



Palm House: Schoenbrunn Palace, Vienna. (Photos by Mary Knowles.)

Inside the Butterfly House, Schoenbrunn Palace, Vienna.



new design freedom. Architects need not think of the building in traditional terms of location and form, migration and transformation. Plentiful energy frees them to make glass buildings and put them out in the heat or the cold.

Consider the rather extreme example of the glass Palm House at the Schoenbrunn Palace in Vienna. The building is a conservatory, a hot house for plants and trees. One enters from the bitter cold of a January day to find a tropical forest, hot and humid. One must shed heavy winter coats to view the array of exotic plants, completely foreign to Austria. Keeping the plants comfortable requires steam and hot water, manufactured in a separate boiler, somewhere out of the visitor's sight. Today, visitors enjoy this Hapsburg whimsy, mostly ignoring the extravagant use of energy.

Also on the palace grounds is the Butterfly House, kept even hotter by steam from a separate boiler. Here, surrounded by glass, outside nature is canceled, replaced by tropical luxuriance. Hundreds of butterflies fill the air with color, landing wherever they choose on trees and flowers and even on delighted people.

The architect for Haas Haus, an important building on the Stefansplatz in the heart of Vienna, obviously had something else in mind besides basic shelter. Designed by Hans Hollein, its glass

façade reflects the surrounding environment, especially the great cathedral across the plaza. A transparent cylinder honors the corner and marks entry where people can see out and be seen as they climb an elegant spiral stair. The slender cantilever on top is an imaginary roof, not a real one, an invention to augment an effect, not to protect from snow, rain, and wind. Yet the people inside are continuously and automatically protected.

Likewise, people are sheltered inside a Portland, Oregon, shopping mall, a self-regulating machine, independent of time and place. Malls, looking much like this one, appear as well in Tokyo, Los Angeles, or London. Inside, people are free to shop, to promenade, to see others and to be seen, to stop for a snack and chat with a friend, all with utter indifference to weather and climate.

And because modern transportation can rapidly ship goods from anywhere in the world, such places typically offer a broad range of merchandise and produce. Wines from Chile or Italy or Australia can all appear on the same shelf, at any time of year, in nearly any mall in the world.

Distance is not a factor, nor is season. If tomatoes are not available from California, you can try Florida, Mexico, or Chile. If you can't get melons from Northern California, you can probably get them from Southern California. If you can't get a leg of lamb from Oregon, you can probably get it from Australia.

## Declining Identification with Place

Treating some prominent buildings with indifference to nature may be justified but what about the masses of unknown and nameless others? Consider, for example, the typical housing blocks of eastern Europe. Centralized energy production has allowed the



Haas Haus on the  
Stefansplatz, Vienna:  
Designed by Hans Hollein.  
(Photo by Mary Knowles.)



Shopping Mall,  
Portland, Oregon.



Wine Display in Portland  
Shopping Mall.