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Pegasus

Matthew Knox

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Pegasus

A School for flying

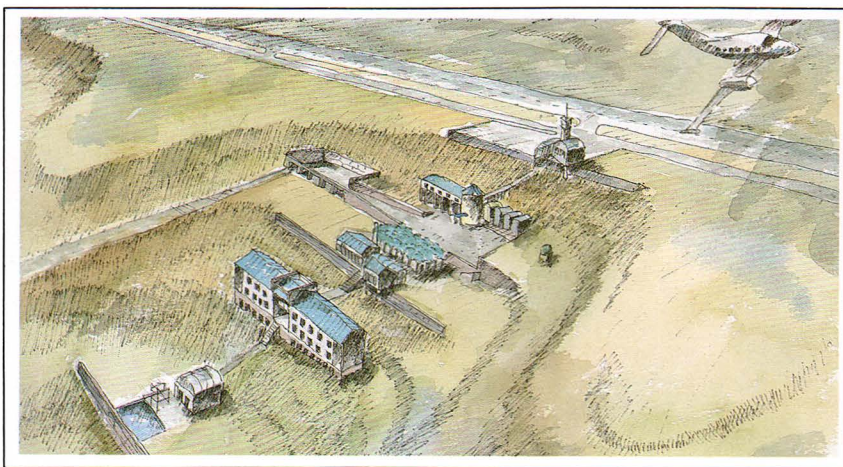
Matthew Knox

Critics:

F.G. Ernst

W. Miller

R. Streeter



Pegasus

This is the way that it feels
Climb to the top of the highest
mountain
See what is hidden behind the
blue curtain
See what is given to us

— Fra Lippo Lippi

It is the poetry of standing atop an isolated Kansas hill with the sun and the wind, along with the beauty of the view, sitting thousands of feet above the plains from an airplane that has drawn Pegasus ... a school to fly ... a place for being ... a place for meaning.

The explicit sources for the project were disparate. From the German philosopher Martin Heidegger's thoughts on *Being and Dwelling* were founded the essential modes of thinking. More

specifically, existential thinking toward dwelling. Dwelling being preservation of the fourfold; the earth, the sky, the divinities and the mortals. In dwelling, we save the earth, receive the sky, await the divinities and initiate the mortals. The fourfold becomes apparent within things, or as in this case, objects. From the writings of Aldo Rossi on Analogical Architecture, infuse the vernacular and common as referents to structure, an architecture based on historically architec- tonic forms.

By using referential and associative forms, the buildings evolve as comprehensible and thus memorable objects. Mood is defined and metaphor recalled. Rationalist manipulation and poetic longing are embodied. Strong emotional and memorable presence of light and form occur beneath mutable sky.

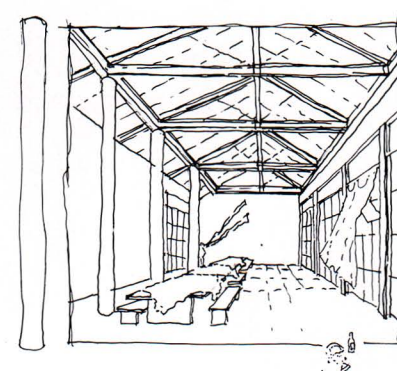
The site of Pegasus is a large isolated hilltop somewhere in the plains of Kansas; a mile-long runway skewed from the cardinal points to acknowledge the relative winds crowns the crest of the hill. With the runway acting as a plinth, the school cascades down along an axis into a natural valley. The aircraft carrier metaphor literally expressed. The axis is fixed in space by beginning in a pool of water (swimming pool) and ending in sky (control tower). A series of terraced walls run perpendicular to the axis establishing distinct places, defining circulation, and accenting the vertical progression.

Approach to the school is by airplane or car. A road meanders up the hill, hiding the school from view until the last bend. Entry is through a cut-out wall that marks arrival and frames the parked cars. This in contrast to the airplanes above parked with their tails hanging over a wall. A thematic relationship is established between object and wall. Arrival by airplane begins at a rational composition of objects recalling the typological images of aviation: a large corrugated metal hanger, a wing-shaped flight office, and a control tower. The tower uses a light metal structure to celebrate the etheriality of flight; its concrete stair tower acts as the antithesis of a water well to pay homage to the sky.

