

SIR GEORGE WILLIAMS UNIVERSITY

A REPORT AND EVALUATION OF AN EXPERIMENTAL COURSE
IN THE STUDY OF VISUAL ENVIRONMENTS

M.A. (ART EDUCATION) THESIS

by

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THESIS TITLE

A REPORT AND EVALUATION OF AN EXPERIMENTAL COURSE
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The author gives evidence of a continuing deterioration in the quality of the man-made visual environment and maintains that if this trend is to be halted or reversed we must re-educate our perceptive faculties. He suggests that this is a task which should be undertaken by the universities through the introduction of courses for general students in which an examination of the physical environment would be related to the study of art and to creative art activity. His premise is that it is only by closely inter-relating such experiences that our aesthetic awareness of the environment can be developed.

He investigates the opportunities for environmental studies which exist in North American universities at the present time and describes in detail an experimental course which he planned and taught in 1966-67. Conclusions drawn from this experiment lead him to make certain recommendations regarding the design of future environmental studies courses.

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INTRODUCTION

The course described in these pages was conducted as an experiment, the purpose of which was to discover whether the exposure of students to art and creative art activity could be related to an examination by them of the visual environment. In the context of this enquiry the term "visual environment" means not only the superficial appearance of the physical environment, but also the underlying structures or systems which influence or shape it.

The experiment was in the nature of a response to the many pleas that have been made in recent years that a means should be found to foster in people a greater awareness of their surroundings. These have come from educators, architects, artists and others who are alarmed at what they view as a general deterioration in the quality of the man-made environment, and who attribute this to public indifference or to the inability of people to perceive and evaluate the visual elements in their world. The task of awakening an interest in the look of the environment is, they say, an educational responsibility and many would maintain that the subject would be introduced most appropriately and effectively at the university level.

It was with a class of a university course that this experiment was carried out in 1966/67.

I

THE STUDY OF VISUAL ENVIRONMENTS

THE EDUCATIONAL NEED

In considering the formation of visual education courses related to a study of the environment it was recognised that many teachers in the art departments of universities and in art schools may already be much concerned with this factor in their teaching. However, the students they teach, in choosing art as their main field of study, have declared their special interest in the visual world and the approach to the subject for them would be different from that required for students of other disciplines. It is the special needs of such "general" students which are considered in this paper.

Among those who stress the importance of educating students whose main area of study will not be the visual arts, to a deeper awareness of their visual environment, is Professor A. D. Trottenberg, Assistant Dean, Faculty of Arts and Sciences, Harvard University.

In explaining the necessity for such action he writes, "Our cities, countryside, our buildings, homes and artifacts, afflicted with commercial blight and planning chaos, constitute a visual environment of unsurpassed ugliness."¹

