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How does the way we imagine the future of our cities affect the way that we ultimately build them? That was the question explored by *Visionary San Francisco*, an exhibition held last year at the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art. The exhibition and its catalogue included a historical overview of visions for San Francisco since the beginning of the century and a commissioned group of contemporary gallery installations and writings that were prepared by teams of architects and authors.

The exhibition aroused a good deal of interest and debate, partly because the works created by the writers and teams of architects did not fit into the formula of visions that, if followed, would march the city (or some part of it) towards heretofore unimagined heights of progress.

Places asked Paolo Polledri, curator of the show and founding director of the museum's architecture and design department, to comment on why he felt it was important to mount such an exhibition and on the considerable reaction that ensued (his article is expanded from an essay in the exhibition catalogue). We then present a portfolio of drawings from the exhibition with commentary by Donlyn Lyndon and Neema Kudva that follows one theme — movement — through a century of civic visions for the city.

— Todd W. Bressi