



ORGANIC ARCHITECTURE

1992

EXHIBITION

1993



THOMPSON & ROSE

The address and the architects of the office

Thompson & Rose Architects
Charles Rose, Maryann Thompson
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Founding year

1987

Size and structure of the office

2 architect-managers, 4 co-operators

Most important projects

1990 The Hartsbrook School, Hadley (MA), including Piening Hall
In preparation:
Walker Art Center, Minneapolis (MN)
The Atlantic Center for the Arts, New Smyrna Beach (FL)
Cambodian Temple and Monastery, Leveritt (MA)
Kenyon College Dormitories, Gambier (OH)

Philosophy of the office and approach

The Hartsbrook School is the first large-scale project of these two young and talented architects. The first building of the complex, Piening Hall, was awarded immediately after completion in 1990. The written motivation of the design (a quotation from this motivation follows below) shows how closely the architects try to link modern ecological architectural thinking to Steiner's building impulse. In the designing process, Thompson and Rose strive after a 'respectful dialogue' with the surrounding nature and with the spiritual and social ethics of the customers. The style of Piening Hall is closely connected to the traditional architecture of the New England region, but stands out by its aesthetic design. The design philosophy of Thompson and Rose can thus be compared with that of Asmussen or the HUS group in Scandinavia. Consequently, it differs from Alberts' NMB building and its irregular form language, a building that was meant precisely to stand out in the area. The simplicity and the organic basis of Piening Hall reverberates in the use of wood, simple forms and a somewhat austere appearance. In a rudimentary way, Steiner's organic forms are echoed in a concave-convex dynamism and in architectural elements as the tree-like balcony and plate roofs that act as a passive sun collector. In general, the building is composed, carefully executed and highly esthetic.

Office quotation

'As a physical manifestation of cultural values and world view, architecture represents an enduring example of our relationships to the environment, society and community. With this thought in mind our design philosophy is constantly evolving to understand and explore many themes which address specific architectural challenges of the late 20th century. Thriving in the creative process of collaboration, we are committed to an architecture of relationships. We define organic architecture as a design attitude responsive to the larger spheres of environment and community, including an awareness of cultural context and history, the local topography, geology, flora, fauna, qualities of light, our own artistry and sense of quality and the client's sense of community. We are committed to a didactic expression of the notion of permanence as well as an informed and conscientious view of natural resources. Our buildings are visually well made, as well as actually well made. It is our hope that our methods of construction convey a value system which supports the

principles of ecology and respects the sources of our natural materials.

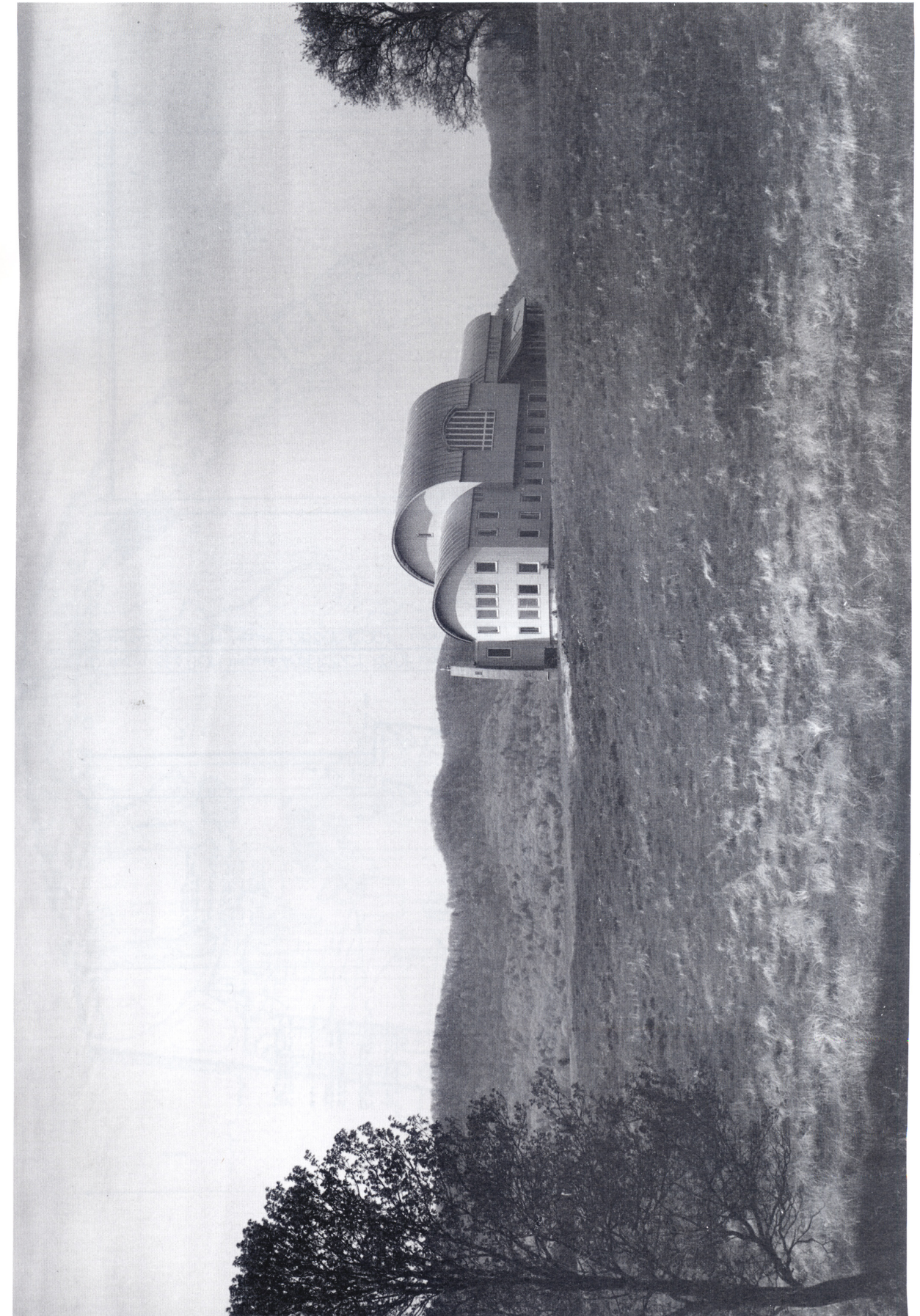
Aesthetically, Piening Hall is the product of a transformative design process. It is shaped by the traditional forms and materials of this region of New England, especially by the pure volumes, inspired massing and powerful materiality of the local farmyards. The building also reflects this American community's European cultural heritage and philosophical outlook, and the embodiment of anthroposophical ideas in the expressionistic forms and construction techniques of early twentieth century anthroposophical architecture, as demonstrated in Rudolf Steiner's earliest buildings in Dornach, Switzerland. We are inspired by the idea of creating a specific regional and cultural sensitivity in our work, while producing original forms which are relevant to our time.'

Bibliography

'Young Architects', *Progressive Architecture*, July 1990 (Special edition on the Hartsbrook School)

K. Rayes, *Organic Architecture*, RIBA 1992 (in preparation)

H. Sanoff, *School Design*, 1992 (in preparation)



THE HARTSBROOK SCHOOL - HADLEY - M.A. - U.S.A.