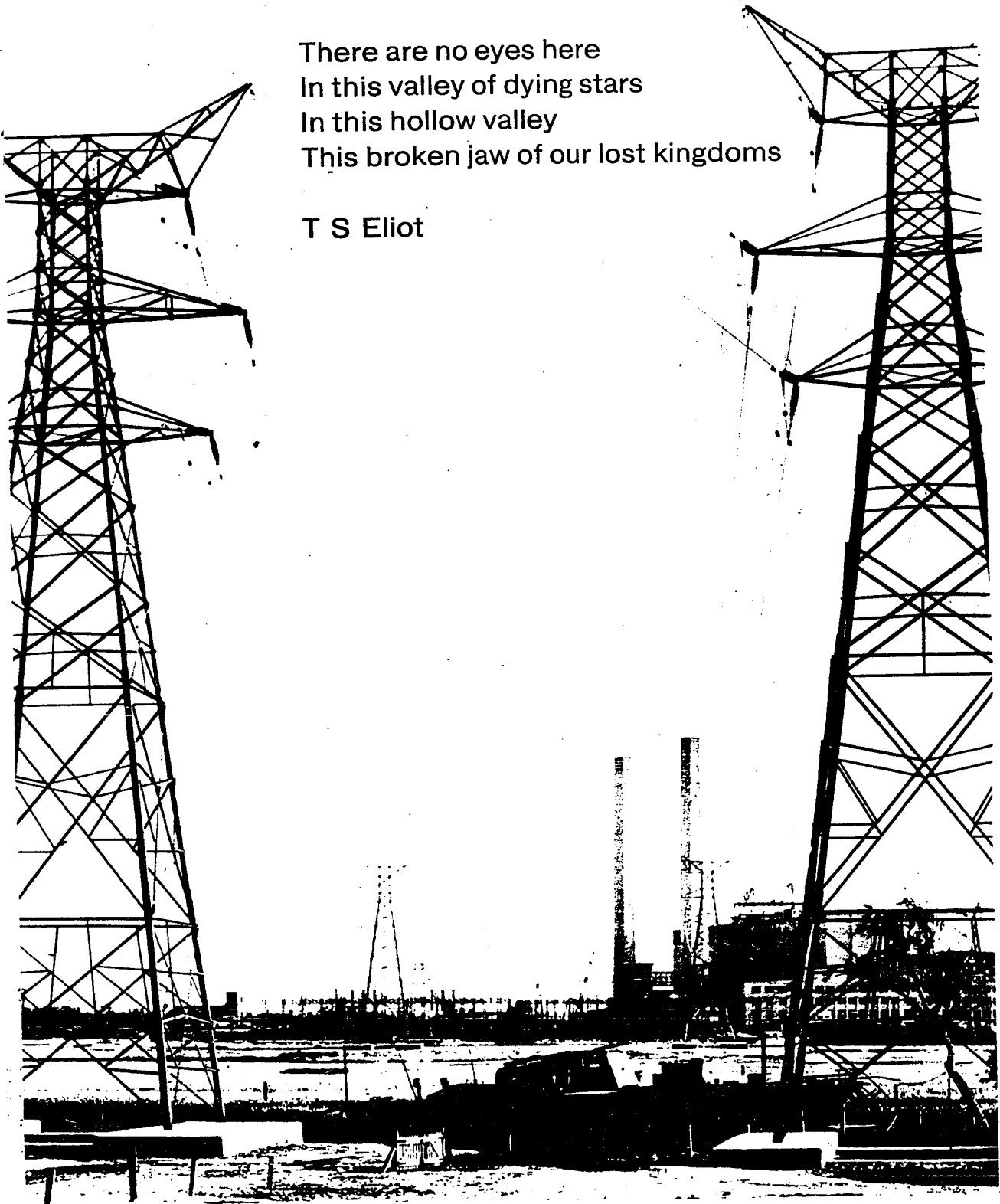
¹ A. D. Trottenberg, "Universities Graduate Visual Illiterates" S. R., (February, 1966), P. 73.

Fig. 1.



There are no eyes here
In this valley of dying stars
In this hollow valley
This broken jaw of our lost kingdoms

T S Eliot



He attributes this to the uncaring, apathetic attitude of people to the quality of their visual environment and maintains that this derives from the fact that most students leave their universities as "visual illiterates". He recommends, therefore, that visual studies courses should be introduced into the university curriculum which would be mandatory for all students, and which would be designed to develop in them a new environmental awareness. He makes reference to the paradoxical situation which, he claims, exists in many American universities today where, despite an ever-increasing appetite for exposure to, and instruction in, the visual arts, students seem unperturbed by the loss of visual amenities in their surroundings.

"There is," he notes, "a serious imbalance between a greater appreciation of the arts and an increasing imperviousness to the quality of the visual environment."¹ The course he visualises, therefore, would differ in scope and emphasis from the traditional Fine Arts Course, although art and studio experiences would play an essential role in it. Its purpose would be to introduce to the student who might never again take formal instruction in the visual arts, an appreciation of the artist's aims and problems and to show him how these can be related to the visual environment. He is somewhat vague, however, regarding the all-important question of precisely what kind of course content is needed to make the transfer from considerations of art to considerations of the visual environ-

¹Ibid.

ment. This problem he leaves to the "Renaissance giant, administrator, teacher, artist and scholar who is to be found to teach and direct the course,"¹ thus suggesting, perhaps, that if the translation of his proposals into reality depends on the discovery of such a paragon, he is not very hopeful of their implementation.

