, www.downtownsplus.com/blogs/downtowns-plus/serial-vision-dynamic-downtown (accessed August 2013); and "034 Serial Vision, Surprise and Closure," *Recivilization: A Little Primer on Urban Design* (blog), August 20, 2012, http://recivilization.net/UrbanDesignPrimer/034serialvisionsurpriseclosure.php (accessed May 2013).

The Internet contains dozens of websites and blogs by individuals and informal social sketching groups who have found Cullen's serial vision to be a useful device for visualizing and learning about their towns through "walk-throughs" and sketching. The sketching teams of Yellowknife, California, and the urban sketcher group of Seattle, Washington, for example, recently posted their serial vision versions in their online blogs. The Yellowknife post reads, "Our sketching team gathers to capture streets and people," and directs readers to Cullen's "method of serial vision, place (here and there), content (this and that) and functional tradition."[501] Last May, their counterparts visiting Barcelona for the Fourth International Urban Sketchers Symposium distributed a publication, *Sketchers* (no. 2), which included an article encouraging their followers to study Cullen's book closely for its beauty, approach, and technique. Moreover, the storyboard-like sequence of framed stills that Cullen shaped into his famed serial vision technique can now be readily experienced in a computer or video game in more than two dimensions.

This way of seeing was first encapsulated in the beautifully rendered 3-D mystery simulation video game *Myst* (1993), a scenographic journey in a fantastic landscape.[502] The player of *Myst* was invited to click sequentially on viewing points to advance to her destination. It has since been superseded by games in the *SimCity* series, followed by increasingly realistic 3-D computer and video animation games, such as the *Bioshock* and *Mass Effect* franchises, as well as *Journey*—a 2012 award-winning game with no dialogue, which emphasized the process

[501] Sketchyellowknife, "Blog Preview," *Urban Design Yellowknife* (blog), December 1, 2010, http://sketchyellowknife.blogspot.com (Accessed June 2013). Also see Frank Ching, "Serial Vision," *Seattle Urban Sketchers* (blog), January 21, 2013, http://seattle.urbansketchers.org/2013/01/serial-vision.html (accessed June 2013), and Josa, "Biblioteca/Lybrary: The Concise Townscape."

[502] *Myst: The Surrealistic Adventure That Will Become Your World* (RedOrb Entertainment, Cyan Productions, 1993), PC video game.

of journeying in pedestrian-like fashion through many environments as the game's objective. [Figure 5.17] As well, Cullen's vision can be seen in computer-generated imagery (CGI) programs, first developed at Bell Telephone Laboratories in the 1960s and later used for cartoon animation, perhaps most familiar today in Pixar's successful line of films. Innovations in architectural design simulation programs have kept pace with this development: the design programs' sophistication grew from Maya to Rhino, and to Revit and beyond.

In historical research, too, scholarly digital reconstructions are not unlike Cullen in attempting to produce affective environments. They offer people a glimpse into the past with the accuracy of experts on architecture, engineering, and sociology, expanding beyond vision to acoustics, kinetics, and in time perhaps smell as well. The Digital Roman Forum and Rome Reborn project created at the UCLA's Cultural Virtual Lab in the 1990s and, similarly, the Ancient Rome 3-D Gallery Layer of Google Earth provide such opportunities.[503] The line separating the experience of the real world from its experience through these digital simulation products—games, design, scholarship—is steadily diminishing as, in the words of Baudrillard, they are turning "hyperreal."

The prime spot Cullen holds on the continuum from hand drawing to multidimensional modeling is also visible in recent scholarship on representation. The argument that has been made repeatedly in the recent past is that hand drawing is still essential for design thinking, but now has to occur alongside sophisticated software to create two-dimensional visuals, three-dimensional animations, and even virtual experiences of city environment. In her recent book, *Drawing for Urban Design* (2011), Lorraine Farrelly placed Cullen in the front seat together

[503] Diane Favro, "Se non è vero, è ben trovato (If Not True, It Is Well Conceived): Digital Immersive Reconstructions of Historical Environments," *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians* 71, no. 3 (September 2012): 273–75.

with a dozen renowned architects and artists as she chronicles urban representation from the pre-Renaissance multipoint perspectival painting of Ambroggio Lorenzetti, *Allegory of Good Government* (1338–40), and Piranesi's *Carceri* series (1761), to Rhino and Maya 3-D digital modeling programs, and to Google Earth imaging.[504] [Figure 5.18]

Farrelly discussed Cullen's serial vision after Guy Debord's *dérive* and Kevin Lynch's city image diagrams, as she stressed both the subjectivity of the sequencing of the drawings and the importance of the accompanying plan to indicate the location of the views. Farrelly is also one of a handful to highlight Cullen's use of photography to extract the line drawing.[505] She closed the book with a quote by Cullen: "If in the end of it all, the city appears dull, uninteresting and soulless, then it is not fulfilling itself. It had failed, the fire has been laid but nobody has put a match to it."[506] Farrelly ultimately joins Cullen in implying that the ultimate test is found at the point where the function of drawing as a design tool of the city ends and where people inhabit the created spaces.

Serial vision has also proven useful in the design of websites, not just their content. David Benyon of the Human Computer Interaction Centre in Napier University in Edinburgh takes advantage of knowledge of urban space design to improve user's navigation of websites.[507] His analogy between physical space and digital information space led him to Cullen. Benyon developed a theory that applies Cullen's concepts of perception in motion—a sense of location,

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[504] Lorraine Farrelly, *Drawing for Urban Design* (London: Laurence King, 2011), 26.

