A Mural for the New Xerox Plaza Midtown Rochester, New York

Leonard Else

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A MURAL FOR THE NEW XEROX PLAZA

MIDTOWN

ROCHESTER, NEW YORK

Thesis - Master of Fine Arts
College of Fine and Applied Arts
Rochester Institute of Technology
Leonard G. Else
July, 1967
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PART 1
March 21, 1967

Mr. Leonard Else

Dear Mr. Else:

The Graduate Committee has considered your Thesis Proposal "A Mural for the New Xerox Plaza", and has approved it, naming Professor Hans Barschel as your advisor. Professor Donald Robertson has been asked to serve as a member of your Thesis Committee; he will serve as technical advisor in the development of your thesis project.

Please keep in touch with Professor Barschel, making suitable arrangements for the completion of your work, remembering to follow the procedures outlined in the Handbook of Graduate Study.

With all good wishes,

Sincerely,

H.J. Brennan, Dean
College of Fine and Applied Arts

HJB:gu

cc: Prof. Barschel
    Prof. Robertson
    Graduate File
TITLE: A MURAL FOR THE NEW XEROX PLAZA
       MIDTOWN, ROCHESTER, NEW YORK

THESIS PROPOSAL FOR THE MASTER OF FINE ARTS
COLLEGE OF FINE AND APPLIED ARTS
ROCHESTER INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY

SUBMITTED BY: Leonard Else             DATE: 3/13/67

ADVISOR: Prof. Barschel

APPROVED BY GRADUATE COMMITTEE: DATE: 3/13/67

CHAIRMAN: Illegible Signature
THESIS PROPOSAL

PURPOSE OF THE THESIS:

The purpose of the thesis will be to design and paint a small scale mural that would enhance and integrate with the New Xerox Plaza and building complex in Midtown, Rochester, New York.

SCOPE OF THE THESIS:

Creation of an outdoor mural that would enhance and compliment the Xerox Plaza. Research will include investigation on the relationship between art and architecture and the possibility of acrylic paint as a possible medium for outdoor murals. A scale model mural will be executed on masonite panels.

PROCEDURES:

Personal interviews and correspondence with Mr. Baio, head of the New Xerox Planning and Construction Center in Webster, New York; and Mr. Jack Hough who is in charge of graphic design for Xerox. Consultation and advice from Mr. Glen
Procedures: (continued)

Paulsen, President of Cranbrook Academy of Art, and a practicing architect. Consultation with Mr. Peter Else, A.I.A., Architect, my brother, whose firm employs me on a part-time basis. Correspondence with manufacturers of acrylic paint for advice regarding the permanence of this new medium and the methods best used for an outdoor mural.

Correspondence with various successful "architectural artists" who are involved in mural work. Names and addresses of these artists were obtained from a personal interview with Mr. Paul Smith, Director of the Museum of Contemporary Crafts in New York City. Correspondence with Mr. Forest Wilson, Editor of Progressive Architecture Magazine.

Personal interview with Mr. Glen Michaels of Birmingham, Michigan, a nationally known and internationally recognized muralist.

The scale model mural will be described with regard to its relationship to the Plaza and surrounding architecture.
PART II
INTRODUCTION

I WILL ATTEMPT TO EXPLAIN IN THIS INTRODUCTION THE EVOLUTION IN MY THINKING WHICH HAS TAKEN PLACE SINCE THE ORIGINAL SUBMISSION OF THIS THESIS PROPOSAL.

I FELT, BEFORE I BEGAN THIS PROJECT, THAT I SHOULD USE THE THESIS AS AN OPPORTUNITY TO WORK IN AN AREA WHICH WAS UNFAMILIAR TO ME SO THAT THE THESIS WOULD BE AN EXPLORATORY LEARNING SITUATION, RATHER THAN MERELY A DEMONSTRATION OF SKILLS. I CHOSE "RELATING ART TO ARCHITECTURE". I FELT THIS WOULD BE CHALLENGING AND, AT THE SAME TIME, I WAS CONCERNED ABOUT THE FACT THAT SO FEW MODERN BUILDINGS INCORPORATED ART. THE RESULT IS AN AUSTERE, CONTEMPORARY ENVIRONMENT.

I HAVE A VAGUE FAMILIARITY WITH ARCHITECTURE BECAUSE OF PART-TIME EMPLOYMENT AS AN ARCHITECTURAL DRAFTSMAN FOR MY BROTHER'S ARCHITECTURAL FIRM. BUT I REALLY DIDN'T BEGIN TO UNDERSTAND THE PROBLEMS INVOLVED IN RELATING ART TO ARCHITECTURE UNTIL I
HAD BEGUN TO DO EXTENDED READING AND RESEARCH FOR THIS THESIS. I HAVE ENCLOSED AS A PART OF THIS THESIS A PAPER WHICH EXPRESSES THE VIEWS THAT I HAVE FORMULATED AS A RESULT OF THIS RESEARCH. THE BASIC CONCEPT COULD BE SUMMARIZED SHORTLY TO STATE THAT ARCHITECTURE IS THE "MOTHER ART FORM" AND ANY ART WHICH IS TO RELATE TO A SPECIFIC ARCHITECTURE MUST RESPECT, COMPLEMENT, AND DISCIPLINE ITSELF TO THE ARCHITECTURE. IT IS WITH THIS PRINCIPLE THAT I BEGAN TO BECOME INVOLVED WITH THE SPECIFIC PROBLEM OF RELATING ART TO THE XEROX COMPLEX IN MIDTOWN, ROCHESTER.

ORIGINALY, I INTENDED TO PAINT A MURAL IN AN AREA OF THE XEROX PLAZA WHICH I FELT NEEDED TO SCREEN A RATHER UNPLEASANT VIEW FROM BEHIND. BUT, AFTER A DEEPER ANALYSIS OF THE PROBLEM AND A CONSIDERATION OF THE WEATHER CONDITIONS INVOLVED, I BEGAN TO BECOME AWARE OF THE ARCHITECTURAL DISCIPLINE REQUIRED BY THIS PROJECT. I ABANDONED THE ORIGINAL IDEA OF A PAINTED MURAL AND OPENED MY MIND TO THE POSSIBILITIES WHICH EVOLVED FROM THE "INTERNAL LOGIC" OF THE CHOSEN LOCATION.
In the main body of this thesis I will attempt to express all the concerns, both functional and aesthetic, which caused me to be carried along by this "internal logic". I feel that even though I have fallen into the discipline of the designer, my solution has achieved a status of more than merely "design"; "design" used in the ordinary sense, such as solving merely functional problems. I have attempted to solve all of the functional demands involved and give the location, the entire Plaza, and Midtown area an added dimension.