An indication that there was an awareness of the problem in Canada was given at the Canadian Conference of the Arts in 1961. William Kilbourn, writer and art critic, speaking at the Conference said,

A person who loves the arts can never be content while the source and means of civilisation itself, the city, is symbolised in our time by a rotting core and suburban sprawl and the right of privateers to be omnipresent and the owner and advertiser as libidiously vulgar as they please . . . We need a revolutionary programme of visual education.²

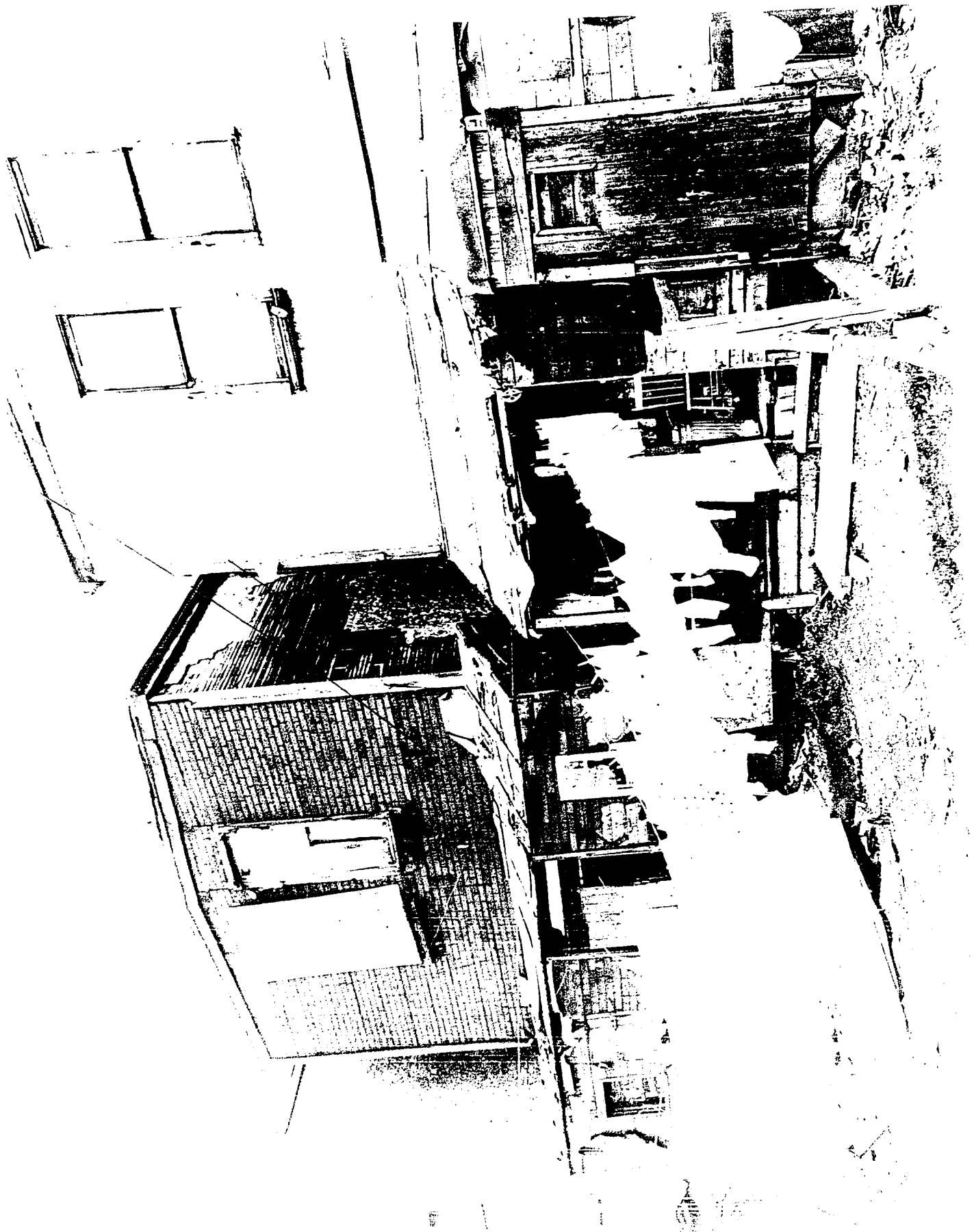
In 1966, the same Canadian body noted that little had been done in the meantime to remedy this state of affairs and it recommended in its report that "the principle of the unity of the visual arts be accepted as vital and that this principle be reflected in education at all levels with particular reference to the education of those involved in shaping the environment."³

