

# TRANSCO TOWER AND PARK

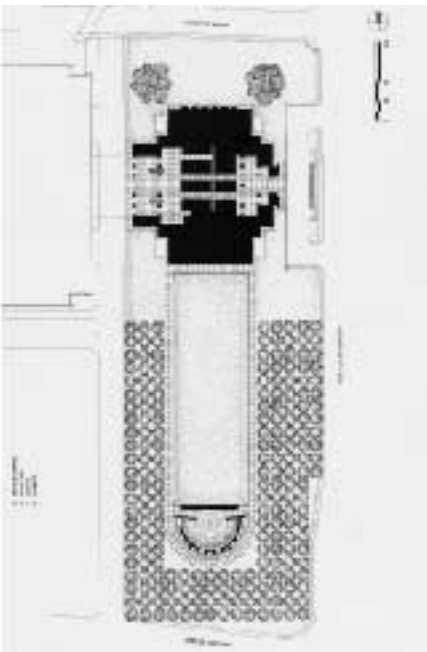
Houston, Texas

**PHILIP JOHNSON • ALAN RITCHIE**  
ARCHITECTS



Philip Johnson and developer extraordinaire, Gerald D. Hines, have worked on many projects since their first collaboration in the late 1960s. One of the best examples of this partnership is the former Transco Tower -- named for the energy firm that originally occupied much the building. The building's site is simply incredible. The developer set aside several acres of what is now prime Houston Galleria district to be used as a park (open to the public), which is a spectacular backdrop for the 51-story tower that rises as a monument that can be seen from great distances.

Here, the firm produced a design quite different from an earlier Johnson landmark built for Hines in downtown Houston, Pennzoil Place. Instead of adapting the modern glass box, the architects began by rethinking the traditional 1920s American skyscraper. For Transco, completed in the 1980s, the architects mixed stone and glass, which brought together the traditional effect of a ceremonial stone arch, done here in pink granite, with the modern possibilities of a reflective glass curtain wall. To complete the composition of tower and park, the architects created a sculptural fountain, the Water Wall. This horseshoe of rushing water that sits behind a proscenium arch is a welcome cool spot in often steamy Houston. Transco Tower and Park is proof that private development can produce excellent architecture and terrific public amenities.



Client: Gerald D. Hines Interests  
Completion Date: 1985  
Area: 600,000 sq. ft.  
Associate Architect: Morris Aubry Architects

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