This added dimension is a rhythmic flow and a theme. This theme has a direct relationship with what will take place in the buildings. The theme deals with the basic principle which makes xerography a dry process.

This mural is intended to add decoration and atmosphere without conflicting with the architect's over-all concept of the Plaza.

I would like to express appreciation to my thesis director, Professor H. J. Barschel, who was instrumental in assisting my choice of this project and inspired me to draw together the many loose
ENDS IN MY FINAL SOLUTION.

I WOULD LIKE TO EXPRESS APPRECIATION TO MR. GLEN MICHAELS, PROFESSOR OF ART AT WAYNE STATE UNIVERSITY, A NATIONALLY KNOWN ARCHITECTURAL MURALIST; MR. KURT FEUERHERM, PROFESSOR OF ART AT THE UNIVERSITY OF ROCHESTER, A MURALIST FOR THE ROCHESTER MIDTOWN PLAZA, AND ST. JOHN'S CHURCH, GREECE, NEW YORK; MR. ALEKSANDRA KASUBA, A NATIONALLY KNOWN MURALIST WHO HAS BEEN COMMISSIONED TO DO THE NEW ROCHESTER INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY DINING HALL MURAL.

Rochester City Planning Commission. I am also indebted to my brother, Peter Else, A. I. A., architect, and Mr. Ed Feldman, A. I. D., for the architectural design experience gained while employed by them.
PART III
THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN ART AND ARCHITECTURE

MODERN ARCHITECTS HAVE REACTED AGAINST AN AGE OF ORNAMENTATION. THEY HAVE DEVELOPED AN ARCHITECTURE WHICH IS BASED ON INDUSTRIAL TECHNIQUES OF PRODUCTION. "LESS IS MORE" IS BEING PRACTICED TO THE POINT OF STERILITY. YET IN THE FACE OF THIS MASS-PRODUCED, DEPERSONALIZED ARCHITECTURE, THERE SEEMS TO BE LITTLE GENERAL CONCERN FOR THE FACT THAT IN THIS BUILDING BOOM, WE MAY BE PRODUCING THE MOST AUSTERE ARTISTIC POVERTY.

ARCHITECTS SEEM TO HAVE DIVORCED THEMSELVES FROM ARTISTIC ASSOCIATIONS -- REJECTING THE POSSIBILITY OF COLLABORATION FOR ANY NUMBER OF REASONS OR RATIONALIZATIONS. THEY MAY REJECT MODERN ART FOR BEING TOO EGOCENTRIC AND CONCERNED ONLY WITH THE ARTIST'S SELF-EXPRESSION AND INCAPABLE OF MASS PUBLIC EXPOSURE. THEY MAY FEEL THAT THE ARTIST HAS NO CONCERN FOR THE LOGIC OF ARCHITECTURE OR SENSITIVITY TO THE ARCHITECTURAL CONCERNS. THE ARCHITECT, ON THE OTHER HAND, MAY BE GUILTY OF HIS OWN KIND OF EGOISM AND FEEL THAT THE PRESENCE OF ART WOULD
Detract from the strength of his personal architectural statement. An artist could create a mural which would detract from the clean simplicity which he worked so hard to achieve in the face of such complex functional demands.

Artists, in like manner, have separated themselves from the architects because of their own fears. They may feel that architecture forces limitations which stifle their own personal expression. They may believe the architect to be merely a half engineer and half entrepreneur who is not in the least concerned with aesthetics, but only with codes and building expense.

To whatever degree the above arguments are or are not valid on the part of the artist or of the architect, the problem remains. The ideal would be to have the architect who designs the building also execute the art work which goes into the building. Some architects have done this with varying degrees of success. Frank Lloyd Wright and LeCorbusier are both examples of architects who have designed art work for their buildings. However, it is oftentimes difficult to find in one man all of the qualities
IT IS MY CONTENTION THAT THE SUCCESSFUL COLLABORATION BETWEEN THE ARTIST AND THE ARCHITECT WILL RESULT IN AN ARTISTIC EXPRESSION WHICH ADD A COMPLETE NEW DIMENSION TO THE BUILDING WITHOUT DISTRACTING FROM THE STRENGTH OF THE ARCHITECTURAL STATEMENT. THE MEASURE OF THE SUCCESSFUL "ARCHITECTURAL ART WORK" IS ITS SUCCESSFUL REINFORCEMENT OF THE ARCHITECTURAL STATEMENT, AS WELL AS BEING AN ARTISTIC STATEMENT.

A question, seemingly obvious, but not often asked by the average person or businessman -- and many architects -- is "WHY HAVE ART IN BUILDINGS?". THE QUESTION HAS BECOME MORE EVIDENT RECENTLY BECAUSE OF THE INTRODUCTION OF LEGISLATION IN SOME STATES STATING THAT A PERCENTAGE OF THE BUILDING'S TOTAL COST BE INVESTED IN ORIGINAL ART WORK. IN SOME BUILDINGS THE INTRODUCTION OF CERTAIN TYPES OF ART WOULD ONLY DISTRACT FROM THE ARCHITECTURE. THESE ARE BUILDINGS WHERE THE ARCHITECT HAS TREATED HIS BUILDING AS A PIECE OF SCULPTURE. THE MOST OBVIOUS WAY OF STATING AN ANSWER TO THIS QUESTION IS TO USE THE EXAMPLE OF THE HUGE SKYSCRAPERS WHICH DIMINISH MAN TO INSIGNIFICANT STATURE. IT IS VERY
HARD FOR MAN TO RELATE TO THESE MAMMOTH GLASS AND STEEL STRUCTURES, BUT HE CAN EASILY RELATE TO A PIECE OF SCULPTURE OR A MURAL. ART WORK HAS AN ABILITY TO "HUMANIZE" ARCHITECTURE. IT CAN TRANSFORM THE FUNCTIONAL OR COLD ANALYTICAL ARCHITECTURAL SPACES AND PRODUCE AN ENVIRONMENT TO WHICH MAN CAN RELATE.