These repeated insistences that there is something grossly wrong with the environment and that there is an urgent need for remedial action is often met with genuine incomprehension or disbelief. Georgy Kepes

¹Ibid.

²William Kilbourn, "Speech at Canadian Conference of the Arts" Canadian Art, (No. 75, September 1961), p. 304.

³Canadian Conference of the Arts. Report Seminar 1966, p. 21.





gives what he believes to be the reason for this attitude in the introduction to "The Education of Vision." He writes:

The strength, the richness of the visual forms that we create depend to a certain extent on the nature of our visual surroundings. If in the world, man sees around him the rhythm of nature's processes revealed and if the colours, forms and movements he sees are expressions of dynamic events, then his vision is nourished by the primal sanities of nature.¹

He believes that our present environment has not grown according to nature and we have lost the benefit of these natural guides. In our man-made environment, shaped by one-sided and short-sighted interests the appearance of things no longer reveals their character. He continues:

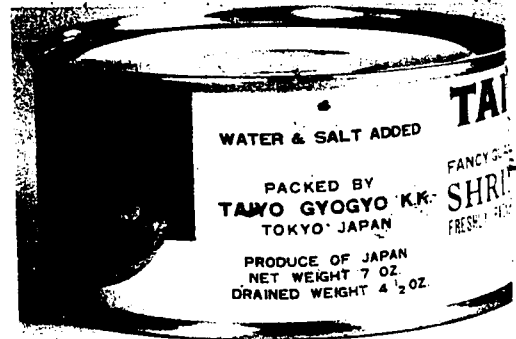
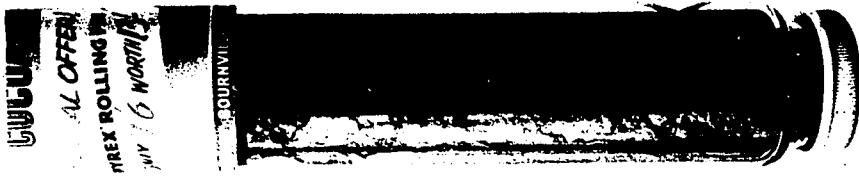
. . . images imitate forms, forms cheat functions, functions are robbed of their natural sources emanating from human needs. Our cities, our buildings . . . objects for use, the packaging of goods, posters, the advertising in our newspapers . . . are often without visual integrity. The world that modern man has constructed by and large lacks sincerity and scale . . . Men living in this environment . . . cannot avoid injury to their sensibilities, the basis of their creative faculties.

There is a reciprocal relationship between our distorted environment and our impoverished ability to see it with freshness, clarity and joy. Fed on our deformed and dishonest environment our under-nourished visual sensibilities can only lead us to perpetuate the malfunctions of the environment we create. To counteract this spiral of self-destruction, we have to re-educate our vision and reclaim our lost sensibilities.²

If the difficulty of perceiving the environment with clearness derives from the nature of the environment itself, the problem of the designer of an environmental studies course, in finding a means to awaken perception

¹Georgy Kepes (ed.), The Education of Vision (New York: George Braziller, 1965), p.ii.

