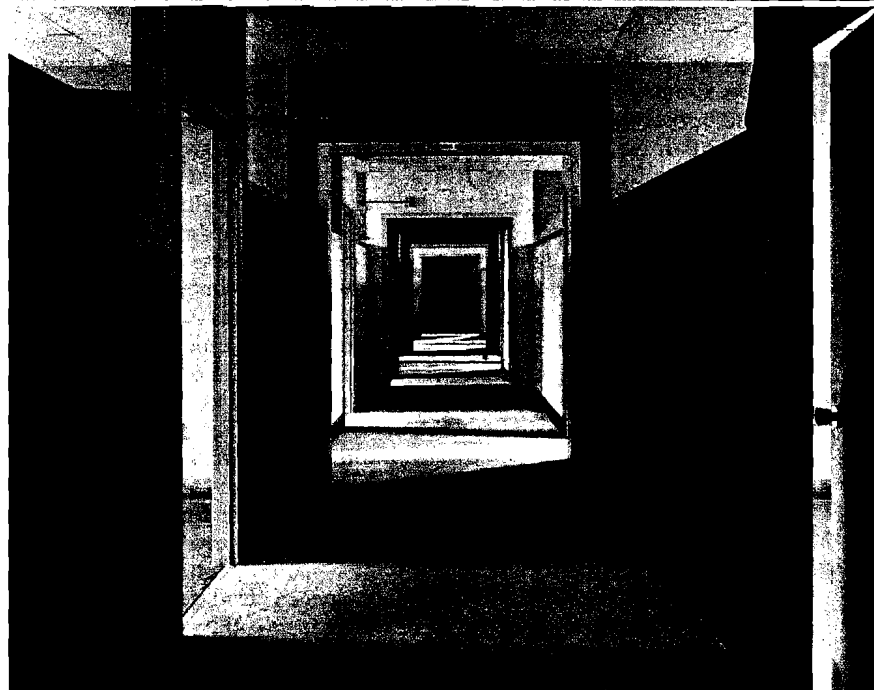


Ruins of the Asylum



From the mid-nineteenth to the early twentieth century, nearly 300 state mental hospitals were built. They were testaments to designers' faith in the healing power of stately architecture, fresh air, and pastoral landscapes. They were at once beautiful and terrifying, and, by the 1990s, they had basically emptied. Architect and photographer Christopher Payne has compiled haunting images of these edifices' ruins in his forthcoming book *Asylum: Inside the Closed World of State Mental Hospitals* (MIT Press). These shots are from hospitals in New Jersey (top) and New York (bottom) —Jesse Zwick