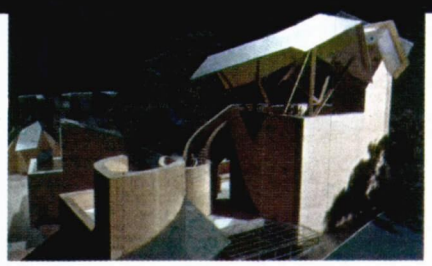
Gehry designs Biloxi "mad pot-hr" museum



The ohr-o'keefe museum of Arts (top left) will have pavilions, including the ohr gallery (top right) and a building with a cafe and gift shop (above)

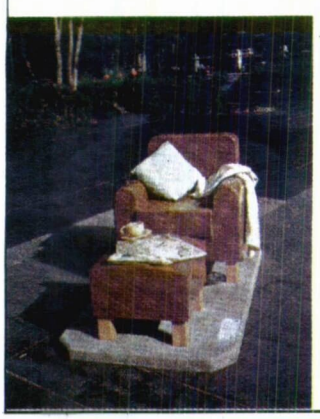
Skip the Guggenheim to view the latest design by Frank O. Gehry, FAIA – the Ohr-O'Keefe Museum of Art in Biloxi, Miss. It's housed farther south, at the Biloxi Community Center, where models of the museum were unveiled in July.

For Gehry, this commission was a chance to design a relatively small, arts-based project with an interesting program. In explaining why he took on the project, Gehry told museum supporters at the unveiling it was the "challenge of doing something small and taking it to the moon." The $16 million Ohr-O'Keefe Museum of Art will be built as a series of six varied buildings placed between a number of large live-oak trees on a four-acre site, a part of Tricentennial Park, overlooking the Gulf of Mexico. Gehry admits that, unlike his signature buildings with wildly undulating forms, this project is somewhat restrained. The centerpiece of the museum campus is a four-pavilion gallery to feature the ceramics work of George E. Ohr (1857-1918), known as the Mad Potter of Biloxi. Ohr, who created thousands of pieces of pottery at the turn of the 20th century, is best known for his pieces called "mud babies," with incredibly thin, pinched, crimped, fluted, and manipulated walls. Considered eccentric and garnering little enthusiasm for his work in his lifetime, Ohr sported a two-foot mustache and proclaimed himself the "unequaled, unrivaled, undisputed, greatest art pot-Ohr on earth." After his death, his mud babies sat in storage for nearly 50 years before being discovered and highly coveted in the past 30 years. Many New York artists, from Jasper Johns to Andy Warhol, became collectors of Ohr's expressive work. Besides the Ohr gallery, the museum will include galleries for African-American art and works by local contemporary artists; a building with a café and gift shop; and an education building with ceramics studios, conservation laboratory, and a pottery research library. The Pleasant Reed House, a 19th-century historic house, will be moved to the site and restored as an African-American interpretive center. Buildings on the campus will be clad in a range of materials, including stainless steel, brick and white plaster. Gehry Partners is working with Guild Hardy Associates of Gulfport, Miss., on the project.

SUITE HOME
CHICAGO

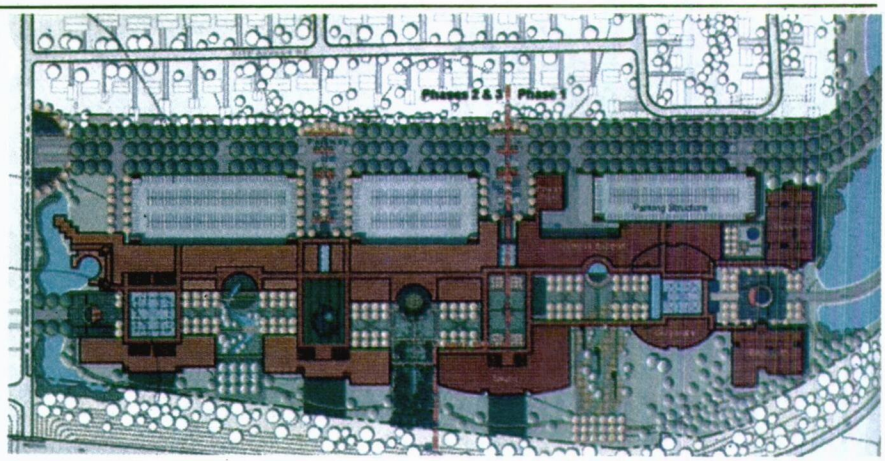
Part Situationist, part Futurist, and all kitsch, Chicago's summer public art exhibit, *Suite Home Chicago*, plops oversized, living room-like arrangements of fiberglass furniture along the city's sidewalks and plazas. Tourists and office workers alike can lounge while buses and cars zoom by, and voyeurs may observe spontaneous re-enactments of "the everyday" in the homelike habitats. These tourist attractions also provide a springboard for the city, which may add more urban furniture around town. A different sponsor funded each suite, and artists rendered the furniture, so each arrangement is unique. Some are three-dimensional billboards for their sponsors, while other feature furniture decorated with a pattern. Michigan Avenue hosts one-third of the exhibits initial 180 arrangements, each comprising one to four pieces of furniture. The city will add approximately 150 more pieces before they're packed up on October 13.

Rosemarie Buchanan



Medtronic campus first Phase complete

The first things to see upon entering the new Medtronic corporate campus in north suburban Minneapolis is what Bill George, CEO of Medtronic, believes to be the heart and soul of this rapidly growing company: the research and education facilities. That's why Medtronic asked Minneapolis based Hammel, Green and Abrahamson (HGA) to design a corporate campus that emphasizes the "campus" over the "corporate".