[505] Ibid., 45–46. Taking the method and building on Farrelly, James Richards gives the example of a sketch over a digital image, as he comments on Cullen's adaptability to/adoption of new technology. See James Richards, "Capturing the Idea," chapter 7 of *Freehand Drawing & Discovery*, 170-203.

[506] Farrelly, *Drawing for Urban Design*, 181.

[507] Benyon, "Navigating Information Space," 16, 18.

progress (i.e., "hereness and thereness"), legibility, and arrival—to the perceptual dynamic of a website map that help users understand the "distance" and direction of the other pages on a site. "By looking to theories of physical space design that emphasise ease of movement and naturalness of interaction, such as Gordon Cullen," Benyon wrote, "the experience of Web site navigation can be much more pleasurable and rewarding."[508] The usefulness and sense of pleasure projected by Cullen's work come across in this digital application and at theoretical and methodological levels (not unlike other wayfinding design literature in the field of graphic design that also used Cullen's work).[509] Once more, as this example shows, Cullen's graphic work is as pertinent in physical space as in digital space. His work has therefore transitioned easily to the new medium, retaining its expediency and gaining value through digital reproduction.

Cullen's emphasis on user interactivity, with which he encoded his book, is likewise an intrinsic component of digital technology. Digital production is collaborative in nature, and results in multiple authorships. Cullen's bricolage operation is inherent to the workings of digital technology. This phenomenon is apparent from the pervasive mode of executing a simple search using the World Wide Web, followed by a simple "cut-and-paste" to create one's own multiauthored design or website (mostly uncredited).[510] Nowadays, scavengers' and bricoleurs' websites, blogs, and Google images have become an abundant source of images for new creations. In one such creative act, even the cover of Cullen's *The Concise Townscape* was given

[508] Ibid., 22.

[509] Gouveia et al. "Letters and Cities," 339.

[510] Rob Annable, blog, "New Small Cullen," *The Journal of an Architect* (blog), February 21, 2011, http://no2self.net/page/2/ (accessed July 2013); Laura Minca, "Montage and Narrative References," *MARCH *Inbetween* (blog), June 4, 2012, http://lauraminca.wordpress.com/2012/06/04/montage-and-narrative-references/ (accessed July 2, 2013).

a makeover by Sandra G. and Orquidea C. in their blog post for their Re-cover Project.[511] [Figure 5.19] They montaged Cullen's name and book title over a photograph of a street reflection in an Amsterdam H&M shopping window. In an act reminiscent of Cullen's idea of indoor-outdoor spatial dynamics, the image displays multifaceted depths—flat planes, three-dimensional mannequin, and deep street perspective—as well as views forward and backward: the street reflection on the window to the back and the "see-through" into the window display to the front, with the window acting as a veil in between.[512] [Figure 5.20] Also in line with Cullen's color palette, the image has red and white colors imposed over a range of grays. To explain their choice of image, they added a quote from Cullen's essay "Outdoor Publicity" (1947): "One contribution to modern townscape, startlingly conspicuous everywhere you look, but almost entirely ignored by the town planner, is street publicity. . . . And yet of all things, this is the most characteristic, and, potentially, the most valuable, contribution of the 20th century to urban scenery."[513] The bloggers' collaged image is as pertinent as their montage act in itself. They brought together in this visually seductive makeover for his *Townscape* cover Cullen's attention to the street, to publicity, to advertising, and to consumerism.

The Re-Cover project thus encapsulates the Cullenesque effect: Cullen's book artifact, his message, his modus operandi, and his imagery all work in unison, inviting imitation through creativity and reappropriation in similar acts.

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[511] Sandra G. and Orquidea C., "Re-cover nr. 19," *Re-cover Project* (blog), November 15, 2011, http://re-coverproject.blogspot.com/2008_11_01_archive.html (accessed March 2013).

[512] This idea of indoor–outdoor spatial exchange recalls Cullen's favorite concept of "indoor landscape and outdoor room" (see "The Hypertext," in chapter 4), as well as his 1976 "White Room" drawing of the Biot series, which he created using a mirror in his bed room apartment to reflect the urban street through the back window, while looking through the window in front to the countryside. [Figure 5.20]

[513] Sandra G. and Orquidea C., "Re-cover nr. 19."

Conclusion

Cullen's print media work continues to endure through the digital age. The baby boomer generation of educators who were students in the 1960s and the 1970s developed a special connection with Cullen's drawings, and passed on their insights to their students of so-called generation X, some of whom are already teaching generation Y. A number of landscape architecture and urban design educators, such as Jacqueline Bowring and Neil Challenger, two professors at Lincoln University, New Zealand, write of their use of the serial vision technique to teach, study, and represent the city, promoting it in personal websites and blogs.[514] And as in the worldwide network of Urban Sketchers, it has been widely accepted into a sort of canon beyond the academic. Even when his work is uncredited, it is often the case that his graphic lessons and production modes continue to be absorbed successfully, to a point of saturation and naturalization.