ARCHITECTS REACTED STRONGLY TO AN AGE OF DECORATION AROUND THE TURN OF THE CENTURY. AN ERA OF ECLECTICISM WHERE PASTED-ON PLASTER DESIGNS WERE DISGUISE THE HONEST ASPECTS OF THE ARCHITECTURE. AN AESTHETIC OF STRUCTURAL HONESTY DEVELOPED WHEREBY STRUCTURE WAS CONSIDERED TO BE THE SOLE VIRTUE IN ARCHITECTURAL DESIGN. AS MANY REACTIONS STRESS SUCH STRONG OPPOSITION TO AN EXISTING DEGENERATE SITUATION AND, AT THE SAME TIME, IN THEIR PURISTIC SINGLE-MINDEDNESS REJECT OTHER CONSIDERATIONS. COLOR, TEXTURE, AND RELIEF -- IMPORTANT ELEMENTS IN ARCHITECTURE -- ARE OVERLOOKED. MANY TIMES THE EXISTENCE OF GOOD ART WILL ADD THESE QUALITIES TO ARCHITECTURE WHICH THE PURE CONCERN FOR STRUCTURE NEGLECTS. THE RESULT IS A MORE HUMANIZED ARCHITECTURE.
In any aesthetic, the primary principle is a rather difficult and intangible element called "unity". In good architectural design, there is no exception. The elements of the architecture must discipline themselves or justify their existence in relation to the whole. Probably this is what the purists, reacting against decoration, were so disturbed by. Not the warmth of the decoration, but its falseness and lack of relation to the architecture -- its pretentiousness. An art which is going to relate to architecture must be aware of the concerns or logic of architecture.

Architecture is concerned with scale (human scale and urban scale). It is concerned with space, light and function. If an artist is to bring some warmth to an architectural environment, he must be sensitive to these qualities with which the architect has been concerned in his design. If the art work is to be indoors, the artist will be concerned with the interior space and the source of light and its quality. He will be concerned with the size of a human and his vantage point, whether far or near or both. If it is an outdoor piece, then the artist,
Along with his concerns for the viewer's scale, must be concerned with relating to the scale of a larger environment than his individual building. It must integrate with a neighborhood, a community, possibly a whole city.

Scale is the major concern of the "architectural artist". His forms, whether a mural or sculpture in round or relief, must fit the space which the architecture provides. A small fountain or sculpture in a huge space is lost. A large painting or mural can crowd a small room. A mural can sometimes draw so much attention that it distracts from the cleanliness of the building. Scale is probably the greatest single factor in the success of good art relating to architecture.

The reason for the success of a piece of "architectural art work" cannot be stated in a simple formula. Besides the primary consideration with scale, the artist can use a number of other elements to produce the "rightness" that is present in the good work. The artist may use the same material that is used to construct the building.
For example, the form for a poured concrete building can be built up to mold an interesting textural relief for the concrete wall. The artist may echo the forms of the building or the structure of the building in his mural or sculptural design.

Viewing time is also an artist's concern. It would be ridiculous to paint a Flemish-style, detailed mural on a freeway bridge -- it would be a complete blur to the viewer. Design of the mural should be simple.

The artist can use the texture of the building or the shapes formed by the natural cast shadows on the building. The artist must be conscious of the light source and its amount and quality (whether bright or dim at various times of day). The arrangement and form of lights, railings and other fixtures should be a part of the artist's awareness.

Above are expressed the concerns of the artist and his need to discipline his art to the principles of architecture. They do not deal with the subject matter, whether abstract or real, or the approach which the artist uses. They merely
Point out the fact that an "architectural art" must be concerned with more than personal expression or therapy for the artist -- which no really great art merely is. The artist cannot use the surfaces or spaces of a building, thinking only about a personal statement and expect it to be right. He may, if he is a good artist, intuit the necessity for a larger concern but, nevertheless, he in some way is aware of it.

In summary then, we may say that successful architectural art is "functional". Functional in the sense not of holding up the building as the beams are functional, but that the art and architecture are so well integrated that somehow the building would not be finished without the art and that the art does not dominate or diminish the architecture, but reinforces and humanizes it.
PART IV
THE FOLLOWING WILL BE A SERIES OF PHOTOGRAPHS, TAKEN FROM MAGAZINES AND BOOKS, THAT SHOULD EXEMPLIFY SOME OF THE PRINCIPLES ALREADY STATED AND SHOW HOW THE UNITY BETWEEN ART AND ARCHITECTURE IS ACHIEVED. EACH EXAMPLE IS NOT NECESSARILY GREAT ART. EACH DEMONSTRATES SPECIFIC UNIFYING DESIGN PRINCIPLES. I THINK IT WILL BECOME EVIDENT FROM THESE EXAMPLES THAT THERE IS NO SET OF SIMPLE FORMULAS THAT INSURES SUCCESS -- THERE ARE ONLY GREATER AND LESSER DEGREES OF SUCCESS.

PRINT 1.

MARCEL BREWER IS BOTH ARCHITECT AND SCULPTOR FOR HIS ST. JOHN'S ABBEY IN COLLEGEVILLE, MINNESOTA. HE LEAVES ONLY THE INTERIOR FOR THE WORK OF OTHER ARTISTS.
Print 2. Again with LeCorbusier, the borderline between sculptor and architect is difficult to distinguish. In his Apartment Building, Marseilles, France, he is very concerned with the textural quality produced by the boards of the concrete molding forms. He even made relief sculpture by building up the forms before pouring the concrete.
Print 3.

Print 4.

Print 3 & 4. Print 3. shows how the mold is built up before casting and Print 4. shows what the finished product is like. This mural was done by the students for a technical school in Amsterdam.
Print 5. In a mural, successful integration results when the wall, in some way, still is evident as a wall when the artist has finished his work. I feel that the carved-brick relief on this All Saint's Church in Frankfurt, Germany has succeeded in doing this.