²Ibid, p.iii.



ome a pack that has a life after
ntents are used, I think it's
ck cocoa in a rolling pin. The
be used in its pack — it must
What am I offered — a free
h cocoa, or free cocoa with a

ures on labels which show
is inside a pack, I also want
ation clearly presented. The tin
or example, specifies both nett
ight so I can easily work out
m paying for 2½ ounces of

water and salt. When I bought the 'New
Jam', however, I thought I was getting a
pound — the jar looked like a standard
pound jar to me. It was only when I got
home that I discovered it only contained
12 ounces. I do not think the weight on th
label is stated in big enough letters. And
when it comes to a choice between
picture and text, as in the two tins of bake
beans, I much prefer the picture: it is clea
and direct, making the tin much easier to
identify than the one that depends upon
words alone to describe its contents.





of it is considerable.

The thesis of Kepes' book is that the problem can only be resolved through the medium of artistic expression. He writes:

The essential unity of first hand sensation and intellectual concept makes artistic vision different from scientific cognition or simple sense-feeling response to situations. It combines both . . . If we reinforce our powers with this basic experience of forming, we are better prepared to rebuild the physical environment with confidence.¹

Marshall McLuhan, while emphasising the difficulties that prevent any particular group from becoming aware of its own environment, also suggests that through the medium of art it may be possible. He states:

Men have become aware of the arts as anti-environments or counter environments that provide us with the means of perceiving the environment itself. Art as an anti-environment becomes more than ever a means of training perception and judgement.²

He sees art, therefore, no longer as a "privileged diet for the élite"³ but part of an indispensable training for all men which will enable them to see their own environment afresh.

ALTERNATIVE PROPOSALS

The notion of deliberately educating a whole or a large part of the population to an appreciation of the visual qualities in the environment, belongs uniquely to our time. In some past eras, e.g., eighteenth

¹ Ibid., p. iii.

² Marshall McLuhan, Understanding Media, (New York: The New American Library, 1964), p. ix.

³ Ibid.

century England, visual education was based on an understanding of the canons of classical design and composition, and art was certainly a diet reserved for an élite. Thus, although the environment then, as now, could be said to be the "sum of individual acts freely undertaken,"¹ the freedom to act at that time rested mainly with a small select group, and it was their cultural and class values which dominated most aspects of the man-made environment.

With the changes in the social order brought about by the economic expansion that followed mechanisation in the nineteenth century, many new environment makers appeared, e.g., the industrialist, engineer, civic authority, the business-man. Few of these had much understanding of the cultural values of their predecessors which, they rightly suspected, had little relevance for their own time. Nor was there any coherent set of values forthcoming to replace the passing order. The unsightly chaos and grim industrial scene of this time mirror the separation of functions in this fractured society and the narrow functional uses to which vision was now put. In the spread of education to all classes, vision was seen mainly as a means of classification and identification, and the education of vision in a total sense was neglected. Today, a more efficient technology and accelerated pace have accentuated the utilitarian "single view point" nature of man's relationship to his environment. As Georgy

¹ Allison and Peter Smithson, "Building toward the Community Structure", Structure in Art and Science, ed. Kepes,

Kepes suggests, this situation may not be recognised by those whose powers of perception have been blunted or distorted by the environment itself and who, failing to see the problem, see no need to search for solutions. There are others, however, who, fully alive to developments, argue that whatever emerges in the environment must come from the needs and pressures of the times, and that the direction which is the resultant of such forces, is unpredictable. They are, therefore, opposed to any conscious appraisal of the quality of the environment made for the purpose of directing its evolution.

Historically, a man's environment may have been produced by the free interplay of such forces, but the homogeneous cultural values of the time, or enlightened despotism, usually ensured some sense of order and harmony in the visual world. Where such controls broke down, as in England in the nineteenth century where industrial wastes and slums were often substituted for a green and pleasant countryside, it was shown how disastrous such a policy could be. Even if it is argued that the economic or political situation justified the means and that such damage, in any case, is not irreversible, it can be imagined how generations growing up in such blighted surroundings were deprived of the essentials necessary for their physical, emotional and spiritual development.

Opposition to any schemes which imply improvements or conscious control also come from those who view the urban scene in the context of

the collage and assemblage art of our time and call for a non-critical acceptance of it.