In his centenary study of *The Review*, the architectural theorist Michael Spens commented that Cullen's highly innovative urban design articles, illustrated by his superb draftsmanship, "altered the whole manner in which the composition of the built environment was viewed."[515] This statement, as this chapter showed, is corroborated by the words and works of many of today's planners and landscape architects in leading professional and academic

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[514] Neil Challenger and Jacqueline Bowring, "Landscape Graphics," in *Representing Landscapes: A Visual Collection of Landscape Architectural Drawings*, ed. Nadia Amoroso (New York: Routledge, 2012), 55–62, 60; J. R. Wasserman, "Visualizing Change: Consensus or Compromise? The 'Art of Relationships' in Digital Media: Gordon Cullen, and Contemporary 3-D Animation, paper presented CELA 2007, meeting of the Council of Educators in Landscape Architecture, Pennsylvania State University, University Park, Pa., August 14–19;; Alison Dutoit, "Looking as Inquiry: Drawing the Implied Urban Realm," in *Drawing/Thinking: Confronting an Electronic Age*, ed. Marc Treib (New York: Taylor and Francis, 2008), 148–60.

[515] Michael Spens, "AR 100," in *The Recovery of the Modern: Architectural Review, 1980–1995: Key Text and Critique*, ed. Michael Spens (Oxford: Butterworth Architecture, 1996), 14.

positions. Peter Rees, Cullen's apprentice in the early 1970s, is today the chief planning director of the City of London. Recalling the lessons of his early training, Rees said: "Working with Gordon was my real education. He taught me to look at places rather than individual buildings, to think of the way that buildings come together—their positions, what goes on around them and in the between them."[516] Rees, who is now shaping the City of London in Cullen's image, is one of dozens who soaked up Cullen's message first hand. But Cullen's work is alive through countless offspring touched by his drawings (and text) throughout the world. These people have never seen or heard of Cullen the man, yet they have been magically drawn to his images, appropriating them for their own needs. Having laid the groundwork and meaning of free-floating images, Cullen etched himself into urban design history of visual consumer culture for posterity.

[516] Peter Rees, quoted in Demetrios Matheou, "Charioteer of the City," *Architects' Journal* 202 (July 6, 1995): 14.

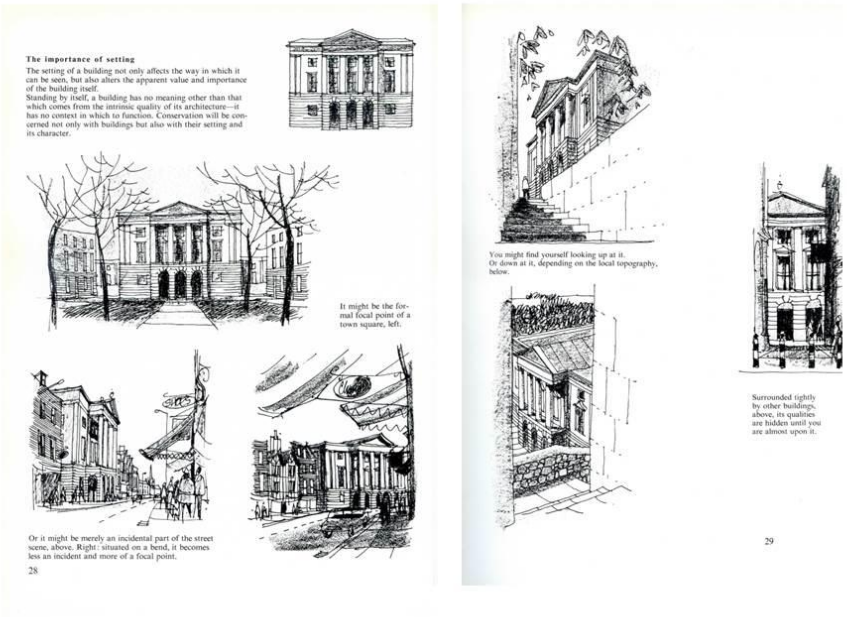

Figure 5.1. Roy Worskett, double-page spread from *The Character of Towns: An Approach to Conservation*, 1969.

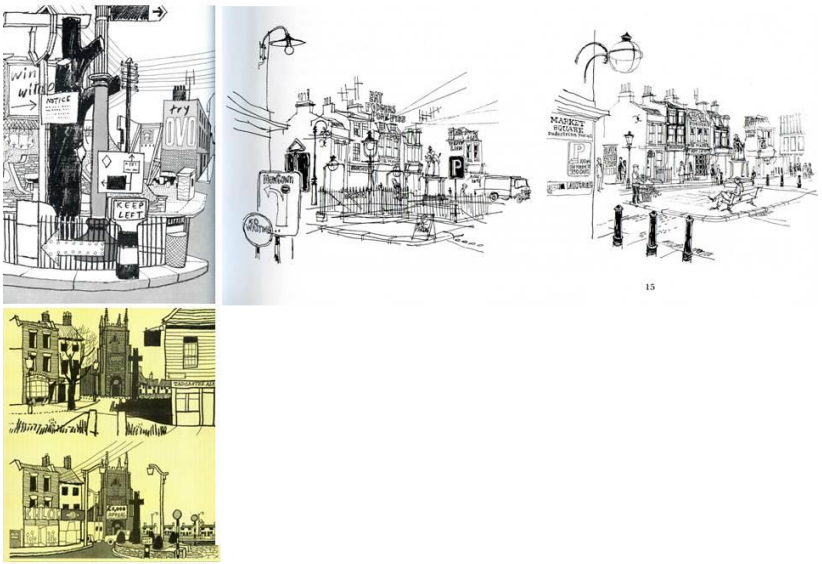

Figure 5.2. Gordon Cullen, drawings, in "Outrage," a special issue of *Architectural Review*, June 1955 (*upper and lower left*); David Knight, before-and-after drawings, in *People and Planning*, report of the G.B. Committee on Public Participation in Planning, 1969 (*upper right*).

