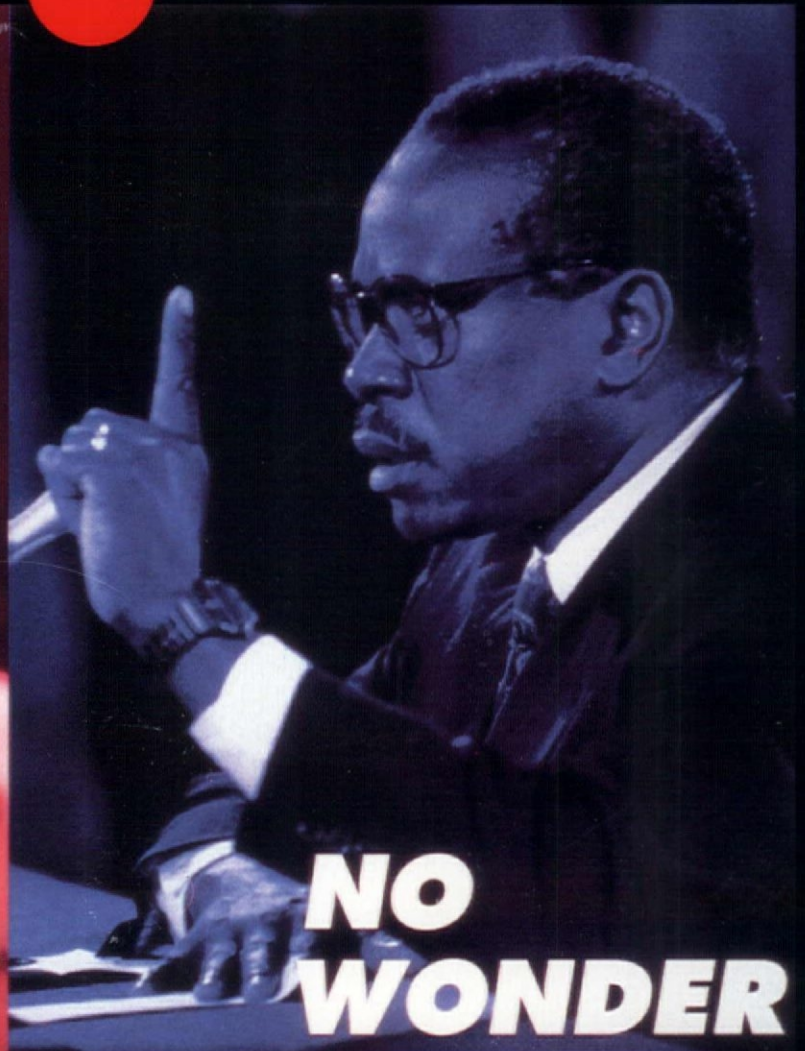
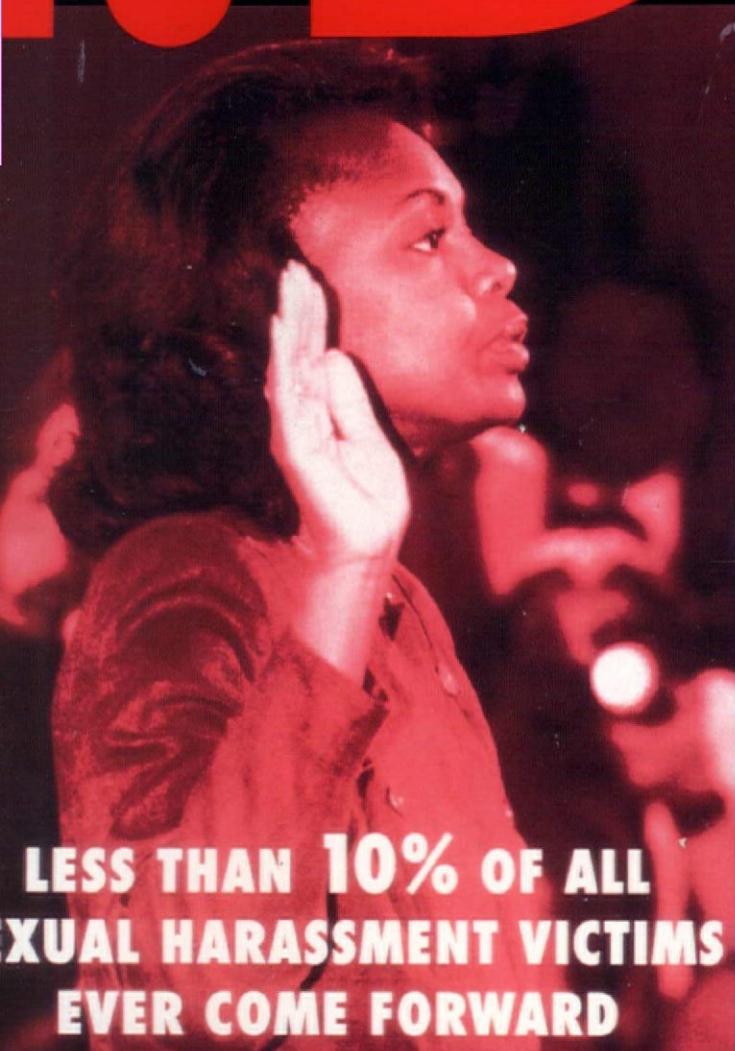


I.D.



Graphic Activism

Karrie Jacobs watches WAC

Birth of the UnChrysler

Michael Sorkin on Cartoon Cities

The Business of Design





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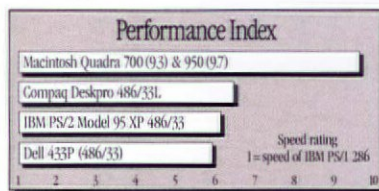
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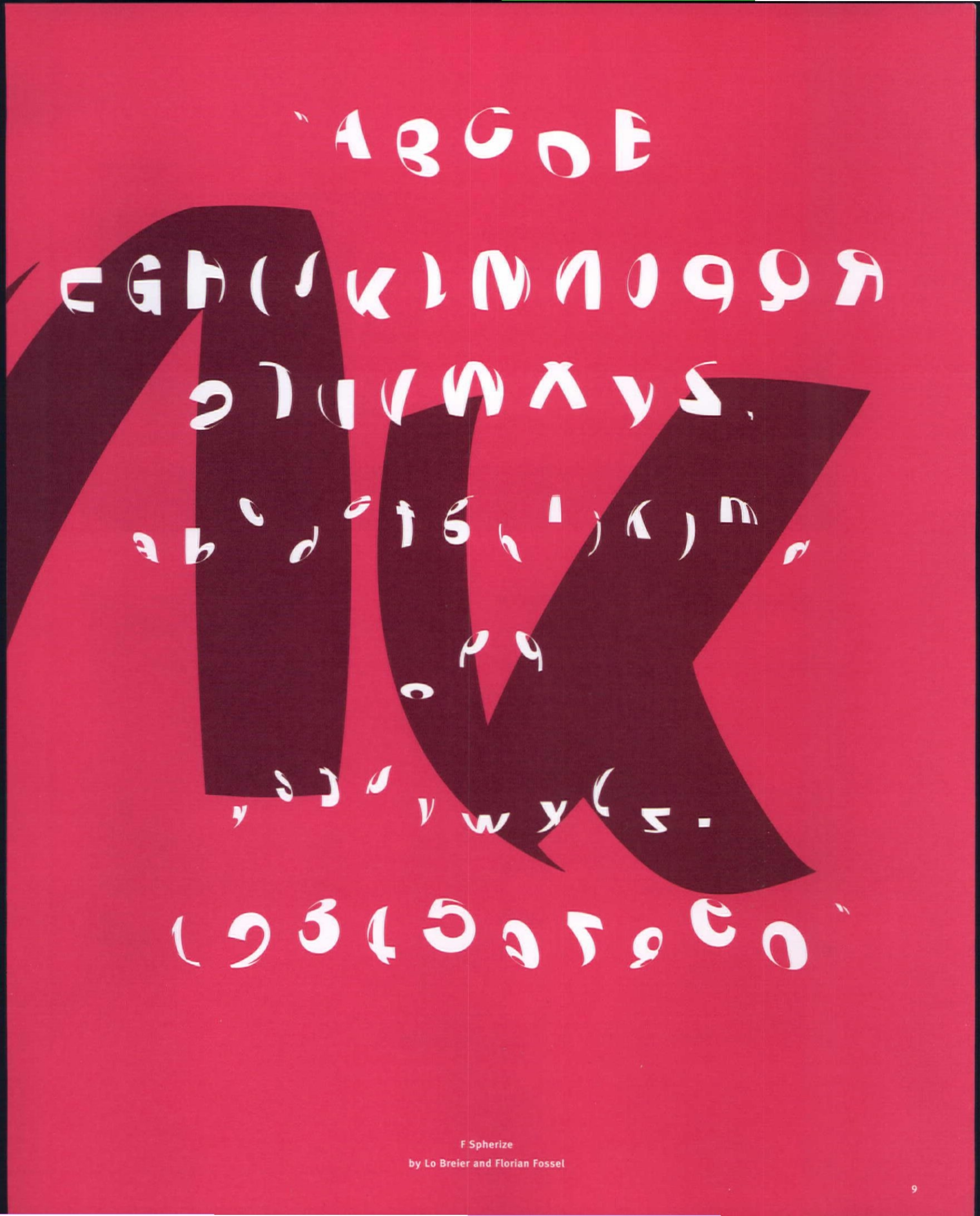
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Cover: Designers and artists responded to the under-representation of women in the Senate during the Clarence Thomas hearings by forming the Women's Action Coalition. Since then, WAC has broadened its agenda and raised its voice by creating posters, such as this cover image, which was used for the Houston Republican Convention in August. Image created by: WAC Visuals Committee and HAMB Design. This page: The blue dot used to conceal women's faces during rape trials has been appropriated by WAC.



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Letters

Congratulations

Congratulations on a long season of becoming even better in stature and size. Having known your magazine since its inception, when Charley Whitney stripped *Interiors*, then the great international design journal, to found I.D., to hearing that there was no support base of readers and advertisers for it, to the fairly recent eclipse of being down to 50+ pages, you are to be commended on the best turn-around in history.

Jack Lenor Larsen
Larsen Design Studio

There's more to Detroit...

I was just rereading the comments by the authors of the "Dear Detroit" article (May/June), and felt moved to write you. The senior people I know in the giant auto companies do not resemble those your contributors

seem to think get up every morning with the avowed goal of lousing up a design and losing money. The giants are changing so fast that the easy targets your letters focused on are scarcely relevant. The senior people I know have ethics, intelligence, vision, environmental interests, daring and insights about political, economic and engineering realities.

The letters did not touch the big issues: adversarial and ossified posture of some unions, the politics and regulations workers compensation scams in various states, a government energy policy apparently aimed at consuming our U.S. oil as fast as possible so we will be more quickly dependent on foreign sources, subsidized gasoline that undermines adoption of alternatives (remember, posterity doesn't vote), recycling issues, traffic and population growth

and alternatives to cars, insurance costs, the role of style in public acceptance and hence societal impact of a new design, etc.

Ralph Nader's focus on retirement costs left over from the past in fact represent only one-thousandth of one percent of GM's costs. Tom Magliozzi extolled "make the buttons like the function," unaware that for nearly half a century aircraft carriers have used flap-like levers to control landing gears. Human factors engineering in the U.S. auto field is primitive but improving. (It is the design of controls on VCRs, not car interiors that defines zero on a scale of 0-10.) Other writers have pointed out how their hindsight is better than the foresight of industry a few years back.

All serious issues have pros and cons, and deserve careful, broad and

deep examination. I believe that the "Dear Detroit" letters did not do justice to the seriousness of the topic, nor did they demonstrate an attitude of building bridges and helping to seek realistic solutions, rather than building walls and finding public-pleasing targets.

Your publication is, in general, so well done that I found "Dear Detroit" not to be representative of what I had come to expect.

Paul B. MacCready
Chairman of the Board
AeroVironment Inc.

Correction

The designer credit for the Tandem Computer's 4500 Disk Subsystem [Gold Award Equipment] was incomplete in the 1992 I.D. Annual Design Review. Gene Yanku should have been listed as the project leader.

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Most 3D programs intimidated me because I felt I needed a pilot's license to use them. That's until I discovered Alias Sketch!™ for 3D illustration and design on my Mac. It made expanding on my initial idea easy. Sketch! even accepted my Illustrator® and FreeHand® files so I could pick up where I left off in 2D. Except now I was working in the real world of 3D perspective where I could view and change my design from any angle. I took to Sketch! like a rocket takes to flight. I felt like I was working with the 2D tools I was already used to — only in 3D.

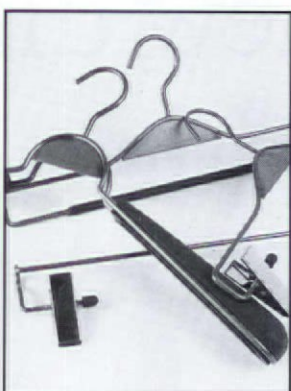


As I watched my rocket take shape before my eyes, it was as if I was sculpting it out of clay. This thing they call "NURBS geometry" gave me ultimate control over every line and curve. And when I placed a texture I created in Photoshop™ onto my rocket I got exactly the degree of realism I wanted. Sketch! took care of rendering the reflections, refractions and shadows — automatically. Finally, using the Match Backdrop tool I put my 3D rocket into the true perspective of a photograph. When the shadows fell into the picture my rocket was launched into a whole new dimension — effortlessly.

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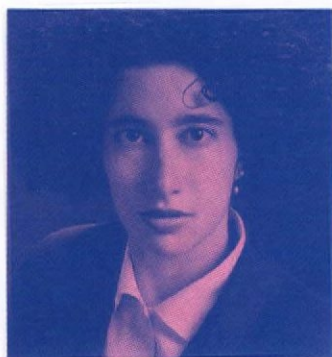
On a certain level every design is a political statement, although some are more overt than others. Whether it's a guerrilla graphics campaign, a corporate identity program, a gas-guzzling automobile or edible tableware, the motives behind each design reflect a social or economic point of view. At design conferences, practitioners wring their hands, frustrated with the notion that they are mere functionaries, barred from setting an agenda or calling the shots. They want a role beyond servicing the "marketing experts." How to attain this position forms the subtext of nearly every professional gathering.

But lately at I.D. we've noticed a hint of change.

In the recent political season, designers and artists of the activist group Women's Action Coalition rallied their skills as message-makers to deploy messages of their own. At the Democratic and Republican conventions, WAC members were on the scene with clever, hard-hitting images such as the poster on the cover of this magazine. Here were the "functionaries" raising their voices and taking control of the content.

When WAC's posters, signs and banners first arrived in our offices, we were moved to take an unusual step. In addition to presenting this work, we invited two of WAC's leading graphic designers to create a piece on the subject of the election (read: women and the election) for our pages. As could be expected, Bethany Johns and Marlene McCarty returned a tough commentary (see page 54) that is sure to incite controversy.

Not only was this year's election a call to action for some designers, the vagaries of the global economy spurred some dramatic changes within American corporations. Take Chrysler's new team-based approach to product design for its line of LH cars. The new cars



and the new approach to building them have been highly touted as symbols of Chrysler's "design renaissance." But are the changes real or cosmetic? Analyzing the hype, Phil Patton takes a look inside the development of the LH series and comes away with more questions than answers. On a broader front, John Heskett surveys design firms across the country and examines the currents and trends that will shape the design profession and designer's roles for the rest of the decade. Design's larger meaning may not always be obvious. But a fundamental shift in attitude toward designers may become a clear move for corporate America.

CHEE PEARLMAN

Expo

Ode to Interchanges

Houston's Highway Heaven

The most beautiful highway in America is the Sam Houston Tollway, which rings the outer reaches of Houston. At a time when the idea of parkways has been killed off by safety engineers and environmentalists, the Tollway soars up out of the Texas swamplands like an automotive aria singing the praises of that great shaper of men, suburban development.

This Texas Tollway is a sign of our times, combining stunning elegance with social ugliness. It is the third ring of highways to gird the amorphous Houston metroplex, acting as a rampart 15 miles West and North of downtown. The Harris County Tollway authority proudly

points out that, due to the completion of the road in 1990, "development of malls and shopping centers in newly created communities is on the increase," and office employment is expected to skyrocket to 100,000 by the end of the decade. What they are talking about are the exurban, or edge city crystal citadels of commerce that rise at the intersection of the Tollway with existing radial highways. The model for the new Houston this road is helping to build is The Galleria, the giant, mixed-use development located on the earlier ring road, Loop 610.

The Houston Tollway is thus just another thread in the wide-webbed carpet of wasteful development

being thrown over most city-adjacent areas of America. But what a brilliant thread! The Harris County engineers are obviously convinced Modernists. They render every functional component of their structures with simple, sculptural clarity. The roadways themselves are thin concrete slabs laid on top of Cor-ten steel beams. They are supported by concrete columns that expand as they rise and then clamp onto the roadway with either steel or concrete beams. Every knuckle, every connection and every difference in load is expressed. You can marvel at how little material can do so much work and trace the relationship between the actual surface of the road and all the construc-

The Sam Houston Tollway: sculptural clarity, but does it lead anywhere?

tion that is needed to allow this thin strip of high-speed transportation to sail over the roofs of future developments.

The most spectacular pieces of this automotive opera are found at interchanges with already existing highways. There the Tollway erupts into an almost Piranesian pile-up of ramps, some vaulting as high as 120 feet over the ground. The sweeps may be just the normal curves designed by traffic engineers to allow a car to make the standard 55-mile-per-hour transition from road to road, but the articulated paring down of all the elements makes them seem as if they are celebrating speed, not just accommodating it. At Interstate 10, the interchange becomes a gateway to and from Houston, an expression of the mobility fixed as a giant spatial assemblage at its (current) outer limits.

Below the Tollway, life goes on as usual. The broad right-of-way — characteristic of Houston highways — destines this 45-mile loop to a future of commercialized, anti-human chaos, though the height of the roadway at least mitigates some of the air and noise pollution usually associated with such constructions.

To drive under the Sam Houston and follow the lines of its beams as they are held up like flying acrobats by the arms of the concrete pillars, or to trace the dizzying array of ramps as they peel off the swooping datum of the main highway, is to be caught up in the magic of engineering. To turn one's head then to the sides of the road is to fall back into the broad and messy world of development, where the path of Manifest Destiny has been replaced with a beautiful road to nowhere. AARON BETSKY

Graphics High/Low

Thirst on Paper

Graphics of eye-popping intensity and bizarre typographic impossibility have long been the hallmark of Rick Valicenti, founder of the Chicago-based Thirst design studio. As well as inciting much discussion — and some scorn — about the future of graphic design with his many projects for commercial enterprises and cultural institutions, Valicenti has also seemingly pioneered the 21st-century paper sampler. No more staid graphics on endless sheaves of paper to be thrown, with guilty conscience, into the nearest yawning trash receptacle. Valicenti's samplers for Gilbert Paper are designed to be kept alongside books and magazines of interest, designed to be deciphered by the reader over time and reflection.

Indeed, it might well take a few patient readings of the Gilbert catalogues to pick up on the designer's deconstructivist wit — especially in the case of his latest project, which highlights various selections of the company's Esse paper. Although the designer has always leaned more toward free-form artistic expression than the hard sell, his previous projects for Gilbert were still recogniz-

able as promotional catalogues. His latest, however, is remarkable for its singular lack of paper-promo conventions — the tell-tale ring binder, the spartan type treatment.

In his words "an expression of mid-life," "a design opera," "a compendium, collection and scrapbook," Valicenti's latest, called "Give & Take," is a masterwork of self-expression, combined with not a little self-promotion. Granted, the opera may be *Tommy* rather than *Tosca*, but the content is no less artful. Willfully controversial, Valicenti has encountered considerable criticism from the design world's High Modernists. Called by some a purveyor of "Pop mysticism," the designer has countered by including clever low-culture references in his work. (To date Elvis, Madonna and Pee-Wee Herman — that post-Modern trinity — have figured in his designs.)

But publicity is publicity, whether good or bad, and Valicenti has manipulated both quite deftly. Panned for his controversial display of what was interpreted by some as emotion-as-promotion at the 1991 AIGA conference, the designer responded by using one vexed critic's scathing words on the front of an invitation to an exhibition of his own work. "Valicenti," it reads, "sat down stage center, legs dangling into the orchestra pit like some cross-dressed Judy Garland, and shamelessly exhibited his narcissism thinly disguised as passion." Dropped into the background is a pink and pixelated Judy Garland — camp *chanteuse* — heralding the opening of "Over the Rainbow," Valicenti's exhibition.

Multipaged and unbound like an



Valicenti by Valicenti



A deconstructivist wit at work in Rick Valicenti's samplers for Gilbert

artist's portfolio, Valicenti's latest creation for Gilbert is about the designer and his self-proclaimed quest for the perfect blend of "art and function." Well, the *art* is there in full force. (In fact, the plastic wrapper comes with an explicit caveat: "WARNING: This Collection of Words and Images May Be Seen as Art.") A faux De Stijl painting by Valicenti himself is captioned "Ceci n'est pas une Piet" — a double whammy, tongue-in-cheek reference to the Dutch painter Piet Mondrian and René Magritte's Surrealist statement. Photography, drawings and graphics merge in what can best be called a fairly hallucinatory *Gesamtkunstwerk*.

Once deciphered, "Give & Take" is also a somewhat sentimental

statement about friendship — particularly Valicenti's friendships with long-time collaborators Tony Klassen, Corinne Pfister, Michael Pappas, Michael Giammanco, Mark Stein and Jason Pettygrove. Narratives about his friends fill the pages. The reader discovers, in one instance, that friend Tony loathes Visa and local utility companies, but loves Jimi Hendrix's "Purple Haze."

Valicenti is prevented from getting too bogged down in ego glory by an omnipresent, self-deprecating sense of humor. Halfway through the visual experience of "Give & Take," a spread depicts a surprised-looking man in a "see no evil, hear no evil" pose. Valicenti has named it BASTA! ANDREA CODRINGTON

Architects in the Kitchen

Food for Thought

Like a Formula One car designed to set the pace and break the records, Coop Himmelblau's X-Time kitchens for the Ewe Kitchen Manufacturing Company of Austria are designed to challenge preconceived notions of food preparation. The Austrian architects, who have offices in Vienna and Los Angeles, have been designing kitchens for the company since 1974; each new model is a move toward something new, something not easily recognizable as the familiar place in which we spend so much time cooking, eating, cleaning and talking.

While kitchens are most familiar to us as built-in blocks of containers with faux-Colonial or Eurostyle facades, Coop Himmelblau's new

design recognizes that the kitchen is the dynamic hub of the house. X-Time is a multifunctional assemblage; its movable work surfaces, minibar, storage box, sink, dishwasher and stovetop are all supported by a stainless-steel column and beam. The structure and function are exposed; the materials — glass, stainless and blackened steel, artificial marble and perforated sheet metal — are tough and textural. X-Time's universal qualities will likely sustain rather than hinder diversity. (The kitchen's English name is derived from the German "Mal-Zeit," meaning "many times," or, in a slightly fudged translation, "bon appetit.")

It is no surprise that this potent

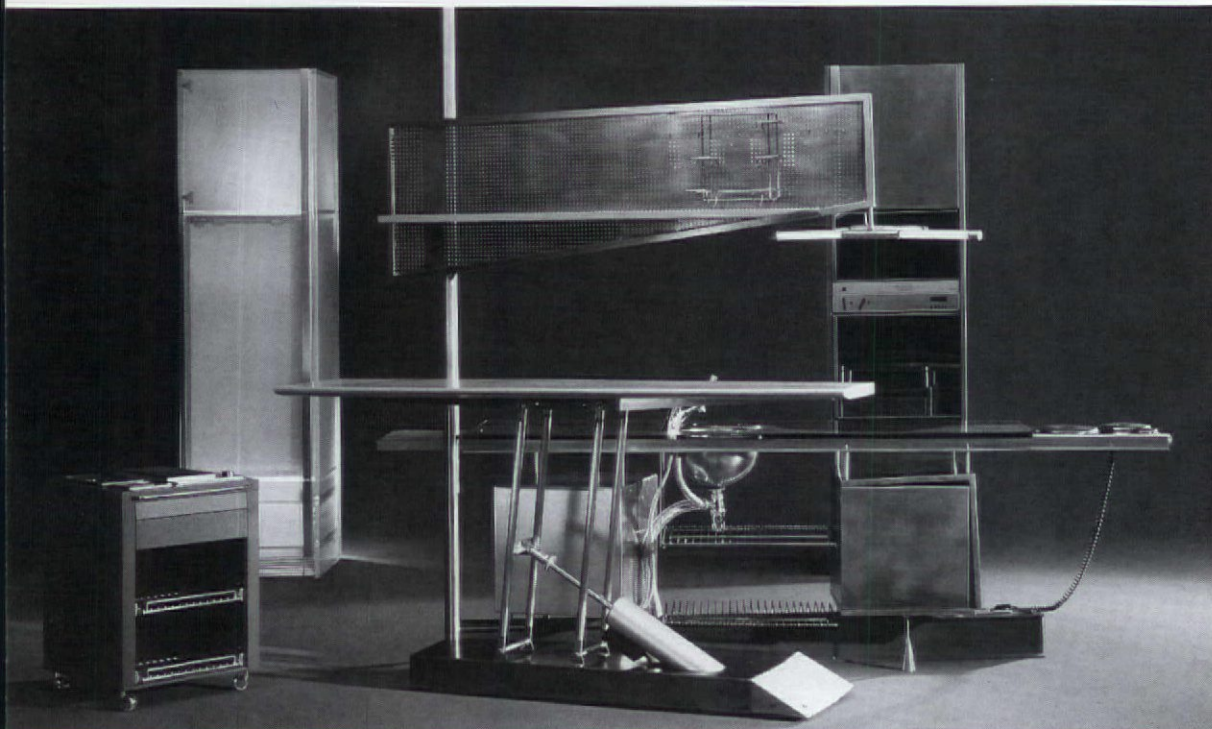
new model for the kitchen is offered by Coop Himmelblau, those eccentric Austrian architects who have consistently dared to question conventions of the built environment and defy traditional spatial and aesthetic notions. We are no longer in the '40s and '50s, when kitchens were designed as pristine models of efficiency; the nuclear family and its prefab residential digs are no longer the rule, but the exception. Yet little has been done to meet the less formulaic needs and desires of the nontraditional household. The firm's seminal design, the unrealized Open House of 1983, proposes that the relationship between a house's architecture and its inhabitants should be reciprocal; its giant spaceframe enclosing no predetermined functional hierarchy.

To Wolf Prix, who founded the firm with Helmut Swiczinsky, the process of design — large or small,

architecture or furniture — must be a conceptual endeavor. He believes that through conceptual projects, newly developed technologies and topologies can be integrated into their traditional manifestations. Prix laments that "there are no concepts anymore, just shapes." He cites Frank Gehry's recent bentwood furniture collection for Knoll (see *I.D.*, March/April 1992) as an exception; "it's not a fashion, it's a concept," says Prix, referring to Gehry's focused exploration of one material.

Although X-Time is currently in limited production in Austria and may soon be introduced to the American market, Prix considers it to be more of a prototype than a fully resolved model for kitchen design. It is a "laboratory or an experiment," he says, suggesting that pieces of X-Time might be "transplanted into a 'normal' kitchen." While X-Time's current incarnation may not appeal to everyone, many of its elements are adaptable to any kitchen. For example, a wheel-mounted electric oven was designed to be used in conjunction with the main assemblage; it can be rolled anywhere, keeping food warm and easily accessible. And what looks curiously like an ironing board is actually a countertop that can be adjusted to any height; its electric motor powers an axle on a threaded rod to raise and lower the work surface.

Coop Himmelblau's break with design orthodoxies has spawned many a fractured and fragmented form. But the pragmatic application of the firm's X-Time concept may better survive entry into the mainstream market. **ABBY BUSSEL**
A retrospective documenting the firm's work from 1965 to the present will open at the Centre Pompidou in December.



A freestanding assemblage of moving parts, the X-Time kitchen expresses dynamism and creativity



Suzette Sherman disposes of the paper vs. plastic debate

Eco Alert: Don't throw that dish away!

Paper vs. plastic

Paper is more ecological than plastic ... no plastic is better than paper ... no paper than plastic. Claims abound as to the environmental preference of paper vs. plastic, as the two schools of thought continue to publicly battle it out. Scientists who support plastic claim that paper creates a lot more pollution, while the other side claims that to eliminate chlorine as a bleaching agent in paper reduces its toxicity, beating out plastic by a far cry. Then there is one group's statistics that paper makes up the largest percentage of waste in landfills, whereupon the other group points out that such plastics as polystyrene actually take up more volume per item than paper. Paper supporters continue by pointing out the ability of a paper cup to biodegrade quickly, whereupon plastic supporters retort that with it leaching into landfill, the fast biodegradability of paper poisons

our essential aquifers.

Although the plastic vs. paper argument has been battling it out in the ring ever since ecological awareness hit the scene, the truth is, no one *really* knows which is better. To date there is no conclusive study that takes into consideration a complete life-cycle analysis of paper vs. plastic, starting with the extraction of raw material and following through to its disposal. Even when this is finally accomplished, recycling would then also have to be figured into the equation. McDonald's decision last year to switch from polystyrene to paper was prompted by the Environmental Defense Fund's study based primarily on the issues of waste reduction and recycling. If neither is yet known to be better, what is one to do?

Edible tableware

This does not allow us to throw our hands up in the air, shrug our shoulders

and continue to use whichever material suits our fancy. Instead, while we wait for science to catch up with us, we need to stretch our imaginations and come up with alternatives. When at the office, use a ceramic coffee mug instead of the standard styrofoam or paper cups. And when grocery shopping take a reusable bag. Think waste reduction. Think alternative materials.

The Taiwan SuGu Company recently developed a radical new material to make waste reduction easy: edible plates and bowls. This tasty tableware is made purely of grain (no additives or preservatives) that can be either eaten or disposed. Neither sweet nor salty, these containers can hold hot soup or cold cereal without altering its taste. Imagine the limitless possibilities for this new material.

The U.S. Navy is currently in the process of replacing paper and plastic utensils with this natural

product for future ecological disposal at sea. And a dog food company is altering the taste so dogs will devour their food and dish too. Some national parks will offer these containers to tourists for camping and picnic areas to solve littering problems and prevent contamination of lakes and streams.

Better yet, think of all those fast food places where we seem to dispose of as much volume in plastic or paper as we have consumed in food. Development is even underway for edible plates at a major U.S. fast-food franchise. So the next time we bite into that burger, we might be able to think alternative materials. And instead of licking our plates clean, we can go ahead and gobble them up. ★

The Taiwan SuGu Company can be contacted at: 886/2/982-7496, phone; or 886/2/988-5097, fax. Its edible products are not yet available in the U.S.

Marshall Blonsky deciphers this year's paramilitary plaything

The Super Soaker: Blood is Thicker than Water

Twenty-five years ago when I was a pale teen growing up still wet in Kansas City, the thing I (all of us) feared most was to be thought a little *pischer*, as they say in French. The little *pischer* (whom we shall henceforth call LP) is the one who, on the first date, puts the keys in the ignition only to hear the engine fail to turn over. An LP (today we'd say nerd), has, in later life, any job that the person of his fantasies would go "yuck" over. Even the BPs (big *pischers*, as they're called even today in Hollywood) worry over imminent reversion to LP status ("THAT'S NO OFFER! THOSE ARE LITTLE PISCHER POINTS!")

For all the LPs out there came, a year ago, a new commodity, multi-colored as Joseph's coat, fluorescent as the most vivid cartoon: the Super Soaker. A garish semblance of Sigourney Weaver's megagun in *Aliens*, the Super Soaker is a hydrostatic, pump-gauge water gun able to shoot 50 feet in a single squirt. First introduced in 1990 as the Drencher, the gun sold a modest 500,000 units. But renamed a year later for our hyperreal times, Super Soaker found itself one spring night in the hands of Johnny Carson, who, taking aim at his staff, made it fun for all ages. Backed up by a \$1 million ad campaign, the gun passed the \$2 million sales mark that year — and the \$20 million mark so far this year — making it the number-one toy nationally and transforming its manufacturer, Larami Corp., of Philadelphia, from a LP of a toy company into the darling of its strapped industry. Super Soaker is to the early '90s what the Cabbage Patch

baby was to the '80s.

What has made it the edge of the wedge? One of the million-dollar commercials advertising it is called "Terminator." An LP kid in glasses gets pushed around by the other boys. He suits up in tough-guy apparel and kicks in the door: "I'm back." There he is in dark glasses, black leather, slicked-back hair, Super Soaker ready. It's Arnold — or is it? A metaphor is in play here. To this LP is transported the name and pose of a Terminator, the commercial pretends to mimic a reality, to unveil a truth (its destiny, said Aristotle).

But which truth? That our frail hero is actually a lethal cyborg in waiting, requiring only a leather jacket and gun to be revealed. Jacques Derrida taught that such a transport can detour, not arrive, fail to unveil — in short, deconstruct. Such a dead letter is this spot. In an effort, I think, to avoid any suggestion the gun is a true ghetto weapon, the kid is so white he's blonde, a miniature golf pro to whom there could never be assigned the traits of an urban terrorist such as Schwarzenegger.

Another dead letter is "Buffy" in which a Valley girl of that name turns away Fat Boy and Eager Boy at the door of her popular-crowd pool party. Dressed as the Blues Brothers, they return to squirt her, squirt everyone. But they're dressed as comic heroes Belushi and Aykroyd only from the waist up. Below, they're wearing swimming trunks, which look like boxer shorts!

The Super Soaker commercials seek to offer LPs the name of BPs, transport to the little squirts of America the identity of a Robin-Hood

style Avenger. In so doing, they activate a code whose power springs from impossible social promotion. But really these spots, albeit sotto voce, are telling the big and little dorks of America they can't be heroes. The gun itself is telling the same story. Larami Executive Vice President Al Davis had the gun designed so that the strong can't put more air pressure in it than the weak. He also designed it so that it can't knock anything over. "The velocity of power, the strength isn't there," he told me. "It just shoots a lot of water. It shoots long but it doesn't shoot strong." A "consumable," as they say in the industry (designed to fall apart), the gun is even more consumable than that — it was designed to deconstruct. Seems the little squirt can't win, even with a gun.

The gun itself is bulbous, a contraption of bilious green water tubes and yellow pressure chamber atop orange hand-pump and yellow handle. (It has to offend the aesthetic. Law mandates that toy guns be far from verisimilitude so as not to be taken for real.) With its red strap on and both barrels full of water, the gadget has a lot of heft (eight pounds). Although it laughably evokes the guns of *Ghostbusters*, its generosity of parts and weight cross the barrier between sign and real, evoking the Terminators of the world. Evoking the media, in short. And that is the gun's destiny.

Look at them on the street, urban warriors, ghetto kids, their Super Soakers strapped on their backs. Or see them, blondies in the suburbs, equally coplike, "serious"

— because one is a killer. The name for this utter identification with a role — this inability to see the very garishness of the color, the ultimate simplicity of the design, the shoddiness of the commodity — is reification. May the force be with you, may the media reify you. Holding the gun, squirting, squirted, you are assimilated to media, not yourself (whatever that was) any longer, but a rigid simulacrum of the media — a fetish. You have as much relationship to your model as a woman's shoe, adored by the pervert, has to her somatic presence.

Not to say the strident experience is without consequence. On May 29, at midnight of this year, 15-year-old Christopher Miles soaked a man in Boston's inner-city Grove Hall district. The angered adult pulled a real gun and shot Miles dead. Boston Mayor Raymond L. Flynn asked stores to stop selling the weapon, three chains complying. The next day in Harlem, a soaked adult shot his "playful" assailant. This time the boy lived.

In New Jersey, Super Soakers led to a riot at an MTV concert. And back in Boston, a woman and her





May the force be with you,
may the media reify you.
Holding the gun, squirting,
squirted, you are assimilated to media, not yourself any longer, but a rigid simulacrum of the media — a fetish.

daughter reported bleach in the eyes from kids shooting the gun. A threshold had been crossed. The Super Soaker, already able to enrage, could be filled with stronger stuff than water.

"The toy maker gives a product liability response," Mayor Flynn's

spokesman, Neil Sullivan, told me. "Because it's neon-colored, it couldn't be mistaken for an assault weapon. The fact of the matter is, the toy is designed to give a young person the sensation of powerful gun play." Not only because of its affiliation to the media; not only because of its heft, notching and pump action; even street talk contributes to the sensation. "Wetting him down" is cityspeak for using an assault weapon.

Do not believe the received idea that violent representations are

without issue in the real. Jacques Lacan once said that the Imaginary (the state of identification with images) sets you on your feet. Images do things although they are, themselves, struck with unreality. But maybe the Boston and New York incidents tell us that surroundings, commodities, photo and film resonate with one another.

