ALVIN BOYARSKY (1928 - 1990)

Born in 1928 - Montreal, Canada
Studied architecture at McGill University, and pursued a 2nd degree in Urban Planning at Cornell University.

1963 - Began teaching at the Architectural Association, London

1965 - Moved family to Chicago and became associate dean of the architecture school at the Circle Campus / U of Illinois.

1970-1973 - Began the International Institute of Design

1971 to 1990 - Chairman of the Architectural Association

CHICAGO À LA CARTE: THE CITY AS ENERGY SYSTEM

THE IDEA OF THE CITY
Edited by Robin Middleton

The Idea of the City was a tribute to the late Alvin Boyarsky Published in 1996, offering insights into the city by a number of leading architects from the United States, Australia, and Europe, in the form of visual projects, analytical essays on the urban condition, case studies of individual cities, histories, lectures, reminiscences, and poetry. A few notable contributors: Rem Koolhaas, Bernard Tschumi, and Peter Eisenman, Zaha Hadid.
**CHICAGO A LA CARTE**

**Image of the city through the post card – Boyarsky’s postcard collection of frontier wonders of excesses**
- “A catalogue of audacious engineering feats, determined by everything that was not there to begin with, of absolute reliability, cold calculation, maximum elasticity and lightness, necessary to harness the power and to force a link between the isolated regions.”
- “Self-regulating models of empirical efficiency appear to glean immediate benefit from science and technology”
- The engineer emerges as a noble savage

**City Planning - How the city was built over time**
- Mechanistic cycle of growth
- Vast tartan grid of hierarchical bands of services
- Persistent symbols of universal motion

**The city as a complex section - Multilevel organization of the Chicago loop**
- Transportation networks
- The complexity of Chicago’s multi-layered infrastructure
- Raising the ground plane
- Tunnels under the lake
- Tunnels under the river
- Freight tunnels
- Surface transit
- “Frayed edges and entrails reveal the anatomy of its multi-layered section which, plunging storeys deep into the earth.”
IMAGE OF THE CITY | Boyarsky’s postcard collection of frontier wonders of excesses

“Representations of the great cities from New York to San Francisco, their abstract spatial fields scarcely adapted to the natural settings, suggest a similarity in quality and origin. Projecting a tough-minded, often sensationalistic pride in a bustling public domain whose dynamic equilibrium is derived solely from the contingencies of their time and place, they appear relieved of the laws of historical continuity and purely compositional activities involving good taste, harmony and delicacy of expression.”
The dominant reading, however, is that of a vast tartan grid composed of hierarchical bands of services, communications, commercial and industrial land use, each with its own scale, geometry, attachments and linkages, some in the process of development, others rapidly becoming redundant, and others not yet invented, superimposed on an abstract field of residential land use.
CITY PLANNING | How Chicago was built over time

Left: Chicago Development Areas
Right: Areas of Recreation and Centers of Activity.
THE CITY AS A COMPLEX SECTION | Multilevel organization of the Chicago loop

Raising the Ground Plane
THE CITY AS A COMPLEX SECTION | Multilevel organization of the Chicago loop

Tunnels Under the Lake
Tunnels Under the River
THE CITY AS A COMPLEX SECTION | Multilevel organization of the Chicago loop

Freight Tunnels
THE CITY AS A COMPLEX SECTION | Multilevel organization of the Chicago loop
Surface Transit