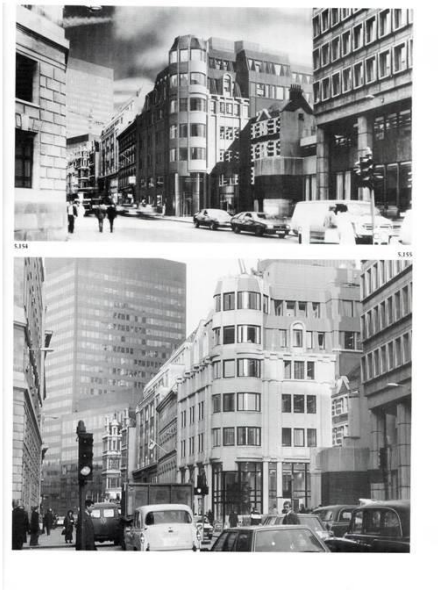

Figure 5.3. Anthony Tugnutt and Mark Robertson, “before” photomontage (*top*) and “after” photograph (*bottom*), Gracechurch Street project in London, page spread in *Making Townscape*, 1987.

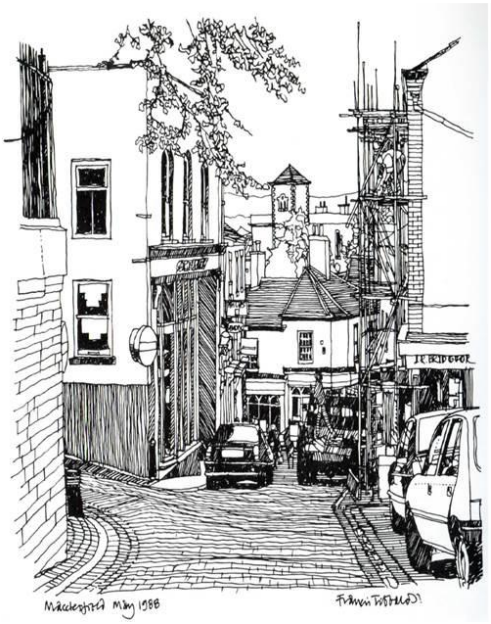

Figure 5.4. Francis Tibbalds, drawing, in *Making People-Friendly Towns*, 1992.

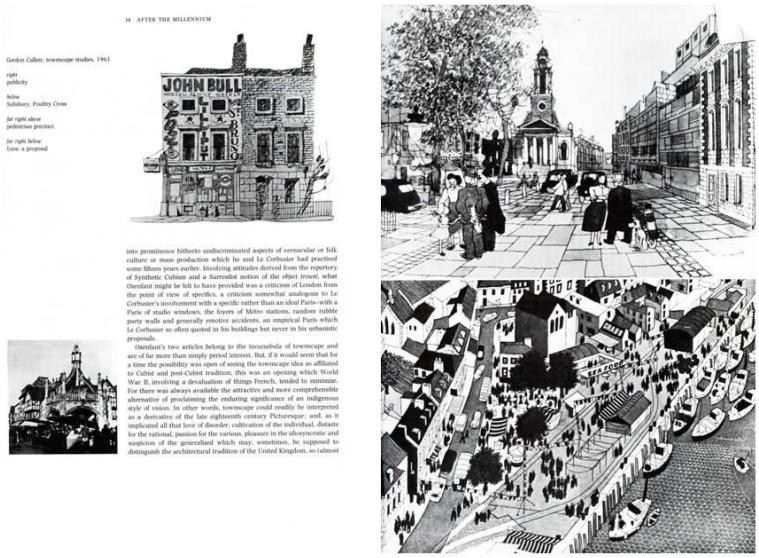

Figure 5.5. Gordon Cullen, illustrations, double-page spread from *Collage City*, by Colin Rowe and Fred Koetter, 1978.

Figure 5.6. Gordon Cullen, double-page spread from *Townscape*, 1961 (*top*); Colin Rowe and Fred Koetter, double-page spread from *Collage City*, 1978 (*bottom*).

Figure 5.7. Gordon Cullen, drawings from "Britain: The Crust is Cracking," by Gilbert Burck, *Fortune*, June 1957. From Cullen's archive.

Figure 5.8. Gordon Cullen, drawings with captions by Ian Nairn from "Downtown Is for People," Jane Jacobs, *Fortune*, April 1958. From Cullen's archive.

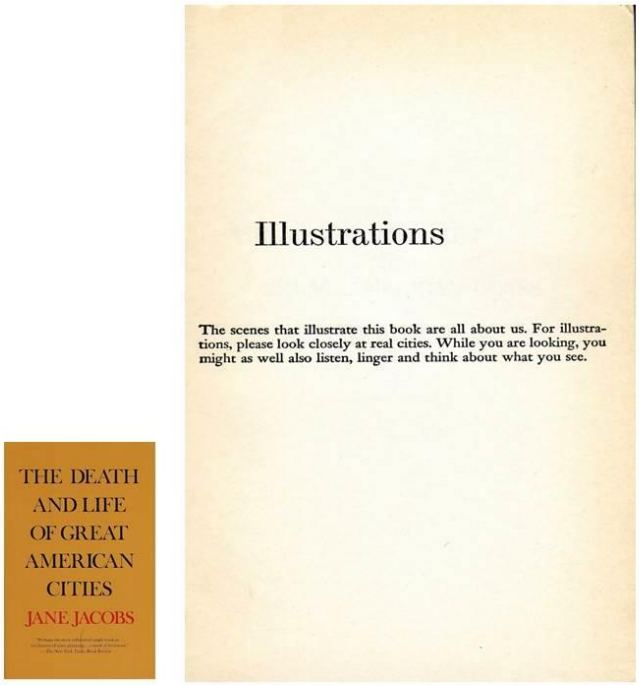

Figure 5.9. Jane Jacobs, list of illustrations, *The Death and Life of Great American Cities*, 1961.