Few today want to corrode images with the decoding power of intellect. Few of us want to live with image faces as asignifying, asubjective. Few want to know that such

and such is only an image, that one is not in love or a Terminator, that above all, this face — Arnold Schwarzenegger's, say — will never really be there for you. In a non-technical language, Larami's Davis understands this, for when asked why he thought the gun had taken off, he pointed to the killing and wounding controversy. "That's the only reason I can think of that the thing has caught on," he said (although not in Boston). The code of the toy touches what is not coded. Rage. Death. ★



Public Facilities

En Fin! French Street Furniture in NYC

The French are masters at housing the human body. When it comes to raising the most intimate of acts to an art form, their reputation is well founded. With this in mind, it comes as no surprise that New York's experimental public pay toilets were the product of Frenchman Jean-Francois Decaux, C.E.O. of J.C. Decaux, Europe's largest developer of "street furniture."

Tall, gunmetal gray and sturdy beyond belief, the toilets, and their

roomier companion units for the handicapped, dotted three Manhattan street corners, where they remained during a trial run until late October. The shape was inspired by the Morris Column, an advertising kiosk first installed in Paris over 100 years ago. The '90s version rises 15 feet to a hexagonal roof trimmed in fleur-de-lis, punctuated by six lion heads and capped with a small cupola and spire. Inside this retro shell is a crisp, high-tech interior. Its discreet,

spare design recalls the encapsulated spaces found on airplanes and boats, complete with round mirror and cast-aluminum toilet bowl. There are differences, however. The faucet automatically releases soapy water onto awaiting hands, followed by clear water and a pleasant blow dry. Similarly, after each use, the unit locks itself for 55 seconds as the head retracts into the wall to be sterilized and steam-dried, while high-pressure water cleans the floor. To

Alexandra Anderson-Spivy defrosts a Finnish design star

Archives: Wirkkala's Mass-Produced Ice Sculpture

Furniture, graphics, even some products have earned their practitioners high profiles, but packaging designers still retain almost complete anonymity. Do people actually think of Raymond Loewy when they pick up a Crest toothpaste tube? And how many people know that Tapio Wirkkala was the mastermind behind the most poetic mass-produced liquor container yet made, the Finlandia vodka bottle?

Other companies have enlisted artists to define a product's image through special advertising campaigns. Baron de Rothschild had artists — Andy Warhol among them — create fanciful labels for "editions" of his wines, raising the prices accordingly. And many a contemporary artist's version of the Absolut bottle has appeared on both placard and magazine cover. But few companies have produced as apposite an

object as did the Finnish National Distillery when it hired Tapio Wirkkala to redesign its vodka bottles.

The bottle Wirkkala designed in 1968 for exported Finlandia Vodka is a prime example of his versatility in product design. It quite marvelously fulfills the Bauhaus dream of producing universally affordable and beautiful mass-produced goods. This distinctive bottle, which adapts the properties of melting ice to the transparency and malleability of glass, combines plasticity with artistry to become an elegant sculptural metaphor for the liquor it holds.

The bottle's pellucid, icicle surface conveys chilled purity so efficiently that it has remained in production for 24 years. Though the Finnish National Distillery has slightly modified the design and has more than once considered retiring it, the company has never been able to

find a more effective way to package its product.

The vodka bottle is, of course, only one item in this designer's vast repertoire. First trained in the 1930s as a sculptor, Wirkkala dominated Finnish design for 40 years. Wirkkala's creative, diplomatic and organizational abilities made him instrumental in the worldwide success of postwar modern Scandinavian design, when design was Scandinavia's finest artistic expression. When the protean designer died in 1985, Jack Lenor Larsen called him "my first choice for the best designer of objects of our time."

And it's no wonder. Wirkkala designed Finnish bank notes and postage stamps. For Airam, Ltd., he redesigned the lightbulb into a diamond shape and in 1951 his laminated, leaf-shaped wooden planter was declared "that year's most

beautiful object in the world." As longtime resident artist at the Iittala glassworks, Wirkkala created many famous designs for glassware, among them several based on melting ice that related to his Finlandia vodka bottle design. From 1951, when he helped organize the Finnish entry at the Milan Triennale (that year Finland won more awards than any other country), until his death, Wirkkala represented the naturalistic functionalism of Finnish design to the world.

The ultimate bearded outdoorsman, Wirkkala was one of the last masters of traditional handicrafts and a late, northern romantic embodiment of the arts-and-crafts spirit. He may have spent summers isolated in a Lapland cabin but he also designed with equal ease in America with Raymond Loewy in the early '50s; in England with

keep all those moving parts working, each location was checked twice a day by two technicians. This kind of local maintenance is costed into the local budgets of many European cities. However, the upkeep of Decaux's toilets may prove too much for Manhattan; a city that can ill-afford to clean its streets — never mind its street furniture.

For the past 10 years, Decaux has worked to adorn 750 European cities with his street furniture. He has fine-tuned his design, paying close attention to the problems of homelessness, drugs and crime that have shut down public toilets in the past. As a result, the interior of his experimental loo is

only large enough to accommodate one person at a time. The sink is too small to wash anything other than your hands. The units operated only during extended business hours.

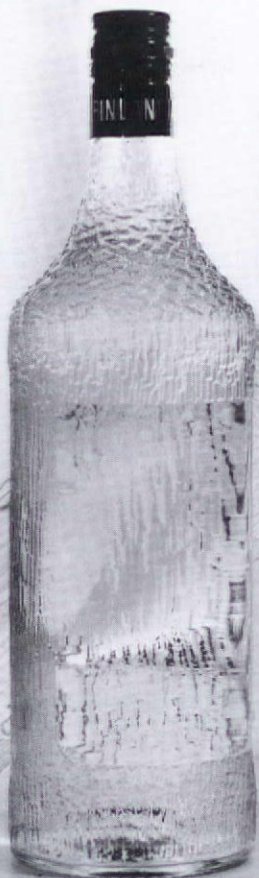
After 15 minutes the door automatically opens, and it cannot be kept locked from the inside. The 25-cent coin box is cast into the structure and the wheelchair unit is only accessible with a magnetic card.

If, pending a review process, the project is approved, a combination of public and private funds will be needed to pay for the borough-wide installation. The toilets are then to be sustained by advertising, French style, on the Morris columns. **LESLIE SHERR**

Rosenthal; in Venice at Venini in the late '50s; and in Germany and in Mexico and Milan. Gio Ponti became one of his closest colleagues. Wirkkala brought his inventive exuberance and his craft to bear equally on precious objects and the most common things. But no matter how elegant the products Wirkkala designed, his creative philosophy remained socialist; his desire to design objects accessible to everyone never changed.

When it came to glass, Wirkkala made the molds himself. "I take them to the glassworks and they're blown there and in a couple of hours I have the finished object in my hand," he said. "If I don't succeed it's my fault!"

Ironically, though its bottle design is so memorable, Finlandia has not been able to capitalize on Wirkkala's fame since he died. Because the artist's death was related to the complications of alcohol, Wirkkala's family, who still receives royalties from the design, has forbidden any association. ✱



Exhibition

Montage and Modernity

Alexander Alland's photomontage *Approach to Manhattan* (below) is one of many works in the exhibition *Montage and Modern Life: 1919-1942* to depict the prototypical American family inhabiting a Modernist utopia. In this case, a white middle-class family with two children walk hand-in-hand across a steel-girded footbridge toward a vista of skyscrapers. The view of the scene is cinematic: the family members, symmetrically and dramatically framed by the cabled supports of the bridge, are seen from behind, their shadows cast on the wooden-planked pathway. The gleaming city — an impossibly spotless, ghetto-free New York — spreads ahead like a real-life Oz, full of adventure, excitement and limitless opportunity.

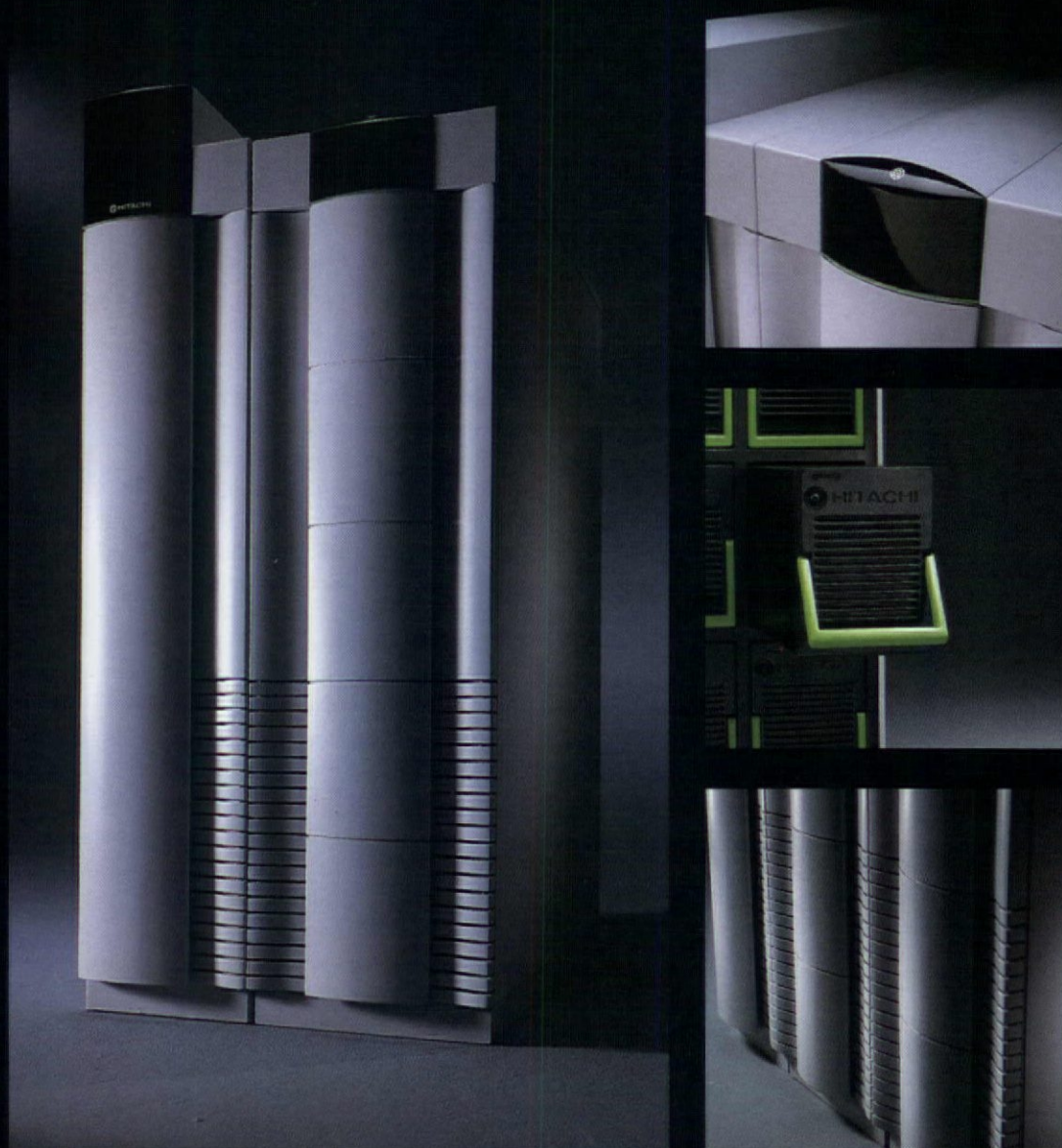
Curated by a group of critics including Maud Lavin, Annette Michelson, Sally Stein, Christopher Phillips and Matthew Teitelbaum, the exhibition explores the many ways in which montage became the appropriate medium for an increasingly urbanized, industrialized culture, not unlike the role of television and other mass media in today's society. Subdivided into nine sections dealing with different aesthetic and social aspects of the medium, the exhibition is itself a kind of montage that thrives on juxtapositions and often contradictory views of life between the world wars.

Indeed, not all depictions of the modern city are as up beat as Alland's. Seen in the same context as *Approach to Manhattan*, the more critical work of designer Lester Beall strikes perhaps a familiar chord in today's urban dweller. His 1940 poster for the New York Housing Authority (above) reads "Slums Breed Crime," and depicts the ever-ready police force battling urban moral decay.

STEVEN CANINE

Montage and Modern Life: 1919-1942 which opened at the Boston ICA, is currently on view at Les Expositions du Palais des Beaux-Arts in Brussels through January 3; a catalogue is available through MIT Press.





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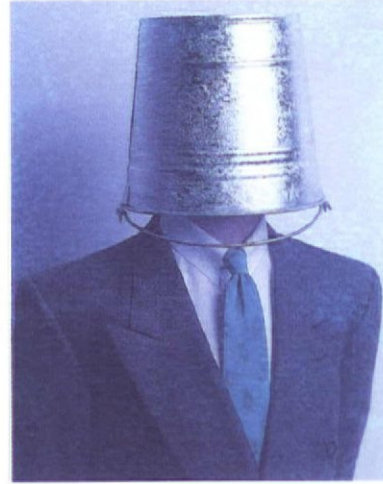
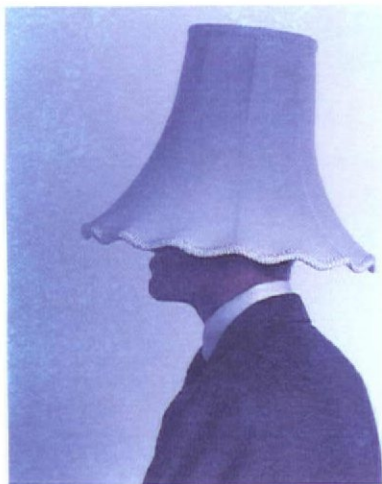
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TO CATCH UP TO US**

CAN WE GO BACK TO THE FUTURE?

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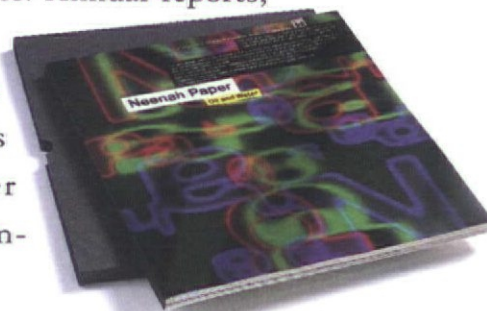


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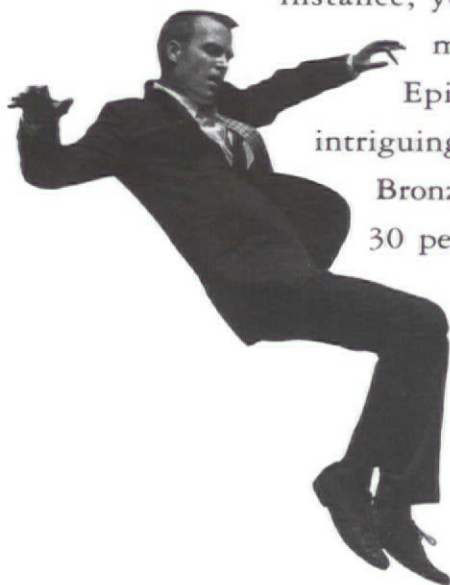
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Exhibition

Borek Sipek's Bohemian Rhapsody

Keeping his studio in Amsterdam has not prevented Borek Sipek from being hailed Czechoslovakia's premier designer. Late in 1991 the celebrated émigré was summoned to consult with then-President Havel's advisers to look at the possibility of embellishing the presidential rooms at Prague Castle. If anything comes of it, Havel will have done for Czech design what François Mitterrand did for French design when he appointed Philippe Starck to furnish rooms in the Elysée Palace.

Sipek's work is Bohemian in spirit, rejecting the anonymity of industrial design. He prefers to talk about the aura, mythology and romance of things. Take, for example, his drinking glasses for the German company,

Anthologie Quartett. A clear conical bowl is supported on a colored shaft, but the shaft pierces the cone and continues its upward journey to rise above the rim of the glass, like the stamen of an orchid. It may be perilous to drink from, but the risk is worth it. By referencing the nectar-drinking gods, these glasses deify their users.

A recent exhibition of Sipek's work at the Vitra Design Museum was accompanied by an essay in the catalogue describing the scene at the Prague Museum of Applied Arts, where a Sipek chair for Vitra is set alongside work from 1830 Bohemia. Although it is rare to see the work of today's design heroes in any historical context, it can be illuminating,

showing that the designer has a place other than that which he occupies by virtue of his contemporary celebrity. It happened when the work of Philippe Starck culminated the timeline of two centuries of French decorative arts exhibited at the Cooper-Hewitt Museum in 1989 to commemorate the bicentennial of the French Revolution. Suddenly Starck had a past. *He belonged.*

Sipek's plans for Prague Castle must belong. There is good political reason for this project as the Czechs forge their new democratic identity. Sipek is perhaps not the obvious candidate, however. A resident of the Netherlands with clients in Italy and Germany, he is very much a citizen of the design world.

Glassware by the Robert Mapplethorpe of contemporary design — Borek Sipek

None of this is news to Prague Castle. Tomáš Masaryk, president during the 1920s, commissioned the architect Jozef Plecnik to reappoint the building when Czechoslovakia was first an independent republic. Plecnik was not a Czech but a Slovenian, and Masaryk wished to give expression to a pan-Slavic ideal. The appointment of Sipek can similarly be seen as a broader European gesture as well as a sop to nationalist sentiment. For his part, Sipek rejects the latter role. "I don't like national movements, even the Slavistic movements. There's so much change now. It's impossible to speak about 'Italian Design' or 'Dutch Design.' The influence is so international."

At Prague Castle, the interiors are to be redecorated to a masterplan by Sipek. His aim is not to provide a statement of contemporary Czech culture, although this will inevitably be one result. "I will work from my own starting point, although I will always reference Renaissance and Baroque building. So it could be that my work will share some of the same interpretation that Plecnik had."

Despite Havel's failure to win reelection last July, work is scheduled for completion at the Prague Castle by the end of 1993. The timetable seems optimistic given financial constraints. Two of Sipek's clients, Triade and Vitra, are expected to donate items, although to date there is little prospect of funds to commission new work. More substantial assistance will be needed if Prague is to follow the Elysée in using design to make a statement of national prowess.

HUGH ALDERSEY-WILLIAMS
Sipek's glasswork is on view through December at the Galerie Binnen in Amsterdam.

Graphics

Annual reports: corporate face-lift or smoke screen?

Michael Rock

About this time every year, big corporations, and the design studios that serve them, begin gearing up for a yearly ritual, the annual report. The seeds planted now, in the dead of winter, will flower prolifically this spring with a bumper crop of 64-page brochures. In preparation for the harvest, I dusted off a pile of last year's reports to see where the art of annual-report design was leading. My collection, a pile of over 100 such brochures, appeared in my mailbox last spring with the numbing regularity of Publisher's Clearing House dispatches. Re-examining that tower of expensively printed paper, I am struck with the level of proficient mundaneness they demonstrate. American corporations are spending an estimated \$4 billion annually on the design, photography, production and distribution of annual reports. But despite the huge investment, they are not using designers to rethink the way their publications work. Instead they have limited them to producing decorative PR campaigns.

An annual report contract is a prize plum to many graphic designers. The annual is often the one corporate publication management is mentally prepared to expend significant resources — or sufficient resources, depending if you are the designer or the manager. There is a budget allocated each year and a precedent for the expenditure (reports can run from around \$2 to as high as \$10 per copy). Often the AR is the only regular project for which the corporation hires an outside consultant. In addition, professional egos may boost the desire for an especially slick presentation as they are perceived as a point of comparison between companies and a direct representation of the management. Designers are not necessarily hired to rethink the problem or reorganize the information, but rather are a tool for sprucing up the CEO's gospel.

The annual report as we know it has been required since the Security and Exchange Act of 1934 demanded business be more forthcoming after the debacles of the stock market crash. Since then the report has been transformed from a financial statement into a major public relations project. It is perceived as a forum for management, especially the CEO, to directly address the stockholder and the analyst. From its earliest days, companies have used the annual to put a positive spin on the year's numbers. "It is no exaggeration to

say that it is difficult to find one out of ten annual corporate reports that is complete, clear and fundamentally honest; and probably there is not one out of five that is not misleading, ambiguous, vague or evasive," snarled Harper's journalist Anderson Farr in 1934. As the annual report's role as a promotional tool has grown, the veracity of the content is increasingly called into question. As with the rhetoric of the political campaign, the audience tends to view the message critically, i.e., read between the lines (or through the designed surface) in an attempt to decipher the hidden meaning that is glossed over. Fifty-eight years after Farr chastened companies for their ambiguous reportage, John Byrne of *Business Week* remarked "Given the show-biz nature of some reports, it's a small wonder that so many people view these corporate missives with skepticism."

Aside from the general level of skepticism with which they are often received, recent surveys reported in the *Wall Street Journal* have indicated that of all annual reports mailed to stockholders, over half are never even opened and of the half that are, less than half are ever read. Other studies have indicated that the average reader spends only five minutes or less looking it over. Analysts routinely report reading only the financial information at the back, bypassing the rhetorical "front section" all together. These facts reveal a level of cynicism, boredom or disinterest that hardly justifies the enormous effort and expense.

The gloss-over glossy

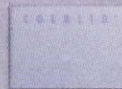
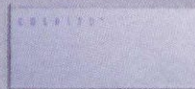
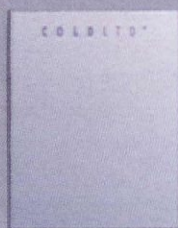
The sheer amount of time and money shoveled into an object that lasts only 12 months and is obsolete by the time it is printed is remarkable. The luxuriously printed brochure becomes merely a monument to the management of the company. As critic Carol Squires notes in an article about annual report photography, "It's one time when a corporation can tell its own version of reality with no pesty journalists or unfriendly outsiders interpreting the information." Flipping through any of the books gives a pretty good idea of the management-centered view of the world. If mentioned at all, employees are usually referred to more as troublesome logistical data than as corporate brethren. Caterpillar Corporation devoted exactly one sentence to their bitter labor dispute with the UAW that has devastated striking communities in

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the Midwest. The few employee photographs are embarrassing constructions of fictional racial and gender diversity — diversity that apparently stops at the office door. Executive portraits are uniformly white and male.

In the crop of annuals I reviewed this season (chosen by a very unscientific semi-random sample from the Fortune 1000), the format was monotonously consistent. Management is highly aware of the expected form, and aside from the occasional oddball stunt — like McDonalds' pseudo-newspaper — few of the reports deviated from the standard 8.5 x 11, 64 to 78-page glossy photographic variety. Designers were rarely allowed to restructure the form or conventional use of the brochures. While almost every report boasted recycled papers (usually recycled coated sheets are in the financial sections only), not one significantly reduced the dimensions or page count with more thoughtful planning. And while most companies crowed about their international perspective, only a miniscule number offered multilingual versions to back up their claims.

As is often the case with corporate clients, the base problems — how to get financial information to the public, how to reduce the amount of energy and waste involved, how to better address the wildly diverse markets the annual report is supposed to conquer — are off-limits to the designers. Barred from redefining the use of the object, designers have been relegated to redecorating, packaging, creating illusory difference or to constructing an elaborate masquerade. For instance, General Motors lost over \$1 billion last year, yet its annual report addresses issues of growth and revitalization with hardly a word about the plant closings or the 70,000 former GM employees on the dole. Corporations pay designers to produce packages to maintain what is often management's self-promotional lie.

Despite all the money flying around, the packages that businesses are getting from their designers are pretty mundane and pedestrian ones. While claims of "innovation," "efficiency" and "quality" pepper the language of every report, the design is practically indistinguishable from one to the next. Companies adopt fancy design to signify innovation, not to be innovative. It is a clear example of the fetishization of design. Management either makes a statement by the absence of design, i.e.,

"We are a plain old company, plugging along; your money is safe in our careful, conservative hands." No wild, irresponsible behavior here. It's the adoption of a folk persona. (For an example of this see Wrigley's report that looks as if it came directly from the word processor.) Or on the other hand, management adopts the daring, break-the-rules approach. This category encompasses the designer-look signifying "we are young, bright, bold, innovative. We have ideas." (See the MCI report that co-opts its style from a Pepsi commercial.) The presence or absence of premeditated design becomes a signifying quality of the report.

Candy-coated information

Decoration, marketing image and propaganda are not terms we graphic designers usually feel comfortable associating with our profession. We often relegate that kind of activity — lifting our noses disdainfully — to the distasteful fields of marketing or advertising. Yet because we are barred from the informational problems of the annual report, the work that designers do is primarily marketing or advertising driven. It is certainly not problem-solving in any conventional sense of that phrase. The real role of much of graphic design is grafting elaborate identities onto products. In the annual report, the product is broadly the corporation, and specifically the management team, but it could just as easily be a computer, a candy bar or a pair of jeans.

Articles with titles like "Annual Obfuscation," "Deciphering Annual Reports," "Show Business as Usual," in the business periodicals belie the conventional attitudes toward annual reports. The popular press refers to them as phony PR stunts designed to hide the hard facts. Designers are not spared in these diatribes. Design is perceived as the candy-coating covering the bad news. It's another case of design being marginalized by business and seen by both sides — management and audience — as at best a superficial face-lift or at worst a smoke screen. In most cases the creative work of the designer is rightfully dismissed, and the real creativity is attributed to the accountants in their masterful manipulation of the books. ✱

Michael Rock is a graphic designer at the New Haven design firm *From Word To Deed* and an assistant professor at the Yale School of Art.

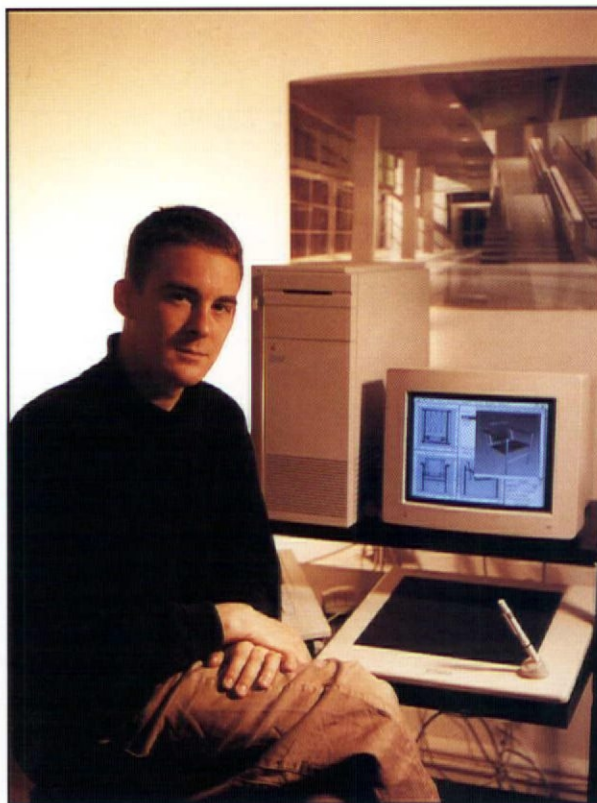
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Furniture

Furniture manufacturers awaken to find the ADA

Michael Wolf

The recent implementation of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) sent a wave of fear through the corporate community over cost and imposition of the changes they would need to make to comply with the legislation. While a business owner may be overwhelmed by the implications of the ADA in an already stressful climate, a 1991 Harris Poll indicates that public attitudes toward the disabled are growing more sympathetic.

In spite of a two-year warning on the ADA's implementation, office furniture manufacturers are just now scurrying to produce refined products that conform to new regulations. For manufacturers targeting this market, statistics on the disabled community forecast promising numbers. The Census Bureau reveals that 16.7 percent of the current U.S. population is affected by a physical or mental disability, with projections that by the year 2000, a third of the population will either have a disability or be 65 or older. Also, 29 percent of persons with disabilities claim some college education. Two-thirds of those disabled under 65 years old are not working, although two-thirds of that group allegedly want to work. Of that group, 23 percent claim their reason for not working is the lack of necessary equipment.

With a labor force that is both shrinking and aging, workers with disabilities will be much needed in the workplace. Considering the added portion of this population nearing the elderly mark, there's an increasing demand for furniture that offers maximum adjustability to satisfy special needs.

In spite of the myriad configurations of sophisticated systems furniture, facility planners exist in a virtual wasteland when it comes to preparing a facility to meet the ADA code. Desk surfaces, for example, are typically at the wrong height for wheelchairs. While the large contract furniture manufacturers have not been paving the way for ADA-conforming products, rehabilitation engineer Lou Esposito claims there is no dearth of non-contract products geared for the disabled. In his frequent role of consulting to state and federal vocational agencies, Esposito researches products available for people with special needs. (By his latest tally there are 17,000 products.) Esposito regularly matches products to disabled users. For example, he will locate a keyboard designed for single-handed use for a data entry worker who has lost the use of one hand but wants to be on the job.

Esposito's knowledge confirms the adage that "necessity is the mother of invention." Most products currently on the market, he finds, were first designed by the people who needed them. What routinely happens is that these original makeshift designs develop as far as they can without the technology a large company provides. Then a manufacturer adopts them and adds the dimensions of refinement, mass production and marketing expertise to introduce the product to the retail world.

In the future, a large percentage of the disabled workforce will perform their jobs at home. With the established, growing trend of large corporations toward work-at-home solutions, products for this market should be forthcoming. AT&T, for example, has more than 10 percent of its Chicago-area employees working at home, where they can set up a "virtual office" for \$4,000 (versus \$20,000 to set up that employee in a corporate office). But the disabled person headed for "cocooning," or creating a workplace in the home, faces special considerations. This individual seeks another level called "sub-cocooning," wherein every tool for optimal task performance must also be positioned for easy access.

Industry response

The need to produce innovative alternatives has already hit computer technology, spawning new keyboard designs in particular. While inventors have been touting for decades the theory that a sensible keyboard would look much different from today's standard, little had changed until now. Designers mindful of both the ADA regulations and the concern about Repetitive Stress Injuries (RSI) have yielded some interesting variations on the same theme. (According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, some 185,000 RSI or Cumulative Trauma Disorders (CTD) reported in 1990 represent an eight-fold increase over 1982.) But interest in altered designs is more likely generated by the onslaught of court cases than the ADA. One example of a radical keyboard change is the "chordal" system, which produces each character by striking several keys simultaneously, as a pianist strikes notes to create a chord. This system can be operated with a single hand.

Though such companies are brainstorming to create alternatives in technology, few large furniture manufacturers have tackled accommodation.



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Advance knowledge that regulations would be different did not compel most to take more than a reactive stance on a market apparently earmarked for expansion. In spite of the big manufacturers' press releases boasting products with supreme adaptability, they're mostly re-hyping long-established lines. Considering the two-year span from ADA passage to its implementation, the few industry offerings hardly illustrate a leap into the future.

In contrast, the Reuter Overhead, a workstation storage unit Knoll introduced last March, beautifully re-invents overhead storage. Its elegant curvilinear front recedes above the unit, and its pneumatic action door that users operate from a sitting or standing position with the flip of a finger provides a pragmatic ADA solution, at no expense to design. Both Knoll and Herman Miller offer height-adjustable worksurfaces, but they don't offer the broad flexibility of a new product called MYDESC from Rhamdec, Inc. of Mountain View, California. The "go-anywhere" desk that swivels, tilts and pivots through an infinite number of positions is made by a young firm for under \$400, garnering a lot of attention since ADA implementation.

Of these contract furniture makers, the company behaving most proactively toward ADA passage is Steelcase. In keeping with its "healthy office" concepts, Steelcase educates its engineers — even its factory workers — on ADA standards, and a forthcoming hotline will answer callers' questions about ADA-complying products. In addition, the company's Casecraft division has stretched its customization policy, so that designers, upon request, develop optimal workplace solutions for an individual with a disability. Customizing may result in desks with longer legs to accommodate wheelchairs or special drawer pulls for people with limited dexterity.

Flexibility, the industry's latest buzzword, has long been primary to interior designer/space planner Susan Carter of Carter and Company, Wellesley, Massachusetts. Guided by a number of fundamental principles, she interviews every worker, disabled or not, to uncover specific needs and work styles. This assessment ultimately shapes the design strategy. Carter initiated this interviewing process because of the vast possibilities of system furniture configuration. She sees the coming of age of modular furniture as a boon to

current ADA regulations because it allows an office to be easily customized or reconfigured for a reasonable sum. "Who could benefit more from these specialized office environments than people with special needs?" she asks.

Changes cost little

While the mention of ADA regulations ruffles so many, the issue is less daunting when essential data is made clear, says Carter, who also consults for Steelcase. Studies on accommodation actually reveal that the average cost of providing for an employee with a disability is under \$50, fifty percent of the time and less than \$500, sixty-nine percent of the time. The business owner also benefits from an annual tax credit (and a second one, if it's a small business) for altering a facility.

When planning for people with disabilities, certain design considerations become more prominent. Wheelchair accessibility and potential for conversation in American sign language (signing) are possible when aisles are six feet wide. People who exercise signing need strong lighting, as their language is loaded with nuance. A space for the hearing impaired emphasizes color and texture because of enhanced visual capacity.

Some active in the design community believe that the ADA puts pressure on industrial designers to create products that apply universal design (i.e., the principle of designing products for people with a wide range of abilities). If this concept is truly realized, a five year old can manage an item (i.e., a door handle) just as well as a ninety-five year old. Since ADA passage, Carter and colleagues argue that industrial designers are compelled to stretch their horizons and produce more sophisticated materials for ADA users. One can argue that ADA passage emphasizes universal design, or that industrial designers should have already forged this specialized product path. Whether sparked by the ADA or not, integrating flexibility with function and form can only fortify the products American designers bring to the marketplace. For the giant furniture manufacturers like Herman Miller, Knoll and Steelcase, this pursuit holds the promise of additional revenue, but in exchange, it is likely to exact the price of inventiveness. ★

Michael Wolf is editor in chief of the Workstation Report, a Chicago-based newsletter covering the furniture industry.



From left to right: Johnny "The Face" Carter, Freddy "The Fish" Larson, and the unfortunate Larry "The Target" Maxwell.

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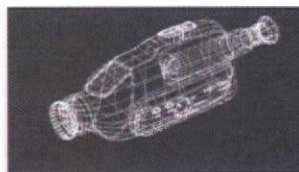
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Ideas

Gifts that keep on giving

Clive Dilnot

"The private giving of presents has degenerated to a social function exercised with rational bad grace, careful adherence to the prescribed budget, skeptical appraisal of the other and the least possible effort. Real giving had its joy in imagining the joy of the receiver. It means choosing, expending time, going out of one's way, thinking of the other as a subject: the opposite of distraction. Just this hardly anyone is now able to do. At best they give what they would have liked themselves, only a few degrees worse. The decay of giving is mirrored in the distressing invention of gift-articles, based on the assumption that one does not know what to give because one really does not want to."

—Theodor Adorno, *Minima Moralia: Reflections on Damaged Life* (1944)

It is well known that the obligation of present buying is depressive. It may even account for the popular supposition that there is an increased rate of suicide at Christmastime. Yet there is something wrong here. After all, the act of giving, if we disengage it from the holiday and its horrors, should be a positive thing. The gift ought to induce a double joy — that of the receiver in the object, and that of the giver at the receiver's joy.

As the lit-up faces of small children still sometimes testify, neither of these joys are inconsiderable. It is worth analyzing them, for they tell us something about how objects (not only gifts) work for us.

Firstly, the proper gift gives happiness because it matches perfectly the receiver's needs and desires. Sometimes it even discovers and satisfies desires that the receiver did not know he or she had. Secondly, the gift gives joy because it affirms a positive relationship between giver and receiver. It is concrete proof that the giver has understood, recognized, affirmed and sought to concretely meet the other's most intimate needs and desires. The receiver finds additional joy in being the subject of the imaginative work undertaken by the giver in securing and giving this gift. The successful gift thus proves to us that our relationship to the giver is more than merely formal or nominal.

For the giver, the joy is perhaps more subtle, but nonetheless significant. It is a joy to please the other: first, in getting to know their tastes, interests and character, in recognizing and accepting their needs and desires (even if contrary to our own) and second in successfully undertaking the task of being able to find a material thing that

concretizes these desires and gives the receiver exactly what he or she wanted. What the giver gives besides the thing is also recognition — that fundamental human desire we crave above all else.

Needless to say, the complex potential joy of the gift is not what necessarily comes to mind when we think of Christmas or of bridal showers, birthdays and all the other occasions when someone, somewhere, is formally expecting to receive a "gift" from us and we are obligated to provide one. The transformation of an act that should be based on love and free will into one based on social and economic obligation ensures that resentment dominates the relationship.