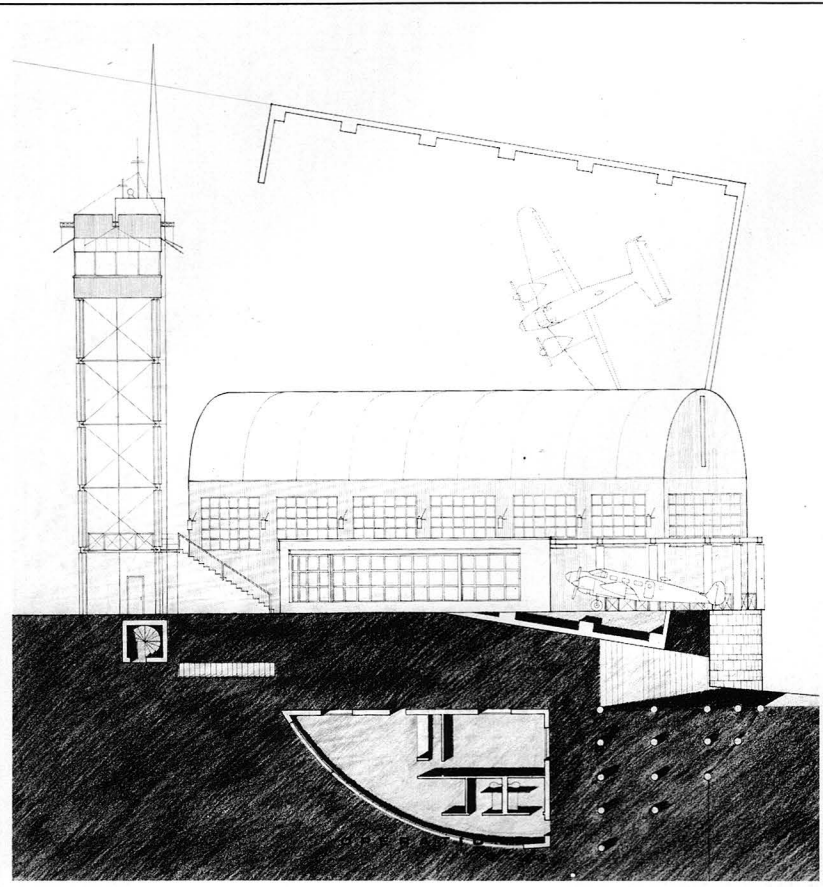
The material pallet of the buildings include corrugated metal panels, exposed steel, concrete and fine-cut stone.

Materials reference aviation technology, Kansas rural imagery and a reduction to the essence of materiality and tectonics.

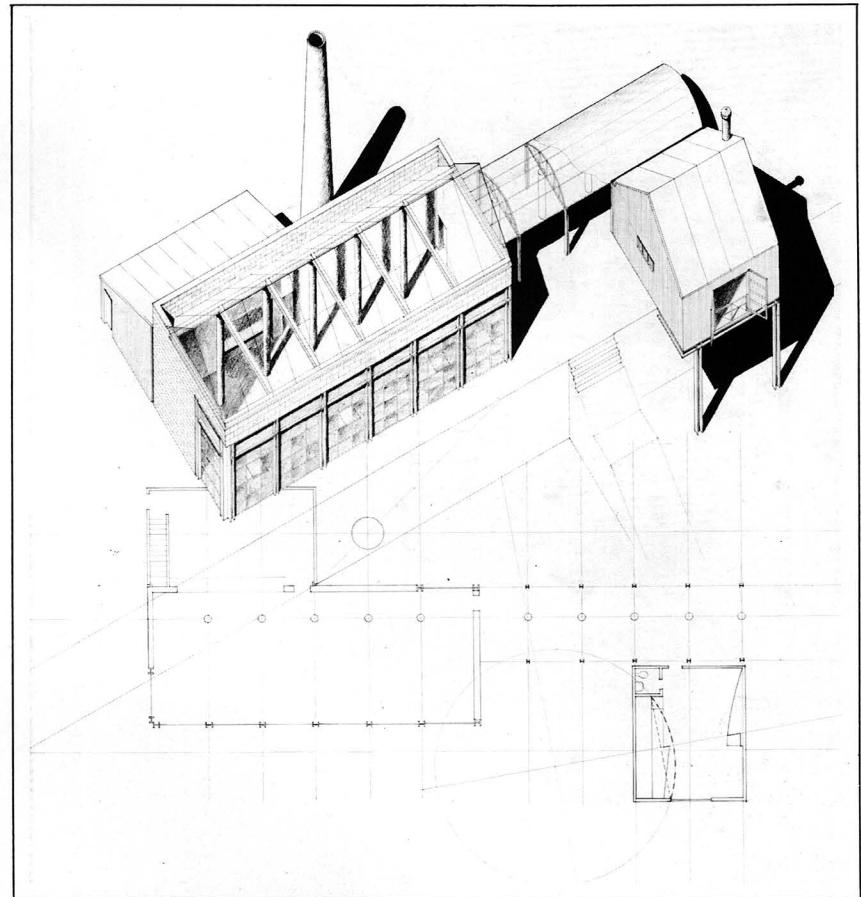
The Hall of Pegasus, the main building, acts as a mediator between the flying and corporeal elements. A rotunda represented as a concrete grain silo establishes a center and gathers circulation with its stairs and elevator. Radiating off the rotunda, parallel to the runway is a stone wall. Perched like birds on a wall are four metal boxes containing flight simulators. Access is from below similar to the climb into a cockpit. Following the concept of wall and cross-axis movement, the opposite wing decomposes the positive wall, presenting a series of glazed bays. Through strong shadows light is present ... Light is noticed. Classrooms, labs, administrative offices by this light are ordered and understood. The lecture hall is reached by a daylight lobby that is