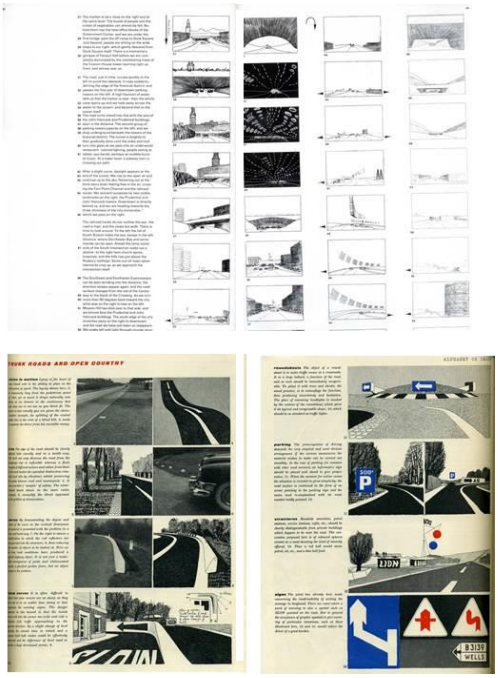

Figure 5.10. Kevin Lynch, Donald Appleyard and John R. Myer, double-page spread from *The View from the Road*, 1964 (*top*); Gordon Cullen, two page spreads from "Alphabet or Image," *Architectural Review*, October 1956 (*bottom*).

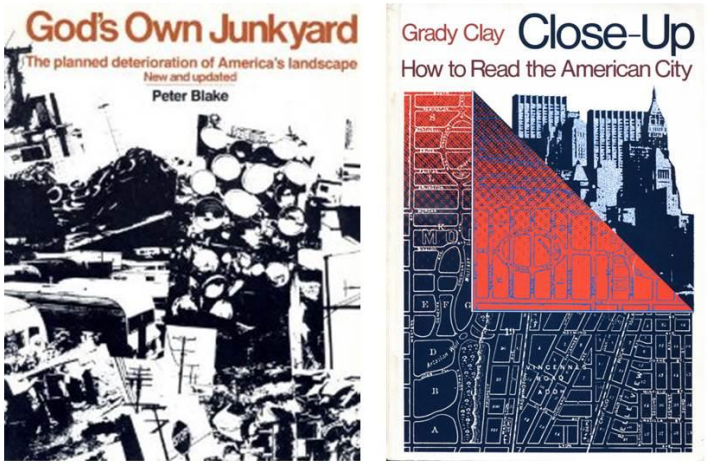

Figure 5.11. Two book covers Peter Blake, *God's Own Junkyard*, 1964 (*left*), Grady Clay, *Close-Up: How to Read the American City*, 1973 (*right*).

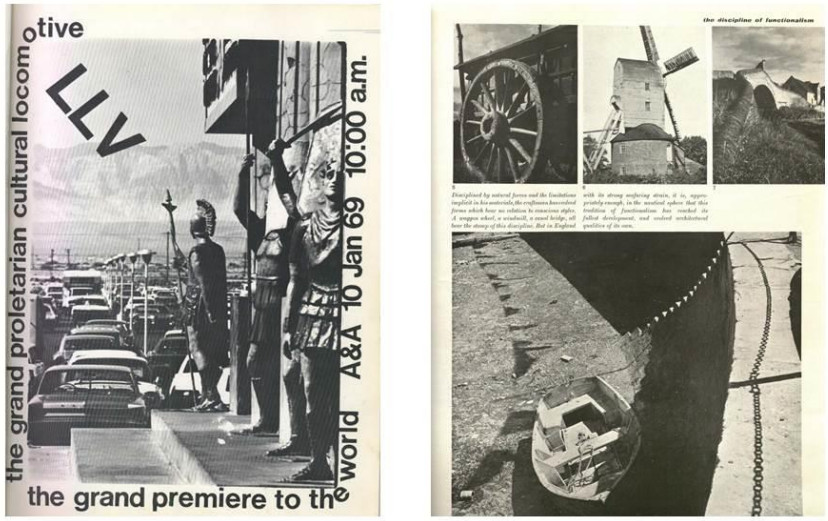

Figure 5.12. Robert Venturi, Denise Scott Brown, and Steven Izenour, cover of *Learning from Las Vegas*, 1972, (*left*); J. M. Richards, ed., page spread from "The Functional Tradition," *Architectural Review*, January 1950 (*right*).