In this context, what should be the easiest thing — giving joy to others we know — becomes almost impossible. Separated from close empathic relation to the other (especially from members of our own family), we really have no idea what the other wants. In any case, resentment is economically induced. While the gift relation obligates us to spend money (and to know that the price of the thing is almost always known to the receiver) the double meanness of our economy — which fetishizes scarcity and constantly tells us that we lack everything, yet obligates us to buy and to feel belittled if we cannot spend to excess — makes us resent "squandering" precious resources. Is it surprising that instead of joy, bad conscience and a sense of disappointment in ourselves dominates?

Inventing gift-articles

The bad grace that the obligated gift-relationship so often induces finds its counterpart in the objects that are invented to service its requirements. The invention of the gift-article — the *bête noire* of product designers — is a result of both a logical economic exploitation of the enforced gift-relation and of creating an "answer" to the "problem" of the true gift. The gift-article is the true gift's substitute, an object made to carry a superficial connotation of a "personal" relationship, but which is almost wholly unrelated to either its buyers or receivers. Gift articles exist indeed only to fill in the absence caused by the fact that, as Adorno has written, "one does not know what to give because one really does not want to."

When gift-articles are not prosaic and relentlessly practical (the list of items the middle-class

bride and groom make available at Bloomingdale's in order that one can help them furnish a home with a hundred fondue sets and a fake onyx bathroom set), they are excessive and useless. The gift-article is a simulacrum of a thing, a thing that is almost not a thing. A "gift book," for example, is a book that is almost not a book.

But this is all in keeping with the true symbolism of a gift-article, which denotes a certain "wasteful" expenditure for both receiver and giver. This expenditure is nominal, not substantive; the gift-article is simply the sign of money spent. In the same way, the gift-article marks the existence of a formal but insubstantial relationship to the other. We would never buy those we love a "gift article": only real and substantive things will do for those with whom we have a real and substantive relationship. Since most of our relationships are now of the insubstantial order, the gift-article is a perfect, although unfortunate, sign of our times.

This explains why we feel that the gift-culture is at odds with serious product and industrial design. The gift-article seems to possess few, if any, of the restorative, recuperative, or transformative powers that real things can have for us.

But the idea that reflection on gifts and giving is marginal to the professional concerns of object makers is quite wrong. In the obloquy into which the very idea of "the gift" has fallen, lie some important truths about our relations to things and objects.

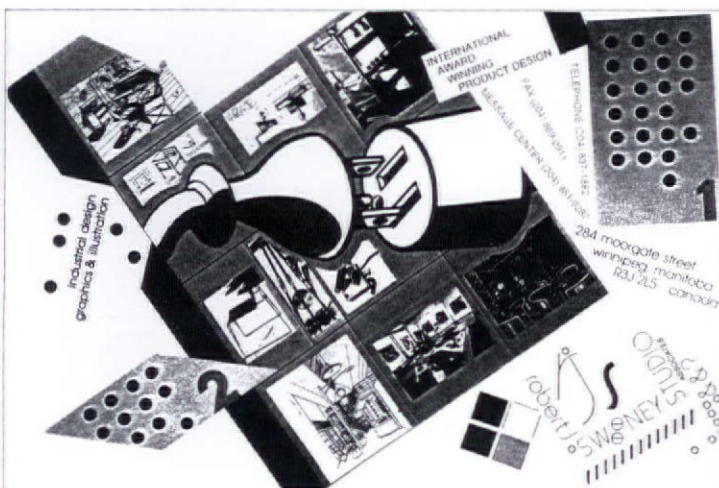
If the gift-article is a kind of mirror to the

alienating product that can arise from bad design, the more positive side of this parallel is that the joy in the gift-relation is potentially there in any relationship between a product and its user. This implies that the act of giving is more integral than we might think both to the work of design and to making in general, and to the art of being human.

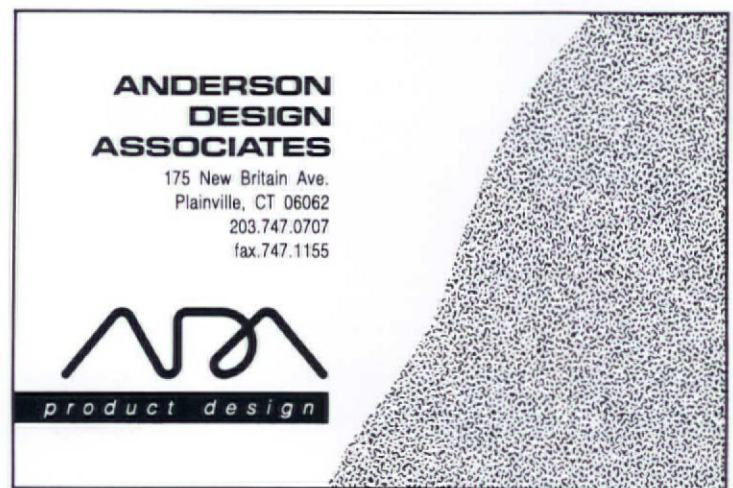
Is there not at the core of the designer's impulse to make things something closer to the ideal gift-relationship? Is not the work of the designer, at best, nearer to the impulse that motivates the gift-giver who gives out of love than to the huckster who provides the market with another "substitute" object? And is this not because objects work not really just for the individual subject, but dialogically, between subjects — at once to aid subjects materially, in how they live, but also as a means of establishing concrete relations with the other?

Of course we make things in order to meet material needs (and, in our society, to produce goods to exchange at a profit). But we can also see that the design and making of things transforms the external world from one that claims indifference to human fate, to one that acknowledges human sentience and the conditions of how we exist in the world. It is objects that give us a human world.

But this means that to make and to design something is to create something whose end is not in itself but is rather in the subject for whom the object is made. The object is never autonomous, never just "for itself." The object has an



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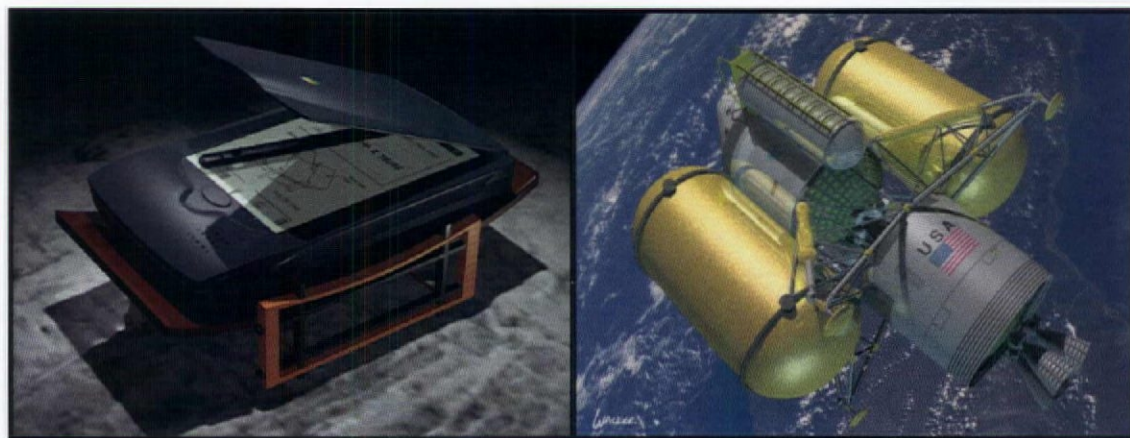
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end outside itself. It is simultaneously raised in significance in terms of the work that it performs for us. Objects help make us who we are. Making and designing are moments of making and designing ourselves.

But if products contain this gift-like quality, it is only because this moment is given to the object by the designer. The gift the designer offers here is his or her creative apperception of the conditions of human subjectivity, together with his or her ability to translate and embody this apperception into the form of the object and to offer it again to the potential user.

Satisfying a need

The process of designing the right object is like choosing the right gift. It becomes a double process of confirmation and affirmation. The act of thinking of the other in this way confirms and affirms both the relationship with the other and the designer's own work. When the designer anticipates the other's enjoyment and use of the object, when he or she concretizes those anticipations in a created object, the designer gets the immediate pleasure of having satisfied a real human need through this creative work. In a more abstract sense the designer receives the pleasure of understanding that the object will be experienced by the user as an augmentation of, and even as a necessary part, of that person. Thus as Marx puts it in an early commentary, in some rather beautiful sentences, "[in this process] I would know myself to be confirmed in your thought as well as in your love. I would know that I had created through my life expression immediately yours as well. Thus in my individual activity I would know my true essence, my human, common essence is contained and realized. Our production would be so many mirrors, in which our essence would be mutually illuminated."

This seems a suitable ambition for what the making of things might once again become, if the moment of the gift (rather than the gift-article) were to become the chief analogy by which we could define — and design — things. ★

Clive Dilnot is an associate professor in Visual and Environmental Studies at Harvard University in Cambridge, where he has taught since 1986. He has written widely on art and design theory and is at work on three books.

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Counterpoint

Designers who respect order and adore chaos

Ralph Caplan

When the Society of Environmental Graphic Designers changed its name to the Society for Environmental Graphic Design, no shock registered on the seismographs of the international design community. It would be a mistake, however, to dismiss it as just a switch from a fancy name for sign painters to a fancy name for sign painting. The increasingly significant and varied applications of signage, and the exceedingly sophisticated technology for fabricating it, require a matching breadth of knowledge on the part of designers. SEG D has from its inception been the most responsible of matchmakers.

Ways of finding the way

To be sure, graphics hardly seems the therapy of choice for our battered environment. But if environmental graphic design cannot restore our lakes and rain forests, it can help us negotiate the built, and largely urban, environment in which we live. One of the field's principal missions is "wayfinding," a term that, after years of professional service, has not yet been emptied of charm or meaning. Jargon aside, graphics are the means by which we find our way through cities, onto and off highways, into and around malls, shops, prisons, nail salons, zoos, theme parks, bowling alleys, cathedrals, factories, bars and public events.

Like the Democratic Party, the SEG D held its national convention in New York last summer. As with the Democrats, the choice was calculated. At least one speaker at every Aspen Design Conference questions the seemliness of discussing gritty problems in the rarified atmosphere of a mountain resort so far from where the problems are. As the putative mother of all ivory towers, Cranbrook, the SEG D's convention venue until the event outgrew the idyllic campus, had provoked the same skepticism. Bloomfield Hills, Michigan, Cranbrook's home, is not far from where the problems are, but it is a community designed to suppress any threatened awareness of Detroit. By inviting its members to Manhattan in August, the convention's planners signaled that this was to be no retreat. They drove the point home by naming their conference "COMPLEXcity: the competition for communication in the urban environment."

There is no escaping complexity, but that's no reason to embrace it indiscriminately or to look for it under every designer's bed. In the SEG D's

newsletter, *Messages*, I came across a designer profile headed by the stunningly candid acknowledgement that "profiles are paid for by the member being profiled." That warning label unaccountably failed to deter me from reading the opening line: "Presenting complex information in a clear and inviting way is the goal, and the hallmark, of Agnew Moyer Smith."

Agnew Moyer Smith is an exemplary Pittsburgh design office that does place an uncommon emphasis on the achievement of clarity. But describing their goal as they do implies that complex information is the only kind they have to work with. Maybe it is. Maybe every project they take on is screened for the minimum acceptable coefficient of informational density. If so they are exceptional, for most offices I know serve clients who have no complex information to convey. They are more likely to have simple information, and even simpler ideas, to convey in a complex environment. They want to say that they are innovative, that they are committed to quality, that their distribution is convenient and their service is reliable, that prices have gone up, or down, that they have just opened a new showroom, that they have changed their name, that customers are important to them, that they have a new product to offer, that their people make the difference.

Simplicity in the city

Those are hardly obscure concepts. A four-year-old child can grasp them all. For that matter, a four-year-old child could have thought most of them up, without help of parent or teacher. Many of the messages entrusted to environmental graphic designers are no more demanding. STOP DON'T WALK MEN WOMEN NO RIGHT TURN WRONG WAY HILTON HOTEL WELCOME TO NEBRASKA SLOW SEARS TOWER GAS, FOOD, LODGING DANGER FOUR SEASONS EAT.

Sometimes there is no information, the banner or sign or display saying nothing explicit because the purpose is purely celebratory: to make nice. The process is intricate, the technology is sophisticated. A massive signage system for Euro Disney or O'Hare Airport is staggeringly complex in development and specification and fabrication; but not in the message content of most units.

DON'T WALK is an injunction anyone can comprehend. In New York the problem is not to

make it clear and inviting, but to make it convincing to a pedestrian determined to get across the street before the blinking red words are replaced by a steady red light that ends the cessation of hostilities and releases the nervous vehicles from the starting gate.

Pedestrian instructions

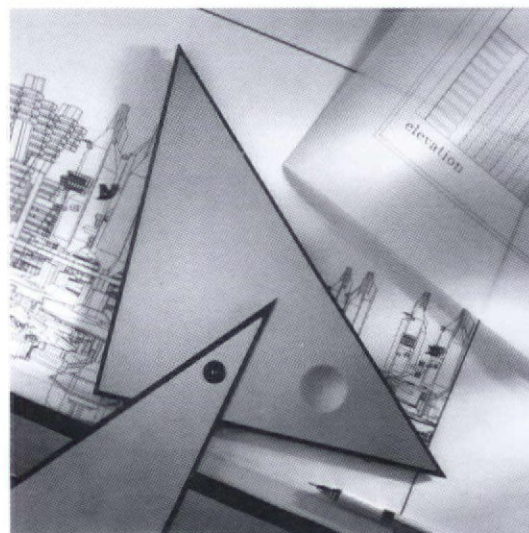
The unwillingness of either pedestrians or drivers to believe the signs they see, and comply with their directions, accounts for the city's pedestrian fatality average of one per day. In response, the department of transportation is installing a new series of signs designed to instruct pedestrians in safety measures (HOLD YOUR ARM UP HIGH WHEN CROSSING) or at least scare them into thinking it over (A PEDESTRIAN WAS KILLED HERE).

The first 1,000 signs are to be placed at the most lethal locations throughout New York City, such as Houston and Allen streets, where last year three people were killed while standing on the Houston Street median. A department spokesman explained that they were "run over by large trucks turning left from Allen onto Houston," adding that "often the rear wheels of these trucks roll up over the curb and intersect with pedestrians."

On our streets, vehicular components intersect with pedestrians. On our highways, they intersect with each other. In neither case is it because the safety messages are complex. Approaching the city on Route 684, a motorist is warned that the lane she occupies will vanish in a quarter of a mile. That is not complicated information. But the driver reading it, and trying to factor its content into the act of changing lanes, may be going 60 MPH while switching radio stations, adjusting the sun visor or the air-conditioning, wondering where the Saw Mill River Parkway turnoff is and worrying about finding a place to park should she ever reach the city. All that is complicated, which is why only the simplest messages can be assimilated under the circumstances. The

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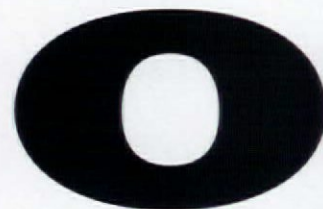
Back to Back on Influence



Snap—It's the sum total of this sheet's higher paper gloss and printed gloss, with optimal smoothness and the ideal balance between brightness and opacity. **Champion Influence Gloss** is designed especially for magazines, catalogs, and commercial printing applications.

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Champion Influence Gloss



A person is captured mid-jump, seen from behind. They are wearing a bright red long-sleeved shirt and black and white vertically striped pants. Their arms are spread wide to the sides, and their legs are bent in a dynamic pose. A soft shadow of the person is cast onto the white background below them.

R

Champion Influence Soft-Gloss

Contrast—It describes this fully coated sheet with high printed gloss and a soft, smooth finish in the unprinted areas.

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designer's task is to steer through the traffic congestion in the driver's head.

Off the roads, clients who want to say something as plain as "our products are superior" have to say it in an environment in which every company says the same thing through the same media, in essentially the same slogans, to the same audience, who has heard it all before. Again, it is not the information that is complex, but the circumstances surrounding its delivery.

Spatially speaking

Environmental graphics have to be made simple to help us navigate through labyrinthine urban space. But, paradoxically, space is our primary resource for the metaphors that make language graphic and clear. If you listen to what people say in meetings (which is not a practice I would ordinarily urge on anyone) you notice how much of our language is spatial in derivation. I told you that going in. We have been totally up front with you. This is the cutting edge. Moving right along now. Do you see where I'm coming from? Let me tell you what I see down the pike. Right now we're in a pretty good place. (Or a tough spot. Or backed into a corner. Or against a wall.)

Metaphors are instruments of simplification, which makes them useful to teachers and politicians. They are also instruments of complexity, which makes them crucial to art. In design they serve both purposes. Although schooled in the organization of materials and space, designers are alive to the pleasure of surprise. Is there anyone with soul so dead that he would not prefer the chaos of an open-air market in the Caribbean or in Spanish Harlem to the meticulous grid of a supermarket in any suburb? In the current issue of *Identity* magazine Gail Finke movingly defends the signs that she says help make Colerain Avenue Cincinnati's ugliest commercial street. She likes them. Sight unseen, I like them too. She finds that their "junky vitality" is never boring.

Boredom is subjective, but it is not imaginary. It thrives in the absence of an engaging environmental complexity. Working on an ecology exhibition for the Museum of Natural History in Washington, I spent a few days in the Sonora desert outside Tucson. At first it bored me to tears, which were absorbed instantly by the parched khaki soil. But the Smithsonian entomologist who

was with me was not bored. He was fascinated by the constant, elaborate insect activity, the complexity I was not equipped to perceive until he showed it to me.

In the '60s some of our leading designers did battle against disorder under a strategy they called "total design." The prospect of their victory was so unattractive to the painter and graphic designer Ben Shahn that he wrote an essay called "In Defense of Chaos." It is intolerable, Shahn argued, for a creative person to be "shackled either by bad design or by good design."

But design that shackles us can't be good design. At about the time Shahn was defending chaos, Robert Venturi published *Complexity and Contradiction in Architecture*, a brilliant book that crashed into Modernist sensibilities with the revelation that complexity and contradiction enrich design just as they enrich the rest of life.

Learning from Times Square

So environmental graphic designers, like any other kind, respect order and adore chaos. The SEG D presentations I saw included signage so clean you could eat off it, and formulaic abstractions from which every semblance of life had been scrupulously removed. They also included a rich dose of the vernacular graphics, including graffiti, that designers always enjoy, and an instructive history of Times Square signs and their manufacture. The lights and squalor of Times Square embody COMPLEXcity if anything does, and because of the signs the area was canonized by designers. It was about to be canyonized by office towers until the redevelopment plans were shelved. Celebrating the reprieve, *The New York Times* architecture critic Herbert Muschamp says, "Even in its current state of dilapidation Times Square has more to teach architects about art than nearly any other site in America."

Probably. Complexity, however they spell it, is not as simple as designers think. ★

Ralph Caplan, former editor of *I.D.* and now a contributing editor, is the author of the book *By Design*. As a New York-based consultant, he helps develop publications, exhibitions, films, educational programs and strategies for a wide variety of clients. He writes and lectures frequently about design, and has received numerous awards for his writings and contributions to the design profession.

Using hard-hitting graphics and disturbing statistics, guerrilla activist groups such as the Women's Action Coalition take to the streets to convey alternative political messages. BY KARRIE JACOBS

With a special election-year project for I.D. by Bethany Johns and Marlene McCarty

Graphic Action





The language and graphics of power have been appropriated by the Women's Action Coalition (WAC) in its distinctive logo. The background derives from the blue dot used by TV media to conceal the identity of rape victims and the "We are Watching" slogan is lifted from George Orwell's 1984. Big Brother has become Big Sister.

About a year ago, when the presidential primary races had barely begun, when the Gulf War was still more or less a success story, when mainstream politics was about as dynamic as an aged house cat on a summer day, I decided that the real action in politics took place between midnight and dawn — not in a smoke-filled room or a voting booth but on the walls and construction fences of the city. Politics, I decided, was an admixture of adrenaline, wheat paste and coffee.

"Night discourse" was the label I invented for this sort of political action. In my essay for the book *Angry Graphics: Protest Posters of the Reagan/Bush Era*, I describe an incident that had taken place during the Gulf War. A pair of billboards on the southeast corner of Broadway and Houston Streets in lower Manhattan protesting the war had been pasted over with a pair of posters supporting the war.

"Whoever did it," I wrote, "however it happened, this exchange of opinions occurred during the night: surreptitiously, illegally, mysteriously. This political debate about the Gulf War transpired while the rest of us were sleeping.

"Night discourse is a much more blunt, more argumentative form of communication than its daytime counterparts, the editorial pages of newspapers and the Sunday morning public affairs television shows. Think of it as 3:00 AM talk radio made visible. The most biting political statements are plastered up all over the city at night: on walls, over existing billboards and especially on plywood construction fences."

The phenomenon I described is still current, although that particular event has faded into history. More than ever, it seems, organized political activists go out in the night and put up posters that draw attention to their grievances. At the moment, the walls of SoHo are dominated by the obsessively detailed hand drawn and lettered diatribes by an art-world curmudgeon who goes by the name The Scarlet Pimpernel. His Xeroxed handbills deal with the decadence and corruption of a fad-obsessed art world. His current target is gallery owner Leo Castelli.

On the same fences are several different messages from the Guerrilla Girls. They started out by making posters attacking curators who didn't include women and minority artists in their shows, but have

moved on to posters dealing with homelessness, censorship and abortion. Picketing museums and galleries that are guilty of these crimes, the Guerrilla Girls maintain anonymity — and attract attention — by doffing hairy gorilla masks. Their signature graphic design style is bold type on a plain background with the occasional strategic use of a photo.

The Guerrilla Girls have been joined, and perhaps outdone, by WAC (Women's Action Coalition), an organization that counts among its members many big-name artists such as Laurie Anderson, Barbara Kruger and Cindy Sherman. During the Democratic National Convention, New York was plastered with "WAC is Watching" posters that featured a wide-open eye within a blue dot. The dot was appropriated from television graphics, specifically from the dot that confers anonymity on women in rape trial cases and in so doing obliterates their faces. Encoded in WAC's image is the message that these women are actively watching; WAC has hijacked the language of power — George Orwell's famous threat "Big Brother is watching you" — for their own slogan.

During the Republican National Convention in Houston WAC staged a spectacular outdoor slide show using what has come to be the established language of the new political graphics: a striking photo paired with a disturbing statistic that heightens the meaning of the photo. For instance, on a split screen, a head shot of Anita Hill faces a head shot of Clarence Thomas. Below Hill's photo it reads, "Less than 10 percent of all sexual harassment victims ever come forward." Beneath Thomas' photo it says, "No wonder."

Although WAC includes some very well-known figures, big-name artists represent only a handful of the 2,500-plus women in WAC/New York and the several thousand women working in WAC branches across the U.S., Canada and France. Sometimes it seems like every woman in New York who has anything to do with the arts has become part of this rapidly growing organization. Including designers. Bethany Johns and Marlene McCarty, for example, are graphic designers with rosters of regular clients (book publishers, arts organizations, etc.) who also have had long experience designing cheap and fast for political causes. McCarty is a member of Gran Fury (which,

she says, is "burnt out" right now. "We exist, but we don't meet.") Johns and McCarty figured out how to mass produce posters for WAC to carry in New York's annual Gay Pride march. Each two-sided poster features a news photo blown up so large that George Bush (a "public enemy") and K.D. Lang (a "hero") have dot patterns for faces and each has a nubby, enlarged typewritten quote on the back. Public enemy Cardinal John O'Connor's quote is "God is a man." The posters were reproduced by a blueprinting service in their most popular color, blue.

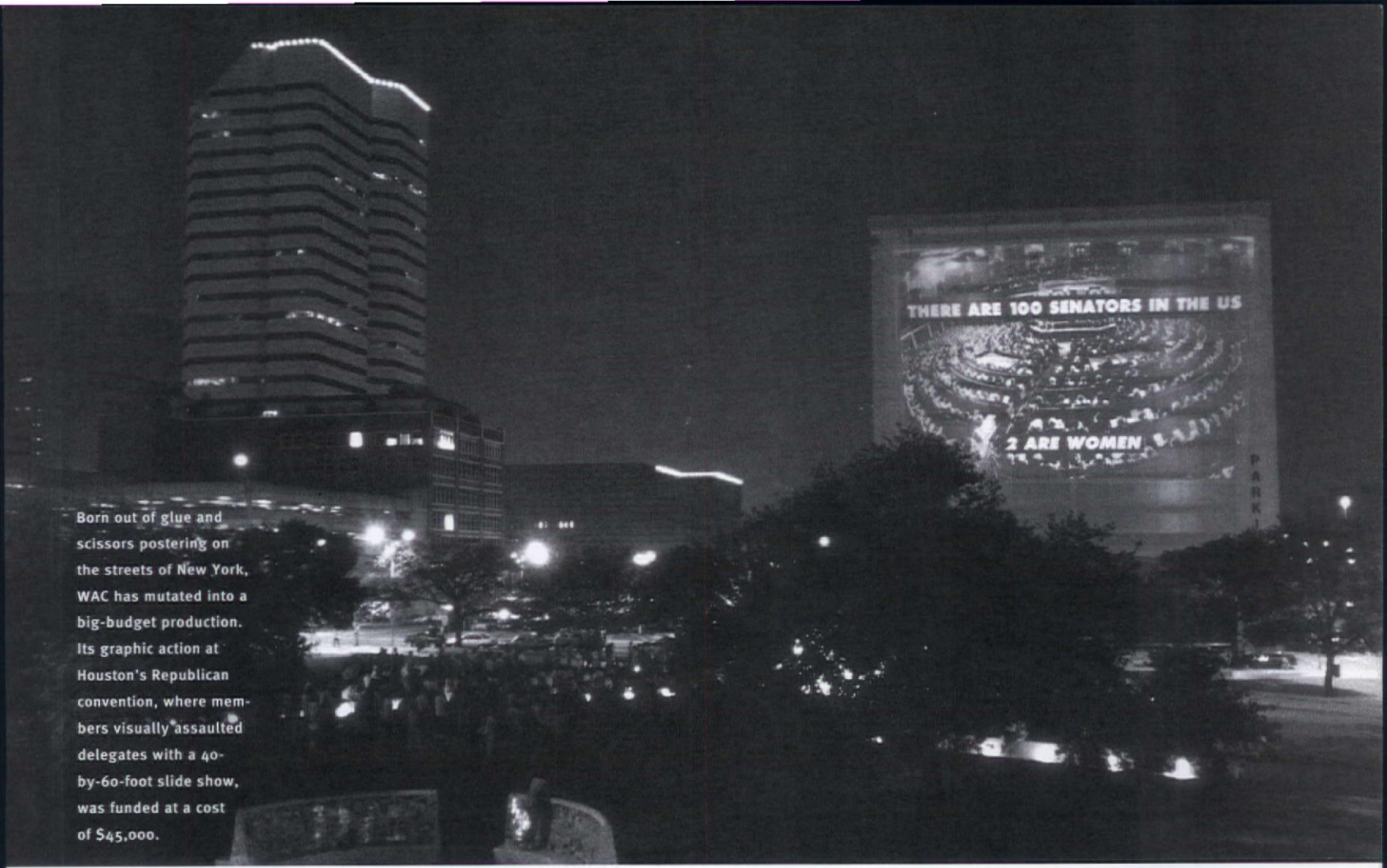
While both designers are deeply involved in their work as activists, they seem somewhat dissatisfied with what is getting to be a routine: the photos, the statistics, the ironic twist. "It's successful, easy and workable once you've got it, but how do you take it a step further?" McCarty asks.

WAC, observes McCarty, has been tremendously successful at getting media attention when they demonstrate. This is due in no small part to their use of powerful graphics and memorable WAC slogan. But, she reasons, "WAC has to figure out what to do with that power." The organization needs a political agenda as solid as its image. "All of the good looks have to have content," McCarty declares. To this end, WAC/New York has set up 15 to 20 committees that meet each week to thrash out issues.

So, night discourse is alive and well. But daytime discourse has also seemingly woken up. Real politics — even major party politics — has gotten stranger, stranger than almost anything the poster guerrillas can produce.

First of all, there was the candidacy of Ross Perot who was, in fact, a product of the school of night discourse. His populist political campaign began, after all, on "The Larry King Show" and he forced the other candidates onto the conventional media of night discourse, the talk show. Secondly, the unanticipated popularity of the Democrats and their campaign (which has played like a very seductive combination of a Frank Capra movie and a Bruce Springsteen song) has made the Republicans behave strangely. They have suddenly become fluent in the language of night discourse, a language that hasn't been spoken much around the White House since the Nixon Years.

In July, some unofficial Bush enthusiasts ran a TV ad for a 900-number you could call to hear the tape-recorded conversations between Bill Clinton and his alleged para-



Born out of glue and scissors poster on the streets of New York, WAC has mutated into a big-budget production. Its graphic action at Houston's Republican convention, where members visually assaulted delegates with a 40-by-60-foot slide show, was funded at a cost of \$45,000.

mour, Gennifer Flowers. By early August, the Bush campaign's very own political director, Mary Matalin, issued a press release that was so bizarre in its message and its syntax that it could have been a guerrilla text pasted to a New York City lamppost:

"You feel like a 'one man landfill?' (Bill Clinton on "This Week" 2/16/92) No, Willie, it's not those Wendy's burgers or Dunkin' Donuts or even those scrumptious home-baked cookies. It's that Alka-Seltzer feeling you get when you're the leader of the 'garbage load' (Clinton, AP, 7/31/92) party."

"We respectfully request you and your fellow Democrat sniveling hypocrites read our lips: SHUT UP AND SIT DOWN so we can get back to more highlights of the Clinton record. If we're at your 'belly button,' (Washington Post, 7/31/92) it feels like Mount Everest compared to your lower-than-a-snake's belly campaign."

If the president's official missives are that bizarre, what's left for the guerrillas? Clearly, the distinctions between night discourse and day discourse are evaporating.

Compared to the Bush campaign's politi-

cal director, the Guerrilla Girls are level headed and sober. In fact, their style is so simple, direct and recognizable that they could be Vignelli Associates.

Robbie Conal, whose caricatures of prune-faced politicians have popped up on posters in cities across the country for the last decade or so, will, I predict, soon be doing covers for Time. After all, Barbara Kruger has already done Newsweek.

And WAC? Well, Madison Avenue has got nothing on WAC.

Last year I wrote, "As daytime discourse gets thinner and more banal, year by year, as fewer genuine sentiments or opinions are voiced by politicians, and bold political statements vanish from mainstream media, street posters are becoming the one medium in which controversial opinions can find a general audience. In China, political posters were a way around official censorship. Here they sidestep a less official set of restrictions: those having to do with commercial expedience.

"Political posters can be read as an expression of frustration from artists, designers

and regular people trying to transform a political system that seems thoroughly insulated from individual action, a system that seems moribund. The posters that appear on the walls of our city in the night can spark real political debate. Maybe night discourse is the last form of political debate."

A year later, daytime discourse is not always as forthright as its nocturnal counterpart, but it is full of crazy energy.

To me it seems like a very small step from Mary Matalin's attack on Clinton, or Dan Quayle's attack on Murphy Brown or Operation Rescue's use of the fetus as both graphic symbol and booby prize to the practice of night discourse. Generally, guerrilla poster is a strategy of the powerless. So if, by chance, the Republican right is no longer in power, the practice of night discourse will continue, but the practitioners will change. ★

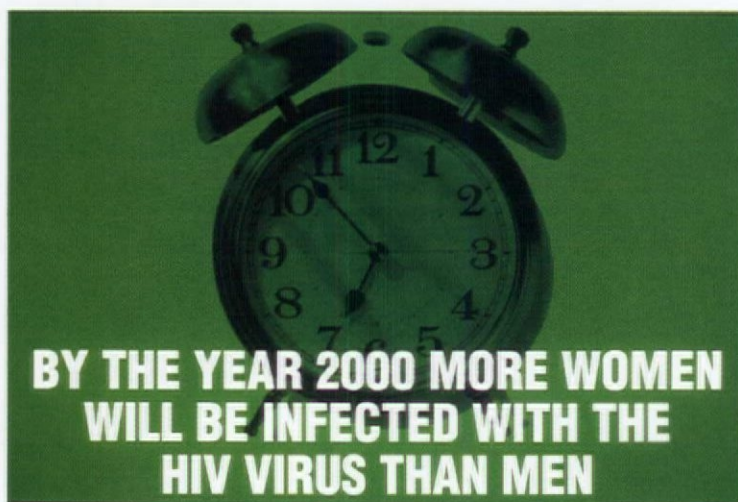
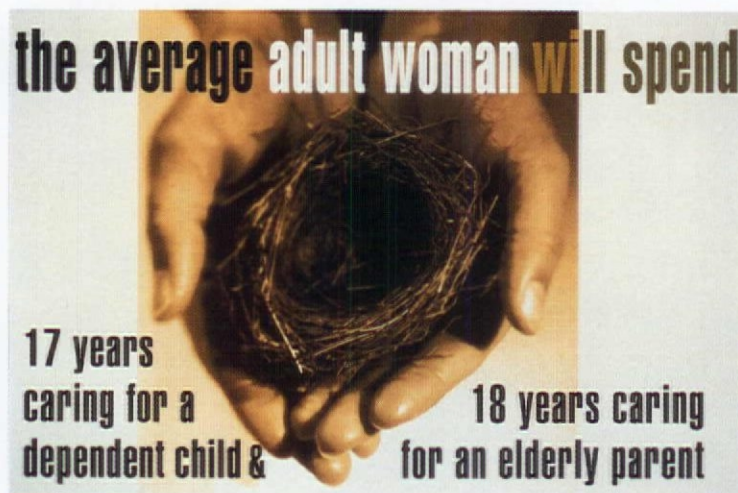
Angry Graphics: Protest Posters of the Reagan/Bush Era, by Karrie Jacobs and Steven Heller and published by Gibbs-Smith, was released just in time for the election this year.

Watching WAC

For three evenings during the Republican National Convention in Houston last August, the Women's Action Coalition (WAC) staged a multimedia assault on the GOP entitled "Women Ignite." A parking garage on Old Market Square in downtown Houston was lit up by WAC propaganda slides projecting gargantuan 60-by-40-foot images; the walls of surrounding buildings echoed with the voices of women making personal statements on abortion, crime and unjust wages. After the crowd of 1,000 dispersed, WAC mounted the projector on a truck and rode around Houston sweeping the images across buildings hosting such Republican fêtes as a Bob Dole fund-raiser.

Created by a group of about 15 WAC members, including designers Hannah Alderfer and Mary Beth Nelson, the slides employed poster-style graphics captioned with grisly statistics. An image of an elderly black woman reading to her grandchild was labeled "Who cares for the caregivers?"; statistics accompanying the image gave the astonishingly high percentage of elderly women who live below the poverty line.

But WAC's poignant graphics-oriented project extended into the daytime as well. Members spent the daylight hours handing out informational leaflets and defending abortion clinics. The highly visible WAC drum corps drove ice-cream trucks through the city's neighborhoods distributing information and handing out free ice cream to kids. WAC renamed standard Good Humor ice cream fare to suit



WAC member artists Laurie Anderson, Barbara Kruger, Cindy Sherman and Elizabeth Murray, along with graphic designers Hannah Alderfer and Mary Beth Nelson, created over 30 images to stun the Republicans at Houston. The giant images were projected onto the facades of major convention venues.

**75% OF WOMEN WHO ARE RAPED
KNOW THEIR ATTACKERS**

**WHAT EXACTLY
IS IT ABOUT
THE WORD
NO
THAT YOU DON'T
UNDERSTAND?**

**LESS THAN 10% OF ALL
SEXUAL HARASSMENT VICTIMS
EVER COME FORWARD**

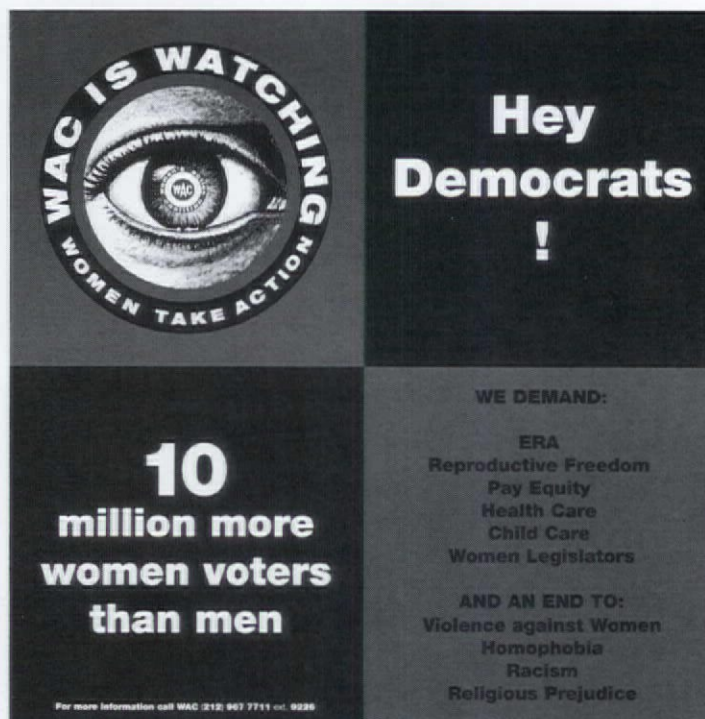
**NO
WONDER**

Convention issues: "Slush Fund Slush," "No Choice I Scream Sandwich" and "Snow Job Cone" treats came with statistical and legislative information on women's issues to be handed on to parents once kids were finished with the sweets. "Operation Dessert Storm," as they called it, also handed out pink faux ice-cream menus, complete with pictures of dreamy ice-cream floats and elaborate puns written in lacy, feminine script. Flavor of the Month was, fittingly, "Good Ol' Boys 'N' Berry."