The art critic, Lawrence Alloway, refers to the "junk culture" of our time. "Junk culture," he writes, "is city art, its source is obsolescence, the throwaway materials of the city as it collects in drawers, cupboards, attics, dustbins, gutters, waste lots and city dumps."¹

Here the political and reforming intentions of artists of the '30's, which were directed against the squalor and degradation of the urban environment are transposed into complete aesthetic acceptance of it. William C. Seitz writes:

The world of artifacts can be seen (as Monet sought to see nature) with vision freed from preconceptual conditioning. The peeling décollage on abandoned billboards in the blighted neighbourhoods of Chicago . . . or the rubble of fallen New York tenements piled between walls patterned in flowered pinks and blues can take on an intense beauty . . . By contrast, the hygienic uniformity of garden suburbs and the glass curtained privacy of Park Avenue or Lake Shore Drive seem drab and monotonous.²

Such an attitude is more likely to be found among those who can escape from its physical reality into a creative world, or into a pleasant countryside, than among the residents or workers who must suffer such environments daily. The explosive socially-chaotic conditions in many cities are evidence of the deforming frustrating effects of such surroundings

¹ William C. Seitz, The Art of Assemblage, (New York: The Museum of Modern Art, 1961), p.73., quoting Lawrence Alloway, Barbara Guest, Notes on Collage, (Arts (N.Y.)), March, 1956.

² William C. Seitz, The Art of Assemblage, (New York: The Museum of Modern Art, 1961), p.76.



on the latter, who given the opportunity leave it for more salubrious (if regrettably, but not necessarily, as Mr. Seitz suggests) duller surroundings.

CONSCIOUS EVOLUTION

The objective detached views of the environment which have been mentioned are rare. In certain fields, i.e., health and population control, it is generally agreed that man, conscious of his own evolution, must attempt to direct it. The harm is acknowledged that arises from overcrowding, excessive noise, air and water pollution, and degrading and brutalising work and legislation is enacted to deal with these recognizable evils. It would be infinitely more difficult to legislate for improved visual environment. Noise and pollution levels may be isolated and calculated, but it is perhaps impossible to measure the myriad factors that make for good or bad in the visual world, even if there were agreement as to what they are. However, in the very fact that environments are deliberately created to have specific effects, e.g., beguiling or relaxing as in supermarkets, depressive as in prisons, or stimulating as in discotheques, the powerful effect of the environment on the individual is recognised.

The shape of the environment, therefore, should not, and possibly cannot, be dictated by law or depend on a master plan, as the failure of many such blue-printed developments testify, but must remain the

collective effect of individual acts. Consequently, the degree of coherence, harmony, amenity, excitement, etc., in this area will eventually reflect the appreciation and understanding the individual has of these qualities and the freedom he has to act or to influence others. In some fields, as for example in the design of consumer products, the pressure to improve standards which can be exercised by the visually educated buyer is considerable. In others, however, where environmental changes are made by powerful private, or government interests, with a total disregard for the individual's rights or aesthetic values, the visually conscious citizen, faced with the concrete fact and the influential forces responsible for it, may feel indignant but helpless.

It would seem, therefore, that the proposed course should be intended not only for the potential consumer, user and observer, but also for those who, on varied scales, will be builders and creators of environments of many kinds. A student of such a course would have discovered how the perceptual ordering and forming required in the creation and appreciation of art can be related also to a fuller awareness and enjoyment of the visual world. He would have a unified sensory and intellectual consciousness of the interdependent, interacting nature of the visual and non-visual factors that make the environment, and be alive to the balance of formal and structural relationships on which it depends.

It would be hoped that through his contribution, whatever it might

be, the environment would be enhanced and enriched and not impoverished, disrupted, or destroyed.

II.

EXISTING OPPORTUNITIES FOR VISUAL EDUCATION FOR GENERAL STUDENTS IN SOME NORTH AMERICAN UNIVERSITIES

In discussing the opportunities that at present exist for visual education related to environmental studies, account must be taken of the attitude of art schools to the problem. Some ignore it in their course offerings, but some seem strongly aware of the need to awaken in students a sharper and more profound sense of their environment. In the catalogue of the Rhode Island School of Design for example, it states:

The . . . purpose served by the visual arts compels us to attack the ugliness and deformities in the environment that now impede our cultural development . . .¹

It describes the thoughtless destruction of visual amenities for narrow private ends.