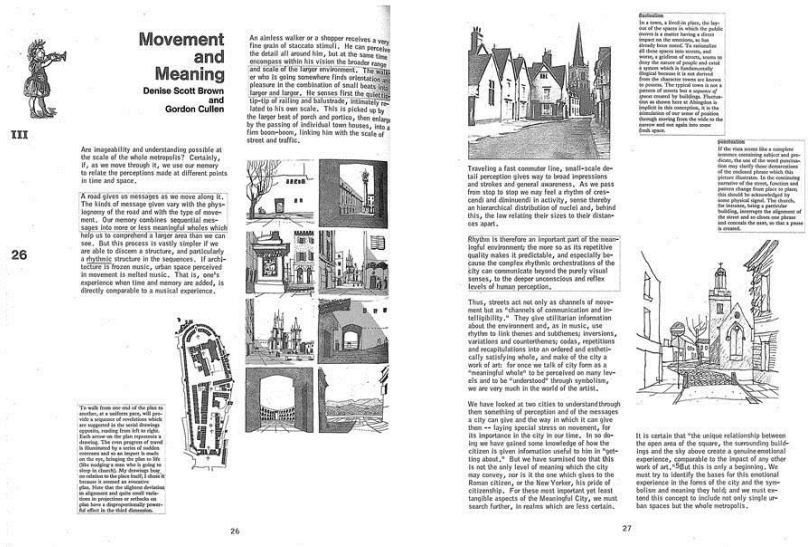

Figure 5.13. Denise Scott Brown and Gordon Cullen, double-page spread from "Movement and Meanings," *Connection,* 1967. Cullen provided the illustrations and boxed text; Scott Brown, the running text.

Figure 5.14. Gordon Cullen, opening two pages, "The 'Economist' Buildings, St. James's," *Architectural Review*, February 1965.

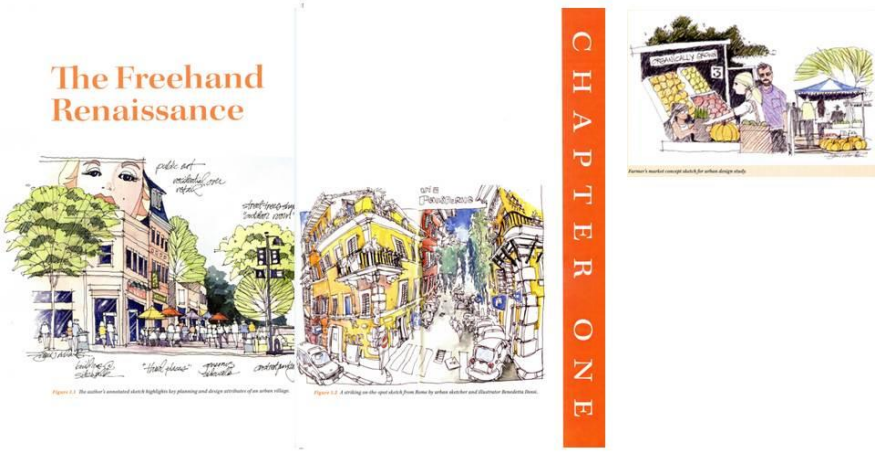

Figure 5.15. James Richards, double-page spread and drawings from *Freehand Drawing & Discovery*, 2013 (*left*), with frontispiece drawn by Gordon Cullen (*right*). Courtesy of James Richards.

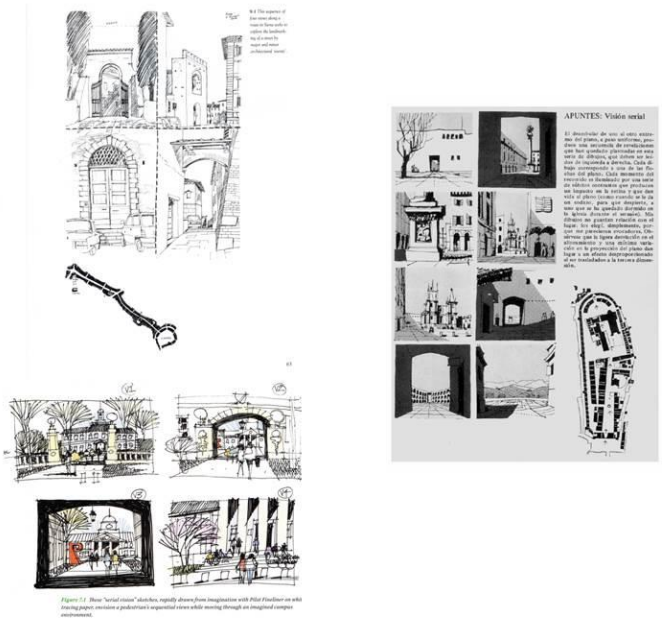

Figure 5.16. Three recent examples of serial vision. Gordon Cullen, drawings reprinted in *Functionalism Revisited*, by Jon Lang and Walter Molesky, 2010 (*right*); Brian W. Edwards, drawings in *Understanding Architecture through Drawing*, 1994 (*upper left*); and James Richards, drawings in *Freehand Drawing & Discovery*, 2013 (*lower left*).

Figure 5.17. Plan of Myst Island (*right*) and two screenshots (*left*) from the 3-D video game *Myst*, 1993. The screenshot sequence shows an advance toward the island's library in the background.