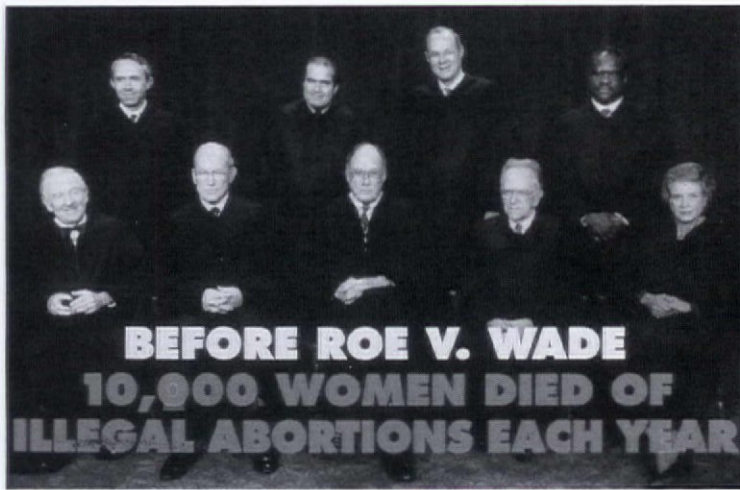
The humor, the noise, the grim statistics, the hard-hitting images, the personal statements and the clinic face-offs all worked to create a discourse that the Convention itself did not provide. But what difference did it make?

Protests during political conventions are not usually considered hard news unless they involve aggressive — let's say masculine — confrontation. The fire supposedly set by angered ACT-UP protesters outside the Astrodome received national coverage. (This violence was dwarfed by the virulence of the anti-gay messages brayed by such ultra-rightists as the two Pats — Buchanan and Robertson.) WAC's activities, however pointed and well executed, were considered soft news and relegated to culture and, in some cases, even gossip columns. Most of the coverage was maddeningly "feminized" in a traditional women's-page way — that is, considered backseat news or colorful padding.

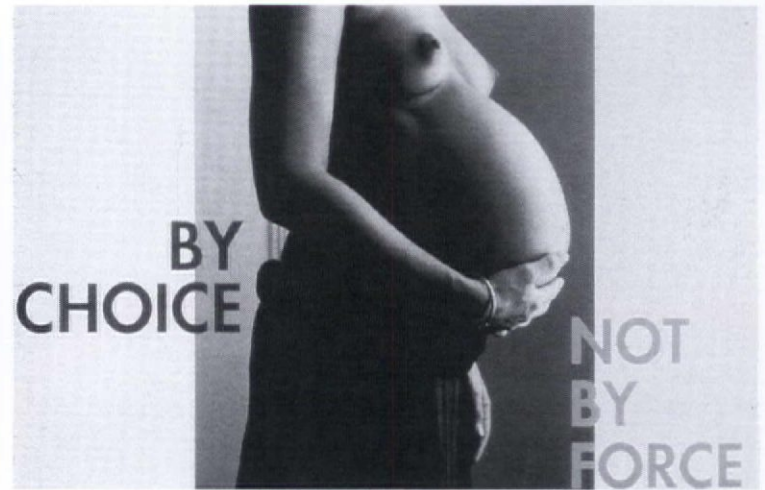
As the Convention progressed, any news coverage focusing on women's issues was obfuscated. The serious matter of Republican pro-choice women challenging the conservative platform was quickly forgotten; what is remembered instead is the



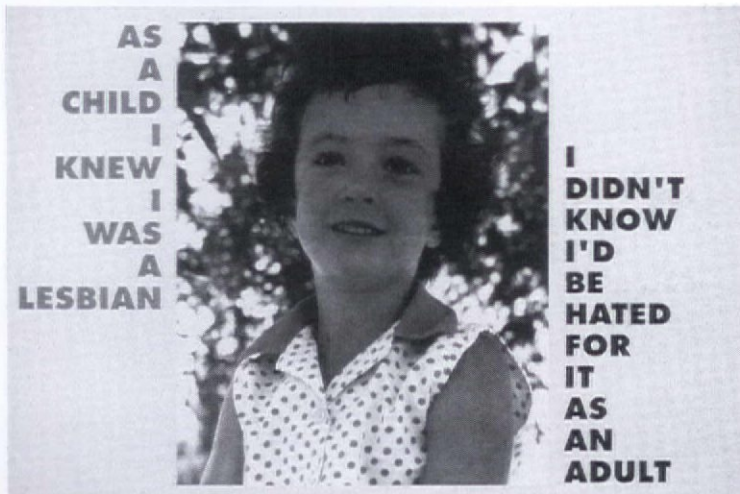
Above: Leaflets and posters were plastered all over Manhattan to confront the Democrats during their convention.
Right: The night discourse at the Republican convention.



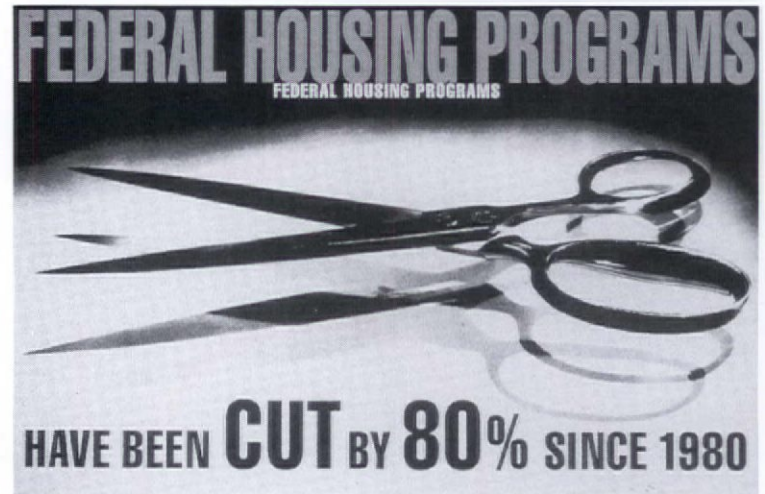
**BEFORE ROE V. WADE
10,000 WOMEN DIED OF
ILLEGAL ABORTIONS EACH YEAR**



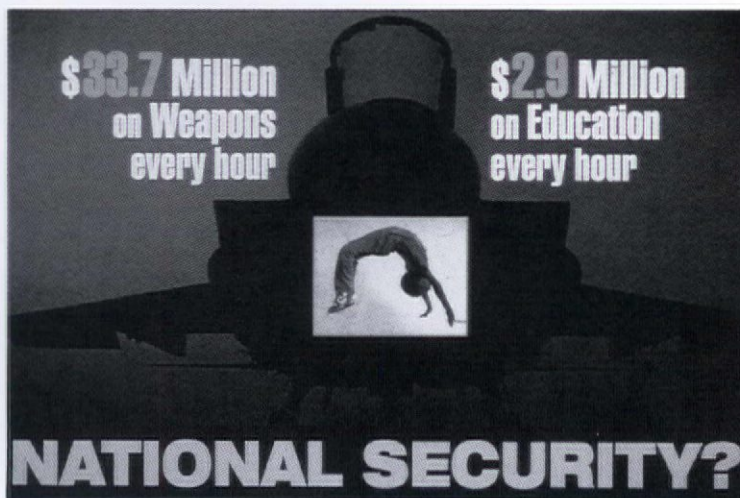
**BY
CHOICE** **NOT
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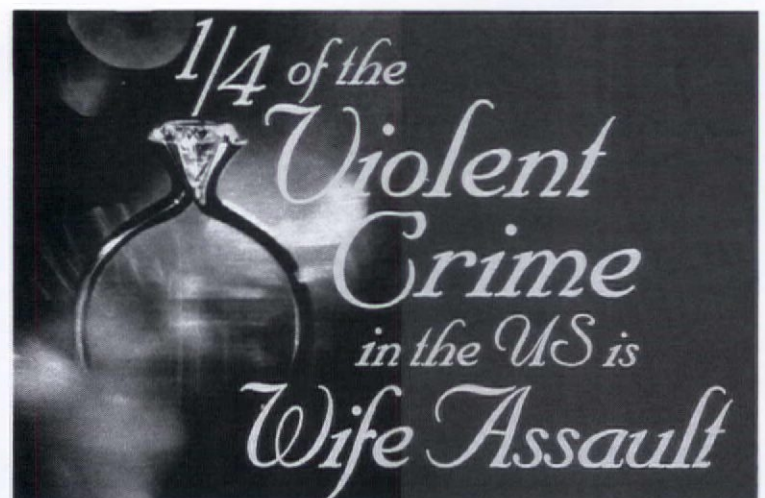
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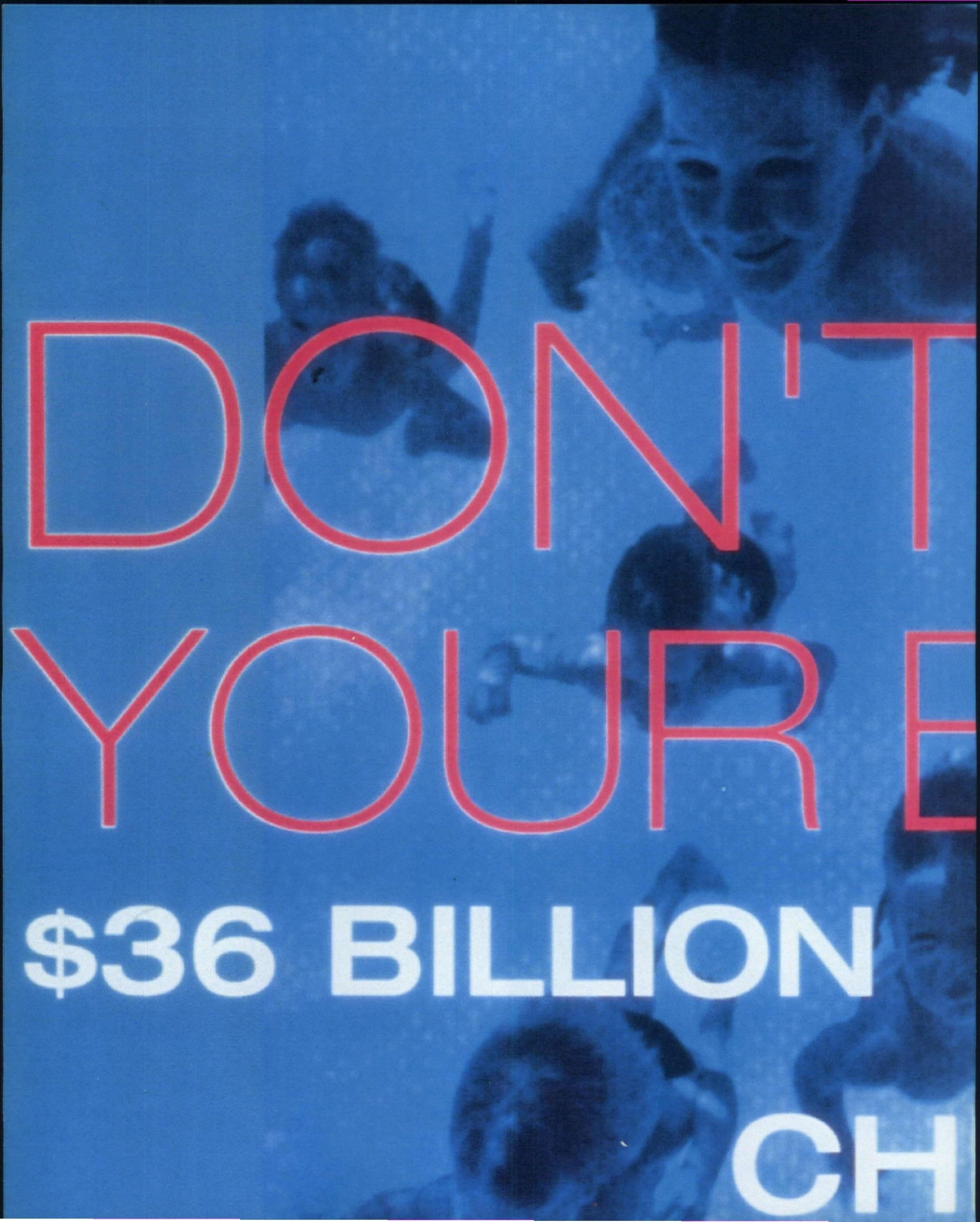
FEDERAL HOUSING PROGRAMS
FEDERAL HOUSING PROGRAMS
HAVE BEEN CUT BY 80% SINCE 1980



**\$33.7 Million
on Weapons
every hour** **\$2.9 Million
on Education
every hour**
NATIONAL SECURITY?



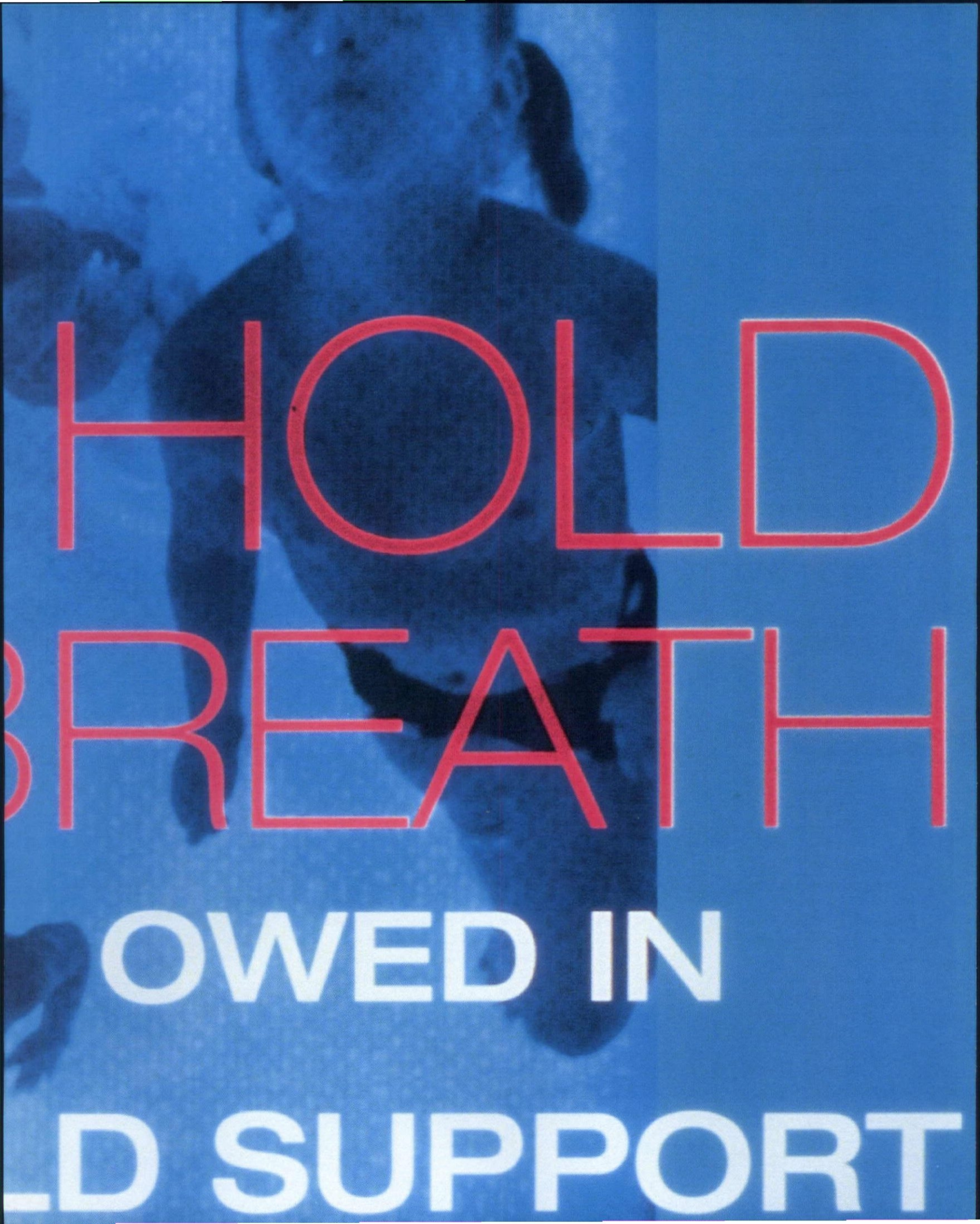
***1/4 of the
Violent
Crime
in the US is
Wife Assault***



DON'T
YOU'RE

\$36 BILLION

CH



HOLD
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OWED IN
LD SUPPORT

disgraceful pitting of working women (Hillary) against stay-at-home moms (Barbara). With a more serious discussion in general, there would have been more coverage of WAC, not to mention the softer-spoken NOW and NARAL rallies, which received almost none.

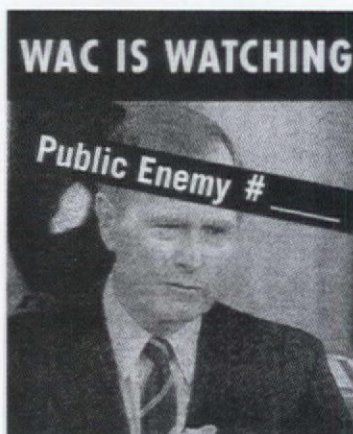
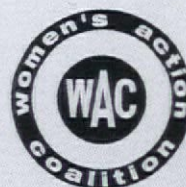
While national coverage of WAC's Houston actions may have been scant, the media was not the group's only intended audience. As Bethany Johns and Marlene McCarty, who often design WAC graphics, explain it, "There are really many levels of audience: the people who are the objects of a protest, the participants and the bystanders at a demonstration, the media who document the action and the people who only get to see WAC's messages through the filter of the media. Every piece we do has to withstand stretching to transmit to all the layers, so we pay attention to simplicity, directness, universal symbols and subverting clichés to create new metaphors."

Both pragmatic and ambitious in its mission, WAC aims to organize women, alert the media and persuade mass audiences of the need to provide economic and social justice for women. Judging from the local press attention and interviews with Houston women who attended the slide show, the most concrete result of WAC's protests was to instigate the formation of a Houston WAC chapter that, as in New York and other cities, is galvanizing longtime feminists and mobilizing a large twentysomething population. Through its case-by-case actions, WAC and its indelible graphics is striving to give women a voice at a time when women's financial status and civil rights are being increasingly threatened. MAUD LAVIN



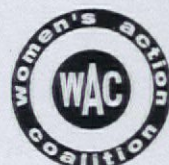
KD LANG

"I have never
denied it.
I don't try to
hide it;
I just am
what I am."
--K.D. Lang

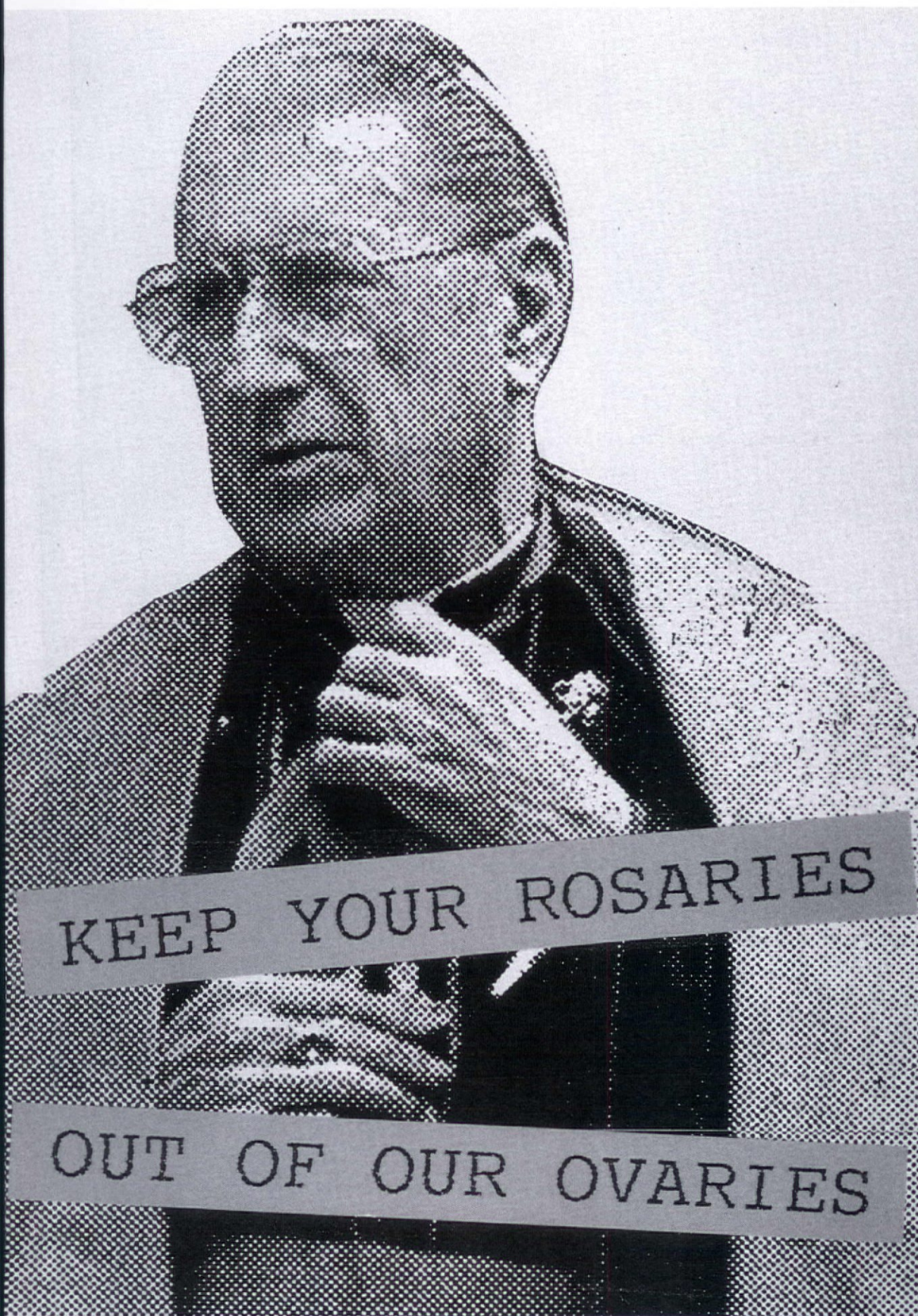


GEORGE BUSH

It costs tens of millions
of dollars every year
to recruit, investigate,
dismiss and replace
gay personnel in the
military.



WAC is characterised by a strong sense of humor. At this year's
Gay Pride march double-sided banners proclaimed
K.D. Lang a gay women's icon and
"Read-my-lips-let's-return-to-family-values"
George Bush was deemed public enemy number one.



KEEP YOUR ROSARIES

OUT OF OUR OVARIES

Following spread:
In a piece created
especially for I.D.,
WAC designers
Marlene McCarty
and Bethany Johns
examine the hypoc-
risies confronting
career women.

About 34 million Americans are not covered by any insurance, including 10.6 million women and 11 million children.

Recipe for Success

Hillary Rodham Clinton

Chair of the Arkansas Education Standards Committee; Commission on Quality Education of the Southern Regional Education Board; Co-Chair for Implementation, Commission on Skills of the American Workforce; Board of Directors of the National Center of Education and the Economy; Chair of the American Bar Association's Commission on Women in the Law Profession; Board of Directors of the Child Action Campaign; Partner in the Rose Law Firm of Little Rock, Arkansas; Board of Directors of the Arkansas Children's Hospital and Southern Development Bank Corporation; Chair of the Board of Directors of the Children's Defense Fund; Southern Governors Association Task Force on Infant Mortality.

Education

Graduated with honors from Wellesly College; President of College Government of Wellesly; graduated from Yale Law School; Director of the Barristers Union; Board of Editors of the Yale Review of Law and Social Action; worked for the Impeachment Inquiry Staff of the Judiciary Committee of the United States House of Representatives (investigation of Nixon's involvement in Watergate); taught at the Schools of Law at the University of Arkansas; Director of the University of Arkansas Legal Aid Clinic.

Honors

Honorary Doctor of Law Degrees from the University of Arkansas at Little Rock and Arkansas College, Batesville; Arkansas Woman of the Year, 1983; Arkansas Honor Young Mother of the Year, 1984; Sandra Day O'Connor Medal of Honor by Seton Hall University; Named to the "100 Most Influential Lawyers in America" by the National Law Journal.

"Bitch, Get Back

Less than 10% of the cancer research budget is spent on cancers affecting women. According to the National Cancer Institute, one of every nine women will develop breast cancer in her lifetime. Breast cancer kills one woman every 11 minutes.

In one study, 99% of boys were breast-fed, but only 66% of the girls were, and they were given 50% less time to feed.

The United States ranks near the bottom among all the nations of the world in the percentage of women in government: 2 women out of 100 seats in the Senate; 28 women out of 435 seats in the House; 3 women out of 50 state governors.

Every hour during 1992 the Federal Government spends: \$33.7 million on national defense; \$23.7 million on national debt; \$8.7 million on S&L debt; \$2.9 million on education; and \$1.8 million on children's health.

The average salary of a black female college graduate in a full-time position is less than that of a white male high school dropout.

It costs the Pentagon \$27 million every year to recruit, investigate, dismiss, and replace gay personnel in the military.

Female lawyers comprise 25% of all associates; only 6% of partners in law firms.

Between 1960 and 1992, lesbians have consistently been depicted in movies as either pathological killers or suicides.

A poll of CEOs at Fortune 1000 companies found that over 80% acknowledged that discrimination impedes female employees' progress. 1% of them regarded remedying sex discrimination as a goal for their personnel departments to pursue.

Marital rape is legal in two states: North Carolina and Oklahoma.

In one survey 51% of college men said they would rape if they were certain they would get away with it.

Sexual harassment costs a typical Fortune 500 company \$6.7 million per year — a cost of \$283.53 per employee; meaningful preventive steps can be taken for \$200,000 — a cost of \$8.41 per employee. It is 34 times more expensive to ignore the problem.

Based on an AIGA survey, women graphic designers with 16-20 years experience average a base salary of \$49,700; the same category of men average \$64,800. With over 20 years experience women average \$50,300; men, \$80,900.

50% to 85% of American women will experience some form of sexual harassment at some point during her academic or working life. 90% of sexual harassment victims are unwilling to come forward.

Based on annual earnings, every \$1 of a man's pay, a woman could expect to earn in 1955, \$.64; in 1960, \$.66; in 1988, \$.66.

(Women, Bust Out -- Demand a Raise!)

(Keeping Us There is Big Business)

36% of women graphic designers earn less than \$30,000, compared to 19% of men. Only 17% earn over \$50,000, compared to 43% of men.

The unpaid labor of women in the household, if given economic value, would add an estimated one-third, or \$4,000,000,000,000 to the world's annual economic product.

to the Kitchen"

Because the Centers for Disease Control's definition of AIDS does not include symptoms specific to women, women with HIV disease are often misdiagnosed and cannot acquire early AZT treatment. Women die 3 times faster than men after an AIDS diagnoses. AIDS is growing fastest among women.

All major U.S. pharmaceutical companies except Ortho Pharmaceutical Corporation have abandoned research in birth control over the past 20 years. Women in Bangladesh now have more contraceptive choices than women in America.

Federal funding for maternal and child health care has decreased 23.4% in the past ten years.

The Federal Government will not fund abortions but continues to pay 90% of the cost of sterilization.

Every 15 seconds a woman is battered in the United States. Battering is the greatest single cause of injury to women in the United States — more than car accidents, rapes and muggings combined.

Wives employed full-time outside the home do 70% of the housework; full-time housewives do 83%.

More than 8 million American women raise at least one child alone, of whom only 5 million are awarded child support, of which 47% get the full amount, 37% less than half, and 28% nothing.

More babies are now born with birth defects as a result of mothers being battered during pregnancy than from the combination of all the diseases and illnesses for which we now immunize pregnant women.

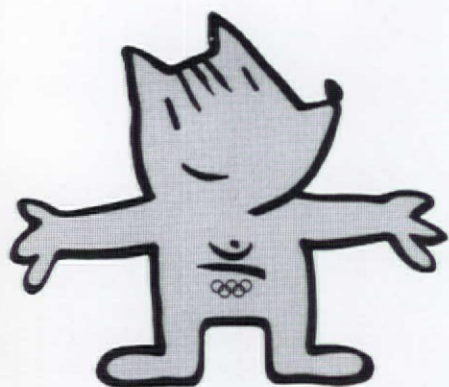
71% of mothers at home want to work. Many list lack of adequate daycare as one reason they aren't working. Furthermore, 75% of working mothers would work even if they didn't need the paycheck.

The diet industry currently earns \$37 billion a year in profits. 75% of women aged 18-35 believed they were fat, while only 24% were medically fat. A study showed that by the time girls were in the 4th grade, 80% of them were already dieting.

Recipe for Success

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Grease baking sheets. Combine flour, salt and baking soda on waxed paper. Beat together shortening, sugars and vanilla in large bowl with electric mixer until creamy. Add eggs, beating until light and fluffy. Gradually beat in flour mixture and rolled oats. Stir in chocolate chips. Drop batter by well-rounded measuring teaspoonfuls onto greased baking sheets. Bake in pre-heated 350-degree oven for 8-10 minutes or until golden. Cool cookies on sheets on wire rack 2 minutes. Remove to wire rack to cool completely. Makes 7 1/2 dozen cookies.

Mrs. Bill Clinton



Model citizens for the city of the future: Spain's Cobi (left) and Curro followed by America's morphing mascot, dubbed Whatizit.
A critic's encounter with architecture's happy-face culture

I went to Europe this summer in search of new cities. The choices included Canary Wharf in London, a Battery Park City rehash; Euro Disney in France, a Disneyland rehash; the new Munich airport, the largest single construction project

Cartoon Cities

BY MICHAEL SORKIN

in German history, an airport rehash; and the two projects that finally drew me: the Olympic installations in Barcelona and Expo '92 in Seville.

I began with a pre-games tour of the empty Olympic Village on a bus filled with urbanists. The architecture of the new Olympic quarter of Barcelona — 30 lots, each with its own architect — is of good quality, if dryish. Although all uninhabited projects tend to look like de Chirico, it wasn't quite possible to tell how this one would turn out after the Olympics when the buildings go condo. Fortunately, the

reclaimed seaside site is a beauty. At best, the new zone might look like Nice; at worst, the L.A. Marina.

The Olympic village riffs and extends the great 1858 design of Ildefonso Cerdà,

a 26-kilometer gridded addition to the medieval center city that housed Barcelona's growing bourgeoisie. Describing his plan, Cerdà wrote that the "squared block is the clear and genuine expression of mathematical equality, which is the equality of rights and interests, of justice itself." Here is the Modernist fantasy of city planning in a nutshell: arranging space arranges culture. Here also is the central irony not just of modern planning but of democracy itself: "mathematical equality" is the death of individuality. As the urban grid becomes more and more endless, the differences among the squares become ever more trivial. Souls die as cities grow.

Today's cities are being reformed along more immaterial grids. As we drove through the village, gripping our Nikons, I noticed — evenly spaced along the buildings on either side of the main drag — a robot army of Coke machines ready for thirsty Olympians, a global net of points of purchase, a bright red latency of refreshing pauses. Here was the most desperately succinct version of the grid Bernard Tschumi plugged into at the Parc de la Villette in Paris, with its field of little red cubes as scary-whimsical fantasy of democratic uniformity.

The issue for cities is simple: if there's a Coke machine everywhere, how do you know where you are? How can you tell Munich from Orlando or the South Street Seaport from Ibiza? Of course, it's also true that when you see a Coke machine, you know *exactly* where you are. *The New York Times* reports that Coca-Cola's Italian operation has been running ads, meant to reassure Italian tourists that Coke is available wherever in the world they might go. In this World According to Coke, famous landmarks — the Eiffel Tower, the Empire State Building, the Leaning Tower

of Pisa — take on the form of Coke bottles. When the columns of the Parthenon acquired this new entasis Hellenic authorities saw red. Coke withdrew the offending image and offered its apologies.

We do live in a world of increasingly manipulated reality — a cartoon culture. Accordingly, Barcelona was festooned for the Olympics with a million annoying images of "Cobi," cartoon mascot to the games, half-teddy bear, half-child, half-assed. Expo had one too, an experiment in cartoon genetics involving Daffy, Dumbo and a candy cane gone horribly wrong. The poverty of these post-Mickey images is impressive: the message of Expo and the Olympics is reduced to "Cute!" These dopey glyphs live in a parallel universe in which anything can be combined if it is amusing or profitable. In a current Diet Coke ad, Paula Abdul dances with Gene Kelly, banters with Cary Grant, trips with Groucho. Like so much urban architecture these days though, the stingless surreality is just For The Taste Of It.

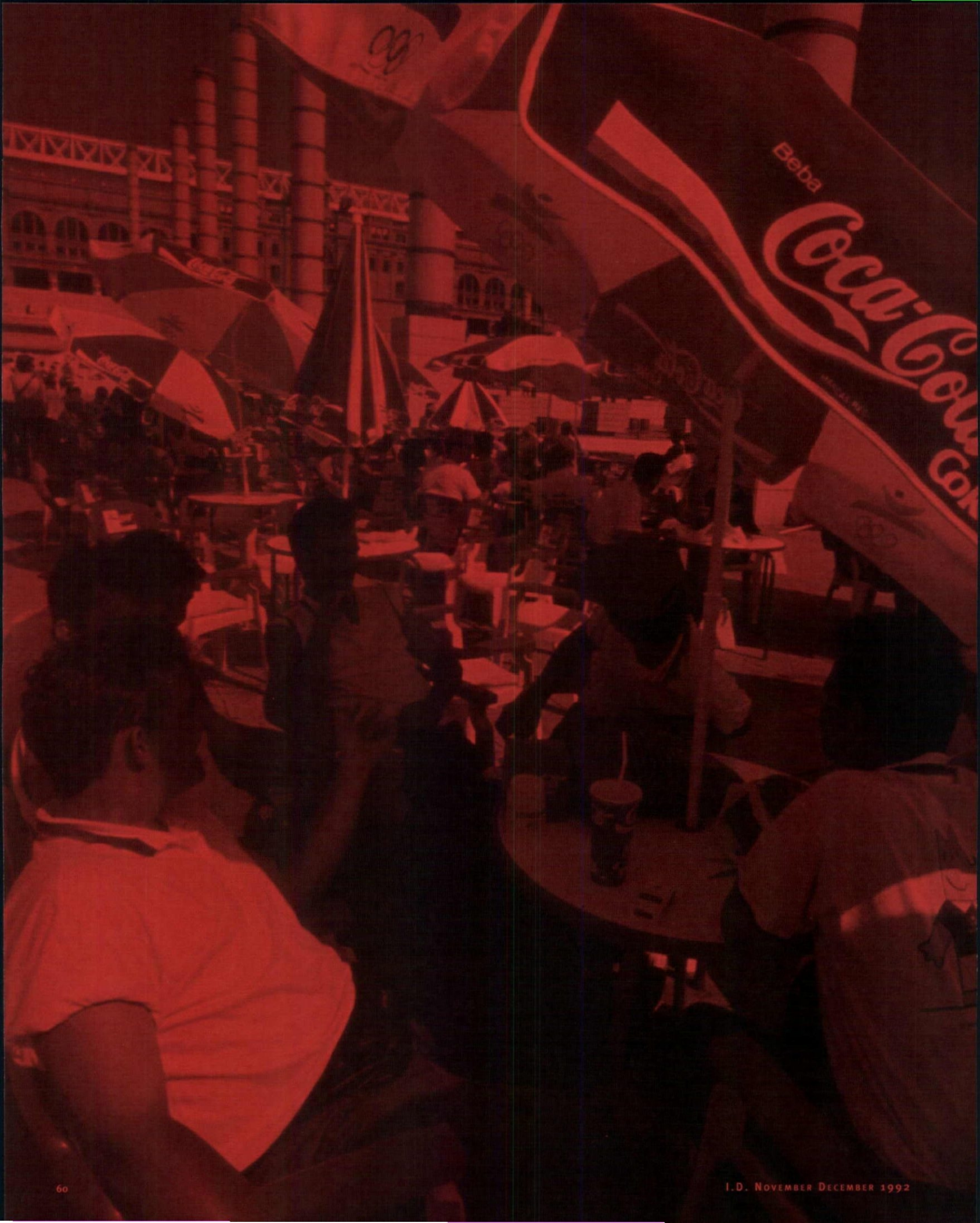
TV offers the most efficient plan for the cartoon city, its grid of frequencies providing endlessly equal "variety," its juxtapositions throwing up a limitless supply of fresh freaks. The first thing I did after checking into my Barcelona hotel room was, of course, to check into the world by switching on the Grundig. I knew I was in Spain because Peg Bundy was speaking Spanish. The channel beyond MTV was broadcasting a bullfight. The bull was streaked with blood, a horrible Coca-Cola machine red. I moved on to the weather channel, which offered a familiar reassuring view from space, a dreary scrim of clouds from the Baltic to Tangier — or was it Lake Michigan to Cincinnati? I drank a five-dollar Coke from the minibar.