Print 6. Sometimes the unifying principle will be a repeat of a form found in the architecture. This tempera mural in a high school in Stockholm, Sweden seems to have succeeded in relating the mural to the curved stairway. This was a difficult problem for the artist because the stairway was such a strong visual element and could not have been ignored.
Print 7. In similar fashion, George Meistermann has successfully integrated a very busy railing with his stained glass window for the staircase of the Broadcasting House in Cologne, Germany.

Print 8. Henry Moore faced a difficult task of giving some life to the very dull facade of the Time & Life Building in London. He accomplished this by lining a screen sculpture with the ledge line of the building and using very architectural forms made of the same material used for the building.
Print 9. A concern for light source and cast shadow characterizes this mural done by an architect, Andre Bloc, for the home that he designed for himself.

Print 10. A concern again for light source is essential for the balance of the sculptural relief for a church in Thayngen, Switzerland.
Print 11. Harry Bertoia's welded bronze brass and nickel screen sculpture "Trees" makes use of the lobby window light for his standing sculpture commissioned by the Denver Hilton Hotel.

Print 12.

Print 13.

Print 12 & 13. Print 12. shows a mural done for a school in Switzerland. The negative shapes of the composition are the wall itself. But Print 13. shows another characteristic about the mural from a long view. The mural's composition develops its focal point and movement to compliment the transition from a one-story to a two-story building.
Print 14.

Print 15.

Print 14. & 15. A series of murals called "Earth", "Air", and "Water" create an atmosphere of lyrical wonderment about the basic elements of life for a primary school in Zurich, Switzerland.
PART V
RELATING A MURAL TO THE NEW
ROCHESTER XEROX PLAZA

In this section of the thesis, I will attempt
to express all the various elements which were the
influencing factors involved in the evolution of
my final solution. First, I will explain the
reasons for my choice of location; then, the
problems involved in this particular location.
I will describe my first attempts, and then my
final solution and the reasons for this final
solution.

I began the project by studying the site and
the construction to its state of completion, the
first week of June of this year. I took a series
of photographs analyzing the bridge area between the
tower and the smaller mass of auditorium buildings.
My thesis director had recommended this as a
possible place for a mural that would screen off a
rather unpleasant view of asphalt parking lots and
old buildings behind. I also felt it to be a good
area because it seemed to be a rather important area
FROM A DESIGN POINT-OF-VIEW. IT WAS THE POINT OF
CONNECTION BETWEEN THE TALL VERTICAL TOWER AND THE
LOWER MASSING OF THE AUDITORIUM BUILDINGS. ON THE
SITE, AS YOU CAN OBSERVE IN THE PHOTOGRAPHS, THERE
IS A VERY IMPORTANT LIGHT FACTOR TO CONSIDER AT
THIS PARTICULAR POINT. BECAUSE THE TOWER IS LOCATED
ON THE SOUTHWEST CORNER OF THE SITE, IT KEEPS THE
Plaza in shade for the entire day with the exception
of the early hours of morning. However, the Court
Street area is very bright because there are no
tall buildings to shade the street. The attention
of the viewer in the Plaza or in the Midtown office
buildings is attracted out of the shaded, modern, new
Plaza area to the strong concentration of light on
the older Court Street and Cortland Street area
behind.

My concern then will be to create something that
will involve an understanding of the light situation
and by some means keep the viewer's eye moving within
the Plaza rather than being so strongly attracted
to the view behind.

I will have to be concerned with the view behind.
Will it change? How can I find out what it will be

- 18 -
LIKE IN THE FUTURE?

I WILL HAVE TO BE CONCERNED WITH THE FACT THAT ANY ART INCORPORATED IN THIS AREA WILL HAVE TO BE VIEWED FROM BOTH FRONT AND BACK. FROM BEHIND, IT WILL HAVE AS MUCH EXPOSURE AS IN FRONT BECAUSE IT MARKS THE ENTRANCE TO THE UNDERGROUND PARKING GARAGE.

WHATEVER I INCORPORATE IN THIS AREA WILL HAVE TO BE ABLE TO WITHSTAND HEAVY WIND VELOCITY AND STAND UP UNDER THE VARIOUS WEATHER CONDITIONS OF UPPER NEW YORK STATE. IT WILL HAVE TO WITHSTAND TEENAGE VANDALISM AND RELATE TO THE MATERIALS SURROUNDING IT. I WILL HAVE TO BE CONCERNED WITH HOW IT WILL BE LIGHTED AND HOW IT WILL LOOK IN THE DAY AND AT NIGHT; HOW THE LIGHT FIXTURE WILL RELATE OR INTEGRATE AND NOT DISTRACT FROM THE MURAL; HOW THE MURAL IS TO ATTACH TO THE BUILDING IS IMPORTANT IN THE TOTAL DESIGN CONCERNS.

THE MURAL WOULD BE LOCATED IN FRONT OF A LARGE DROP BECAUSE THE PARKING RAMPS FOR THE UNDERGROUND PARKING FACILITIES ARE BEHIND. IN THE ARCHITECT'S PLANS AS THEY STAND AT PRESENT, THERE ARE NO
provisions for a protective railing. The existing ledge that surrounds the entire "podium" or Plaza area is three feet six inches wide, but only one foot six inches high. I feel this would be safe for the majority of the Plaza because it is only a few feet to the street level below, but I feel that it is unsafe in the area surrounding the underground parking entrance which is a drop of more than twelve feet. Its low, wide surface would be a tempting walkway for young children. The presence of a railing that integrates with the mural, or the possibility of the mural itself having a secondary function as a protective railing, will be one of my considerations.

Another consideration is a theme. The theme need not relate directly to Xerox, but it would be more fitting if it did. I also wanted something with a light feeling because the architecture is very heavy and massive in this area where the pedestal columns receive the weight of the huge tower. I wanted to introduce some flowing, rhythmic elements to contrast and complement -- as a note of dissonance to the horizontal-vertical lines of the architecture.

- 20 -
INITIAL ATTEMPTS TO SOLVE THE PROBLEM

My initial direction was to eliminate the Court Street view entirely from the Plaza. However, before I had made too many beginning sketches, I met with Mr. Thomas Graham, from the Rochester Planning Commission. He informed me that the area behind my mural location was due as part of the Southeast Loop Urban Renewal Project. There would be large public open areas and farther removed would be low commercial buildings. This area behind, then, would not be a completely undesirable view. However, I still felt the need to have some type of a screen which would filter the view and keep a degree of the viewer's attention moving in the Xerox Plaza area.