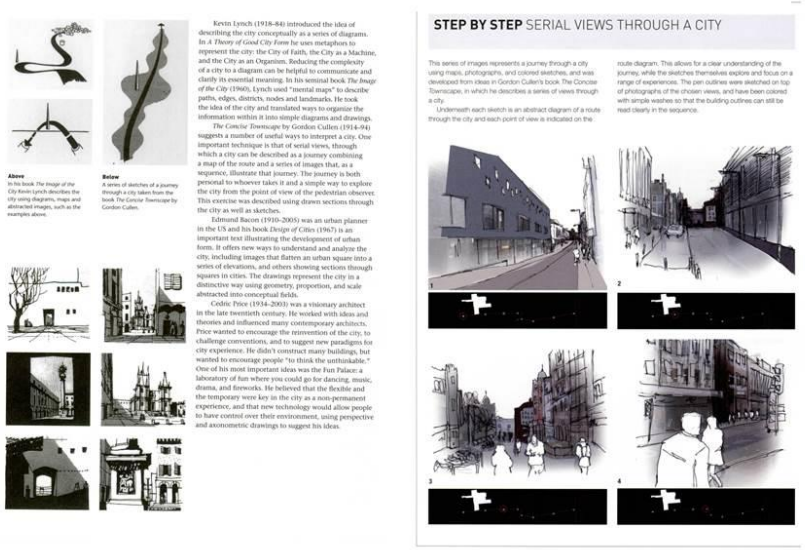

Figure 5.18. Lorraine Farrelly, two page spreads from *Drawing for Urban Design*, 2011.

Figure 5.19. Sandra G. and Orquidea C., a makeover to the cover of Cullen's *Townscape, Re-cover Project* (blog), 2011.

Figure 5.20. Gordon Cullen, "The White Room," Biot series, 1976. Cullen is seen (*right*) in the mirror preparing to take the photograph of the White Room (the dining room is reflected behind him, and the street view is visible through the window). In further preparation for the final drawing (*top middle*), he took a photograph of the White Room (bed) (*bottom, second from left*), made a preliminary sketch of the White Room (*bottom, third from left*), analyzed the spatial dynamics of the image (*top left*), and presented explanatory text and diagram on a page in a Biot school folder (*bottom left*). From Cullen's personal archive.

EPILOGUE: FROM TOWNSCAPE TO INFOSCAPE

By mapping the uniqueness in Cullen's mode of working and the ways that his townscaping influence continues to spread throughout cityscapes and virtualscapes, this study reveals the dynamic relationships between design representation, the contemporary city, and architectural authorship and audience. It therefore points to the need for further scholarship on the agency of design drawings, consumerist design strategies in urbanism, and the manufacturing of an architectural audience.

This study restores Cullen to the forefront of these three current discourses and redefines him not as urban designer or theorist but as product *imagineer* and marketer (be it of the city or otherwise). Cullen anticipated the requisites of today's digital design representation (e.g., 3-D simulation and animation), the global city (e.g., the construction of place identity and packaging of urban experience), and the nature of authorship and architectural audience (i.e., collaborative and multiplicity of publics)—and did so almost seven decades ago! Through his drawings, Cullen was profoundly instrumental in shaping the postwar discourse of architecture and, thereby, the physique of the postwar city. In contrast to the work and vision of his erudite colleagues—Nikolaus Pevsner, J. M. Richards, H. de C. Hastings, Ian Nairn, and others, who contributed their intellectual and polemical treatises—Cullen's representations continue to breathe and inspire design and designers.

By focusing on image making and the circulation of images, "Gordon Cullen and the 'Cut-and-Paste' Urban Landscape" cultivates analytical insight into contemporary architecture. It thus builds on recent theoretical writing that has made the agency of design representation—historically and today—their object of study. The works of Robin Evans and Alberto Pérez-

Gómez, for example, are central to this discussion. Both have shown the effective links between the properties and limits of specific drawing techniques and architectural design thinking in various historical times. This study also follows works that treat architecture as media; for example, the works of Kester Rattenbury and Beatriz Colomina, the latter having studied the mechanism of architectural publicity through experimental magazines of the 1960s (with Craig Buckley), and the work of Le Corbusier, among others. As well, Catherine de Smet has produced an illuminating body of work on the print media production of Le Corbusier. These expositions have greatly enriched architectural discourse. Yet, to bridge the gap between theory and practice, and to equip designers with new tactics for shaping the architecture and city of today, more studies of trades supportive of, but which many consider subordinate to, architecture are needed. For a similar reason and to devise new tactics, it is necessary to turn the spotlight away from the heroes (i.e., Le Corbusier) and redirect it onto and reassess controversial figures in the shadows.

In landscape architecture, too, although to a lesser extent, recent writing has probed the realm of landscape as vision and the agency of landscape representation—for instance, the works of Dianne Harris, D. Fairchild Ruggles, and Dorothée Imbert, as well as several contributors on the pages of "Landscape Architecture Core," a recent special issue of *Harvard Design Magazine*, notably Antoine Picon.[517] More scholarship is needed on landscape as media—landscape as image and information—and its influence in shaping the physical landscape. For a discipline born of landscape painting and gardening at a critical juncture—the birth of visual culture and consumerism and the emergence of landscape as an aesthetic commodity—the study of representation is all the more salient. Cullen's commitment to the visual field of landscape, or Townscape, and his reinvention of landscape representation in order to shape an entirely new

[517] Antoine Picon, "Substance and Culture II: The Material Culture of Landscape architecture." *Harvard Design Magazine*, no. 36 (2013): 124-29.

way of seeing outfitted the landscape profession for the postmodern age. Like the postwar landscape architects who embraced Cullen's eye-level vision for the postmodern city, the younger generation of landscape architects has the possibility of reinventing digital representation for the millennial city, now at the "i-level."