For "serious" urbanism nowadays, context is the default mode. The benchmark urbanist practice is imitative, devoluted reproductions of historic patterns. If I hear another architect talking about "extending the grid," I swear I'll throttle him or her. This strategy bears the same relationship to the richness of great cities — Barcelona, Seville, London, Paris, New York — as Cobi does to a duck or a Goya print. This cartoon urbanism increasingly converges into a generic order: a block pattern with strong street walls, a bit of historic flavor, the Disney version of the 19th century, somebody else's Fantasyland. Look around your city and you'll find it somewhere.

World's Fairs — the original model for the Disneyland — have had a more explicitly visionary role in the past, as dream towns for a dreamy new life. They've always been cartoons, sure, but utopian ones, happy simplifica-



Ildefonso Cerda's
1858 design for
Barcelona: As grids
grow, the differ-
ences among the
squares diminish.



tions like all utopias. From the celestial Crystal Palace of 1851 and continuing through the imperial Columbian Exposition in 1892, the motion-obsessed '33 Fair in Chicago, futuristic '39 in New York, and the sexy yet reasonable '67 Expo in Montreal, the hype has always been about the shape of things to come, boon technology. Exemplary and apart, this kind of cartooning has, at its best, a chipper didacticism that perks rather than dulls the imagination.

This year's Expo, built opposite Seville on a long island in the Guadalquivir River, was the city's inverse, playing Cerdà to the twisty old town. Seville lies at some ineffable midpoint between Europe and North Africa, the winding, covered streets of the Medina, the whitewash of the Mediterranean, the spliced architecture of the Moors and the Middle Ages, lush courtyards, continuous texture. The Expo plan was more Northern, gridded and discontinuous, a parable of plots and property of the off-scale, overeager variety. Like Disneyland, it represented the city as total service economy. Neatly attired youth of all nations smiled and helped you through the queue, cloying ambassadors of the happy-face culture of McDonald's, Cobi made flesh. The Fair's modernistic architecture was seldom memorable. Even the better buildings — oppressed by the grid, blurred by vague iconography, constrained gestures and TV architecture — were recycled from last year's magazines, a plat of frequencies filled with equivalent product and endless words from our sponsors.

The urban idea behind the Fair was the aesthetic idea behind television: anything goes if it's the same. Understanding this is nearly impossible and almost totally beside the point. Expo was, in its way, a brilliant and cautionary analogue. Like MTV or CNN, it had a range and a look, the slippery anti-context of multinational space. Expo defended the physical in the guise of the televisual, as well as vice versa. You keep seeing those damn reruns, but you've got to trudge to change channels.

I mean this literally. Lines snaked for hours through Expo's Andalusian sun. The payoff? Banks of television sets and IMAX movies, actors lip-syncing silly little dramas about telecommunications, shops selling knickknacks and other gross national product. The hot ticket at Expo was the Fujitsu pavilion, *another* domed movie theater but with a "difference": the movie was in astonishing 3-D, reality *more* virtual, improved. At the Saudi Arabian pavilion, there were TV monitors half buried in the sand. The metaphor was everywhere, like the thing itself. Expo was the Chichén Itzá of the culture of no difference. Architecture became immaterial.

That grid of Coke machines at Barcelona's Olympic

Village had a more sophisticated version at Seville, a ubiquitous field of IBM kiosks, where banks of touch-screen computer monitors offered games for kids and elaborate information about the Fair: where to eat, who was performing, etc. These kiosks could have been the Fair; the dinosaurian pavilions behind them were just relic bulk. Gathering points, the kiosks offered our current version of urban social life: waiting on line for your turn. Here's the World's Fair of the future: watching TV next to a stranger. Useless information is power in the new urban order. Had U.S. officials been cannier, they might have abandoned our pathetic official pavilion — reconstituted out of two geodesic domes pulled out of storage — for the sponsorship of this more potent totem. Expo provided one reassuring irony: real information about the Fair depended on the oral routines of the old city. The folklore of the line — not the official information system — let you know which pavilions were worth the wait, where the lines had ebbed.

Expo amplified daily life in a culture remorseless in its management of space. Visitors entered as to an airport, through gates flanked by armored cars, metal detectors and X-ray machines, moved through a well-managed fog, ate with plastic utensils, watched travelogues. Nationhood was vague: down the street from the Romanian and Sri Lankan pavilions was Euro Disney's, the theme park within the theme park, the "destination" within the destination. Like Disney, it could have been anywhere, and is.

The Fair was Green. The ecological trope was this year's visionary theme, with extensive plantings, recycling facilities and elaborate attention to mitigating the sultry climate. Walkways were overhung by plant-covered pergolas, a cooling mist of water was sprayed into the air, shade was available everywhere. It felt after the fact, though, like a retrofit. The real city across the river, with its narrow streets and intense gardens, does so much better. Expo's vision was simply stale, a 19th-century city, designed from scratch at the end of the 20th, then repaired a little and brought up to date. Cerdà thought rationality would come by opening packed old cities to light. Expo, in contrast, celebrated shade.

Yet despite all the peppily packaged anomie, the people of Seville made something marvelous and particular of this fair. At dusk, they streamed across the bridges to drink and dance and stroll. Seville knows how to party and its people brought festivity to the Expo's broad boulevards. The city gave soul to its surrogate. Here's the message for urbanism: cities are not solutions but occasions. Real life will win out every time. ★

Hope springs eternal at the Chrysler Corporation, where the new LH series is attempting to repudiate a past of ill-conceived design. Is this the shape of things to come or the company's Last Hope?



Birth of the *Un*Chrysler

BY PHIL PATTON



"They're so, so — so un-Chryslerish!" customers in the marketing clinics keep saying of the company's new LH cars. The trio of new sedans — the Chrysler Concorde, Dodge Intrepid and Eagle Vision — the company introduced this fall have been shaped to be as different as possible from the products the company is known for.

"If you didn't know it was a Chrysler, the people at the tests tell us, you wouldn't be able to tell," says interior designer Trevor Creed triumphantly. "That's the best thing they could ever say because they are talking about the old Chrysler. Our whole objective is to become the new Chrysler."

The new series — code-named LH — is about selling the latest "new Chrysler," a visual promise of better engineering as well as better looks, a visual assertion that the company has improved its quality and dealer training — weak areas in the past. The result is a strange creature, the generic sum of all that is not Chrysler — the UnChrysler.

Creed, along with exteriors chief John Herlich and the rest of Chrysler's design staff, headed by Tom Gale, was handed one of the strangest possible design exercises: shaping a product that repudiates a long history of previous products. The LH cars use design to represent corporate culture. The lines are shaped as much to cut through the prevailing head winds of customer skepticism as to slice through the air.

The LH series is a make-it-or-break-it attempt for Chrysler. Despite a \$178 million second quarter in 1992, the company is ailing. Chrysler lost \$780 million last year and owes \$4 billion in unfunded pension obligations — a concern for every taxpayer, since these pensions are guaranteed by the Federal government. LH, runs the inevitable joke, stands for "last hope" — Chrysler's last chance to reestablish itself as a mainstream auto company, not just a segment marketer of minivans and four-by-fours. In fact, LH is simply a successor to such designations as the "K-car," although "leapfrog Honda" and "Lee's heritage" have been facetiously offered as the source for the initials.

To raise cash, Chrysler sold its stake in its jointly owned plant to co-owner Mitsubishi as well as \$350 million in new stock. No wonder the company invited Wall Street analysts and journalists alike for preview rides this summer through the desert at Rancho Santa Fe and up California's Mount Palomar. If the LH designs fail, Chrysler could be forced to seek a partner in business or find its line reduced to minivans and Jeeps.

The cars have already been proclaimed winners in the auto and business press. They offer an attractive combination of features: dual airbags and antilock brakes on most models. Behind the wheel, the cars are extremely quiet and efficient, riding comfortably and accelerating smoothly. The view from the driver's seat is fresh: the nose drops

Adapting Japanese and European managerial practices, Chairman Lee takes to the airwaves with a new mantra: "In this business you either lead, follow, or get out of the way."

off quickly. "The styling is unique, progressive, contemporary," says Chris Cedergrén, an analyst with AutoPacific.

The company's advance publicity for the LH series has heavily emphasized design. "Chrysler is in the midst of a design renaissance," runs one current ad featuring the company's show cars. Chrysler has been offering insight into the LH design process for several years, agreeing to be featured in WGBH's "Made in America?" public TV series with economist Robert Reich; and signing up race driver Emerson Fittipaldi as consultant. ("Like an Indy car," was his unsurprising comment on LH handling.) Chrysler was even happy to publicize imagined profiles of ideal customers for each of the new cars, in ridiculously sharp detail. The Concorde buyer, for example, is likely to have a woodworking shop in the basement, while the Intrepid buyer listens to National Public Radio.

But above all the car is hailed for being — an UnChrysler. "They've gotten rid of the tinny ashtrays," says respected auto journalist Brock Yates of *Car & Driver*, "and the air-conditioning systems that hadn't changed in about 30 years are gone. It's not cobbled together with crap stuck on. There's nothing derivative on it."

Chrysler is counting on "cab-forward" architecture to distinguish the series. In cab-forward design the engine is pushed forward into reduced space and the wheels are moved closer to the corners of the vehicle for a 15 percent larger interior space, thus a more comfortable ride.

"Cab-forward," believes Cedergrén, "will become the predominant architecture for sedans in the latter part of the decade." But for those who judge the cars not just against earlier Chryslers, but against historical standards, the cars rate less highly. Edson Armi, automobile design historian and author of *The Art of American Car Design*, gives the cars a "B." With cab-forward, he says, "Chrysler is putting into practice what most students were doing in schools three to four years ago. It was a hacking cliché at that point. The new Mazda MX-6 is basically cab-forward, as well as the Saturn coupe."

"The question no one seems to be asking is, is it well done? Is it somehow ahead or beautiful?"

A corporate recovery

"This is a reborn company," says Creed. "It's a new Chrysler." But there have been many new Chryslers. The new Chrysler of the K-Car, the new Chrysler of the minivan, the new Chrysler of the Diamondstar collaboration with Mitsubishi, which made the company most dependent on a Japanese partner, even though Lee Iacocca was castigating the Japanese at the time.

Reborn, recovered — the vocabulary you hear inside Chrysler's huge new glass Tech Center sounds like a corporate version of the 12-step recovery vocabulary so popular in Hollywood these days.

The latest new Chrysler is symbolized by the multi-million-dollar Tech Center in Auburn Hills, 30 miles north of downtown Detroit, a vast glass mall-like structure on 540 rural acres near the Silverdome. Walter Chrysler's old tool set, which he once proudly displayed in the Chrysler

Building in New York, has now been moved to the lobby of the Tech Center, but the place remains half empty. Employees still get lost in its long wings joined at "nodes," or glass-topped courts.

Talk of empowerment

Chrysler's designers speak the current corporate vocabulary, the recovery talk of a corporation owning up to its past excesses and swearing off glued-on chrome, filigree decorations, boxy fenders and cars named after Spanish cities. The litany is familiar: development teams, "benchmarking" of competitive products, CAD/CAM imaging, working with suppliers. You hear talk of "empowerment," "consensus," "simultaneous engineering," "platform teams" — the managerially correct vocabulary of America's business recovery movement.

But if the talk around the Tech Center recalls the Betty Ford Clinic, the story line echoes Ford's Taurus program of 1980–1984. It too is familiar: designers trying to push the envelope encouraged by visionary executives they never forget to mention, improving quality and detail while wrapping the new car in a new shape.

If aerodynamics functioned for Ford as a motif to signal corporate change by employing stylistic change with functional justification then cab-forward would serve the same way for Chrysler.

Platform teams, adopted from Japanese and European practices, were used at Ford to produce the Taurus, and at Chrysler similar teams had developed the second generation minivan, the new Jeep and the \$56,000 Viper sports car. Rather than sequential organization — design to engineering to manufacturing to marketing — the concept relies on simultaneous involvement of all departments. The aim is to sharpen the design focus and shorten the development time — in the case of the LH series just 42 months. The line was introduced to the public at the North American Auto Show in Detroit last January.

Chrysler has done things carefully. It has been explicit about the benchmark cars: the Nissan Maxima for torsional rigidity of chassis, for instance, the BMW series for heat and air-conditioning, the Lumina and Taurus for low-end handling package and, for exteriors, Herlich says, Audi, as it's projected to look in the mid-'90s. To assure quality, Chrysler aims to produce just 50,000 LH cars this year, but hopes for annual sales of around 225,000.

Why then is the result so uninspiring, its elements so eclectic and its themes unconvincing? The talk of shapes as Eurostyle and development methods as Japanese suggest that the "new corporate culture" is still perceived as essentially foreign. And while chrome and filigree are gone, there is still something "Chryslerish" about the emphasis on the glittering "mica flake" paint the company is so proud to introduce.

There is a new kind of showiness to the LH line: not chrome outside but a dizzying array of plastic compartments, hooks and holders inside.

Then there is the matter of the simulated wood on the Concorde dash. "If you place one instrument panel with

Even in the most enthusiastic reviews, there is a sense of relief at the mere competence of the machine. The cars are so much better than old Chryslers — “so UnChryslerish” — that the question of how good they are by general standards is neglected.

wood and one without in front of people,” Trevor Creed says, “and ask them to choose the ‘luxury’ panel, they will invariably choose wood — even if the wood is simulated.” Creed explains how his team worked hard with suppliers to get quality simulated wood. “If you can’t tell it’s not real,” Creed says, “that’s sophisticated enough for me.” Might this have something to do with the ideal Concorde buyer’s propensity for woodworking?

Consider even the names for the cars: Intrepid evokes an America’s cup yacht of several years ago or a WWII aircraft carrier, Concorde a beautiful but impractical and superannuated airliner.

Even in the most enthusiastic reviews, there is a sense of relief at the mere competence of the machine. The cars are so much better than old Chryslers — “so UnChryslerish” — that the question of how good they are by general standards is neglected. Says Brock Yates: “I don’t see much wrong with the car.” The enthusiastic coverage in *Automobile* magazine — “The Second Coming of Chrysler ... Hallelujah!” — resorted to such less-than-ringing praises as — of the power train — “well up to contemporary standards.” Another typical phrase hails the interior as being designed in the “Euro-Japanese idiom.”

Design by market survey

In the “design node” at the Tech, Creed and Herlich share adjacent offices with views to a court where new models are displayed for study, screened by trees from outside eyes. Both began their careers in 1966. Creed worked for Ford of Europe, where he was involved in the Sierra and Scorpio before coming to Ford of U.S. and then, in 1985, to Chrysler. Herlich has spent his entire career with Chrysler although, he jokes, “it’s been like working for five different companies.”

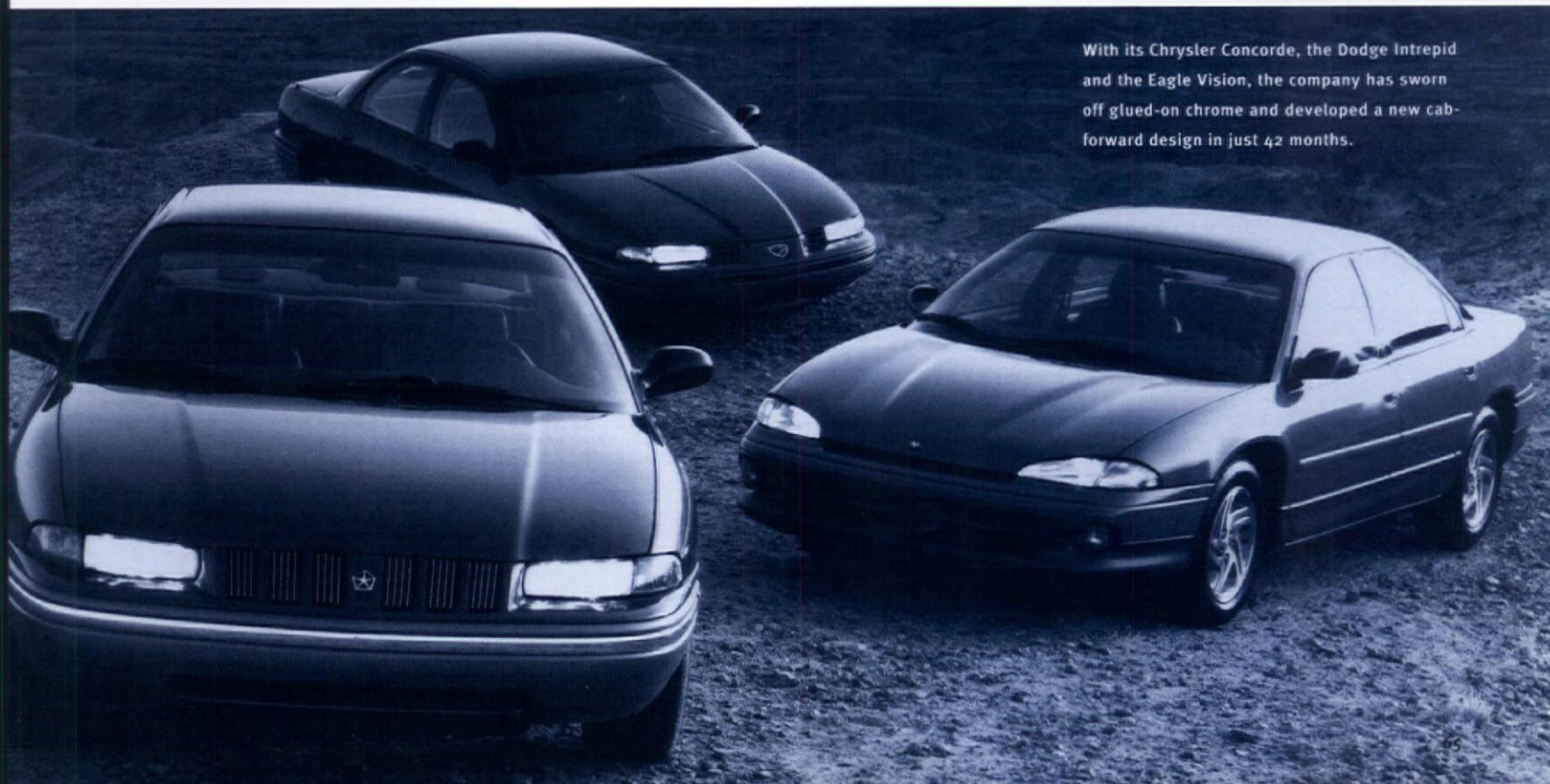
Marketing targets and consumer surveys drove the design of LH. Designers were given theme boards bearing pictures, cut from magazines and ads, showing images of ideal customers and the products they use.

In the late '80s, as Herlich recounts it, Chrysler’s hopes for the family car of the '90s were embodied in the Liberty program, but the first full-sized models seemed too conventional, the changes too incremental — still too “Chryslerish” perhaps — to make the real difference in public perception Chrysler needed.

To go further, says Herlich, designers took a new approach. Since Chrysler’s most successful vehicle was the minivan, why not build a car that shared as many of its qualities as possible? The minivan had almost saved Chrysler; indeed, after its introduction in 1983 as the Plymouth Voyager and Dodge Caravan, it created a whole new category of vehicle.

“We looked at what people liked about the minivan,” Herlich says. Using focus groups and consumer surveys of minivan buyers, they found that women in particular liked its “immense” interior space, wide opening doors and the view offered by its short front, what Chrysler terms “command of the road.”

“We virtually dropped the minivan layout down,” says Herlich about the functional origins of the LH series. Since



With its Chrysler Concorde, the Dodge Intrepid and the Eagle Vision, the company has sworn off glued-on chrome and developed a new cab-forward design in just 42 months.

the minivan was by its nature a cab-forward vehicle, the resulting layout fit nicely with elements of the cab-forward Portofino show car of 1987, developed at Pacifica, Chrysler's California design outpost.

In the LH series, cab-forward produced a 113-inch wheelbase as compared to Taurus' roughly 108-inch one. It meant, according to Herlich, that "the rear wheelhouse is moved completely out of the passengers way," thus avoiding what the auto industry terms "kidney intrusion." The rear doors, which are usually about 20 percent smaller than the front, are virtually the same size in the LH. The effect is a very fast windshield — a 65 degrees sweep — with resulting aerodynamics for both fuel savings and noise reduction.

The price paid for cab-forward came in the vast quantity of glass it necessitated. The heads of passengers seem dis-

Chrysler's designers speak the current corporate vocabulary, the recovery talk of a corporation owning up to its past excesses and swearing off glued-on chrome, filigree decorations, boxy fenders and cars named after Spanish cities.

concertingly close to the glass at first, in both front and rear. Glass added weight to the car, which is heavier than a Taurus or Lumina, and tasked the cooling system dramatically. Only heat reflective materials in the glass and a new, efficient air-conditioner as powerful as a two-ton household unit remedied the problem. Vendors of those folding cardboard windshield sunscreens may have to consider producing larger units for LH cars.

But the length and angle of the cars are diluted by horizontal accents of the sides. Close up, the forward rake and the height of its rear deck are more evident than in photographs; the length of the car is less so. From the front seat, what is new is the vision afforded by the drop off of the nose — and a depth of panel beneath the glass in front of you that takes a while to get used to.

Making them like they used to

"We wanted a total composite package — excitement and excellence," Herlich says. "We want the customer to feel that he is in a solid substation road-worthy machine wrapped in an exciting skin. That is something Chrysler was famous for back in the '50s."

Those cars sported the "forward look" developed by Virgil Exner, who immigrated to Chrysler from General Motors' design studio. The look featured huge tail fins, lower, longer bodies, larger greenhouses. "Cars that can do what they look like they can do," the ads claimed — but by the end of the '50s they couldn't. Cab-forward may echo the forward look, but with LH what they can

do is better than how they look.

Again following the model of Taurus and Sable, Chrysler worked hard to establish "brand separation." For the Intrepid, a set of cues "leveraged," in Tom Gale's phrase, from such cars as the Viper lend a sporty air. You can see the resemblance in the front valance and in the headlights. "We call them Viperesque," Herlich says. "Those little burners light up like the Jawa eyes in *Star Wars*." Herlich also points out how the taillights on the Intrepid take a cue from the Portofino's parallel slot treatment. The digitally inspired lettering on the back of the Intrepid is the sort of look that stood for high technology a few years ago in, say, sci-fi film logos, but is at war with the use of the analog gauges inside.

The New Yorker, the longer LH model that will target the Lexus/Cadillac luxury segment, Herlich says, took its inspiration from "the classic limousine," specifically the Bugatti Type 57, and has an almost "Deco curve" to the rear window. "That Bugatti had a steeply raked windshield like the New Yorker," Herlich reports, "and when we did the idea in a 3/8 model it spelled mother immediately." The resulting curve — similar to a motif used in the Mercury Cougar and elsewhere — is echoed in the treatment of the rear deck.

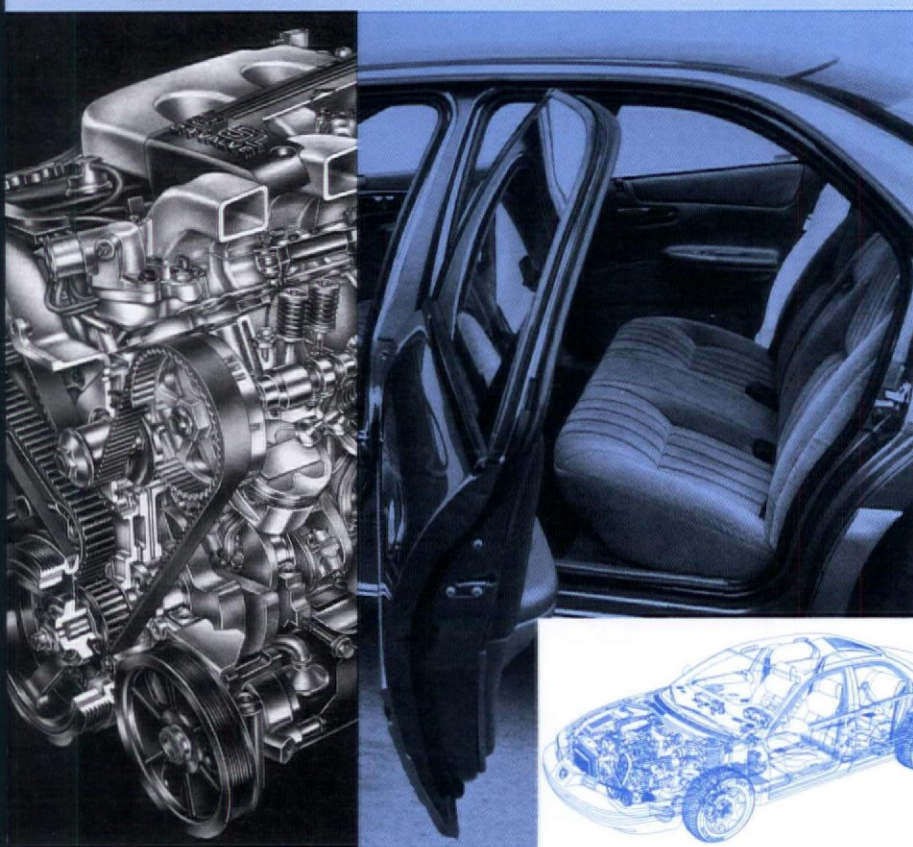
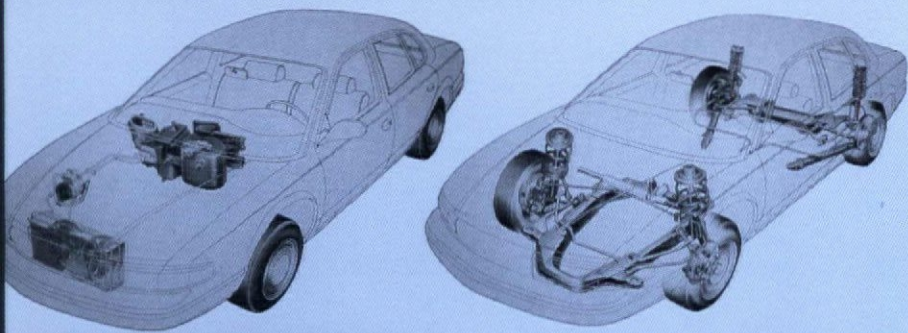
On the Eagle Vision, the hood is shaped to a beak-like effect, to frame and front the badge the way Alfa Romeo has, according to Herlich. But the beak-like front, with its little vents, also bears more than a passing resemblance to that of the Honda Prelude.

Chrysler's new ads for the LH series, similar to those for the Grand Cherokee, will heavily emphasize Trevor Creed's new interior — perhaps the cars' most unChryslerish design of all. Creed says his team worked hard to create a sense of "delight" to the eye and the hand in the interiors. There was a lot of emphasis on tactility — switches that feel right. Such goals, Creed says, cannot be specified in words or numbers, but only by example, by actually touching and feeling. That is the sort of area in which working with suppliers early on helped immeasurably.

Creed and his team aimed to create an instrument panel with all controls visible, one which can be immediately grasped "on a rainy night at a rental lot in Chicago," as he puts it. The needles of the gauges at rest line up on the horizontal. The type is neat and clean. But while the interior is highly intelligible it also seems somehow generic and, despite flowing lines aimed at unifying it, visually busy with gaps and vents.

The black-on-white dials of the Intrepid "benchmarked" from the instruments of the Nissan Maxima virtually are the dials from the Maxima. The rear ashtrays pivot out of the door like those in a Honda; the lamps on the doors are Taurus-like. And the seat-shaped metaphoric control for tilting or lifting the driver's seat is nearly identical to the famous Mercedes original.

At heart, the appeal of the LH series is bread-and-butter Detroit: more space inside and more power — the 3.5 liter V-8 offers about 200 horsepower, the most in the class. Americans have never lost their affection for big



Simulated wood on the Concorde dash was deemed the "luxury" choice (top); the LH air conditioning system was designed to perform as effectively as the BMW series (center, left); the base level suspension was benchmarked against the Taurus and Lumina (center right); one of cab-forward's salient benefits is the spaciousness of the back seat (above).

cars. The Taurus brought back a sense of size through full shapes and subliminal invocations of '40s American cars (the fronts of the Taurus and Sable paid quiet homage to the 1949 Ford and 1950 Mercury). Although some customers in tests have guessed that LH is a Toyota or Honda, the car tries to bring back a sense of size not only in its interior, but in perceived length — what Herlich calls "a leanness, an athleticism."

Is competent enough?

LH's chances of success are very good, according to most analysts. "I believe they will sell out" says Chris Cedergren. "I think they've pulled it off," agrees Brock Yates. And cab-forward seems likely to become a trend in the future. Detroit's rumor mill already has Ford introducing it into the next generation Taurus, due out in 1995.

The question remains whether buyers will find interior space as high on their list of priorities as Chrysler's designers. And for all the ad talk of "design revolution," Chrysler's success or failure will depend far more on quality and reliability than on design. (Executives at the Tech Center are already shuddering at an early recall for minor engineering problems.) Sadly, as Saturn and any number of Japanese cars have shown, mediocre or mere competent design still finds a large audience in this country.

"We don't want to be just not Chrysler," Creed admits. "We have to define something positive and new."

"At some point we want to become the benchmark for a change," John Herlich hopes. "Wouldn't that be nice?"

Nice, but not likely. With the possible exception of their generous interior space, there are few standout features to make the LH cars a benchmark. While the cars are affable and competent enough, they sometimes seem, like the marketing profiles of the company's ideal buyers, to be composites. They are personable without strong personality. Nor, coming seven years after Taurus, are they landmarks on the landscape of American automobile design.

To achieve a real design revolution, Chrysler will need more than benchmarking and focus groups. The customer may always be right, but is he or she always right right now? To possess durability of design, cars must reflect a personality and a theme.

"All that market research sounds great," says Armi, "but you also have to be creative. Bill Mitchell (the great General Motors design chief) used to say, 'Frank Lloyd Wright didn't go around ringing doorbells to find out what kind of houses to build.'" In the end, there is little risk to the LH cars.

Chrysler is not alone in this. More and more cars, Japanese and American alike, convey a sense of design by committee. To achieve a real design revolution, Chrysler must do more.

"Lead, follow, or get out of the way," runs the slogan that shows up in Chrysler ads these days. The company is following now — following the right path, but not leading. It has focused on the target, but it has not led the target — and the target is moving. An UnChrysler is a lot better than an old Chrysler, but it is not yet a new Chrysler. ★



The Business of Design

Hit by a failing economy and pervasive corporate apathy, are American designers down for the count or up and fighting?

Whatever happened to design as the buzzword of the '90s — the prospective savior of the beleaguered U.S. economy? Three years ago there seemed to be a shining new era in business that accepted the importance of designers. Now, with the last decade of the millennium one-quarter past, the business of design is changing, but in a way that no one envisaged. Not least because, as David Jenkins, design manager for seating at Steelcase points out, "There's been a big shake-out. The white-collar boom of the 1980s will never return."

A recognition of fundamental change is widely accepted by designers, but few seem to know where that change will lead. David Cundy, a graphic designer who runs a consultancy in New Canaan, CT, uses MTV, with its barrage of contradictory sounds and images, as an analogy for what is happening to the design professions. He has a point. Design is indeed displaying diverse and often baffling patterns. Some consultancies are doing well, but many are cutting back or going belly-up; some are stripping out their design capability, others are enhancing it; one person says there are marvelous job opportunities for the right people, another says

there are many fine designers out on the streets.

How do we begin to make sense of the confusion?

The lack of reliable statistics is a problem, especially in a business culture where only numerical methods are given credibility. Many designers argue, with justification, that numbers cannot accurately represent the realities of design. But, the fact that the U.S. Department of Labor's statistics on employment do not acknowledge design as a distinct category

of work serves as a sad indicator of the official standing of the profession.

A cartographic survey

In the absence of any reliable figures, an opinion survey was carried out by this publication this past July to identify business and technological trends influencing U.S. design practice. The aim was cartographic, rather than numerical; an attempt to learn through canvassing and conversations the state of the various design professions.



"We run a lean operation with careful costing and tight margins. In this economic climate, we can't afford to make mistakes."

Jilly Simons, Concrete, Chicago, IL

Jilly Simons began her graphic design consultancy in Chicago in 1987 when the economy was in less of a muddle than it is now. Although able to afford a staff of three full-time colleagues, a part-time office manager and freelance workers, business has not been easy in recent years. As Simons puts it, "Volume has picked up in the last six months, but clients are increasingly bypassing consultancies. We don't respond by cutting our price. But neither do we pad our bills or make elaborate presentations. We run a lean operation with careful costing and tight margins. In this economic climate, we can't afford to make mistakes."

BY JOHN HESKETT

Access to power

If design really is becoming a significant part of corporate strategy, some sign of this should be evident in the positioning of designers in corporate structures — in their access to, and participation in, decision-making processes. There seems, however, to be little sign of change in this respect. Designers are still noticeably absent from senior positions, with most corporate design

directors positioned to report to company vice presidents. Change is occurring in a lateral direction, however, with some corporations shifting from centrally organized design departments to positioning designers in strategic business units. At Puritan-Bennett Corporation, design manager John Blue believes that his company's dismantling of a centralized design department has led to better integration of designers. Now,

he says, "each project is assigned an industrial designer to work as a team member." Steelcase has also redistributed its design group among five business teams. David Jenkins feels this has created an exciting new challenge; "We are faced with proving our competence and business savvy with fewer resources."

Design doesn't come out well in another indicator of corporate standing — numbers of personnel and size of budget. The corporate design groups we surveyed are generally small, even in those companies where design is a valued function. Recent year-to-year variations in budgets show most corporations treading water, barely maintaining their present level of commitment to design.

Corporate identity and communications should be an obvious sphere of responsibility for a corporate design group, but, in fact, key decisions are frequently taken by other parts of the company. The marketing communications group often takes charge of the concept and then delegates the realization of the concept to the design department. Designers also tend to play a subordinate role in corporate marketing projects — producing the peripherals such as promotional videos and point of sale materials rather than being involved in the initial concept.

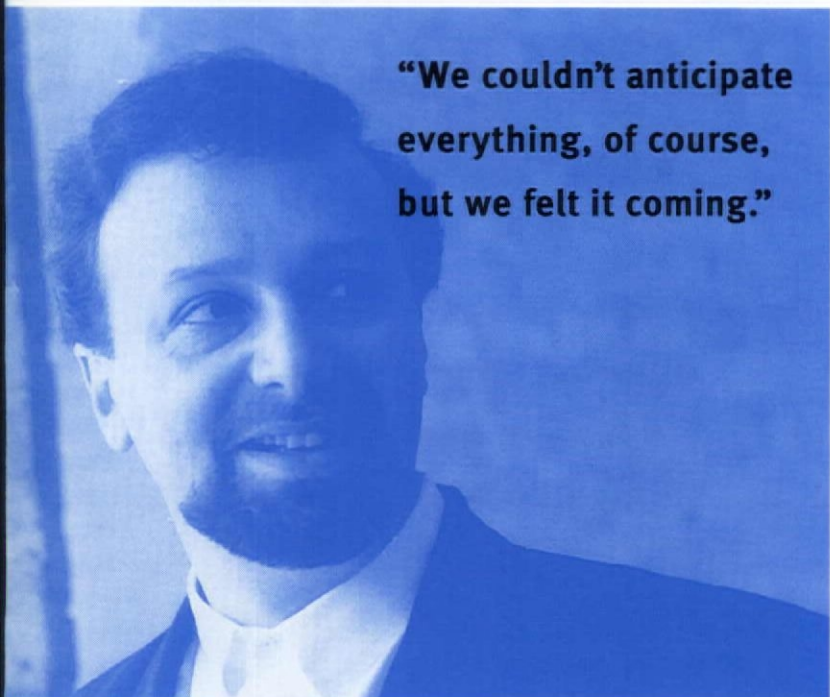
In companies where new strategic methods are common, however, there are notable exceptions. At Haworth, manufacturers of office furniture, senior industrial designer Jeff

Reuschel says, "Designers play a key role in conceptualizing and usually initiate the project start-ups, selling new ideas to executive management." This holistic approach often goes hand in hand with an emphasis on speed to market as a major competitive strategy. William Swartz, director of industrial design at Maytag confirms, "Our products are now turned out in half the time of only five years ago. As a result, design has been accepted as a much more potent factor in the market." At Dictaphone, another company recently enjoying success, Sandor Weisz, director of design, reveals that 90 percent of its product range has been designed in the last five years.