My first attempts, before visiting the City Planning Commission, were strong opaque abstract forms which would silhouette against the strong light source from behind and be interesting from both sides. I could introduce more complexity into the design by having some forms overlap and by having open areas in the solid forms. I could become more complex by
INTRODUCING VARIOUS DENSITIES OF TINTED GLASS OR PLEXIGLASS. I COULD EVEN HAVE THE PROBLEM OF LIGHT HANDLED BY THE USE OF AN INTERESTINGLY FORMED NEON TUBE THAT WOULD LIGHT THE AREA AND BE AN INTEGRAL PART OF THE TOTAL DESIGN. I COULD USE THE THEME OF "MEDIA BEING THE EXTENSION OF MAN", WHICH MARSHAL McLUHAN HAS SO STRONGLY EXPRESSED IN HIS ATTEMPTS TO EXPLAIN OUR ELECTRONIC AGE.

IT WAS AT THIS TIME THAT MY THINKING CHANGED AND MY WHOLE APPROACH TOOK A NEW DIRECTION. I REALIZED THAT I WAS ATTEMPTING TO CREATE SOMETHING THAT WOULD OVERPOWER RATHER THAN INTEGRATE WITH THE ARCHITECTURE. IT WAS HEAVY RATHER THAN LIGHT. I HAD JUST FINISHED MY INTERVIEW WITH THE CITY PLANNING COMMISSION PEOPLE WHO INFORMED ME OF THE FUTURE CHANGES IN THE AREA. PROFESSOR BARSHEL RECOMMENDED SOMETHING LIGHTER AND A THEME MORE CLOSELY RELATED TO XEROX. I THUMBED THROUGH SOME LITERATURE PUBLISHED BY THE XEROX CORPORATION WHICH I HAD BEEN GIVEN DURING AN INTERVIEW WITH MR. JACK HOUGH, THE MANAGER OF XEROX PUBLICATIONS. I CAME ACROSS A PHOTOMICROGRAPH OF A XEROGRAPHIC IMAGE BEING FORMED. IT SHOWED LARGE ELECTROSTATICALLY-CHARGED BEADS. IT WAS AT
This point that all the various elements fell into place and I envisioned my final solution.

Final Solution

This final solution is a very simple one, but I feel it is a simultaneous integration of the many concerns involved in this architecturally-disciplined situation. I would take various gauges of highly-polished metal wire and stretch them between the bridge and the ledge. On these wires at various heights I could station metal spheres in such a way as to create a rhythmic pattern. The spheres would represent the theme of electrostatically-charged beads. The wires would be anchored to the ledge below and to the underside of the bridge above in a random, staggered pattern at various slanting angles so as to create a three-dimensional mural. This was advantageous because I felt three-dimensional art relates more successfully to architecture than two-dimensional art. It made, at the same time, provision for a very inconspicuous recessed down system of lighting the mural. I would recess fixtures in the underside of the bridge.
This solution eliminates the problem of heavy reinforcing structure to protect panels from wind pressures. The simple wire-sphere design would have very little wind resistance.

The shiny metal would stand various weather conditions and would be virtually vandalproof. The metal would contrast well with the cement plaster and dark cement and aggregate above. It would complement the marble cap below.

The design would be equally attractive from the back as the front and would define the entry to the underground garage. The design would eliminate the need for a railing because the mural itself would protect people from the deep drop behind. A separate railing would be difficult to relate to the mural and probably would appear as an afterthought.

The three-dimensional rhythmic pattern would be a handsome complement to the strong geometry of the architecture. The movement would begin from the east and build up a density of closeness of spheres as it moved west to a heavy concentration and then taper off. The viewer's eye would be drawn naturally.
FROM THE LOWER MASS OF BUILDINGS TOWARD THE TOWER
BY THE MOVEMENT AND CONCENTRATION OF OVERLAPPING
SPHERES.

I FEEL THE PROBLEM OF LIGHTING AND ELIMINATION
OF LIGHTING FIXTURES THAT MIGHT CONFLICT WITH THE
DESIGN IS SOLVED BY THE RECESSED DOWN-LIGHTING.
INCONSPICUOUS DOWN-LIGHTING, I FEEL, WOULD BE VERY
SUCCESSFUL BECAUSE IT WOULD REFLECT SOFT LIGHT OFF
THE METALLIC SURFACE OF THE RANDOMLY-SITUATED SPHERES.
DOWN-LIGHTING WOULD ALSO SERVE THE DUAL PURPOSE OF
LIGHTING THE UNDERGROUND GARAGE ENTRYWAY. IF
NECESSARY, RECESSED UP-LIGHTING COULD BE INCORPORATED
IN THE TOP OF THE LEDGE OR AN "UP AND DOWN" VALANCE-
TYPE LIGHT COULD BE MOUNTED ON THE FACE ABOVE THE
UNDERGROUND PARKING ENTRY.

THERE ARE SOME possIBILITIES WHICH I WILL ONLY
MENTION AS "DIRECTIONS TO BE EXPLORED", AND NOT
ATTEMPT TO ELABORATE IN THIS THESIS. THE LIGHTING
COULD BE INCORPORATED IN A COMPUTER-CONTROLLED SYSTEM
OF REOSTATS THAT WOULD MODULATE THE LIGHT IN A
RHYTHMIC MOVEMENT TO CAUSE AN INTERESTING VIEW AT
NIGHT FOR THE WALKER ON THE PLAZA OR THOSE DINING
ON THE TOP OF THE MIDTOWN PLAZA.

THE COMPLEX SYSTEM COULD ALSO INCORPORATE ROTATING COLOR FILTERS AND THE SPHERICAL SHAPE COULD BE CRYSTAL OR SOME FORM OF HARD PLASTIC OR GLASS. THE LIGHT ACTING ON THE SPHERICAL SURFACE WOULD THEN SEEM TO CAUSE THEM TO BE MYSTERIOUSLY SELF-ILLUMINATED. THESE, I FEEL, AT THE SAME TIME WOULDN'T CONFLICT WITH THE ARCHITECTURE BECAUSE THE ARCHITECTURE WOULD BE DARK AND THE SURROUNDING LIGHT COULD BE CONTROLLED SO THAT ITS INTENSITY WOULD BE SUBORDINATE TO THAT OF THE MURAL.