The second discourse this study joins is that of the contemporary city. While this study extracted itself from the context of urban design specifically to examine Cullen in the context of the history of image making—that is, of architecture "as media"—it is not without consequence for architecture and urbanism "as material." In fact, as this study shows, Cullen provides a salient lesson in the interrelatedness of physical and ethereal forms of the contemporary city of spectacle. The critic Stan Allen recently argued that in this age of information, to fully comprehend today's urban conditions one must understand the interplay of architecture as material and architecture as media, real and imagined, physical and affect: "architecture and urbanism always need a graphic apparatus to convert information into stable form"—information *is* form, not opposed to form.[518] Cullen belongs in this strategic zone. His images shaped information about the city, which in turn took concrete urban form. His marketing savvy led him to draw from advertising and theater arts to meld visual and emotional effect during the immediate post–Second World War consumer environment, precisely the prominent strategy that E. R. Somol, Dana Cuff, and Roger Sherman recently considered in their observations of the contemporary city.[519]

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[518] Stan Allen, "Urbanisms in the Plural: The Information Thread," in *Fast-Forward Urbanism: Rethinking Architecture's Engagement with the City*, ed. Dana Cuff and Roger Sherman (New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 2011), 39–47.

[519] E. R. Somol, "Urbanism without Architects," in *Points + Lines: Projects and Diagrams for the City*, ed. Stan Allen (New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 1999), 137–42; Dana Cuff and Roger Sherman, introduction to Cuff and Sherman, eds., *Fast-Forward Urbanism*, 26–27.

In fact, in the introduction to their book *Fast-Forward Urbanism*, Cuff and Sherman use the metaphor of play and gambits, or "legs," as reference points to urban design practice, a metaphor that Cullen conceived for *Townscape*, to structure their reader's experience of their book and conception of the city. Sherman's requirement for a commodity-based model of thinking that now gains currency is a close characterization of Cullen's postwar strategy. Sherman writes elsewhere in the volume, "There is growing agency for [a] model of thinking, . . . that recognizes that urbanism has at one level become a form of entertainment, wherein the architect-planner's role is not unlike the Disney imagineer, creating captivating—but also potentially genuine and interactive—forms of pleasure that employ market savvy to engage the politics of identity."[520] Sherman refers to these urban catalysts as "strange attractors" (and lists six strategies that achieve these conditions, each with its own tactics of deception and varied political and social effects).[521] However, Cullen's unpremeditated strategy does not conform specifically to any of Sherman's. As chapter 5 shows, Cullen's ideas were so adaptable that they were employed by many different clients and groups, for variable ends and effects. Yet, of Sherman's six strategies, Cullen's approach is perhaps most closely related to the "i-Catcher," a strategy in which, according to Sherman, images are deployed as objects of contemplation intent on attracting "notoriety through internet buzz (viral marketing)"—only Cullen's pre-Internet production would qualify as "eye-Catchers" rather than, "i-Catchers."

Beyond any simple comparison, however, the point is that Cullen's shrewdness and graphic strategies seem to be as relevant today to urban landscape thinkers as they were to postwar cityscapers. As the present global city of spectacle evolves new forms of imaging, mass

[520] Roger Sherman, "Strange Attractors, or the Catalytic Agency of Form," in Cuff and Sherman, eds., *Fast-Forward Urbanism*, 243.

[521] Ibid., 262–63.

media, and technology, it continues to operate according to the same logic as the postwar city of spectacle, in which Cullen flourished and which he helped shape. More studies of city imagineers and opinion shapers are needed to help formulate strategies that architects and landscape architects could use to negotiate their place in the politics of identity and experience among other environmental players. Specifically, because this study aims to generate a greater understanding of the agency of design imagery and image making at the structural level, it—unlike many urbanism books—avoids passing judgment or proposing correction to Cullen's marketing strategy.

The third discourse that foregrounds this study is the making of an audience, as opposed to the making of buildings. The works of Mario Carpo, which this study repeatedly cites, have served as a point of entry into Cullen's mode of operation. In an increasingly interconnected digital world, in which authorship relies on explicit and implicit collaboration between countless individuals, audience comprises a multiplicity of digital publics, Cullen has a particular urgency. Not only has his drive for *visual literacy*—the crusade to educate people to read the environment—been perpetuated in the digital environment as *visual digiteracy*, but also the graphic strategies he embedded in his print media to encourage audience participation provide lessons for contemporary designers who package their products for—and in the process, construct—Internet audiences.

Moreover, Cullen's ability to "feel" his audience still enjoys special currency in today's digital information world. Before his detachable printed images could attract audiences, Cullen had to know his audiences, on a gut-level. He felt that relationship better than did or trained admen or his architects-colleagues. To explain how architects should connect with their audience, Cullen ended his 1971 introduction to *The Concise Townscape* by quoting Max Miller,

a top British comedian from the 1930s to 1950s who performed stand-up comedy in variety shows in large theaters: "But the main endeavour is for environment makers to reach their public, not democratically but emotionally. As the great Max Miller once remarked across the footlights on a dull evening 'I know you're out there, I can hear you breathing.'"[522]

Miller's skill was such that he could hold an audience in the palm of his hand. Cullen deployed this corporeal and, in Cullen's words, "emotional" aptitude to "reach" and touch his audience. [Figure 6.1] This postwar image-making and audience-shaping propensity enabled Cullen to popularize architecture, an enterprise as relevant today as it was then. Cullen's living legacy guides our design thinking today, specifically because of its spectacular and emotional—its human—way of perceiving space and interactions.

[522] Cullen, *The Concise Townscape*, 16.

Figure 6.1. Gordon Cullen, ink print, “Right hand,7.2.1945,” 1945. From Cullen’s personal archive.

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