A shrinking demand

All too often though, there is a price to be paid for an accelerated production process. "Design, which was once considered a vital tool for enhancing and increasing our market share, has now become an arm of the manufacturing function," says a design manager who has requested anonymity. "Decisions are based on short-term cost rather than long-term growth. Design of new products is too expensive. Not only has the number of designers shrunk, but the attitude toward them has become one of tolerance, not of value."

Even in companies where design is still valued, designers have to take their share of cuts in the present crisis. At Unisys Corporation, which has suffered severe problems in the volatile computer market, Anthony Ho,

A blue-tinted portrait of Stephen Melamed, a man with dark hair and a beard, wearing a suit and tie. The image is positioned on the left side of the page, with a quote overlaid on it.

"We couldn't anticipate everything, of course, but we felt it coming."

Stephen Melamed, Tres Design, Chicago, IL

Two years ago, Stephen Melamed's 10-year-old consultancy specializing in product design found client companies getting cold feet about releasing new products in unstable economic conditions. As a result, three quarters of the seven-person team's projects have been put on hold, a scenario that has put many small design practices out of business. Yet Tres Design has survived because Melamed and his colleagues had prepared for this contingency: "We couldn't anticipate everything, of course, but we felt it coming. We were running a lean machine and had a cash reserve that gave us a cushion. We are not going to experience the growth of the past, because there has been a major shift in employment and products and how people spend their dollars. But we feel the work we put in has prepared us to cope and face the future with optimism."

director of design, says, "We peaked in 1990 and have been on a downward slide ever since."

Managerial changes are capable of turning the fortunes of corporate design in a totally opposite direction. At Syracuse China, director of design Steve Unger is upbeat about a recent change: "With the return of a new president, absent for five years, support for design as an element of long-term strategic thinking has improved, compared to an earlier emphasis on bottom line priorities such as production yields and investments outside the company."

However, such reversals can easily go the other way. Management ignorance or indifference remains a serious problem for many designers, especially in the wake of a takeover. One California designer says that following the new management's decision to reposition the company to capture the mass-market and achieve more competitive pricing: "You are talking to someone in deep mourning." In a consistently profitable company, whose reputation was built on quality and innovation, this designer was told he was too concerned with quality and not concerned enough about speed. "The marketing staff," he says bitterly, "have clout way beyond their capacity to function. They are drummers only vaguely aware of what design can contribute."

Retreating inside

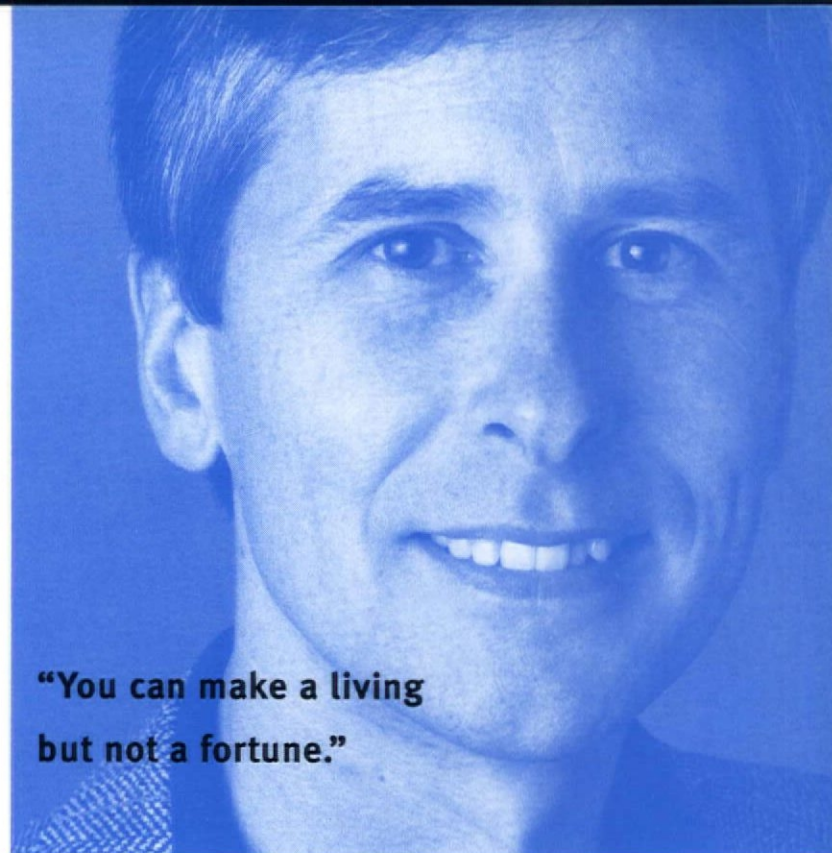
For design consultants, the corporate trend to use in-house resources wherever possible is proving a major problem. "This

economy favors internal design teams," says David Jenkins of Steelcase. "Outside help can cover deficiencies at a cost, but internal knowledge is more valuable and cost effective — the inside team knows far more about a company's capabilities."

Another problem for design consultancies is the growth of desktop computer systems. Clients' expectations are increasing. Martin Beck, president and CEO of Fitch RS says: "Clients now want us to have ready access to type fonts previously reserved for typesetters, to analyze market data using spreadsheets and databases, and to create product innovations that can be modeled three dimensionally on a color monitor."

Computer anxiety

A widespread anxiety about computerization is expressed by Stevan Lipson of Lipson, Alport, Glass & Associates of Chicago, specializing in packaging and corporate identity: "Increased expectations of turnaround and lowered costs have reduced the creative services profession to a commodities business." Over-capacity at the lower end of the design market is reflected in price competition, making margins often impossibly low. A Chicago graphic designer whose small firm folded earlier this year, confirms: "Existing clients were questioning everything, wanting very detailed invoices. We were also getting heavy price competition from firms specializing in areas such as desk-top publishing, marketing consultancy and public rela-



**"You can make a living
but not a fortune."**

David Cundy, David Cundy, Inc., New Canaan, CT

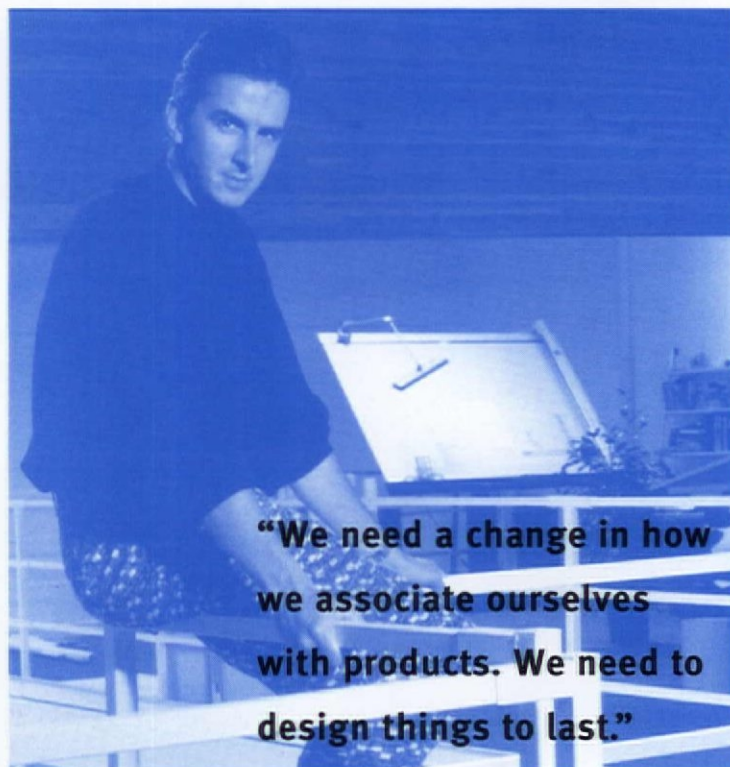
Corporate graphic design consultant David Cundy has implemented an aggressive marketing program since he founded his firm in 1985. Although experiencing difficulties, Cundy believes there is potential for growth in his company. However, he also feels that many design firms will not survive the recession and those that do will be focused on niche services. "Corporations are willing to pay drones and undercut consultancies. This is affecting the type and cost of jobs available. Work opportunities still exist with small and medium firms, but they expect designers to act as full-service turnkey agencies that must add value." Despite a rise in health care and financial service clients, Cundy maintains modest financial expectations, saying, "You can make a living but not a fortune."

tions that were using freelance designers at rock-bottom rates. This work was later presented to clients as originating from the consultant office."

There are undoubtedly many improvements computers can bring to a design business. Jeffrey Corbin, president of Corbin Design, based in Traverse City, Michigan, estimates that computerization has increased overall office efficiency by

about 35 percent. "The computer enables us to reduce the time we spend on the administrative aspects of projects and increase creative and production time." Communication and networking with clients is also being fundamentally changed through the use of diskettes and modems to transfer information.

Clients are demanding that designers use systems compatible with those they have installed,



"We need a change in how we associate ourselves with products. We need to design things to last."

Stephen Peart, Vent Design Associates, Campbell, CA

Vent Design was founded by industrial designer Stephen Peart six years ago, and currently has a client base ranging from small start-up companies to large corporations such as AT&T, Motorola, Nike and Apple. The recession, he feels, is to a large extent a mental state of mind encouraged by the media: "It should be a time to move wisely, a time to invest for the future. Too many think that if they've cut back costs, they've addressed the big question of the recession. But they haven't! The biggest problem we now face is the environment. I know it sounds idealistic, but we need a change in how we associate ourselves with products. We need to design things to last, to upgrade our products for high-performance results that last a lifetime. If we sort that out, we can solve not only the economic problem, but the bigger global problem."

which often means increased capital expenditure by consultancies for equipment and training. "The majority of our capital budgets for the past four years have been allocated to purchase personal computers and software and networking them together," says Martin Beck of Fitch RS. His consultancy is taking that process a stage further: "Now we've found it

necessary to invest in portable units, such as Mac PowerBooks, which we use at the client's site, while traveling, at home or in the office."

While computerization has profoundly changed techniques and procedures, even the most enthusiastic consultants emphasize that computers are still basically tools that do not replace designers' creative abilities.

One major complaint voiced by many designers is that business publications persist in presenting design as a mysterious art form, which lessens its credibility. But Spencer Mackay of Emerson Johnson Mackay Inc. of North Hollywood, California, nonetheless views the media's coverage of the profession as essentially positive: "Clients are becoming aware of design as a legitimate discipline and as a result managers are better able to justify design expenses to upper management." Forrest Richardson confirms that publicity has "often brought 'MBA-clods' to the table who want design but have no clue of what it involves, what it costs or how it happens."

Ignored by the press

Design, unlike advertising, is still conspicuously absent from the business pages of major newspapers such as the *Wall Street Journal*. By contrast, the Japanese equivalent of the *WSJ* launched its own design magazine, called *Nikkei Design*, five years ago. Within a year *Nikkei Design* had a readership of 20,000, half of which turned out to be in large corporations.

Fundamental changes of the kind presently affecting designers can impose enormous strains. Small firms that depend either on a steady stream of small clients or on a limited client base are particularly at risk. Precise figures are not available, but our survey indicated that a substantial number of such consultancies have gone under. This is not a uniquely American phenomenon. After

the collapse of the Japanese investment bubble, 40 of that country's small design firms went out of business in February of this year.

Small or large?

Is the size of a design group the critical factor? Pundits like to predict that large groups are the wave of the future, and that a pattern of mergers resulting in large one-stop, multi-specialist consultancies, and large multi-discipline corporate groups that parallel developments in other professions will take place.

But size can make consultancies unwieldy, with heavy management and bureaucratic overheads, and a preoccupation with internal politics wreaking havoc with creative capacity. The much vaunted growth of British design consultancies in the '80s was based precisely on this belief in size, yet two of the largest Ozymandian design empires, those of Michael Peters and Terence Conran, are no more. On the other hand, small British consultancies such as Paul Priestman Associates and Seymour Powell (both based in London), continue to prosper by producing high-quality work for major international clients.

There is no convincing evidence that large in-house groups are the most effective. They may be necessary due to the scale of work in some industries, such as automobiles, but most major car manufacturers also rely upon separate small groups for the generation of new concepts. For example, in Japan, the major consumer product corporations have large

design groups, but also use small design think tanks to develop new ideas.

Braun's reputation for design is exemplary in the corporate world and, astonishingly, has been sustained over 30 years by a group of just 15 designers and support staff. After the German company's purchase by Gillette in 1967, this small group began to have a profound influence on their parent company. The current trend to decentralize design throughout a corporation, as at Hewlett-Packard or Steelcase, also runs counter to this belief that bigger is better.

Some larger consultancies are indeed successful, but if they have continued to prosper, it is because they are structured to maintain a high level of creativity in their work. Pentagram has not merely expanded over many years from its base in London to New York and San Francisco, but continually renews itself by bringing in fresh talent as partners. Each partner virtually runs a business within a business.

Small is beautiful

Another shining example of this phenomenon is IDEO of Palo Alto, Chicago, Boston and London. Currently, the company employs 149, encompassing both creative engineers and designers, and defies all economic patterns by going from strength to strength with a blue chip list of international clients. A crucial element in IDEO's approach is constant attention to creative management, in other words, keeping designers

fresh and vital. "We don't think we are large," says IDEO's director of strategy Bill Moggridge, one of three partners who recently merged to create IDEO. "We haven't consolidated. We still operate much as we did before. I like to think that small is still beautiful." He believes that 10 to 15 is the maximum size group for designers to stay creative. Moggridge attributes the success of IDEO to "managing a large company so that it feels like a small one."

But is design the essential ingredient it is extolled to be? There is a lot of *de facto* evidence that design works. Disparate companies such as Ford, Hewlett-Packard, Dictaphone and NCR, which integrate design into their product development processes, are coming through the recession strongly. Bill Moggridge also sees signs of encouragement in that fewer companies need to be taught the value of design. "Compared with ten years ago," he says, "when I found myself constantly playing the missionary, there is a terrific acceleration of interest."

Nevertheless, comparisons with leading trading competitors overseas reveal a gulf in the provision and support for design. Japan, for example, has half the population of the U.S., but three times as many industrial designers. Taiwan is spending millions of dollars to improve design capabilities in its industries. On the plus side, numerous foreign corporations have already established design groups in the U.S. or are commissioning work from American consultancies.

One bonus of the current economic climate is the weak dollar. American design services are now incredibly cheap by world standards and so some consultancies are picking up commissions across the globe from companies who appreciate the high standard of their work. Internationalization could well be a key criterion for consultancies' competitive success in the future.

Executant not executive

It will take more than occasional articles, competitions and a few optional design courses at business school to affirm the importance of design in the U.S. Designers themselves must learn to argue their case with conviction and clarity and to continually demonstrate their worth through performance. "Too many schools," comments Bill Moggridge, "have trained designers in skills, but not to think."

Icons of orthodoxy are continually being challenged, old rules are being flaunted and patterns of belief dissolved. But change will also bring new opportunities. The recent trend in industry to strip out layers of middle management is providing openings for young, largely self-taught design managers to take corporate design into new dimensions.

There are also clear signs that enormous talent is emerging. The intelligence, energy and, above all, the creativity of our young generation of designers, and their innovative use of materials and new technologies, is full of promise. But

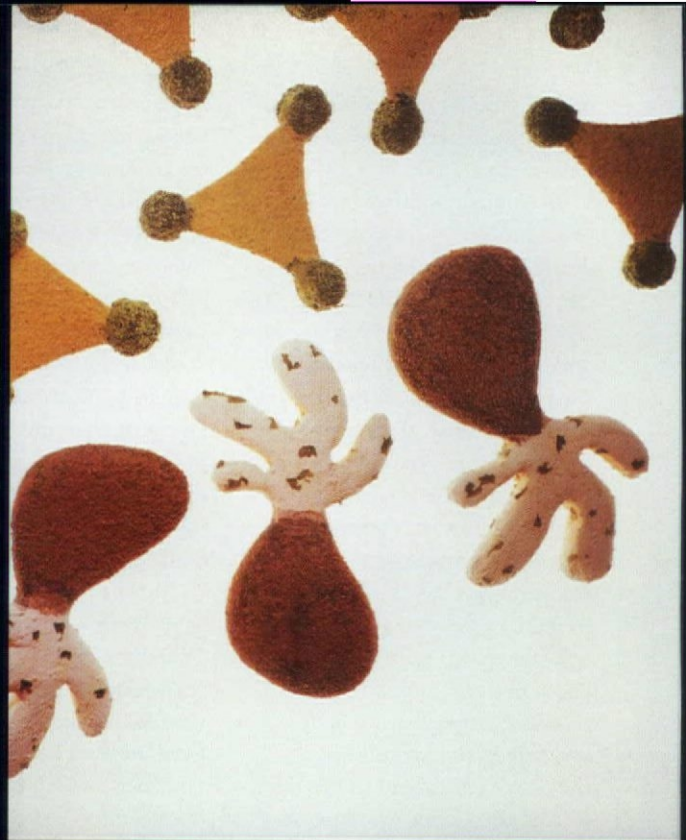
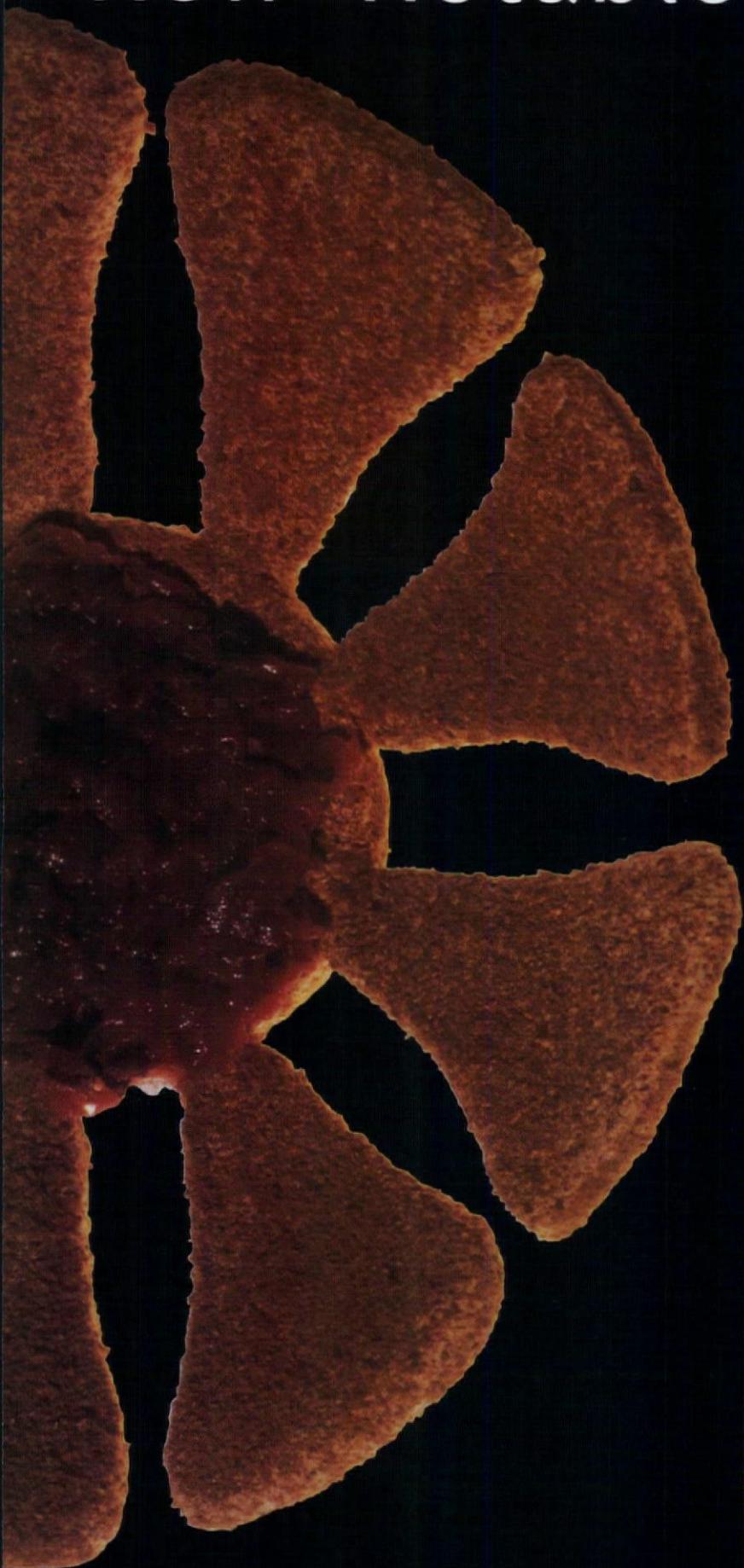
here is the essential paradox: while American society is a seed bed like no other on the planet, capable of propagating these young abilities, our business culture has had other agendas. The fact remains that designers still do not have a leadership role in corporate strategy or policy-making, or in managing development teams in American companies. They generally remain at the level of the executant, rather than the executive.

It is encouraging to see signs of change, but whether they will result in a fundamental shift of attitude is unclear. For designers, there is always the consolation that design is one of the most transferable competences available to businesses. If the work of designers goes unacknowledged in the United States, one prediction can be made with confidence: clients across the world will be avid for their talent. ✱

Notice to our readers:

I.D. would like to provide a continuing forum on the state of the design professions. Please send your observations and comments to Editor, I.D. Magazine, 250 W. 57th Street, Suite 215, New York, NY 10107 or send a fax to (212) 246-3891.

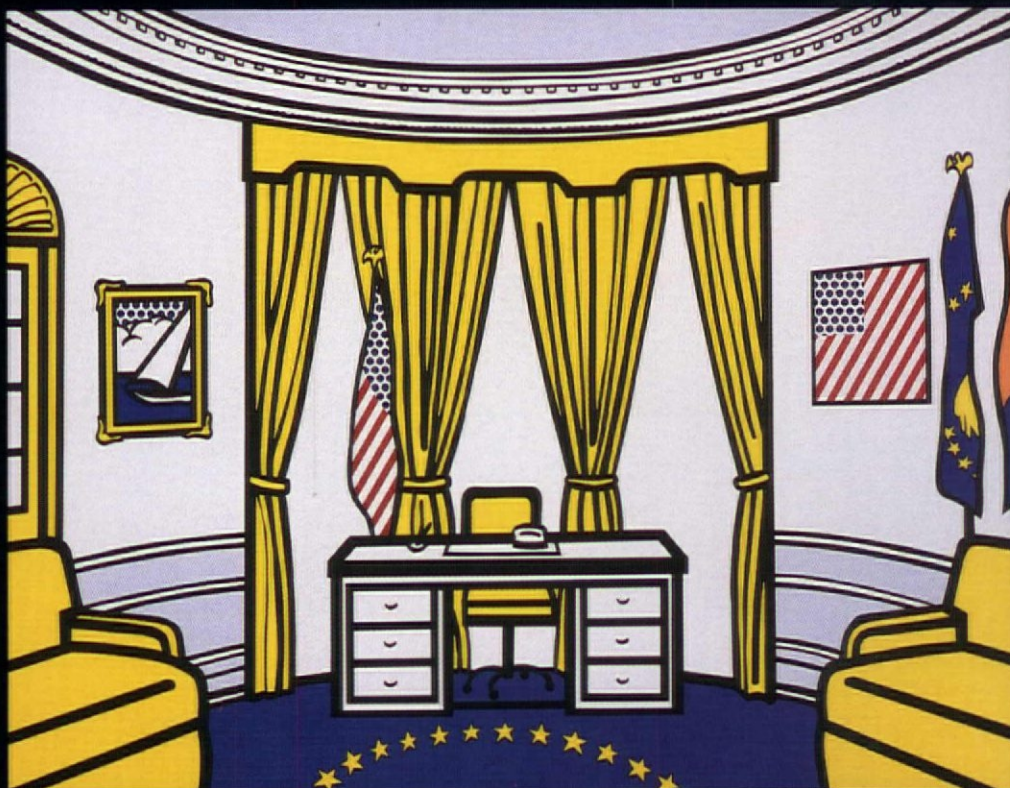
New+Notable



Although predominantly known for its award-winning industrial designs, the Rotterdam-based WAAC studio has now bitten into the world of gastronomical design. Biscuits and crackers in the shape of tulips, sunflowers and anemones are as pleasing to the eye as they are to the mouth. Cleverly packaged in a fast-food container, WAAC's "Tulips," for example, are a healthful french-fry alternative made of soy, brown rice, nettle, onion and bell pepper. The

"Virgin Cookie" is a triangular design treat made of a rice-paper shell with a spicy soy-nut filling. WAAC's designs will be available in supermarkets and gas stations throughout Holland in the near future, and may well give empty-calorie candy bars a run for the money.

I.D. invites you to submit your designs to New+Notable for possible publication. Contact information for all designs is found on page 92.



Musicians and the public have expressed their concern for the wasteful packaging required for CDs at retail outlets. The Eco-Pack CD jewel box, which was two years in design and development, displays like a CD long box in the store, but its rigid plastic frame and paper-board panels can be snapped and folded into a permanent 5x5-1/2" storage box. Unlike the throw-away packaging provided with most CDs, the shrink-wrap is the only dispos-

able item. Some critics argue that the box can be difficult to assemble and open, but it does nonetheless provide an environmentally conscious solution to the CD packaging quandary. The Ivy Hill Corporation licenses its new packaging to the music industry on a royalty-free basis.

How would the Oval Office be transformed under a new administration? Back during the presidential campaign, artist Roy Lichtenstein suggested one vision in which even the American Flag is revised. In a silkscreen print titled, "A New Generation of Leadership" created to help the Democratic National Committee raise funds, Lichtenstein studied photos of the Oval offices in the past and alludes to several of them in this print. Lichtenstein's

limited-edition silk screens sell for \$2500 and posters sell for \$20. Proceeds are given to presidential and congressional campaigns.

N+N



Rendering the accumulation of plastic garbage bags obsolete, the Piece "garbage can" allows the conscientious consumer to make use of those awkward bags that usually find their way to the dump empty. Designed by Gaston Marticorena of Piece Inc. in New York, the welded steel structure, available in wall-mounted and freestanding models, requires minimal space. It is practical for sorting recyclable materials in even the tiniest kitchens.

What's the best way to bring kids along on a bike ride? Designers Timm Fenton, Chris Heageman and George Scott of Cannondale have come up with a luxury chassis that seats two children with plenty of internal pocket space for their snacks and toys. The unit conveniently folds down to a compact bundle to fit in a closet or car trunk. The Stowaway trailer is constructed of a light, durable polyethylene shell supported by an aluminum frame to make it

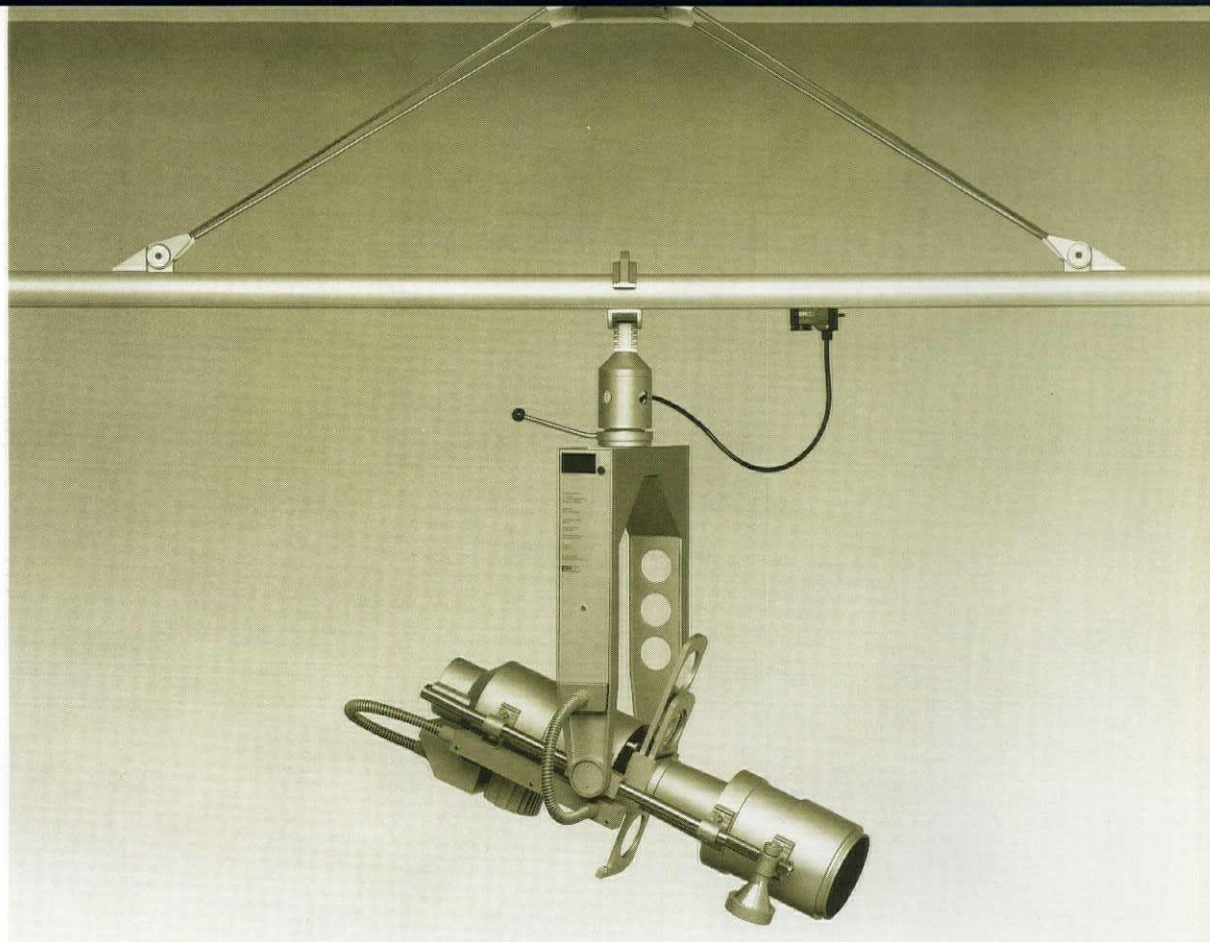
easy to pull, and the canopy is a combination of yellow nylon with reflective trim and mesh panels that provide both visibility and ventilation. Seat belts keep children secure while inside.

Alessi has entered the world of lighting design with the introduction of table and floor lamps designed by Aldo Rossi. The lamps are based on the architect's design of street lamps for the Piazza Croce Rossa in Milan. The freestanding fixtures, which accommodate an incandescent bulb with a dimmer, are crafted of aluminum with a gray or black baked.





The Shpigel Joint, incorporated here into the design of a tripod head, is being integrated into a number of new products, including a task lamp, a prosthetic shoulder, a drum mount and cellular car phones. Invented by the Brooklyn-based industrial designer Vladimir Shpigel, the flexible joint is patented and marketed by the Amrus Corporation in New York.



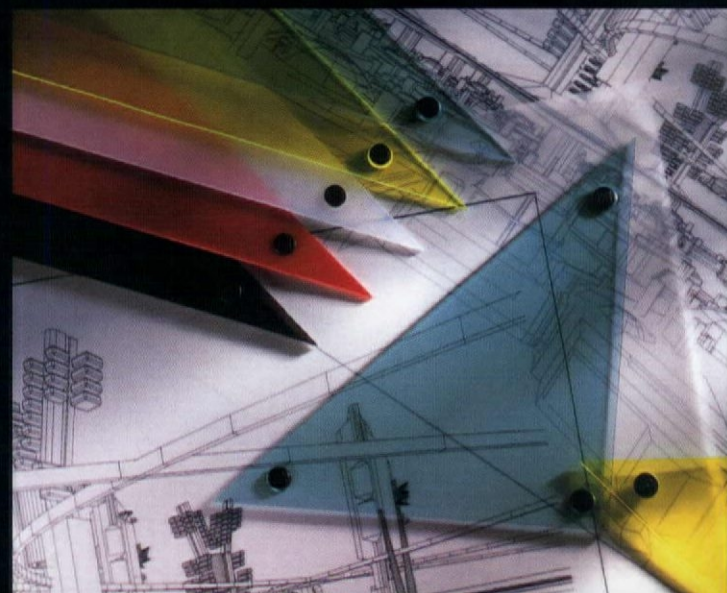
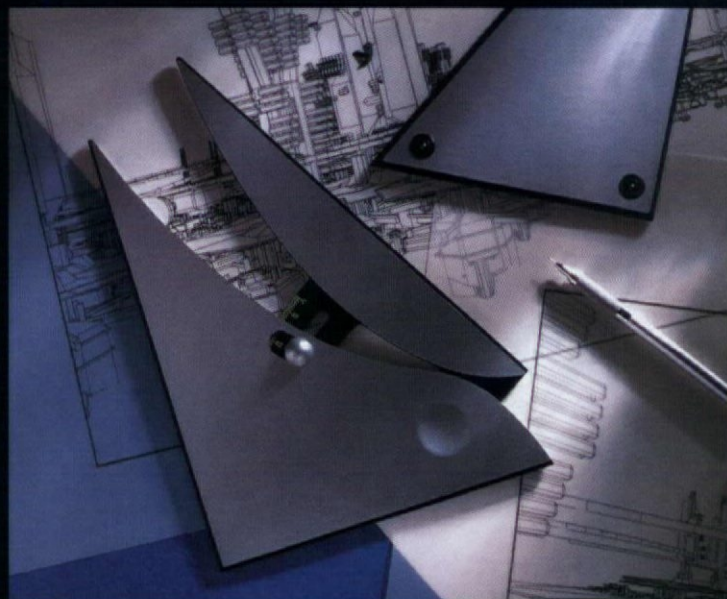
Metal theater lights that resemble tiny movie cameras were designed by Roy Fleetwood for ERCO in Germany. Specified to accommodate hot, bright long-life lamps, such as 1000-watt tungsten halogens, to meet the rigorous demands of the stage, the Emanon 150 theater lights provide a flexible system for creating a wide range of dramatic effects. The lights, which attach to the theater superstructure, include condensor and ellipsoid projectors

to create either high-definition or high-luminence theatrical lighting. Special filters can create colored effects or sharp-edged geometrical beams.

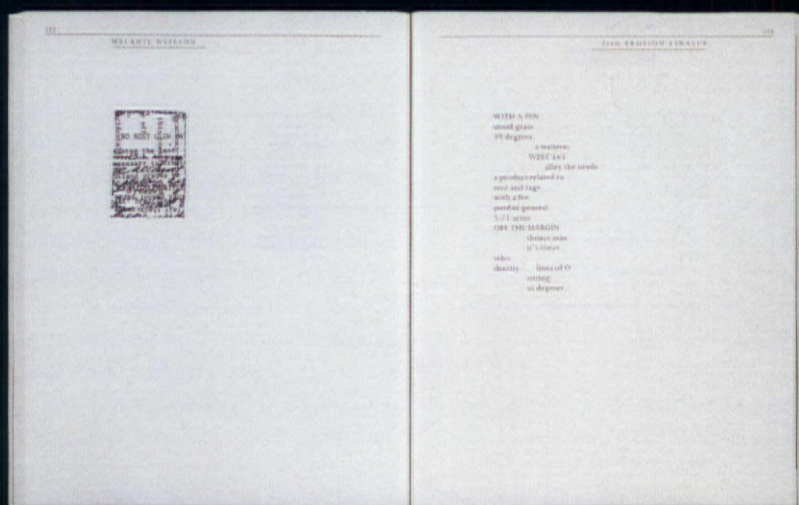
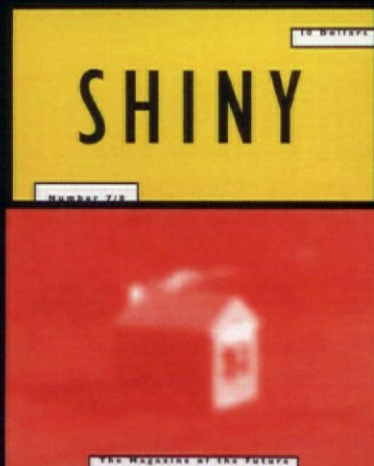


Designed by New York-based ECCO Design for Goody Products, the Salon Profile line of hair brushes provides the consumer with professional quality hair products at below-premium prices. Human factors data determined the proper handle-to-bristle-block configurations, sizes and shapes. Molded in ABS plastic and available in a variety of pearlescent colors, the brush's sculptural shape offers users a comfortable contour.