I HAVE ATTEMPTED IN THIS MURAL DESIGN TO CREATE SOMETHING THAT IS AN IMPORTANT ELEMENT IN THE TOTAL DESIGN OF THE PLAZA, AND YET AT THE SAME TIME INCONSPICUOUSLY SIMPLE ENOUGH TO BLEND WITH THE ARCHITECTURE. THE EXISTING ARCHITECTURAL PLANS CALL FOR POTTED, SMALL TREES TO BE POSITIONED IN A MODULAR PATTERN ALONG THE PLAZA. I DO NOT THINK MY DESIGN WILL CONFLICT WITH THIS LANDSCAPE PLAN. HOWEVER, IF I WERE GOING TO GET INTO THE PROPOSED COMPLEX LIGHTING SYSTEM, I WOULD CALL FOR REMOVAL OF THE TREES IN FRONT OF THE MURAL AREA OR CALL FOR
Some low landscaping in planters.

There are also some plans for a freestanding piece of sculpture in the plaza, roughly positioned in front of the area where I have designed my mural. The commission has not been awarded yet and is a closed competition between ten artists, predominately from the New York area. If mine were an authentic, rather than a hypothetical, solution I would recommend that there be close collaboration between the sculptor and myself, as well as the architect so as to come up with a successful marriage of architecture, mural, landscape, and sculpture.
A photomicrograph of a xerographic image being formed is shown at left. The large, electrostatically charged beads are transporting developer powder to a xerographic plate.
STUDY OF THE LIGHT CONDITIONS AT THE SITE.

VIEW OF THE UNDERGROUND PARKING ENTRANCE.
PRECAST CONCRETE PANEL WITH EXPOSED AGGREGATE

PEDESTAL COLUMN WITH GRANITE CLADDING
Until we get there, we ask you to use your imagination.

Imagine a soaring, deep-gray office tower, with ribbons of glass aimed at the sky. The structure's slim, loadbearing, external columns will result in column-free office floors. The tower will be the equivalent of 31 stories, or about 440 feet above the block formed by Clinton, Broad, Chestnut and Court streets.

Near the tower, picture a two-story auditorium that seats about 800 people. Xerox will make it available for community functions.

Between the tower and the auditorium, visualize a sunken ice skating rink and restaurant. You've seen something like it in Rockefeller Center.

About 2,500 people will call Xerox Square their workplace. They will work in 450,000 square feet of office space. Almost everybody will have a window because of the way the tower will be constructed around a nine-unit core of elevators.

The Square has been growing since June, 1965. Making it grow are Turner Construction Company of New York, Welton Becket Associates (architects) of New York and Los Angeles and Central City Holding Company of Rochester, which will lease the Square to Xerox.

By the fall of 1967, the new international headquarters of Xerox should be completed.

Then you won't have to use your imagination anymore.
July 28th, 1966

Messes. Robert Gudnow and George Bail
Construction Planning Center
XEROX Corporation
Home Federal Bank Building
WEBSTER, New York

Gentlemen,

We have been watching Xerox Center Progress with even greater fascination ever since we had visited with you and learned more about the hard core facts behind your planning group. The students and I continue to be greatly obliged to both of you gentlemen for giving us such a generous amount of your precious time, and you succeeded to stimulate our general interest in the environmental design potentials of a CREATIVE architect beyond a mere aesthetic curiosity. Most of us are convinced now that the creative SCOPE of a contemporary architect is enviable, to say the least, for he incorporates and commands ALL the ARTS in his all over effort, interior, exterior, everywhere.

One of my present Summer College graduate students would like to make the Xerox Rural on Communication his master thesis project next year and LEONARD ELSE would like to discuss a few pertinent details with you next week, if convenient, before our summer session is over and he returns to the architectural studio of his older brother. Len will phone you for an appointment.

Yes, we have the floor plans which you sent us and are
very grateful for them. If possible, we would also like to have copies of pictures of the outside plaza, as we feel that a screen-like, concave outdoor mural would be the most impressive representation of the Xerox communication (equipment) image, besides it would help to shield the Xerox beauty from the menacing ugliness of its highly unsophisticated environment, especially toward the south!

Our young friend from Cranbrook will be able to explain to you what additional plaza-information we may need.

With kindest personal regards also to our Tim Fergerson,

I am,

Very sincerely yours,

H. J. Barschel, Professor,
Graphic Communication
GENTLEMEN:

WE ARE SENDING YOU **Attached** ☑ Under separate cover via ______ the following items:

- ○ Shop Drawings
- ☑ Prints
- ○ Plans
- ○ Samples
- ○ Specifications
- ○ Copy of letter
- ○ Change order
- ○

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THESE ARE TRANSMITTED as checked below:

- ☑ For approval
- ☑ Approved as submitted
- ☑ Resubmit _____ copies for approval
- X For your use
- ☑ Approved as noted
- ☑ Submit _____ copies for distribution
- ☑ As requested
- ☑ Returned for corrections
- ☑ Return _____ corrected prints
- ☑ For review and comment
- ○
- ○ FOR BIDS DUE ____________________________ 19

REMARKS


COPY TO

SIGNED: G. A. Baio
April 3, 1967

Mr. Leonard Else  
26685 Captain's Lane  
Franklin, Michigan  

Dear Leonard:  

Attached you will find the drawings you require for your thesis project. I hope this information will be helpful to you.  

Sorry for the delay as we have been extremely busy completing the space requirements for Xerox Square.  

Very truly yours,  

George A. Baio  
Manager, Interior Design  

GAB:km  

Attachments
Mr. Leonard Else  
26685 Captains Lane  
Franklin, Michigan  48025

Dear Mr. Else:

I have received your letter of June 8, and am pleased to note that you are using our new Xerox Square project in your Masters thesis. What you are planning to do sounds most interesting, and I would be glad to help you in any way that I can. I do understand that you wrote a similar letter to Mr. Creighton Jones of the Welton Becket office requesting the same information. In talking with Mr. Jones recently, he advised me that he is sending you what you requested, and I would therefore presume that you need nothing from me at the present time.

As I mentioned above, if I can help in any additional manner, please let me know.