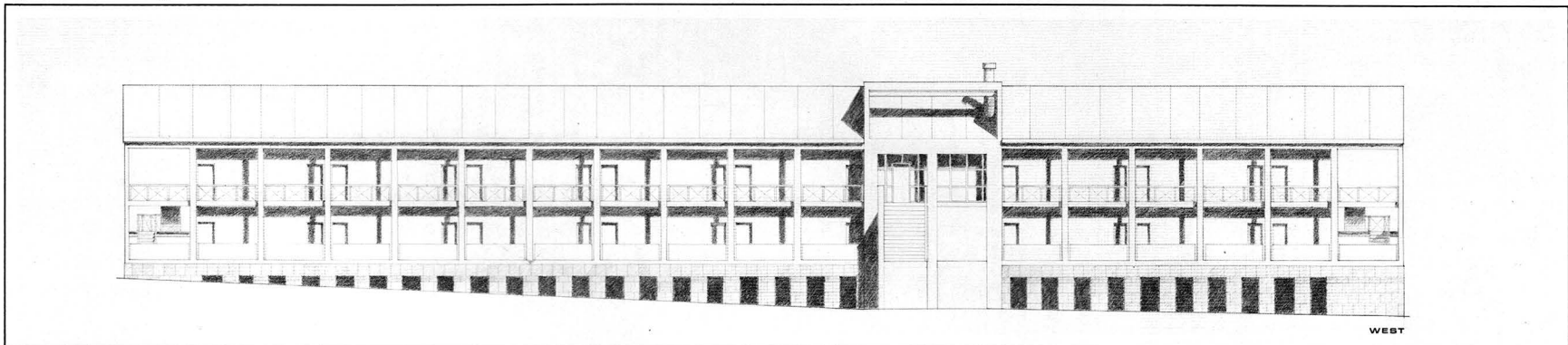
Sketch of the Canteen



Operations Building



Canteen and Pub



Dormitory Elevation

wrapped around the rear of the rotunda. Through the glazed roof one can pause and gaze at framed views of the sky in contemplation of what has been given. A cobblestone entry court, shaped by converging axes is spatially defined by the building and an abstracted cloister at its end. The "collegiate" quadrangle dating back to Oxford in the 1300's is recalled along with the nostalgia and momentary emptiness of the monastery cloister.

A small orchard lies next to the entry court in contrast to the wavering plains and as transition between places. Adjacent is the canteen, placed within a shell taken from the figure of an abandoned farm building. Its chimney, set off as an object recall institution. The adjacent pub, resting precariously over the wall is a simple metal shed. The grounds are managed by a caretaker who's house lies tucked within one of the terraced walls. Inherently, the house is integral to the

school and is represented as such, both literally and figuratively.

Students reside in a long horizontal and gabled dormitory that alludes to many sources. Pragmatically, it is the image of house. It speaks of community with a common street and public square, and much like Le Corbusier's 'Unite', the stone piloties elevate toward the sky and free the landscape.

The last element of the school is the gym ... a small metal and concrete building presented as a morphological metaphor of structure and skin, flesh and bone, wing-rib and fabric; essences. It is from here that one can turn and view the school as it appears — comprehensible and memorable — between earth and sky.