French architect Jean-Paul Fournier's bookcase on wheels is a wonderful idea for people who are tired of lugging around unwieldy furniture and scratching polished wood floors. With an elegant curvilinear vertical body of veneered ash and a black epoxy-laquered steel structure, the mobile bookcase is a modern application of traditional wood-shaping techniques, and accommodates books and magazines of all sizes.



Well-designed drafting tools have a substantial feel in the hand. Align's triangles feature recessed ball-bearings that allow them to move easily on drawing surfaces. A 9" x 9" adjustable triangle made of a layer of black acrylic sandwiched in between two layers of anodized aluminum adjusts from 45 to 90 degrees. Colorful minimalist plastic triangles are available in two models, an 8" x 8" 45-degree triangle or a 10" x 6" 30/60-degree triangle.



An important venue for contemporary fiction, poetry and art, six-year-old *Shiny, The Magazine of the Future*, has recently been recast to brilliant effect. Under the art direction of New York-based designer Dirk Rowntree, *Shiny's* new look — an elegiac blend of typographical innovation and haunting black-and-white images — is as impressive as the writing between its covers. Included in this issue is an interview with Jackson Mac Low, photographs

from Patty Martori and poetry from Melanie Neilson. Published by Michael Friedman and Kim Rosenfield at Shiny International, a not-for-profit organization, this contemporary journal demonstrates that low cost does not mean low quality.



The Zulia piccola lamp designed by San Francisco designer Pablo Pardo would be tough to knock off any table. With its resilient, infinitely adjustable sand-filled soft leather base and broad shade, Zulia is a friendly hybrid of task and table lamp. The hand-spun aluminum shade has random perforations that make for interesting visual effect. The Zulia is being produced in three sizes with leather bases in seven rich colors.

The I.D. Annual Design Review honoring the achievements of 1992

I.D.

Call for Entries

The I.D. Annual Design Review
is America's most comprehensive
design recognition program

The Categories are:

Consumer Products Electronics, appliances, personal computers, housewares, accessories, toys, sports/leisure equipment, automobiles, personal transportation.

Graphics Printed, filmed, or computer-generated images for commercial, editorial, promotional, public or personal use, including advertisements, posters, annual reports, signage, identity programs, logotypes, stationery and videos.

Environments Commercial or professional interiors, restaurants, exhibitions, galleries, showrooms and public spaces.

Furniture Contract and residential furniture, furnishings, lighting fixtures and lamps. One-off designs also accepted.

Equipment Business, medical, industrial and scientific products, instruments and apparatus for professional use.

Packaging Graphic and structural packaging programs for retail, wholesale and industrial uses, including containers, boxes, bottles, labels and hang tags.

Surfaces Wall, floor and furniture coverings, including textiles, fabrics, carpets, tiles, laminates, composites and wood.

Concepts Projects or products not yet manufactured that explore the possibilities of design and technology.

Student Work Product and graphic design, realized or proposed, created by undergraduate or graduate students.

Deadline February 1, 1993

Eligibility Any project or product introduced to or intended for the North American market in the 1992 calendar year is eligible. All award winners will be featured in the special July/August 1993 edition of I.D. Best of Category and Gold Award winners will receive award certificates and the I.D. Annual Design Review Seal.

Jurying Panels of distinguished designers will choose three levels of awards for each category: Best of Category, Gold Awards and Honorable Mentions. Criteria for evaluation include innovation, function, aesthetics, problem solving, human factors, use of materials and quality.

Fees Entry fees are \$60 for an initial submission and \$50 for each additional submission. Student fees are \$30 when accompanied by a valid ID.

For entry forms or more information contact:

Design Review Editor, I.D. Magazine, 250 West 57th Street, Suite 215, New York, NY 10107

Phone: 212-956-0535 Fax: 212-246-3891

Practice

Photography by Susan Larocque

Materials

How Green is Your Paper?

The availability of environmentally conscious paper products has been increasing steadily over the last few years, but confusion in labeling makes it difficult to distinguish one product from another. The meaning of the word "recycled" is at present about as malleable as paper pulp. "Recycled" can mean that the paper contains trimmings and damaged rolls from the manufacturing process — materials that have always been re-used anyway. Even the denotation, "50 percent recycled" is ambiguous because it can mean that either half the total paper weight is recycled (a large proportion) or, more likely, that half the total fiber content is recycled (a considerably smaller amount). More slowly coming to the fore is the issue of using chlorine in the paper-making process. Chlorine has been found to release dioxins into the environment — substances that have been shown to cause birth defects in animals. Yet the availability of non-chlorine bleached papers in the U.S. is minimal, and awareness of the issue low in comparison to Europe.

Nevertheless, the following sampling of new papers from five U.S. companies indicates that public pressure is forcing a clarification of the environmental issues at stake. Companies are beginning to be more specific about what percentage of their papers is made up of post-consumer materials, i.e. how much wastepaper used in new paper products has actually been diverted from landfills, such as paper reclaimed from homes, offices and retail stores? According to Bob Schaeffer, an educational consultant for Conservatree

Paper Company, which runs a recycled paper information service, "in the last six to nine months people have begun to understand the need for post-consumer content in paper, and it is the design profession," says Schaeffer, "that has been taking the lead."

Schaeffer admits, however, that it is still difficult to find a stock that is both non-chlorine bleached and has a high percentage of post-consumer waste. This is partly because eliminating chlorine from the manufacturing process requires expensive retrofitting of the paper mill, and partly because secondary (post-consumer) fiber has often already been bleached. It is telling that only one of the following samples of new papers is non-chlorine bleached, and that it is non-recycled.

Conservatree

Enamel-One coated text and cover, 20 percent post-consumer waste per percent of fiber content. Enamel-One is one of many premium-grade, clay-coated recycled papers being introduced this year by paper companies. Because Conservatree is a supplier and not a mill owner, the company is able to act as the liaison between mills and the market to establish what is needed and what can be supplied. One notable deficiency, says Schaeffer, "is that there hasn't been enough coated stock for high-end applications."

Gilbert Paper

Gilcrest recycled writing and cover grade; Gilbert Oxford recycled writing, text and cover grade. Both contain 30 percent post-consumer waste



Paper is shredded as part of the recycling process. This image appears in Claudia G. Thompson's comprehensive *Recycled Papers: the Essential Guide*. The book can be ordered for \$25 from the MIT Press, (800) 356-0343.

per percent of fiber content. The conversion of existing lines to recycled grades with high post-consumer content represents another growing trend among paper companies anxious to keep up with the accelerating demand for recycled product. Hopper Papers has just done the same with its Skytone line, and Gilbert's conversion of Gilcrest and Gilbert Oxford was introduced in October in response to recommendations from Gilbert's "design advisory council," which meets regularly to discuss needs and trends in the market. The council is comprised of Joe Fuller and Robin Rickabaugh, who in 1990 collaborated on the creation of a recycled grade Esse, as well as Heidi Rickabaugh and Rick Valicenti.

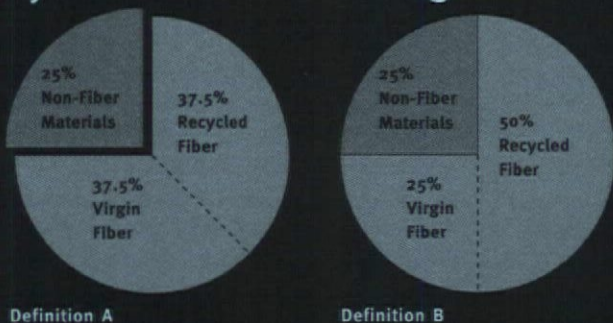
Gilbert marketing manager Su McLoughlin believes that the post-consumer content of high-grade

uncoated papers such as Oxford and Gilcrest is unlikely to rise much. "It is hard to do without a lot of bleaching and without perfect post-consumer waste," she says. As it is a non-integrated mill that buys its pulp, Gilbert is "somewhat at the mercy of the pulp suppliers," says McLoughlin. Non-chlorine bleached papers are not yet available from Gilbert, though McLoughlin claims that the company is putting "soft pressure" on the mills to meet this need.

Simpson

ReCollection, coated (two-sided) book and cover grades, matte and gloss, 10 percent post consumer content of total fiber. Again capitalizing on the market for coated recycled papers for annual reports, catalogues and literature requiring sharp, four-color reproduction, the

Recycled Content Percentages



The same paper requires a different formulation to meet a 50 percent recycled standard, depending on whether the standard is defined by total fiber content or total fiber weight. This chart compares the two situations. In definition A, recycled content is defined only in reference to the fiber portion of the paper. In definition B, recycled content is defined with respect to all components of the paper, the total paper weight. For the sake of comparison, the percentages shown within the pie in both situations are calculated based on total paper weight. If the paper is 50 percent recycled by total fiber content, instead of total paper weight, substantially less recycled fiber is required to meet the standard.

ReCollection line took a year to develop and was launched this summer. Creating coated papers with a post-consumer content has posed some problems for Simpson, however, because contaminants from the secondary fiber often cause blade scratches on the coating as it is applied and leveled off. Simpson also produces Quest, a 100 percent post-consumer content uncoated recycled paper. Spokesman Ron Polucci feels, however, that it is unlikely that the post-consumer content of coated papers will increase to that level. "Anything's possible," he says, "but I don't think we're going to see that in the near term."

Mohawk

Chlorfree Gloss coated premium grade, 100 percent virgin pulp, oxygen bleached. Indicating that concern is growing at last in the U.S. over the issue of chlorine bleaching, Mohawk's Chlorfree Gloss was launched in July as a non-chlorine bleached, but non-recycled paper. Because Mohawk is a non-integrated paper company, it was able to shop around for a supplier of oxygen-bleached pulp. "It's a big investment for people to change their bleaching processes," says Mohawk's manager of communications Laura Shore, "and they have to have a clear sense

that there is a specific market demand for non-chlorine bleached paper. It costs more because pulp, being a commodity, rises and falls in value according to supply and demand, and the demand in Europe for oxygen bleached pulp is particularly high." The cost can be around 20 percent more than chlorine bleached pulp, she adds.

Champion Paper

Kromekote recycled coated cover (two-sided), 10 percent post-consumer fiber content. "With a grade like Kromekote," says Champion's director of creative services Tony McDowell, "It has taken two years to get the post-consumer content up to 10 percent." The difficulty is in controlling the debris that comes along with the secondary fiber, says McDowell. "Our cleaning equipment can only handle a certain amount."

The cost of the operation is also a slowing factor on the industry. Buying de-inked secondary fiber pulp can cost a mill \$300 a ton more than it would cost them to produce its own pulp from wood, McDowell claims. So Champion, like other mills, is having to invest in its own de-inking facilities, a move that recently cost them \$85 million. McDowell adds that current and future voluntary outlays for improve-

ments in recycling technology will total several billion dollars.

Speeding the changes

Demand will continue to increase for high percentage post-consumer recycled paper, predicts Champion's McDowell, until it becomes a moot point. He says that the public's current interest with the post-consumer percentage is something of a hobby horse. McDowell feels that these statistics are not as important as the overall picture of how much waste is being recycled and government attitudes about recycling.

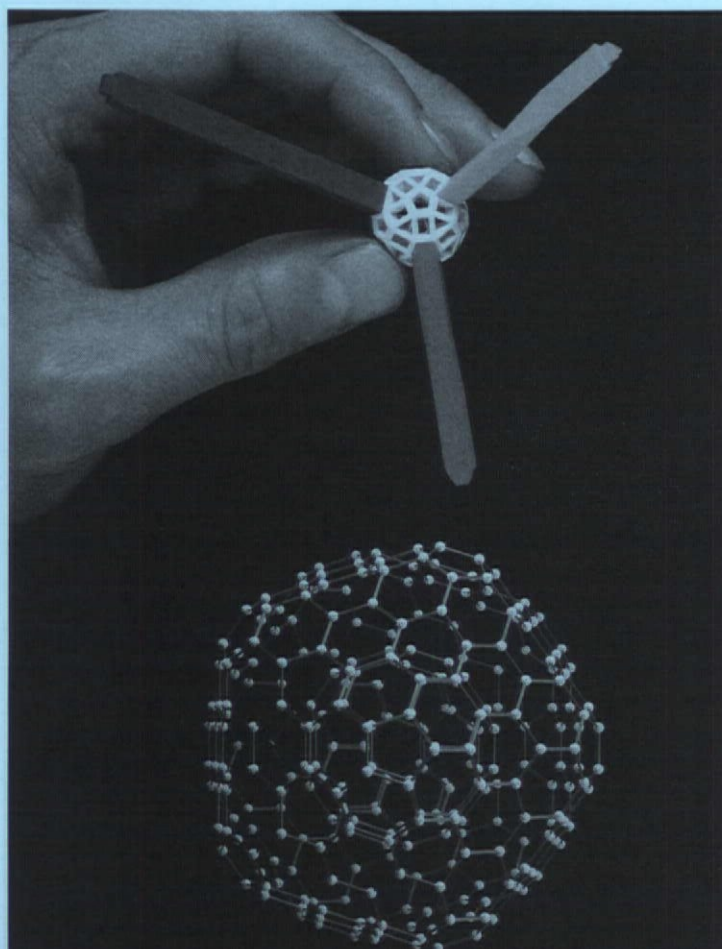
Government action on recycling standards and paper bleaching, however slight, would speed up the slow and painful revolution of the paper industry. There is evidence of

movement: the Environmental Protection Agency's 1988 guidelines for federal-funded agencies' purchase of paper and paper products, which dictated that all paper purchased should have 50 percent recycled content (pre-consumer waste included), are being revised this winter. What had become a meaningless industry standard because it did not specify how much fiber should be post-consumer product, may as a result have some effect. Similarly, the General Services Administration, which buys about \$300 million worth of paper a year, is proposing a new specification that the paper it uses must be chlorine-free. Whether these guidelines will be adopted is in some doubt, but at least the debate is on the table. PETER HALL

Recycled Paper Information

The complex and inconsistent laws regarding the labeling of recycled and environmentally friendly products can be downright baffling and can make the conscientious use of these products difficult at best. To help get the facts straight, the educational division of Conservatree publishes a bi-monthly newsletter and conducts twice-monthly seminars in cities all over the U.S. on topics such as the environmental impact of ink and starting recycling programs. The organization helps environmental groups lobby for new recycled-paper laws and maintains databases on relevant issues and legislation.

Memberships cost \$39 for individuals and non-profit groups and \$59 for corporations; contact Conservatree's information services at (415) 433-1000, ext. 24.



Tinker Toys for Grown-ups

One of the newest 3-D modeling tools does not require any sophisticated computer hardware and software. In fact, the Zometool is a set of plastic sticks and balls that can be put together like Tinker Toys. Unlike children's play, however, the primary-colored Zometool derives from advanced scientific research and can model shapes as complex as a "31-dimensional hypercube." Scientists are applying the tool to help model molecular quasi-crystals or fullerenes (recently discovered carbon molecules that resemble architect Buckminster Fuller's geodesic dome), while artists and designers can use the set to help them visualize complex 3-D objects and spaces.

Zometool is also a marvel for its engineering. Inventor Paul Hildebrandt describes the manufacture of the tiny domes as "the most complicated single-cavity injection mold ever built," meaning it required 62 hydraulic pistons to punch the appropriate openings in the one-centimeter balls. The limited-edition sets, which include 256 balls and over 1,000 color-coded sticks in three sizes, sell for \$950 — a hefty price, but still less than a CAD system.

For more information about Zometool, contact Biocrystal, Inc. P.O. Box 7053, Boulder, CO 80306-7053, (303) 786-9888.

Education

Stanford's Dream Teams

If there's one thing just about everybody seems to agree on it's that U.S. industry is losing the competitive edge, and the finger of blame is often pointed at education. American colleges, critics argue, simply aren't turning out the kind of graduates the nation needs to compete in foreign markets. Students aren't as well-rounded as their Asian and European counterparts, and they're not trained to be good team players. The proof, as it were, is in the products. So how do educators get future members of the manufacturing team — fledgling designers, engineers and marketers — to work in some kind of creative symbiosis?

A few colleges are making the attempt. Bridging the chasm between technology and management in a classroom setting is the daunting task of Stanford University's new graduate course, "Integrated Design for Manufacturing and Marketability," now in its second year at the college's campus in Palo Alto, California. The course, which was jointly developed and taught by professors in the design division of the engineering school, is offered to graduate business, engineering and design students who need to fulfill engineering requirements.

"The course grew out of a concern of educators that MBAs have little experience with, or sympathy for, the shop floor," says instructor William Lovejoy, "and many engineers have little experience with, or sympathy for, the economic and competitive context of their work." Tacit among the educators' objectives is a placement of more emphasis on design practice, rather than theory.

Lovejoy says, "unless that happens designers are going to remain on the short end of the attention span of business managers."

The program throws graduate students from Stanford's top-rated Business School together with peers in the college's School of Mechanical Engineering, in a superheated, two-quarter free-for-all that, last year, involved competing teams in simulated "war games," defining, designing, prototyping and costing out a can crusher for home recycling. The results were being rated by professors, some of whom run professional design practices.

"It's the only one of its kind," Lovejoy says of Stanford's interdisciplinary course. "This course is unique because of its notion of having an economic competition at the same time as a competition to come up with functioning prototypes. To my knowledge, that hasn't been done in the classroom before."

The first time the course was offered, 20 students — 10 from the engineering Master's program and 10 from the business school MBA program — were divided into five teams of two engineers and two MBAs each. All teams were required to compete in the same product market and required to design, build and manage a can-crusher product. Each team had the same tool set and product class, and all were pitted against the same two can crushers currently on the market.

In what is fashionably known in marketing terms as a "conjoint analysis," the teams first developed a model "feature set" based on interviews with selected potential buyers

for the product. So, for example, one highly desirable feature that emerged was that users did not want to handle the can after it has been crushed.

Each team then built a functioning prototype according to their guidelines. This involved completing engineering drawings for each part, generating process sheets on how to produce each part on the lab machinery and assemble them into the finished product and generating a costing sheet that costed out each step in the manufacturing and assembly process, as well as an estimated total unit cost.

Chris Cavello, one of the course's two teaching assistants, worked as an industrial designer with his own consulting firm before returning to Stanford to complete his master's degree as part of the program, and now puts in time at Apple Computer's Portables Product Design Group. "I ended up dropping half my classes to work on the course," Cavello says, "the involvement was *that* intense."

Cavello describes the course as a nuts-and-bolts affair that required engineers to figure out finances while business students ran milling

machines, turned parts on a lathe and worked in plastic and anodized metal. "The engineering types learned something about marketing," Cavello adds, "but more important was getting the MBAs to empathize with the people who have to prototype this stuff, which is really the hardest part. Ultimately, what this course is about is what a royal pain in the butt it is to actually make something."

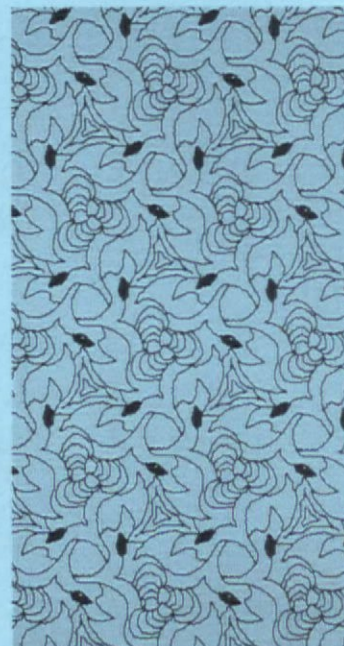
Projects were partly graded using a technique of "conjoint simulation" — a kind of computerized report card — and partly by a panel of outside judges. The winning solution, a wall-mounted structure of anodized aluminum, has two arms with attached plates standing out from the wall. When raised, the plates separate, allowing a can to be inserted. When the arms are pulled down the plates move together, crushing the can, and when the arms are raised again the can is released into a receptacle. At just over \$7 a unit, the can crusher garnered a large, if hypothetical, market share.

Other schools have taken Stanford's cue. A similar, though not

identical, program at MIT's School of Engineering has students redesigning an actual product already on the market — a slice of real-life experience sadly missing on most American campuses. But that could be changing. With generous grants from industries such as IBM, concerned about the crisis in U.S. competitiveness, other technical schools around the country are stressing the manufacturing process.

At Georgia Tech, for example, some 60 graduate engineering, management and computer science students who complete a core curriculum in manufacturing receive a certificate in "computer integrated manufacturing systems." The campus has also completed a \$15 million Manufacturing Research Center, supported by a consortium of industries, where students gain experience in advanced production techniques using state-of-the-art equipment. Such efforts are clearly designed to remove some of the stigma from a field that traditionally has not always been associated with innovation.

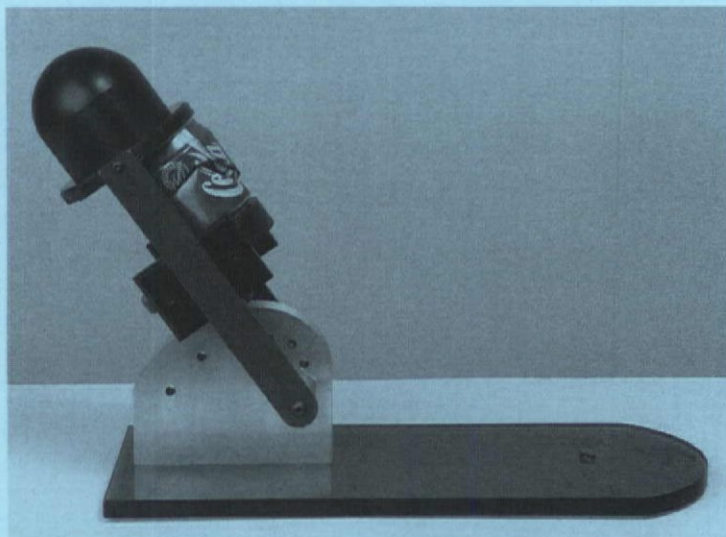
Although it's too early to tell if many other design, business or engineering schools will follow Stanford's lead, and far too soon to predict what effect this brand of intensive education will have on future developments in product marketing, design and manufacturing, Stanford's experiment demonstrates the wisdom of putting cross-disciplinary talent to work together long before they start drawing their first paychecks. "The course illustrated that interdisciplinary groups that can speak each others' language the best generally faced the most success in their products," Cavello says. "But then anyone who's worked as a designer should know that already." KEN COUPLAND



Computer-Aided Surface Design

Symmetry Studio, a new 2-D surface pattern generator, is both a professional and educational tool that provides insight into the creation of complex surface geometry. Created by Dr. Timothy Binkley, the chair of the Graduate Program in Computer Art at the School of Visual Arts in New York, the program allows users to generate images that are symmetrical around any point, line or plane. One of the most wonderful features of this simple program is that designs are generated in black and white on the screen as you draw, and the computer can create new symmetries at a touch of a key that are as mesmerizing to watch as any kaleidoscope. Symmetry Studio runs on almost any Macintosh with System 6.0.4 or higher.

The program and a 192-page manual can be found at bookstores, or can be purchased for \$64.95 from Van Nostrand Reinhold Mail Order Department, P.O. Box 668, Florence, KY 41022; or call (800) 842-3636.



A can crusher designed by students in Stanford's new graduate course.

Siggraph Report

Three Days of Sensory Overload

Graphic designers, artists, photographers and cinematographers have used traditional media to create the illusion of fictional objects for years, but an abundance of new computer tools and techniques displayed at the annual Siggraph exposition this summer demonstrated how *anyone* with the right hardware and software can become a master of special effects. The result was a near-psychedellic display of spinning molecules, dancing teapots, and three-dimensional type that seemed to jump off the screen. Why, the exposition seemed to ask, be content with a simple 2-D rendering of an object when it can be exploded, marbled, animated or morphed?

Surprisingly, the visual gymnastics taking place in every corner of Chicago's mammoth McCormick Place Convention Center represented nothing startling technologically; the show did, however, provide desktop-sized demonstrations of techniques that have been evolving to new levels of accessibility over the last two decades. The novelty of seeing highly reflective metallic

balls bouncing in a sea of marble is bound to wear off (with any luck), but as a testimony to the growing popularity of the computer imaging technology, the 19th Siggraph show was mobbed. A record 30,000 attendees, ranging from computer scientists and designers to curious onlookers, converged to check out the wares displayed by 255 companies. Accessories for creating high-definition television images, sophisticated animation and rendering software and 3-D interactive virtual reality displays were among the most popular. If there was a trend at the show, it was "morphing," the creation of an animated sequence that shows the transformation of one object into another, such as turning a fish into a bird or combining several images to form a composite. The effects of morphing are sometimes hard to comprehend, but if done right, these animations can be graphically convincing and hypnotic to watch.

Curiosity led many conferencegoers to wait in line for up to three hours for a chance to take part in

one of several virtual reality demonstrations that lasted only a few minutes. They could experience two VR caves — one sponsored by the Illinois Institute of Technology's Supercomputing Center and the other by Sun Microsystems. Live computer-generated images were projected onto three walls and viewers wore stereo shutter goggles to control the cartoon-like 3-D images with head movements.

Virtually real

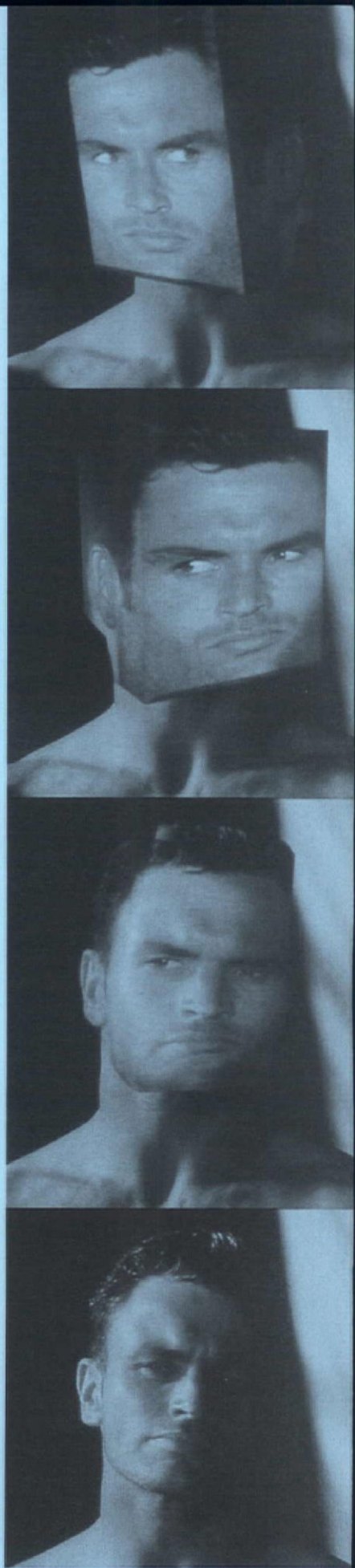
Although these exhibits did provide an amazing sensation of inhabiting space, their crudeness demonstrates that virtual reality still has a long way to go before it could be confused with *real* reality. (Jim George, the exhibition coordinator, noted that the caves were still experimental: "If the math is not right, you will become ill.") But who's looking for reality? VR is seen by many as a fantasy medium, a drug without side effects that could provide the ultimate sensory experience of the kind that Aldous Huxley envisioned in his *Brave New World*. In a live performance at the show's Electronic Theater, a virtual reality guru demonstrated how he could play an orchestra of virtual instruments by waving a gloved hand in the air that allowed his virtual hand to play instruments plucked out of the electronic vapor.

In other venues, however, VR as entertainment gave way to its practical applications, such as steering a virtual wheelchair through a build-

Designers Who Compute

Are you seeking compatibility and connectivity? The International Design by Electronics Association (IDEA) is a professional organization dedicated to helping designers help each other with computer applications. The nationwide organization now comprises 500 members and is open to graphic designers, product designers, environmental designers, computer manufacturers, artists and design educators. Members receive a quarterly journal and qualify for discounts on hardware, software and publications. The national organization holds an annual conference and electronic design competition, and local chapters in Boston, New York, Washington D.C. and Connecticut meet for software critiques, studio tours and social events. Contact IDEA at 2200 Wilson Boulevard, Suite 102-153; Arlington, VA 22201; or call (800) 466-1163.

This "morphing" sequence was created on a Silicon Graphics Workstation with EDDIE software by Discreet Logic.



ing to check for accessibility, and a virtual lathe that allows a user to "carve" a spinning cylinder with a wand. These tools suggest a new WYSIWYG computer interface for 3-D design work.

Electronic communications

It seems that the ability to interact instantaneously, not just with the computer, but with other operators at remote locations, marks the next useful leap in electronic imaging technology. Experimental displays, showcasing both the work of artists and scientists, demonstrated how partners at remote laboratories could engage in wordless communication by interacting with images on their respective screens. More than one speaker predicted that interactive electronic media will soon be replacing the printed word for some types of published communications, and are presenting an instant need for interactive training and multimedia corporate reports. Appropriately, this conference marked the first time that several technical papers were presented electronically.

The popularity of the show in a year of ill-attended events says

much about the importance of computer imaging to many professionals who might have considered it out of their reach a few years ago. It is clear that more industries are adopting graphic communication techniques as computers make it possible. At a show where emphasis was on image, there was an appalling lack of *good* images, or for that matter, well-designed software interfaces or nicely designed computer hardware, as relatively few designers have been brought in to collaborate with technicians. Although designers may feel threatened by the widespread availability of the tools, as computer imaging reaches more non-technical users, there is tremendous opportunity to help guide the development of new visual media. JULIE M. TRELSTAD

Information about Siggraph proceedings and videos and upcoming shows is available from ACM at (800) 342-6626 or (212) 869-7440. Siggraph would like to showcase the work of designers in upcoming shows; if you have ideas or would like more information, call Alyce Kaprow at (617) 969-0288.

Conference

Worldesign Report

Designers beckoned by the brochure for last August's Worldesign conference held by the Industrial Designers Society of America were invited to join a "gathering of the tribe to grapple with issues of the planet and create our own world view." "Can designers be agents of change?" wondered the pamphlet along with its readers. This question seemed to hover over the San Francisco event. Apart from promising an investigation of why design, designs and designers matter, little structure confined the proceedings. Worldesign's chief success lay in the questions it provoked.

The three-day session was launched by PBS personality James Burke, host of shows like *Connections* and *After the Warming*. Although animated and entertaining, Burke managed to slip the audience some bitter pills, explaining that while we may currently have 5.5 billion people on Earth, the parents of the 10 billionth are now alive. As information becomes more and more accessible through computer user networks, he predicts, the hierarchic, top-down innovation-blocking, institutional power bases will become increasingly obsolete. Pointing to strong links between technological breakthroughs and economic reshufflings throughout history, Burke concluded that survival will always depend on our capacity for change.

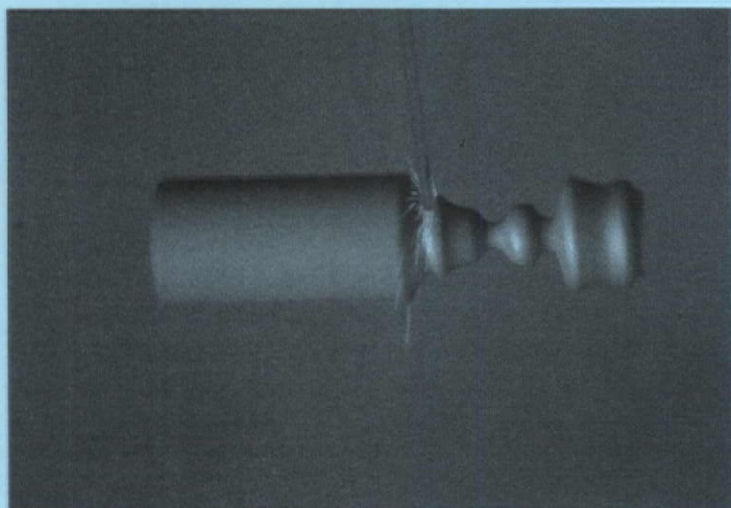
In the absence of a theme, the environment became the conference's *de facto* topic. Hunter Lovins, president of the Rocky Mountain Institute in Aspen, eloquently argued a case for both energy and resource management in the face of exploding

populations and dwindling resources. Crucial in addressing these problems is the need to slow down our rate of consumption and waste. "The cost of the energy wasted each year is greater than the ten grand per second we spend on defense in America," she explained, continuing that, "we put our kids in .5-mile-per-gallon tanks in the Gulf War because we wouldn't put them in 32-mile-per-gallon cars."

Ending this dense, but impeccable missive with a plea to industrial designers to help limit the world's excessive consumption cycle, Lovins extolled devices that save energy (compact fluorescent bulbs) and lamented those that don't (the common refrigerator). In terms of materials, she urged us to ask questions like, "is it renewable, reusable, recyclable, nontoxic and not rare?" Lovins told the audience to raise tough questions with every project they do: "Your job as designers is *not* to make inefficient, irresponsible products look and feel good ... don't leave the important considerations up to some technical expert. You matter as designers, or at least you *can* matter."

Paul MacCready, another environmentally pro-active speaker, showed his own radical departures in transportation design, including a human-powered airplane he calls the Gossamer Condor and an electric car for GM known as the Impact (see *I.D.*, Nov/Dec 1990). Like Lovins, he encouraged us to be the "burr under the saddle of complacency."

A number of Worldesign's speakers presented moving, if not inspiring talks. Wheelchair-bound Peter

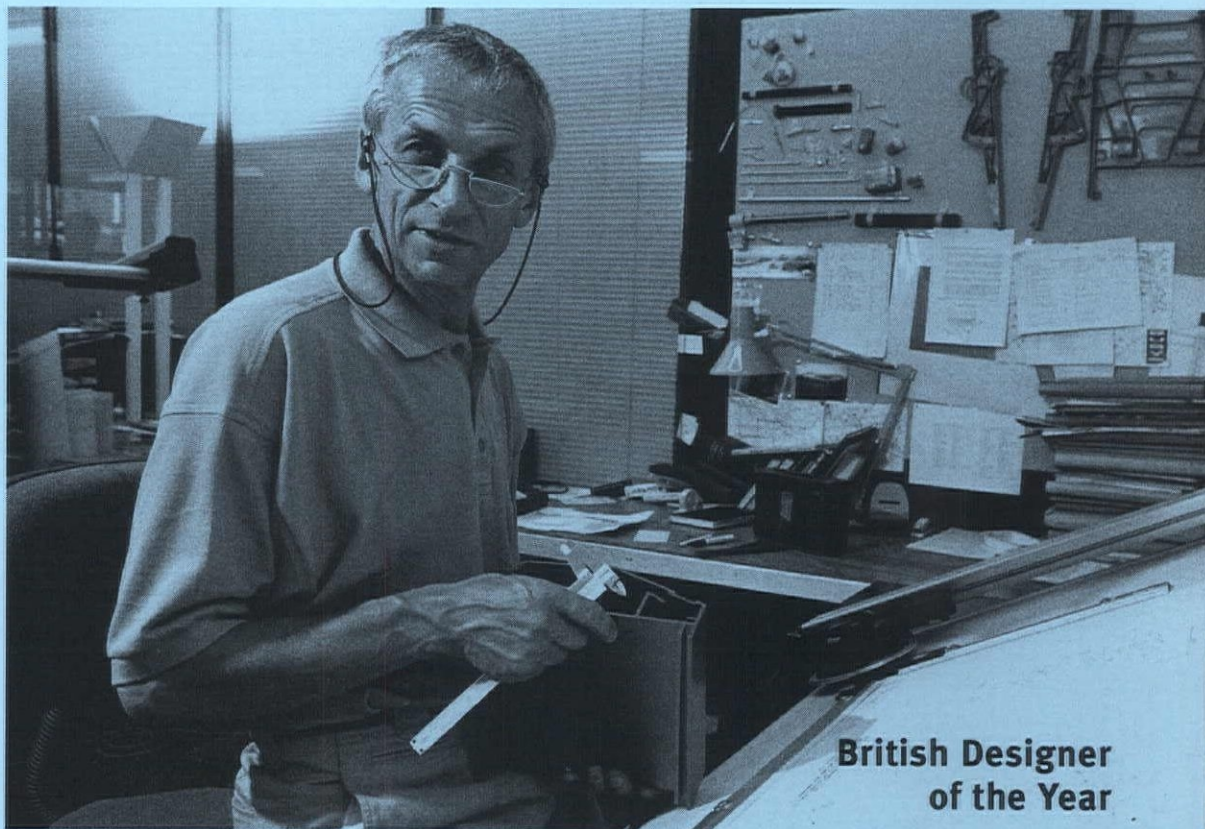


Sun Microsystems' virtual lathe was demonstrated at Siggraph.