Very truly yours,

Paul H. Van Wert, A.I.A.  
Manager  
Corporate Facilities Planning

PHV/ji
Gentlemen:

We are forwarding herewith the following:

- ( ) Catalogue Cuts
- ( ) Change Orders
- ( ) Estimates
- ( ) Photographs
- ( ) Prints
- ( ) Purchase Orders
- ( ) Reproductions
- ( ) Samples
- ( ) Shop Drawings
- ( ) Sketches
- ( ) Specifications
- ( ) Tracings

Prints

Purchase Orders

Reproductions

Samples

Shop Drawings

Sketches

Specifications

Tracings

By: Air Mail

By: ______________ Messenger

By:

Plan & Section of Ramps 3, 4, 5

Remarks:

- ( ) For your information and comments
- (X) As per your request 6/8/67
- ( ) For coordination purposes
- ( ) For your files
- ( ) For field use
- ( ) For your approval or correction
- ( ) Returned for correction
- ( ) Approved with changes noted resubmission not required
- ( ) Approved with changes noted resubmission required
- ( ) Approved
- ( ) Disapproved
- ( ) Please give this matter your immediate attention
- ( ) Resubmit copies at once
- ( ) Forward copies to this office for distribution
- ( ) Other

If Enclosures Received Are Not As Listed Above, Please Notify Us At Once.

Copies To:

WELTON BECKET, F.A.I.A. ARCHITECT

By:

Telephone Number Plaza 1-1540
Mr. Leonard Else  
26685 Captains Lane  
Franklin, Michigan

Dear Mr. Else:

We wish to acknowledge your letter of September 26th in which you requested that we provide information on the permanency and durability of LIQUITEX colors on an exterior mural exposed to the weather. However, you failed to tell us what type of ground you intend to use.

Artists and architects are always hoping for the ultimate in easily applied materials for outdoor murals, for durability in organic plastic bound paints that to date can only be found in fired ceramics. All that can be legitimately claimed for LIQUITEX colors and other similar organic plastic bound artists' colors is that the acrylic vehicle paints are much more durable than any other organic vehicle bound colors, plastic or oleoresinous heretofore known. No organic vehicle paint or organic binder now known will last indefinitely outdoors exposed to sun, rain, and wind. And, of course, neither do stone or concrete masonry.

Although we have no reported history of outdoor murals that have been painted by others, we have had a test mural on a concrete slab exposed for some nine years. The appearance held up well for three years. After that the normal weathering of all outdoor organic finishes began to show. The areas painted with the more transparent colors began to slowly erode on the surface due to greater penetration and deterioration by the ultraviolet light. After nine years now most of these areas have more or less weathered away although the areas with opaque colors are largely intact.

The "weathering" consisted of a gradual wearing off of the surface, there being no cracking, flaking, or peeling. To some degree, consequently, the thicker the paint film is the longer the color will stay - if it is the same all the way through. In this way a painting might hold up in reasonable condition considerably longer than our test mural. But you cannot expect the unattainable. No such paint material has yet been discovered, none that will remain indefinitely without deterioration exposed to the elements outdoors.
If, with the above described limitations, you wish to go ahead, we can offer the following advice on preparation if your ground is going to be that of concrete.

The surface (concrete) must be the original concrete that is not itself tending to flake or "spall". If it has been previously painted with a cement paint, it is not suitable for painting with LIQUITEX colors and any other paint. On original concrete, unless it is new, wire brush thoroughly to remove any loose or deteriorated material on the surface.

The surface should be first primed with one or two well brushed in coats of LIQUITEX Gesso to which 25% by volume of the LIQUITEX Polymer Medium has been added. Painting with the LIQUITEX colors can proceed on this ground. Colors should likewise be mixed with at least 25% LIQUITEX Medium, either Polymer Medium or Gel Medium.

For three dimensional work use either LIQUITEX Jar Color or LIQUITEX Tube Color mixed with LIQUITEX Gel Medium. Some LIQUITEX Modeling Paste may also be incorporated for greater opacity. For this use equal parts of Modeling Paste and Gel Medium and work in color with this mixture. Our test mural was flowing color painted out, had not the thickness of coating to which we recommended earlier in this letter. Greatest durability will be using only the more opaque colors which are indicated on the enclosed color chart, by the shaded section at the bottom.

No honest or conscientious paint manufacturer can make a firm statement of how long any paint will stand up outdoors. Our experience is stated above. For really long term durability there is really yet no choice but fired ceramics.

We appreciate your favor and interest and trust that we have supplied adequate information.

Sincerely,

PERMANENT PIGMENTS, INC.

Robert E. Ranseen,
Sales Manager
March 8, 1966

Mr. Leonard Else
26685 Captain's Lane
Franklin, Michigan

Dear Mr. Else:

Thank you for your request for our brochure entitled "The Most Versatile Medium in History." Due to such an overwhelming response for this brochure, we are temporarily out of them. However, we are enclosing other information on our Acrylic colors which we hope will be helpful.

We anticipate having more brochures in four to six weeks and will keep your request on file so that we may send it to you then.

Very truly yours,

SHIVA ARTIST'S COLORS

Penny Smith

PS/s

Enclosures
Mr. Leonard Else  
26685 Captains Lane  
Franklin, Michigan

Dear Mr. Else:

The Shiva Acrylic Colors are all formulated to give maximum permanency under all conditions. The use of them for outdoor murals is recommended.

You should make certain in preparing for the mural that the substrate is clean and provides enough "tooth" for good mechanical adhesion. Liberal amounts of the Shiva Acrylic Gloss Medium should be used with the colors as this provides protection as well as optimum film continuity.

If you would care to describe the conditions of your mural in more detail, we will be happy to provide you with more explicit information.

Very truly yours,

K. A. NELSON

KAN:ss
ADDENDA SHEET

CATALOG K

This catalog, issued in 1932, is still in good supply and has not been superseded.

We will continue to use this catalog, postponing, for some time, the added expense of costly printing and distribution of new catalogs.

We will endeavor to carry a reasonable stock of the active items and will be prepared to supply practically all of the items shown in catalog K, except balusters shown on page 75, of zinc, on the basis of list price plus 20% f.o.b. our factory. Balusters are not carried in stock for the reason that when they are used, the quantity required is large enough to warrant making them up special, as we do have the chucks on hand for spinning them. Spinning costs have increased more than stamping costs. Write for quotation on balusters and disregard the list prices shown in catalog K.