Powerful machines rip the landscape, trample nature and history alike but lay no plan that sustains a coherent community. Wherever restraints are absent, the commonplace threatens to poison a waterfront, clutter a park, encumber a highway, clog a river. Ours is a visual world of man made chaos.²

This suggest that this school at least is strongly aware of the position and that its students may have a more acute sense of the inter-relationship between art and the environment than many others. Their

¹ Rhode Island School of Design, Catalogue 1966.

² Ibid.

feeling of frustration and failure then may be all the greater, therefore, as they discover that much of what constitutes the visual environment is beyond their orbit of influence. Those who "poison a waterfront, encumber a highway, clog a river," etc., do so because they are indifferent to, or unaware of, the visual considerations that are so important to the artist. It is unlikely that in their training as engineers, communication experts, industrialists, salesman, etc., much mention will have been made of such considerations.

John Blake, editor of the British magazine, "Design", writes:

One thing is certain and that is that design education conducted as an exercise in how to acquire good taste is doomed to failure. What is needed is a new type of course which would be separate from existing classes in art and crafts under such a heading as environmental studies.¹

Here again the problem is understood, but as in the U.K. art schools are nearly always separate establishments from universities it would, again, be most difficult to make such courses available to general university students.

Professor Jay Wolff has introduced a visual studies course for general students into the curriculum at Brooklyn College, in which creative exercises are carried out in an art workshop. Here, much of the preliminary work is concerned with undoing ingrained habits of "what is worth looking at."

¹ John Blake, Design, (April 1965), p.ii.

To do this Mr. Wolff employs the camera, the microscope and dramatic lighting effects to "metamorphose stereotyped recognition into states of re-energised and anonymous freshness."¹ Although such techniques may lead to the development in the individual of a "fully alive and self-sensory intelligence"² they may not answer the question which is the subject of this paper, i. e., how to foster in the student an awareness of the environment in its actuality ?

Despite the many arguments heard in favour of the setting up of visual education courses, Professor Wolff's is one of the few so described in North American universities. However, it is probable that there are Fine Arts university courses which are dealing with the problem, or some aspect of it, which are described differently. It was considered, therefore, that it would be of value to enumerate and classify through catalogue descriptions introductory art courses in universities in an attempt to find out how much interest exists at present in this problem. In Table I, the sixty-three American and nine Canadian universities listed were chosen at random from the catalogue shelves, and are spread over a large geographical area. Where it was known the number of teachers, full and part-time, was given as an indication of the size of the department.

¹ Jay Wolff, "Visual Intelligence in General Education", Education of Vision, ed. Kepes, p.226.

² Ibid., p.230.

Expanded descriptions of the courses given in columns A to F of Table 1 are shown below:

Columns A and B show the introductory Art History and Studio courses which are offered by most universities. The former usually regarded as an academic discipline while the latter, it is assumed, provides a centre of creative activity which through exhibitions and interdepartmental contracts alerts the student body of the university to the fact that art exists in the university as a living thing. No mention has been made of those few universities which have no art department. As Professor Trottenberg remarks in the article referred to in the Introduction, "Almost every major university has constructed, or is planning to construct, a major facility for the practice and teaching of the arts".¹

Column C covers all the courses which are intended to introduce the student to a variety of art media and concepts. These are usually open to all, but may also be prerequisites for art majors and B.F.A's. It is likely that some teachers of these courses would also discuss in their teaching the interaction of art and the wider environment, perceptivity and other related matters.

Column D refers to what are generally described as Art Appreciation courses. In those listed, only one included Studio work. Normally such courses are of the seminar/lecture type which are concerned with

¹ Trottenberg, p.73.

a search for visual fundamentals through the study and analysis of works of art. It is not proven that "taste" acquired in this way is transferred to consideration of the everyday environment.

