

Building Scene

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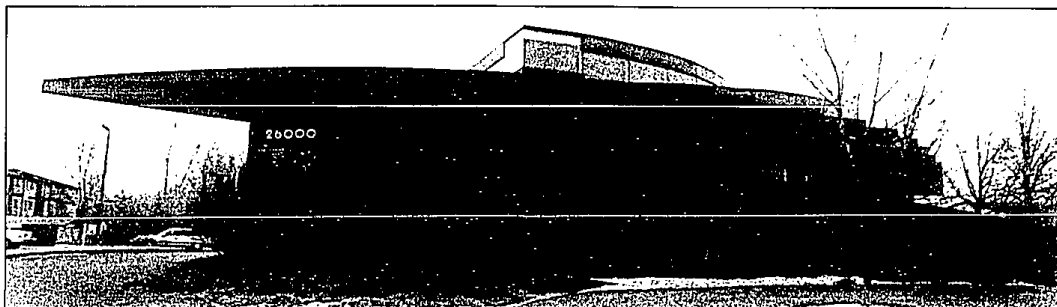
Marilyn Fitchett editor/591-2300



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★ ★ IF

Color:
Just a
dab will
do ya'



JERRY ZOLYNSKY/staff photographer

Formidable looking, yet arresting, the Max Klein Inc. building stands out as one of the few — if only — black buildings in metropolitan Detroit.

Accents give buildings attention-grabbing designs

By Gerald Frawley
staff writer

Don't expect to find garish, bright colors in architecture these days — architects say the best way to use color is conservatively.

A pastiche of colors, red line on gray, green stripes across barren concrete walls, ceramic tiles accenting glass and steel — used to attract rather than overwhelm, to attract rather than overpower.

Color, however, is still an important part of architecture.

AS IMPORTANT as shape and texture, color conveys feelings, portrays images and sends messages. Just as a mistake in shape and texture can ruin a project, so can a mistake in color.

Can you imagine a maroon Renaissance Center?

"You could build the same building in two different places and change the colors and it would look completely different," according to Alvin F. Blair, a partner with the Detroit architectural firm of BEI Associates Inc.

The way color is used and where it is used is as important as what color is used, he said.

LIGHT COLORS give a building an impression of lightness, while dark colors give a building a sense of foreboding, he said.

Light colors also make a building look larger, while dark colors make it look smaller, Blair said.

"The same optical illusion in clothing applies in buildings."

THE USE of color in modern architecture dates back more than 40 years, according to Robert Ziegelman of Luckenbach/Ziegelman & Partners in Birmingham.

Prior to the 1950s, buildings were built in one shade — usually gray or white.

In the 1950s, however, architects began to experiment with color.

In addition to the use of more red, brown and earth tone bricks, multi-colored — sometimes bright — painted panels were added to buildings, Ziegelman said.

"BUT THERE was a problem

with this — colors can be very faddish and after 10 years they go out of vogue," he said.

Architecture experienced a backlash in the 1960s. Colored panels were removed or repainted and everything was built in "monolithic gray," Ziegelman said.

It wasn't until the mid-1980s that use of color became popular again, thanks in part to new materials and a more conservative style.

TODAY, MUTED colors are available for building facades and bright colors — when used at all — are used as accents, Ziegelman said.

"I'd say we're much better at using color than we were 20 years ago. As an era, the '50s and '60s generally used color very poorly," he said.

When used properly, bright colors can express life and vibrancy; dark colors can convey a sense of stability and conservatism, Ziegelman said.

"But there's the danger that if things aren't natural colors, they are just fashionable," Ziegelman said.

FASHIONABLE BUILDINGS run

the risk of becoming old before their time.

Architects, Ziegelman said, are just as guilty as the rest of the population when it comes to indulging in fads.

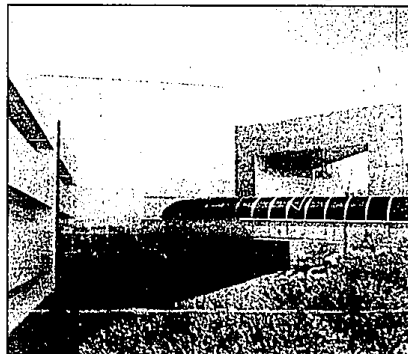
"But you'll see less and less of that," Ziegelman said. "Today, you'll see more subtle uses of colors in basic building materials — tastes are more sophisticated today."