Special prices will be quoted on quantity orders, also on items made up special in other sheet metals, such as copper, leaded copper, bronze, brass, aluminum and stainless steel. On such metals, prices will depend largely on quantities required.

Our specialty has always been the reproduction of ornamental designs for church Fleches and other extra features for the most exacting architects. We will be glad to quote on any such special requirements you may have.
September 30, 1966

Mr. Leonard Else
26685 Captains Lane
Franklin, Michigan

Dear Leonard:

Thank you for your letter of September 26, and the return of the evaluation form.

The Graduate Committee meeting dates have not been set for the coming academic year, but I would be happy to take your Thesis proposal, when it is ready, and present it to the Committee. I imagine that we will have our first meeting in mid-November.

I hope you have a good year, and that we will see you in the summer of 1967.

With all good wishes,

Sincerely,

H. J. Brennan, Dean
College of Fine and Applied Arts

HJB:jag
cc: Grad File
Dear LEN,

Quickly an acknowledgement of your letter of FEB. 6th, with the fine essay on THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN ART AND ARCHITECTURE. You may add this, if you wish, to your Master Thesis Proposal and refer to it in your proposal. I keep the copy handy in the folder you sent and will add your proposal, as soon as it arrives. Don't forget to send TWO additional copies for our various bureaucratic files.

Jim THE CHIEF Parton saw me this morning, in fact, he picked me up at the house and we zoomed down-town together to discuss his "Pollution Problem" with me. All he has to do now is to get a professionally typed version of his proposal and he can wade knee-deep in polluted water, air and what have you.

After minus 10°F in these here latitudes, it's up in the forties again and the snow-drops are blooming. We had, so far, none of those super-snow falls. Thank God or St. Peter for that! NO NEED TO GET SCARED ABOUT THIS COMING SUMMER...
LEN, we are CREATING a MONOCLE-SHOT, or did you become a GIRL WARRIOR?? Too young, yet!!!

10 MARCH, 1967
31 May!

To Mr. Barschel,

Please forgive my slow responses these last months. I have been more than swamped with work from school and work. DITO

I appreciate your rapid responses and your very generous interest—it is a needed encouragement and stimulus. Thank you!

I hope that the slides were OK. YES!

I am going to spend some time now with the correspondence & interviews described in the thesis proposal. How did you make out?

I am almost afraid when I think of this ahead of me. I really don't have many ideas regarding imagery for this mural. I feel it should capture the energy & feeling which has been stepped up by mass media—rather than actual mechanical images. I have even thought of abandoning imagery and work with atmospheric abstract imagery of forms which would echo or repeat the architectural surrounding and colors to symbolize the energy of communication.

I would love some comments on these ideas. Thanks again for your patience—I will be writing soon with further thoughts. Sincerely,
3/9/67

Dear LEN,

Many thanks for the slides. We kept a few, -
I am returning the others, as you may have use
for them.

BULLETIN: Summer college will start on

    J U N E  26th,  a  M O N D A Y

and end  A U G U S T  4TH,  1 9 6 7

Make sure to get your THESIS PROPOSAL in real
soon. T E M P U S  F U G I T !

Cheerio!
Dear Mr. Else:

I apologize for not having attended to your letter of March 15. I have been away most of the time for reasons of installation.

Most of the answers to the questions you have posed were answered recently to Mr. Samuel J. Nelson who prepared a Thesis on my work. If you care to inquire directly her address is: Lakeview Terrace, Fayson Lakes, Kinnelon, N.J. 07405.

Sincerely,
July 12, 1967

Mr. Leonard Else, c/o Mr. Curt Feuerhahn
425 Westminster
Rochester, New York

Dear Mr. Else:

Enclosed is a carbon copy of my thesis on Harry Bertoia which I am happy to have you read if it will be of any service to you. Unfortunately, the photocopies of the plates are rather poor but I think you will be able to get some idea of the originals from them.

As I am hoping to have the manuscript published and will need all working copies, I should appreciate your returning this copy to me via First Class Mail as quickly as possible.

Best of luck in your research.

Sincerely yours,

(Mrs. Samuel J. Nelson, Jr.)
May 14, 67

Dear Mr. Else:

Forgive me please for not answering your letter sooner.

I shall attempt to describe a few points that guide me in the trials to accomplish the integration of art with architecture.

Once I am thoroughly familiar with the given area, its proportions and physical dimensions, I usually get a feeling of its relationship to the surrounding architecture. The area most always has an "intention" either to be more opened-up, or tied-into the building, if is either pulled or pushed or squeezed by the surrounding architectural forms. This dictates the general feeling, composition and movement of the mural-to-be. Thus each commission is a totaly new experience. It seems to me that all good murals have one big movement around which everything else happens. Sometimes the area is so self-contained that it asks only for a centralization.

After the general feeling of the area is established (by far the most important step) comes the question of textures and materials. To me the quantity of surface texture desirable is determined by the factors of distance from which the mural will be seen and physically felt and the sources of light available. The scale of the materials to be used is also important. The integration of size-of-area to mural-texture to the surrounding materials is, in my estimation, the next most important factor.

Colors do carry the entire area forward or backward. Blues and greens tend to dissolve any wall and therefore should be used with extreme caution. A good mural is never a picture, never a "window" framed by other walls.

It might interest you to know that at present I am working on a 11' x 88' natural brick mural for the Dining Hall of the new dormitory complex of the Rochester Institute of Technology. The bricklayers are to begin the work early next month.

Wishing you success with your project and the thesis,
I thank you for your interest, sincerely,
Reproductions of my work are in:

HOUSE AND GARDEN  OCTOBER 1962

CRAFT HORIZONS:
May/June 1962
July/August 1963
November/December 1963
March/April 1966
April 17, 1967

Mr. Leonard Else  
26685 Captain's Lane  
Franklin, Michigan  48025

Dear Mr. Else:

I am sorry I cannot help you at the moment but there is a book coming out this fall on my work which will answer your questions but I am afraid it will be too late for the thesis you want to write.

Sincerely,

IN:js  
Isamu Noguchi