continued to be a loose collage as well, Gehry, though he is the first to become a world figure, is acknowledged to be supportive of Moshe, Morphosis and some of the others to the extent of passing them on work and recommending them to otherwise incredulous clients. The result is a jocular rivalry and a similar down-the-line import to old Sci-Arc graduates whose funny contraptions crop up all over the back blocks of Santa Monica and west Los Angeles. Not entirely coincidentally, the two best magazines on architecture seem to come out of California in the early '80s—Arts and Architecture and Archetype. The former a revival of the pioneering magazine that had sponsored the famous 'Case Study' houses in which the '50s men had experimented with the light-tech architecture of Craig Ellwood and Raphael Soriano (to mention only two). In its later series giving a positive boost to the idea that glass and colour and art and pangs and sheer unadulterated form were, of course, linked, but not in any school, many way they might have been in a self-conscious European or Eastcoast tome. The latter magazine, with an inordinate American market of the somewhere at the helm, was noteworthy if for no other reason than that it is introduced most of us to Stanley Saitowitz, a South African architect who in his late twenties had already built a most marvellous and original house. Of the many fine stage photographs in Archetype, it commended its sheer relaxedness to anyone with a spirit—at a level that made even the LA work seem self-conscious. The proposition was simply that in a dripping, or gently swinging, long curves
corrupted metal over thin frames and then making occasional house-enclosures below. Taken in fact from the barn-building tradition, but art with great sensibility. Saitowitz has made other houses and designs and drawings that are always fresh and original ... as in the case of his suntracking house (AR February 1980), this first was shattering.

In what seems to have been no time at all, the scenary has become inhabitised by other draped and swung buildings, not in the fields and suburbs of course, but on the drawing-boards of students, particularly at the AA. Demetris Porfyrio has called them the 'architecture of fragmentation', meaninglessness and design', but then his spirit of architecture as constipated as his prose. 'Meaning', this dread prop of the verbally preoccupied, is always trotted out to validate the spatially humped at the expense of the formally exuberant. There isn't an enormous array of connotative meaning to be found in the best of the AA work, with the odd exception, though Across Architecture (p62), contains strong declarations. What there is, as an alternative, is a lot of running: the running of the edge of the building into other edges; the collage becoming more of a layering process where sheets or strips or mesh or filmy filters play amongst each other. The clue was given by Gehry with his chain link and his twisted draped. To the ferrets it can also be found in the work of some current Australians, like Rex Addisson, or Glenn Hurcutt, or sometimes Richard Leplastrier (p48), for example, who also rediscovered corrupted metal and decided to drape it and curve it. To other ferrets began to associate with Hugo Haring in Gankow mood and, of course, to Hans Schaarun in the Philadelphia. The wayward wheel turns full circle, of course, with any mention of the Expressionist stream of European architecture, for in the German-speaking countries one is always aware of the pent-up emotion surrounding Rationalist-Expressionist associations. How did Mies feel about being published in Taut's 'fünftastics' we wonder?

The AA, however, likes to feel itself partly self-generating. At first it has a point: the extraordinary rethinking that elsewhere would have resulted in the architectural equivalent of cross-eyed dopeness has in fact resulted in a chain of influence, support, rivalry and evolution that puts real meaning into the idea of the academy. Perhaps it is because the English architectural world at large has been less anxious or suspicious of the AK since about 1850 than from inside the feeling that 'This is up to them' is implicit. Just look at a sample of the chain of all the NAB group were students of Nigel Coates, but he in turn was a student of Bernard Tschumi. Neil Porter (p62) and Guy Comely were students of Peter Wilson but he was a student of OMA's Koohas and Zeghelli. Incidentally, Zaha Haddad is also an OMA student (and, the ferrets will note, a student of Jean Klaman at an earlier stage). Kay Nuye Tan and Ditrim Vranes were students of Christian Hawley (and myself), but she had studied with Archigram's Ron Ronn who still teaches there. The full chart of cross-fertilisation overlaid on direct-line influence would soon render this point

highly inventive—even when it stated—in just beginning to dawn, and excite. Oscar Niemeyer (who was not to be mentioned in pointe architectural circles three years ago) is once again being heralded as a hero and 'look-on-hand' becomes, once again, the cry in contemplating the legs and wings of the new architecture.

The present messages being sent out are just the first few hops from branch to branch but those with good hearing can discern a fantastic rustling and the healthy sound of twigs breaking.