Colors, especially bright ones, are still faddish so architects have to be careful in their use, Ziegelman said. Bright racing stripes wrapping around buildings, for example, are dead giveaways a structure was built in the mid-1980s.

SOME ACCENT colors are still popular, Ziegelman said. Deep greens and reds used as window framing and railings are popular because they give an old-fashioned feel to a building even though neither color was used much years ago.

Colors can even cause physical changes in the body, Blair said.

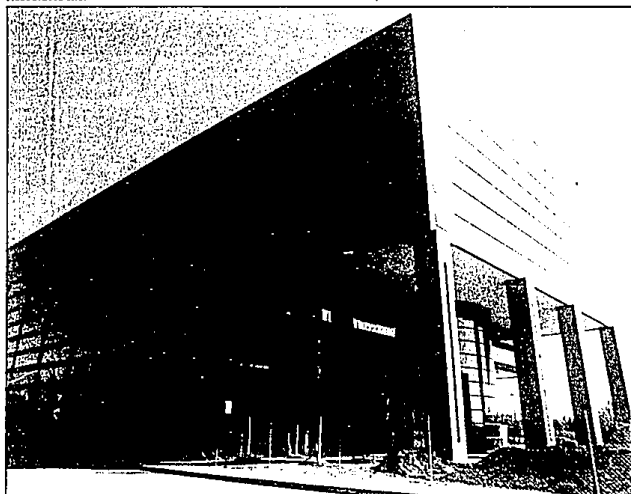
"Red and orange are vibrant colors that physiologically create ex-



JIM JAGDFELD/staff photographer

Color can also serve a purpose in architecture. An eye-catching red portico on a relatively spartan white-and-silver building announces to visitors the point of entrance.

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JERRY ZOLYNSKY/staff photographer

Simple in design, the Raleigh office building near 10 Mile and Telegraph Roads stands out from its neighbors because of its choice of colors; light orange brick, contrasted by green-tinted reflective window panes.

Owners can inspect condo records

I am trying to inspect the books and records of my condominium association. The association's attorney, who I think is playing games, said I could look at the books and records but that I could not have a copy of them without paying the cost of not only copying the records but also paying the management company to collate the records.

However, when I finally got a chance to inspect the records, it became clear that the board of directors had not followed its own attorney's advice regarding certain actions it took.

Now I find that I am having a problem getting any records from the association since the "cat" seems to be out of the bag. What would you suggest I do?

I have empathy for your frustrations. The association has an obligation

to allow you to inspect the books and records of the association.

Concomitant with that obligation is the right to allow you to copy those books and records of the association that you wish to have. If the association refuses to let you do so and after having given them notice of your demand for the copies, if they do not do so, you should consult with an attorney as you have a right to begin legal proceedings to demand that it turn over the books and records to you.

You also may have a right to collect attorney fees since the board of directors is failing to adhere to its own legal responsibilities under the condominium documents.

Also, you may question why the association chooses not to follow its own attorney's advice. That may end up being part of your lawsuit, particularly if the action taken by the association turned out to be wrong and



condo queries
Robert M. Meisner

or detrimental to the best interests of the association.

Robert M. Meisner is a Birmingham attorney specializing in condominiums, real estate and corporate law. You are invited to submit topics which you would like to see discussed in this column by writing Robert M. Meisner, 30200 Telegraph Road, Suite 407, Birmingham 48010. This column provides general information and should not be construed as legal opinion.

A Note from Herman Frankel

After 39 years of building homes, I've learned that it is impossible to forecast when any particular home will sell, but I've seen many disappointed people who missed the home that they thought would be there when they were ready.

Simsbury's first phase is now almost complete. This is the last time we will be able to offer all of our most popular models because we are down to 1 availability on several of them. We are also offering a special builder package including a jacuzzi whirlpool tub.

Please come visit us and see why I'm so proud of our award winning Simsbury Condominium Community.

I hope to see you there.

Herman Frankel

Visit our decorated models
Priced from \$164,900
Main office 683-3500
Sales Center 651-3500

Located on 14 Mile Rd. 3/4 miles West of Orchard Lake Rd.
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CONDOMINIUM COMMUNITY