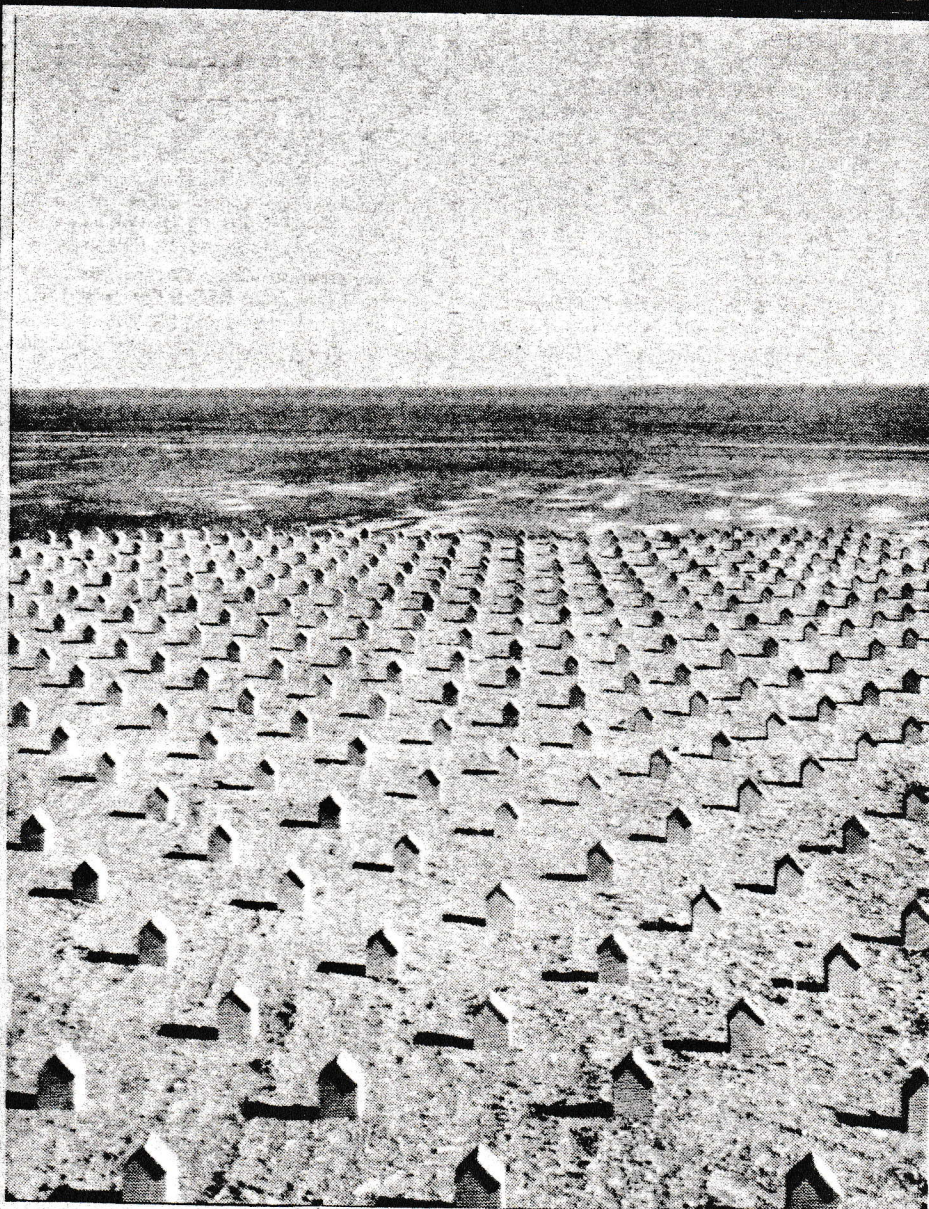


Pick Of The Week



For an aesthetic rush to rival anything in the galleries, drive north on the Pacific Coast Highway, past the fish restaurants, boutiques and estates of the Very Rich on the Malibu Cliffs to **Stephen Pearson's** installation "Two Hundred Years of Architecture: A Bicentennial Salute to Los Angeles, 1781-1981." On a 115 by 300-foot plot of choice property overlooking the ocean, there are 794 little blue houses extending out to the edge of the cliff. Each is identical, 8 by 11 by 8 inches, with clapboard siding and peaked tin roofs. They are charming cartoon simplifications of houses. Standing among them, one feels like Gulliver in the Lilliputian suburbs.

The piece brings several fairly obvious thoughts to mind: the careless and unimaginative development of the coastal, or even inland, topography; the aspects of real estate speculation that permit one dwelling, like the ranch house to the left of Pearson's installation, to have a market value of \$1,750,000, or enough money to house at least 794 families; and painful economic disparities that result from the relentless westward expansion. Pearson's houses face east, however, looking back at Los Angeles on the horizon. Physically and conceptually they signal an end to the push, the evolution that has almost destroyed the environment. On another level, though, Pearson's houses are the amusing prize at the end of the treasure hunt. Unabashedly beautiful grid lines of blue that melt into one another, they lose their identity to the sky and ocean beyond. Either way, it is worth the drive. Documentation of the event is currently available at Asher/Faure and from June 12 to 20 at LAICA downtown. The installation continues thru June 23. To get there take Pacific Coast Highway north, one mile past Paradise Cove. Turn left on Heathercliff Road, left on Dume Drive and left on Grayfox to the end of the street. Look for a bamboo fence on the ocean side.

—Hunter Drohojowska

photo by Steve Pearson