**Sert**

**MLK School**

My school, Martin Luther King Jr. Elementary School in Cambridge, Massachusetts, was designed by the firm of Josep Lluís Sert: Spanish architect and planner, former Harvard Graduate School of Design dean, designer of the superb Peabody Terrace apartments just across the street, as well as buildings for Harvard and Boston University. My school came late in his career, late for the concrete walls and rhythmic geometric shadows that were signatures of his architecture, and late, too, for the architecture’s relationship with the surrounding stick-built residential neighborhood known as Riverside. My school was demolished during the spring of 2014. Another King School is now under construction, this one of terminal beige exterior blandness, designed by Perkins Eastman. King School 2.0 trumpets its community connections, zones for students of different ages and natural lighting—just like the one it will replace.

—Alexandra Lange “Never-Loved Buildings Rarely Stand a Chance

Josep Lluís Sert in Cambridge” MasContext Legacy Spring Summer 2015

“When you see the multi-ethnic murals in the front lobby of the Martin Luther king school in Cambridge, you get the distinct impression that this is not your ordinary school…It is in a diverse neighborhood including Harvard students living directly across the street and residents of a low-income housing project adjacent to the school.”

—Kathy Sheehan A touch of far-away lands in Cambridge's King School. Boston Globe, 29 May 1977: F12.

**Prentice Women’s Hospital**

First things first: Why save Prentice? Many Chicagoans hate it. The taste for concrete buildings from the ‘70s is unpopular outside architectural circles. although it’s spreading, and rightly so. Great late-modernist buildings, innovative and ruggedly beautiful, deserve respect, and, increasingly, careful custody.

—Michael Kimmelman. A Vision Enabling A Clover To Bloom. New York times, 18 Oct 2012: C1.

With this essentially homemade software, Goldberg and Stainer were able to undertake previously unheard of amounts of engineering calculations in a matter of weeks. The result was a structural system at Prentice that had never been used anywhere else in the world. Both the lightweight concrete shell and the cantilever of the tower remain highly complex by present day engineering standards. Fixed element analysis and digital computing have since made possible an architectural revolution of convoluted shapes and sculpted structures by architects like Rem Koolhaas and Frank Gehry. The structure of Prentice also remains rare, and possibly unique. Few buildings in the world are supported by concrete shell walls as thin as Prentice’s. The combination of this shell with the unusual 48-foot cantilever makes Prentice’s structure a very unusual one.

—Susannah Ribstein. Goldberg, Bertrand

Old Prentice Women’s Hospital, Norman & Ida Stone Institute of Psychiatry. June 30, 2011

**Mechanics Theater**

Baltimore now has a theater which it will make its own—but only with critical awareness and after thoughtful appreciation. It was initially conceived, then designed, and constructed as a community service of a special kind. This service is not only to accommodate theatrical performances. It is to deepen the sense of vitality and potential dignity of all those who use the building. As distinct from some trends in architecture today, this building can be called ‘in the mainstream’ of the contemporary architecture which primarily serves its citizens and goes beyond this to exalt them and give them a feeling of dignity. Over all the building is at once recognizable as a theater, but its shape goes further than needs. The resulting piers, walls, ceilings, which assert the forms and shapes of the building, should not be taken for granted, but in effect demand your attempted comprehension of every detail. This is the kind of participation which can make this building begin to belong to our community.

— Alexander Cochran, in a pamphlet prepared by the Mechanic Foundation for opening day.

(cited in Danz, A.(2014). A Brutal Truth: The Threatened Legacy of Baltimore's Brutalist and Urban Renewal Architecture. Retrieved from http://libra.virginia.edu/catalog/libra- oa:7287)

The latest project, first announced in April 2012, has moved slowly because of a series of delays that kept the vacant performance venue standing amid protests from architectural preservationists. The Mechanic was heralded as a landmark architectural achievement that was crucial to the success of the Charles Center urban renewal plan in the 1960s. It has been eyed for redevelopment since David S. Brown Enterprises Ltd. acquired the site nine years ago… News of the demolition is sure to raise hackles by architectural preservationists, who had waged a battle to save the theater from the wrecking ball but ultimately lost.

— Kevin Litten. Mechanic Theatre demolition finally underway. Sep 4, 2014, Baltimore Business Journal.

**Orange County**

Let’s start with an obvious truth: Paul Rudolph is not an easy architect. He never was. His assertive modernist buildings of concrete and glass are not what anyone would call user-friendly. They can be harsh, and tough, and it is not surprising that to many people they are cold.

But oh, can they be beautiful, and there is a reward to feeling and appreciating the magic and dignity and even, let me say it, the grace that Rudolph’s architecture can bring….Rudolph’s Orange County Government Center in Goshen, New York, completed in 1971, has all of his strengths, and all of his issues. It’s an energetic composition of concrete boxes, piled one atop the other, elevated on columns. The whole thing seems full of movement and energy, and yet at the same time it exudes the seriousness of purpose we expect of a public building. It is in every way an attempt to express in modern form the ambitions of a traditional civic building. At the same time it communicates an utterly important message that few traditional buildings are ever able to do, which is the notion that government is capable of creative imagination.

—Paul Goldberger, Can Paul Rudolph’s Architecturally Vital Orange County Government Center Be Saved? Vanity Fair, May 2012.

I am writing to ask you to stop any interference with the demolition of the Goshen Government Center.  I am not sure who has deemed Paul Rudolph a genius, but based on his design in Goshen, I would strongly disagree.  First, it is out of place in Goshen. This is a beautiful village full of Victorians that are extremely well-kept. The center sticks out like a sore thumb, except a sore thumb would be prettier. The design is just plain ugly. It looks like something my children would build with blocks when they were little; not very sophisticated. The center has a flat roof which just begs for flooding. Who puts such a large structure with flat roofs in upstate New York? We get snow here, lots of it.  
When I read in the paper about how some self-important twit anoints  Rudolph with the genius mantle I want to say that the emperor has no clothes. If one were to look at this structure with an unbiased eye, they would say it was ugly, out of place, and poorly designed. People like to feel so sophisticated because they can jump on the bandwagon that they see beauty where others do not. The emperor has no clothes. It is ugly.

—Letter writer to Ernst Wagner, Director of the Paul Rudolph Heritage Foundation. Saturday, July 11, 2015 (http://www.paulrudolphheritagefoundation.org/goshen-1/2015/7/21/the-goshen-correspondence-pro-and-con. Accessed February 13, 2017).