Axelsson, founder of Beneficial Designs, described his inventions for people of different ability. A poignant video entitled "Snowdance" depicted his process of learning how to ski on a monoski of his own design.

Design as a response to market forces was most intriguingly summarized by Japanese "conceptor" Naoki Sakai of Water Studio. Sakai sees the artifact environment as a group of subsets into which he feeds all objects. This approach, at least for the Japanese market, seems to work. What is important about any product is not how many have sold, but its impact on the culture. He describes the role of conceptor as someone "listening to all new music, trying all new computer games, buying all new products, and going to all new stores." One wondered whether this fascinating if bloodless approach to culture-making leads to real invention or just endless subdivision and nostalgic rehash.

Worldesign was impressive for its list of speakers and for the salient issues they raised. But these are complex and troubled times and lip service paid to noble ideas is still far easier than getting the client to buy them. It would be grand if the designer could play an instrumental role in addressing some of the dire problems "of the planet," but it is difficult enough to get us to agree on whether our work should sit quietly and politely do its job, or act as a wrench in the machinery. I would love to experience the solidarity and strength of the design "tribe" to which the Worldesign brochure referred, and join with other designers to combat our sins against the planet. Tribe or not, we will not succeed in being agents of change until we fit our work, cluttered with deadlines, budgets, liability and market share, into the world. LISA KROHN



British Designer of the Year

David Crisp, a British designer, was awarded the Prince Philip Prize for "designer of the year," in a ceremony held at Buckingham Palace this July. Crisp, who describes himself as "more of an inventor than a stylist," was born in 1938 and worked as a product designer with Fred Ashford, Kenneth Grange and Allied International Designers before he started his own office (Crisp & Wilson) in London in 1978. He was the first person to design a computer monitor that could alternate between portrait and landscape formats, and has recently proposed a countertop cutting board made of ice. Crisp has a list of clients that include Black & Decker, British Telecom, Ever Ready and others.

Seminar Offers Advice on Protecting Yourself from Liability

As independent designers become expected to take on more responsibility for more stages of product development and manufacturing, the risk of liability suits increases. How can a design firm protect itself from lawsuits without taking costly legal measures? A seminar for design professionals held at the International Design Center, New York (IDCNY) this spring, led by Speaker Larry F. Gainen of the law firm Hutton Ingram Yuzek Gainen Carroll & Bertolotti, offered the fol-

lowing advice:

Many litigation cases have their origins at the early stages of a project when designers can potentially create client expectations that are higher than they have the ability to actually meet. Other frequent problems arise from misunderstandings over cost, certifications designers are expected to make or project delays. To prevent early misunderstandings from escalating, Gainen suggested that designers certify a single document as a contract that

is as explicit as possible about tasks and fees, including specification of duties for which the designer is *not* responsible. It is helpful to include both a limitation on liability and a statement that, if a lawsuit should occur, the prevailing party should pay the legal fees. Designers should never agree to a fixed definition of costs or to do the work to the specification of the client.

For information about IDCNY events, call (718) 937-7474.

Calendar

Aldo Rossi: Drawings and Prints

NEW YORK, NY. Max Protetch presents the work of the architect Aldo Rossi through Dec. 12. Presented in conjunction with a forthcoming book published by the Princeton University Press, Rossi's recent drawings and hand-colored prints depict his intriguing images of domestic architecture. 212/966-9193.

California Graphic Designers

SAN FRANCISCO, CA. Celebrating the strong sense of experimentation and color that has brought the California graphic design community international acclaim, "California Graphic Designers," opens Dec. 17 at the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art. Curated by Paolo Polledri, the exhibition features the work of four Northern California designers: Michael Cronan of Cronan Design, Michael Manwaring of The Office of Michael Manwaring, Gerald Reis of Gerald Reis and Company and Michael Vanderbyl of Vanderbyl Design. The show ends Feb. 7. 415/252-4000.

Designed for a Cause

NEW YORK, NY. Combining the talents of lighting and furniture designer Gaston Marticorena and a host of internationally prominent fashion designers, Modernage SoHo presents "Designed for a Cause," a collaborative AIDS benefit for Housing Works, a New York-based AIDS housing, support and advocacy organization. Using Marticorena's steel-framed lamps, fashion designers such as Nicole Miller, Geoffrey Beene, Betsey Johnson, Todd Oldham, Donna Karan and Mary McFadden have designed the lamp shade, complete with designer labels. The exhibition opens Nov. 12 and runs through Dec. 31. 212/477-2224.

Elegant Technique: Italian Furniture Design 1980-1992

CHICAGO, IL. An exhibition designed and curated by Italian architects Michele de Lucchi and Achille Castiglioni, "Elegant Technique: Italian Furniture Design 1980-1992," at the Chicago Cultural Center, showcases the work of 30 Italian manufacturers and 50 international designers and presents the production techniques, design processes and final products that have made Italian design celebrated around the world. The show runs through Dec. 13. 312/829-9650.

Gianni Versace: Signatures

NEW YORK, NY. The largest designer exhibition ever mounted at the Fashion Institute of Technology, "Gianni Versace: Signatures," presents the Italian fashion designer's flamboyant creations of the last 15 years, including an extensive collection of his theatrical designs for patrons such as La Scala, B  art, Roland Petit and Elton John.

The accompanying catalogue includes images from photographers Herb Ritt, Bruce Weber, Richard Avedon and Irving Penn. The show, coordinated by David Harvey and Richard Martin, runs until Jan. 9. 212/760-7970.

Montage and Modern Life: 1919-1942

BRUSSELS, BELGIUM. At the Palais des Beaux-Arts through Jan. 3, "Montage and Modern Life: 1919-1942" examines photomontage techniques developed between the two World Wars in Germany, the Soviet Union and the United States. Profoundly influencing both the art world and the media, photomontages became the tool by which everything from economic policies to consumer goods were disseminated to the general public. Culled from a variety of media, including architectural designs, advertising, documentary films, posters and photographs, the works represented in the show include those by Alexander Rodchenko, Kurt Schwitters, Alfred Stieglitz and Imogen Cunningham. 32/2/512-0403.

Off the Shelf and Online:

Computers Move the Book Arts into the 21st Century

MINNEAPOLIS, MN. What have computers done to the book and type design? "Off the Shelf and Online: Computers Move the Book Arts into the 21st Century," at the Minnesota Center for Book Arts, features three areas in which computers have made a significant impact: digitally designed typefaces, polymer plate printing and hypertext books. Commentaries from leading typographers Summer Stone, Matthew Carter, Charles Bigelow and Kris Holmes are included. Electronic hypertext books can be viewed on computers installed in the gallery. The show, which runs through Dec. 12, is sponsored in part by Adobe Systems and the Minnesota Chapter of the AIGA, and will be traveling throughout the U.S. 612/338-3634.

Scandinavian Design

LONDON, ENGLAND. In conjunction with the Scandinavian festival "Tender is the North," Scandinavian design, the benchmark of "good design" for British designers, is the focus of three shows on view at the Design Museum through Feb. 28. "Allies in the Same Battle: Scandinavian Design in Britain 1930-1970" demonstrates the influence of Scandinavian design on British retail and consumer tastes. Contemporary industrial and consumer products shown in "New Directions in Scandinavian Design" illustrate current design concerns, and the graphics and photography that will be displayed in "Ethics and Aesthetics" examines the role of design agencies in Scandinavia and their promotion of "good design." 44/71/403-6933.

Exhibitions

New York

American Craft Museum

More Than One, contemporary studio productions of 27 artists, through Nov. 8; Recent Acquisitions in Ceramics, Fiber Arts Jewelry and Metalwork, through Nov. 8. 212/956-3535.

American Institute of Graphic Arts

One Color/Two Color: Minimalism, A Design Aesthetic for the 1990s, A Design Aesthetic for the 1990s, juried show, Nov. 12-Dec. 4. 212/742-0813.

Brooklyn Museum of Art

Biomorphicism and Organic Abstraction in 20th Century Decorative Arts, furniture, glass, metal, ceramic, and plastic from the 1930s to the present, through Dec. 13; Max Weber: The Cubist Decade 1910-1920, paintings, Nov. 15-Jan. 10; Consuelo Kanaga: A Retrospective, social photography, through Jan. 31. 718/638-5000.

Comme des Garçons

Tom Dixon, lighting installation, through Nov. 27. 212/941-0277.

Cooper-Hewitt Museum

The Power of Maps, through March 7. 212/860-6868.

Cooper Union

Prague and the Book, Communist period book designs, Nov. 17-Dec. 11; Words on Words, rendering of Vaclav Havel's free speech address, Nov. 17-Dec. 11. 212/353-4155.

Gallery 91

A Decade of Design: A Tenth Anniversary Show, through Nov. 14. 212/219-1684.

Fashion Institute of Technology

Gianni Versace: Signatures, fashion and theater costumes, through Jan. 9. 212/760-7970.

Guggenheim Museum

The Avant-Garde in Russia, 1915-1932, through Dec. 15.; Chagall's Jewish Theatre Murals, through Jan. 31; Robert Rauschenberg: The Early '50s, abstract expressionist paintings and other mediums, through Jan. 31. 212/423-3500.

Illustration Gallery

Douglas Fraser: Solo Exhibition of New Work, paintings, through Nov. 29; Steven Guarnaccia & Paolo Guidotti: Faccia a Faccia, painted sculptures and assemblages, Dec. 3-Jan. 10. 212/979-1014.

International Center of Photography Midtown

Karsh: American Legends, portraits, through Jan. 24; Ernst Haas: In Black and White, through Jan. 24. 212/768-4680.

Leo Kaplan Modern

Dan Dailey, glass, Nov. 5-28; Paul Stankard and John Clark, glass, Dec. 3-Jan. 2. 212/535-2407.

Max Protetch

Aldo Rossi, recent drawings and hand-colored prints, through Dec. 12. 212/966-5454.

Metropolitan Museum of Art

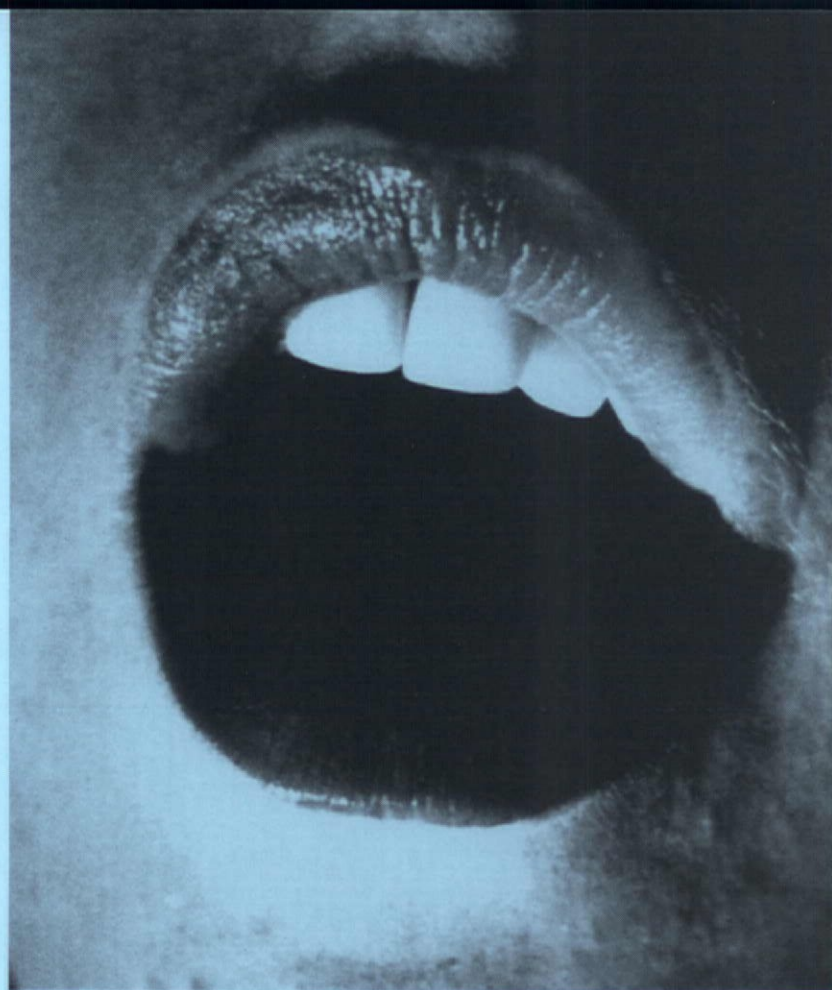
René Magritte, through Nov. 22; Arthur B. Davies, works on paper, through Jan. 17; Decorative and Industrial Design, 1900-1986, permanent collection. 212/879-5500.

Modernage

Collaborative AIDS Benefit, lighting design by Gaston Marticorena and international fashion designers, Nov. 12-Dec. 31. 212/477-2224.

Museum of American Illustration

The Society of American Illustrators 35th Annual Exhibition Editorial and Book Categories, Jan. 25-Feb. 19; Advertising and Institutional Categories, March 1-26. 212/838-2560.



Arnold Crane's untitled installation, combining photography, projections and video, is part of "Art at the Armory: Occupied Territory," at the Chicago Avenue Armory through Jan. 10.

Museum of Modern Art

The Indy Race Car, through Jan. 31; Henri Matisse: A Retrospective, through Jan. 12; The Artist and the Book in 20th Century Italy, through Feb. 16; 20th Century Design, permanent collection. 212/708-9480.

Neotu

Waechtersbacher Ceramic Workshop, ceramics, Nov. 12-Jan. 5. 212/982-0210.

New Museum of Contemporary Art

In Transit, urban planning, through Jan. 3; The Final Frontier, space exploration and scientific inquiry's cultural impact, Jan. 17-April 11. 212/219-1222.

New York Public Library

New Worlds, Ancient Texts: The Cultural Impact of an Encounter, maps, manuscripts and rare books, through Jan. 9; Mapping the New World, mapping imagery, through Jan. 9; Native American Prints and

Photographs: 400 Years of Images from the Collections of the New York Public Library, through Jan. 9. 212/221-7676.

Parsons School of Design Gallery

Furniture of the '90s, competition results, through Dec. 4. 212/229-8987.

Peter Joseph Gallery

Michael Hurwitz and Wendy Maruyama, furniture, through Dec. 5; Thomas Loeser and Michelle Holzapfel, furniture, Dec. 9-Jan. 15. 212/751-5500.

Whitney Museum of American Art

Agnes Martin, paintings and drawings, through Jan. 31; Jean-Michel Basquiat, paintings, through Feb. 21. 212/570-3633.

National

American Center for Design

Chicago, IL. Armin Hoffman, graphic design, Nov. 13-Dec. 11. 312/787-2018

Center for Creative Photography

Tucson, AZ. Enthusiasm Strengthens: University of Arizona Photography MFA Alumni Exhibition, through Jan. 3. 602/621-7968.

Center for Fine Arts

Miami, FL. Faces, Nancy Burson's computer imagery, through Nov. 15; Treasures of Faberge, through Jan. 31. 305/375-1700.

Chicago Athenaeum

Chicago, IL. Ricardo Bofill: Between the Tower and the City, architecture, through Nov. 15; Good Design: Made in Chicago Made in Illinois, competition results, through Nov. 27. 312/829-9606.

Chicago Avenue Armory

Chicago, IL. Art at the Armory: Occupied Territory, installations by 18 artists addressing contemporary issues of identity, politics and the environment, through Jan. 10. 312/751-0242.

Chicago Cultural Center

Chicago, IL. Elegant Techniques: Italian Furniture Design 1980-1992, through Dec. 13. 312/829-9606.

Columbus Museum

Columbus, GA. An Other World, attempts at understanding the difference between the Old World and the "Other World," Sept. 20-Jan. 3. 404/649-0713.

Corcoran Gallery of Art

Washington, D.C. Washington Area Printmakers Exhibition, through Dec. 31. 202/638-3211.

Dallas Museum of Art

Dallas, TX. Decorative and Industrial Design, 1900-1986, permanent collection. 214/922-1200.

Detroit Institute of Arts

Detroit, MI. Helen Levitt, photography, Nov. 11-Jan. 10. 313/833-7900.

Florida Gulf Coast Art Center

Belleair, FL. Dark Decor, gender bias in wallpaper patterns, Dec. 11-Feb. 7. 813/584-8634

Gallery of Functional Art

Santa Monica, CA. Holiday Show, furniture, ceramics and magnetism exhibit, Nov. 21-Jan. 10. 310/450-2827.

Hirshhorn Museum

Washington, D.C. Eva Hesse, sculpture, through Jan. 10; Directions: Tim Rollins + K.O.S. (Kids of Survival): Animal Farm, mixed media collaboration, through Dec. 6; Eva Hesse, a sculpture retrospective, through Jan. 10. 202/357-2700.

Henry Ford Museum

Dearborn, MI. The Automobile in American Life, permanent exhibition. 313/271-1620.

Hudson River Museum

Yonkers, NY. Stopping Time: The Photographs of Harold Edgerton, through Sept. 20. 914/963-4550.

International Gallery

San Diego, CA. Toys for Everyone, Nov. 13-Jan. 10. 619/235-8255.

Mead Art Museum

Amherst, MA. The Rediscovery of Jared French, paintings, through Nov. 29. 413/542-2335.

Menil Collection

Houston, TX. Brice Marden: The Cold Mountain Series, through Nov. 29; Magritte, paintings, Dec. 15-Feb. 15. 713/525-9400.

Minnesota Center for Book Arts

Minneapolis, MN. Off the Shelf and Online: Computers Move the Book Arts into the 21st-Century, through Nov. 22. 612/338-3634.

Museum of Contemporary Art

Los Angeles, CA. Judy Fishkin: Some Photographs 1973-1992, through Dec. 6; Yves Klein: The Fire Paintings, through Dec. 6; Wolfgang Laib, Dec. 20-Feb. 7. 213/621-1748.

National Building Museum

Washington, D.C. Vision/Revisions, American Institute of Architects/D.C. Chapter biennial exhibition, through Jan. 31; From Mars to Mainstreet: American Designs 1965-1990, government sponsored projects, Nov. 19-Dec. 1993; To Build a Bridge, suspension bridge construction, through Dec. 1993. 202/272-2448.

National Gallery of Art

Washington, D.C. Ellsworth Kelly: The Years in France 1948-1954, paintings, photographs and collages, through Jan. 24; Stieglitz in the Darkroom, photography, through Jan. 3. 201/737-4215.

National Ornamental Metal Museum

Memphis, TN. Born With a Silver Spoon, contemporary American spoons, Nov. 15-Jan. 17. 901/774-6380.

Neuberger Museum

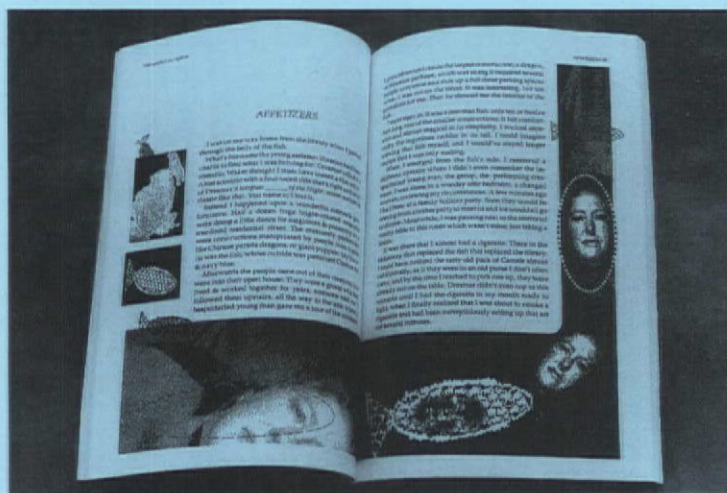
Purchase, NY. Sette & Segura Publishing Co.: A Decade of Print Publications, through Jan. 3; Rebecca Medel's Transcendental Fiber Constructions, through Jan. 31. 914/251-6113.

Newark Museum

Newark, NJ. One Hundred Teapots, through Jan. 19; American Prints in Black and White, 1900-1950, through Nov. 17; Toys and doll-houses, Nov. 27-Dec. 29; Tova Beck-Friedman, sculpture, through Jan. 5; Patricia Malarcher: Works in Fiber, through Jan. 5; Printmaking Council of New Jersey, Dec. 14-Jan. 31. 201/596 6550.

Pacific Design Center

Los Angeles, CA. Potters to Artists, clay pieces 1925-75, through Feb. 21; Ingenious Projects from Austria, through Nov. 14. 310/657-0800, ext. 264.



Betsy Davids's *Dreaming Aloud Book Two*, from "Off the Shelf and Online: Computers move the Book Arts into the 21st Century," at the Minnesota Center for Book Arts through Dec. 12.

Philadelphia Museum of Art

Philadelphia, PA. Martin Puryear, sculpture, through Jan. 3; Leonardo da Vinci: The Anatomy of Man; Drawings From the Collection of H.M. Queen Elizabeth II, through Nov. 29. 215/763-8100.

Phoenix Art Museum

Phoenix, AZ. Get a Clue, an exhibition offering clues to understanding works of art, through May 2. 602/257-1222.

St. Louis Art Museum

St. Louis, MO. Frank Gehry: New Bentwood Furniture Designs, Dec. 15-Feb. 14. 314/721-0072.

San Francisco Museum of Modern Art

California Graphic Designers, Dec. 17-Feb. 7; Richard Diebenkorn, paintings, Nov. 19-Jan. 24; Jeff Koons, paintings, sculpture and photography, Dec. 10-Feb. 7; Linda Connor, photography, through Jan. 3; Luciano Fabro: A Retrospective, fine arts, through Nov. 29. 415/863-8800.

Tech Museum of Innovation

San Jose, CA. Micro-electronics, space exploration, high-tech bikes and robotics, permanent exhibition. 408/279-7167.

Virginia Museum of Fine Arts

Richmond, VA. Virginia Architecture 1719-1990: Drawings and Models, Nov. 10-Jan. 3; Bill Viola: Slowly Turning Narrative and Other Video Works, through Dec. 27. 804/367-0852.

Walker Art Center

Minneapolis, MN. Malcolm X: Man, Ideal, Icon, Dec. 13-April 4; Claes Oldenburg: In the Studio, prints, drawings and collages, through Feb. 14; Magdalena Abakanowicz, sculpture, ongoing; Public Address: Krzysztof Wodiczko, through Jan. 3; Robert Motherwell: The Spanish Elegies, through Jan. 3. 612/375-7600.

Wexner Center for the Arts

Columbus, OH. Maya Lin, permanent site installation; Kiki Smith, sculpture, Jan. 23-March 21; Re/Visions, displacement and cultural identity in America today, through Dec. 27; Framing American Cities: New York, Columbus, San Francisco, architectural installations by Mark Robbins, through Jan. 3; Daguerreotypes from the OSU Collection, through Jan. 3. 614/292-0330.

Williams College Museum of Art

Williamstown, MA. Rediscovering America: 150 Years of Collecting Pre-Columbian Native-American Art, through Dec. 13; Mostly Spanish: Selections From the Permanent Collection, through Dec. 13; George Washington: An American Icon, through Dec. 13. 413/458-9017.

425 Seventh Street

Washington, D.C. The New Public Realm, competition results concerning public space, through Dec. 12. 202/724-9073.

International**Canadian Centre for Architecture**

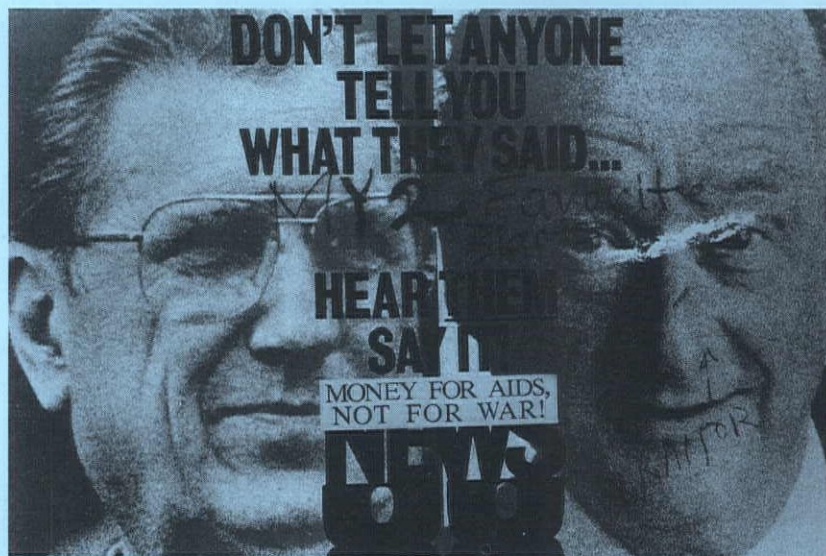
Montreal, Canada. Opening the Gates of 18th-Century Montreal, through Jan. 17. 514/939-7000.

Chapel-Vieille Charité Centre

Marseille, France. Gaetano Pesce: The C.I.V.R.A. Experiments, 5 techniques for glass, through Jan. 17. 33/91/56 28 38.

Design Museum

London, England. Allies in the Same Battle: Scandinavian Design in Britain 1930-1970, Nov. 12-Feb. 28; Ethics and Aesthetics: Design Agencies of Scandinavia, graphics and photography, Nov. 12-Feb. 28; Review: New Directions in Scandinavian Design, Nov. 12-Feb. 28; Industrial and Graphic Design, permanent collection. 41/71/407-6261.



Diane Neumaier's Street Graphics Intervention, from the traveling exhibition "From Media to Metaphor: Art About AIDS," at the Musée d'Art Contemporain de Montreal through Jan. 3.

Fondazione Giorgio Cini

Venice, Italy. Russian Symbolism: Sergej Djagilev and the Silver Age in the Arts, through Nov. 29. 39/41/52 89 900.

Latvian Museum of Foreign Art

Riga, Latvia. Principle Thonet, bentwood and metal furniture, through Nov. 16. 007/0132-325051.

Montreal Museum of Decorative Arts

Montreal, Canada. Armin Hofmann Retrospective, graphic design, through Nov. 15; Frank Gehry: New Bentwood Furniture Designs, through Nov. 15; English Silver: Masterpieces by Omar Ramsden, through Nov. 15; Sylvain Dubuisson: Objects and Drawings, Nov. 12-Jan. 10. 514/259-2575.

Musée d'Art Contemporain de Montreal

Montreal, Canada. From Media to Metaphor: Art About AIDS, through Jan. 3; Free Worlds: Metaphors and Realities in Contemporary Hungarian Art, through Jan. 3.; Eye For Eye: Video Self-Portraits, through Nov. 22. 514/847-6226.

Musée Des Arts Decoratifs

Lyon, France. Guimard, Art Nouveau architecture, through Jan. 3. 33/1/ 40 13 48 00.

National Gallery

London, England. Edvard Munch: The Frieze of Life, paintings, Nov. 11-Feb. 7. 44/71/839-3321.

Palais des Beaux-Arts

Brussels, Belgium. Montage and Modern Life, photomontages from 1920-30, through Jan. 3. 32/2/512-0403.

Vitra Design Museum

Weil am Rhein, Germany. Vitra Museum Permanent Collection. 49/76/21 70 23 51.

Conferences & Fairs

Designing New York

Nov. 13-14. Charrette competitions on the redesigning of six public underground spaces in New York. Info: National Institute of Architectural Education, 30 W. 22nd St., New York, NY 10010. 212/924-7000.

American Geriatrics Society Annual Meeting

Nov. 15-18, Washington, DC. Info: AGS, Suite 400, 770 Lexington Ave., New York, NY 10021.

New York International Gift Fair

Feb. 21-25, New York. Includes Accent on Design. Info: George Little Management, 2 Park Ave., Suite 1100, New York, NY 10016-5748. 212/686-6070 phone, 212/685-6598 fax.

Concepts

Feb. 25-27, Orlando, Florida. International conference on computers and electronic publishing and printing technologies. Info: Graphics Arts Show Company, 1899 Preston White Drive, Reston, VA 22091-4367. 703/264-7200 phone, 703/620-0994 fax.

Online '93

March 15-19, Mexico City, Mexico. First North-South International Meeting of Informational Access. Info: Rosa Perez, Executive Secretary Online'93, Circuito Exterior, Area de la Inv. Cientifica, Apartado Postal 70-392, Cd. Universitaria, Mexico, D.F. 04510, Mexico. 525/622-3951 phone, 525/548-0848 fax.

Westweek

March 17-19, Los Angeles. Info: Westweek, Pacific Design Center, 8687 Melrose Ave., Los Angeles, CA 90069. 310/657-0800.

Deadlines

East Meets West International Design for the Environment Program

Deadline: Nov. 15. Environmentally conscious product design. Info: East Meets West, 11 West 42nd Street, 2nd floor, New York, NY 10036. 212/477-3239 phone, 212/598-4932 fax.

Neste Forma Finlandia 3

Deadline: Dec. 15. International plastics design competition. Info: Ms. Leslie Petersen, Neste Forma Finlandia 3, Neste Oy Box 20, SF-02151 Espoo, Finland. 358/0 450 5043 phone, 358/0 450 4985 fax.

6th International Design Competition, Osaka

Deadline: Dec. 25. The theme is Kase: Wind, Air, Beautiful Ambience. Info: Mr. Mashimo or Ms. Shimizu, Japan Design Foundation, 3-1-800 Umeda Chome, Kita-ku, Osaka, 530 Japan. 81/6 346 2611 phone, 81/6 346 2615 fax.

American Craft Council Logo Competition

Deadline: Dec. 31. Logo design competition. Info: Helise Benjamin, ACC Logo Competition, 21 South Eltings Corner Road, Highland, NY 12528. 800/724-0859.

Pattern: New Form, New Function

Deadline: Jan. 4. Pattern design competition. Info: Arrowmont School, P.O. Box 567, Gatlinburg, TN 37738. 615/436-5860.

International Furniture Competition

Deadline: Feb. 20. Wood furniture introduced since Jan. 1991. Info: International Furniture Design Fair, Asashikawa Organizing Committee Office, Asashikawa Furniture Industry Cooperative, 10-chome, 2-jo, Nagayama, Asashikawa, Hokkaido, 079 Japan. 81/0166 48 47 49.

Resources

Where to find the products featured in New + Notable, pages 74-79.

PAGE 74: **Edible Design**, WAAC Design & Consult, Hennekijnstraat 37B, 3012 EB Rotterdam, The Netherlands, 31/10 412 6999.
PAGE 75: **Eco-Pack CD packaging**, Ivy Hill Corporation, 375 Hudson Street, New York, NY 10014;
Roy Lichtenstein's Oval Office, Ron Feldman Gallery, 31 Mercer Street, New York, NY 10013.
PAGE 76: **Trash bag holder**, Gaston Marticorena, 218 E. 6th Street #9, New York, NY 10003; **Stowaway Bike Trailer**, Cannondale Corporation, 9 Brookside Place, Georgetown, CT 06829; **Table Lamp**, ALESSI, spa 28023 Crusinallo (No), Italy.
PAGE 77: **Shpigel joint**, Amrus Corporation, 280 Park Avenue South, Penthouse J, New York, NY 10102; **Emanon 150 theater light**, ERCO Leuchten GmbH, Brockhauser Weg 80-82, D-5880 Lüdenscheid, Germany.
PAGE 78: **Shiny Magazine**, Shiny International, 39 E. 12th Street, Suite 603, New York, NY 10013; **Zulia piccola lamp**, Enos Metal Works, 1526 Wallace Street C, San Francisco, CA 94124.
PAGE 79: **Salon Profile brushes**, ECCO Design, 285 West Broadway, Suite 650, New York, NY 10013; **Bookcase on wheels**, Paul Maurand, Architecte D.P.L.G., 20 rue Isabey, 54000 Nancy, France; **Triangles**, Align, 588 Broadway, Suite 809, New York, NY 10012.

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The January/February issue closes November 21.

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Manager of Industrial Design. Administrative and budgetary responsibility for industrial design group. Supervise and participate in design process activities such as ideation using monochrome sketching technique, full color rendering of various concepts, computerized ergonomical and mechanical packages, full scale drawings, full scale models, fabrication of master plugs, molds and prototype parts, bi-dimensional and tri-dimensional graphic studies, static and dynamic evaluation of prototypes. Research materials and fabrication procedures. Technical liaison with relevant departments such as engineering, purchasing, manufacturing and quality assurance. Participate in approbation phase of preproduction parts and follow up to production. Requirements: Bachelor degree in Industrial or Environmental Design or Architecture, 5 years work experience as industrial designer, and the following (which may have been gained concurrently with each other and during the required 5 years experience): 3 years industrial designer experience designing motorized personal watercraft and 1 year industrial designer experience using computer aided design software. 40 hrs/wk Salary: \$46,000. Send resume and cover letter to Phil Baril, Job Order #FL 0677374, Job Service of Florida, 3421 Lawton Road, Orlando, FL 32803.

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Contributors



Karrie Jacobs is *Metropolis* magazine's editor-at-large and the executive editor of *Colors*, a magazine about cultural diversity published by Benetton. She recently co-authored *Angry Graphics*, published by Gibbs-Smith.



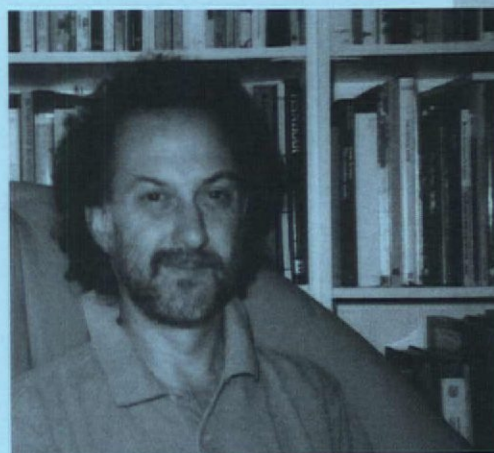
Marlene McCarty (left) is a founder of the graphic design firm Bureau and a long-time designer for activist groups Gran Fury and the Women's Action Coalition; **Bethany Johns** is the principal of Bethany Johns Design in New York and an original WAC member.



John Heskett is an associate professor at the Institute of Design, Illinois Institute of Technology, in Chicago. He is the author of *Industrial Design, Design in Germany: 1870 to 1918* and *Philips: A Study of the Corporate Management of Design*.



Phil Patton, a contributing editor to *I.D.*, is the author of *Made in the U.S.A.: The Secret Histories of the Things Made in America* and *Open Road*. A regular contributor to *Esquire*, his work has also appeared in *The New Republic*, *Art in America*, *Smithsonian* and *Seven Days*.



Michael Sorkin, a contributing editor to *I.D.*, is an architect and writer who teaches at Cooper Union and Columbia. He is the author of *Exquisite Corpse*, published by Verso Press and, most recently, *Variations of a Theme Park: The New American City and the End of Public Space*, published by Noonday Press.

Not pictured

Marshall Blonsky is the author of *American Mythologies: Stalking the Dreammakers*, published by Oxford University Press. Blonsky is professor of semiotics at New York University and on the faculty at the New School for Social Research.

Maud Lavin is the author of *Cut with the Kitchen Knife: The Weimar Photomontages of Hannah Höch* and has written about design and politics for the *New York Times Book Review*, *Art in America*, *Artforum* and the anthology *Graphic Design in America*.

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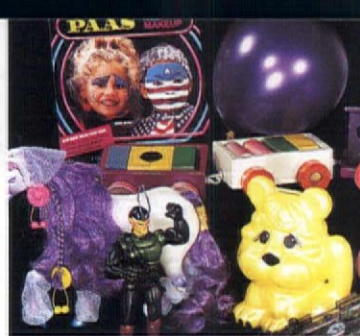
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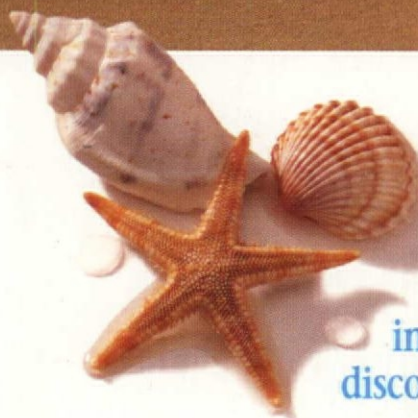
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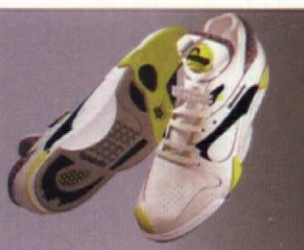
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