The medtronic campus will include about 1 million square feet of space, with an emphasis on research and education, to be built in three phases.

Construction has begun on the 1 million-square-foot, three-phase campus, on the site of a former drive-in movie theater. The 540,000-square-foot first phase was completed this summer.Phases two and three will be built in five-year intervals.

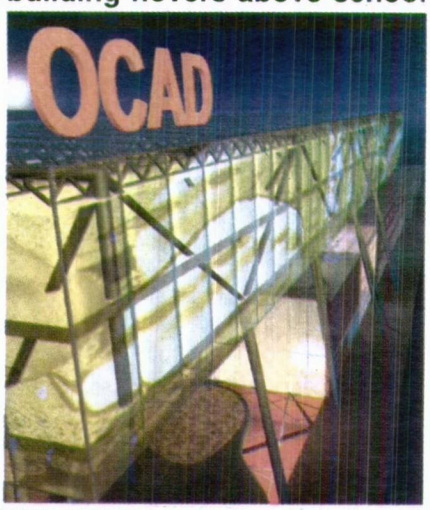
Medtronic, a pioneer in the field of cardiac pacemaker technology, has expanded its business scope into the areas of vascular, neurological, and spinal treatment devices. A large part of Medtronic's mission involves educating doctors and technicians worldwide about its research and products. As a result, the first phase includes classrooms and state-of-the-art research labs.

Utilizing an updated version of "Collegiate Gothic" architecture, the architects have designed a linear group of buildings to be built around a series of exterior courtyards. A circular, four –story corporate office is between and just behind the research and education buildings, at a formal entry court. Also in this first phase are a day-care facility, support services, and a 54,000-square-foot building for the company's rapidly growing neurological, spinal, and ENT surgery division. Exterior building materials include native Minnesota stone with brick.

Working with landscape master planners Oslund and Associates of Minneapolis, HGA, and Medtronic wanted to emphasize "stewardship of the land", says Bill Blanski, AIA, senior project designer at HGA. Three courtyards will have themes: prairie grasses, pine forest, and hardwood forest. *Bob Dillon*

Source : Architectural Record 08/ 2001

Alsop's first North American building hovers above school



With Will Alsop's first building in North America, the London-based architect will be making quite a statement. Alsop Architects, in a joint venture with Toronto's Robbie Young + Wright Architects, has designed the $25 million Sharp Centre for Design and renovation of the existing Ontario College of Art & Design (OCAD) building in down town Toronto.

The steel-and-glass building looks like a rectilinear spaceship that landed over the top of the existing design school. "Visually vibrant" was the understated way Gregory Woods, project architect with Robbie Young + Wright Architects, described the unusual tabletop like structure that will straddle the existing OCAD campus. Construction is scheduled to begin by the end of this year and be completed in 2004. The 50,000-

The sharp centre for Design will be built on columns above an existing OCAD building.

square-foot Sharp Centre facility, about 75 feet wide and 300 feet long, will include classrooms, studios, an auditorium, and meeting space. It will relieve pressure on the cramped, existing OCAD space that has been cobbled together since the original building opened in 1913.

The $25 million project cost includes technology and equipment enhancements for the school.

Supported by columns that will bracket or penetrate the existing building, the Sharp Centre will be accessed by glass-enclosed elevators and stairways through a reconfigured main entrance.

The underside of the new building will be about seven stories above street level, and about three stories above the roofline of the existing building.

"That gap is just as important as the structure," Wood says, "because our master plan includes oganic shapes to be suspended from the bottom of the new center as a foil to the rectilinear geometry of the table."

While the functions of these amorphous shapes has not been determined yet, Woods says they could possibly be classrooms.
Al Warson

Source : Architectural Record 08/ 2001

Future uncertain for H.H. Richardson's last home

After one and a half years on the market with no buyer coming forward, the Brookline, Mass., home in which H.H. Richardson lived and worked during the last dozen years of his life is in danger of being lost forever. Richardson rented the Cottage Street house in 1874, shortly after winning the competition for Trinity Church. He practiced first out of its east parlor, later building a wing of offices. While these "coops" were demolished around 1890, Richardson's other modifications remain intact, including a stained-glass window by John La Farge (who collaborated on Trinity's interiors) and a staircase and woven gate.

The stair leads to the most poignant reminder of Richardon's presence-the bed room he designed for himself, where he died in 1886 after struggling with Bright's disease. The room is an unusual space of vivid architectural play. It also portrays Richardson's continuing passion for his work, despite being bedridden for months at a time. Rischardson used the three hooks in the ceiling above his bed to life himself upright. The herringbone cork walls doubled as pinup surfaces for designs produced downstairs. Although rich in history, the property's future is uncertain. After passing to Richardson's son and grandson, the house was purchased jointly by two flanking neighbors in January 2000. They hoped to prevent it from being sold to someone who would tear it down. These new owners worked with the Society for the Preservation of New England Antiquities to create covenants that would safeguard the house. But the covenants will only take effect if the right buyer can be found-someone who can afford the asking price of more that $1.5 million, and who has energy enough for the restoration.

The current owners cannot hold the house indefinitely, and in Brookline's wealthy market it would sell quickly as a tear-down. Today, the building is one of seven on the Brookline Preservation Commission's endangered list. Hope still hinges on finding a buyer soon, so that, in the words of David England, chair of the commission, this "strange, weird, and wonderful place" can be saved. *Mark Pasnik* geh..desi.Biloxi-inter.news.12

The house that H.H. Richardson had lived in (Top) includes a staircase with spindled screen thnat he designed (left). He spent most of his remaining yrars in the bedroom (right).