Columns E and F. Although both are concerned with the relationship of art to the environment, they have different approaches and aims.

Column E concerns courses that deal with a single area of the environment, e.g., interior decoration, home improvement, fashions or display. Although occasionally this may be part of a major art programme, it is more likely to be a "general interest" course.

Column F is related to Visual education and/or Environmental studies courses in which the aim is to develop in the student a greater sensitivity to the visual environment. The descriptions of such courses vary considerably.

Some examples taken from catalogue descriptions for the year 1966 are as follows:

Central Washington State College. "To study the function of minor arts and industrial design in environment. Presentation of criteria for developing aesthetic awareness."¹

Harvard and Radcliffe. (Open to all students but required of architectural sophomores. Limited enrolment suggests that effect would not be widespread). "Designed to facilitate the systematic study of various media for visual communication and to help the student develop the visual

¹ Central Washington State College Catalogue, 1966.

quality of his environment."¹

University of Guelph, Wellington College. "Lectures, demonstrations and seminars designed to present a study of the visual arts upon contemporary society and today's media of communication with an analysis of the impact of the modern sciences upon painting and sculpture in this country."²

Table 1 gives the following percentages for the courses described under the headings A-F :

- A - 92% offer introductory Art History courses.
- B - 82% offer Basic studio courses.
- C - 48% offer Orientation courses.
- D - 50% offer Art appreciation courses.
- E - 8% offer Environmental study courses in a specialised area, e.g., Interior Decoration, Display, etc.
- F - 9% offer Visual study/Environmental courses.

This would suggest that, even allowing for the value that the mere existence of studio courses (B) in a university may have in making the general student aware of art as a part of the environment and for aspects of visual education related to the environment which might be taught by a teacher in courses (C), (D), and (E), there are at present very few opportunities in these universities for the general student to receive a

¹ Harvard and Radcliffe Catalogue, 1966.

² University of Guelph, Wellington College Catalogue 1966.

visual education specifically designed to increase his awareness of the environment.

INTRODUCTORY FINE ARTS COURSES AND ENVIRONMENTAL STUDIES COURSES
IN SOME NORTH AMERICAN AND CANADIAN UNIVERSITIES

Name of University	No. of Full and Part-time Teachers in Dept. (Where known).	B. F. A. - O	B. Sc. - Ø	A	B	C	D	E	F
Stanford University California.	21	Ø	O	Historical Intellectual Analysis of Art. Also general survey (Historical) Illus. Lecture	Basic Studio Training in Major areas of Specialisation, i.e., Painting, Sculpture, Print Making, Crafts.	Orientation Course. Introduction to Artists Media and Concepts. Studio.	Non-historical examination of works of art and architecture. Art appreciation. Search for Visual Principles. Illus. Lecture, or Seminar.	Interior Decoration, Fashion, Display General students and/or prerequisite for specialist courses.	Art/Design in Contemporary Life. With or without Studio involvement. Nature of Perception. Art and the Environment. General students and/or pre-requisite for Art and specialist courses.

	N	O	M					Courses.
Stanford University California.	21	O	X	X			X	
Connecticut College, New London, Conn.	12	X	X		X			
Barry College, Miami, Florida.	2	X	X					
Stetson University, Florida.	3	X					X	
University of Georgia, Athens, Georgia	24	O	X				X	
Georgia Southern Coll.	4	X	X		X			
University of Idaho	6	X					X	
University of Illinois	85	X	X		X			
School of Art Institute of Chicago, Illinois	95	O	X				X	
Roosevelt University, Chicago, Illinois	8	X	X				X	
Northern Illinois Univ.	34	X	X		X			
Illinois Institute of Tech. Illinois	13	O	X		X			
Ball State University, Indiana	14	X	X				X	
Iowa State University, Iowa	17	O	X					
Polytechnic Institute, Louisiana	8	O	X		X			

[illegible]

Univ. of Mississippi	5	☒	X	X	X	X				
Washington University, St. Louis, Missouri	5	☒	X	X				X		
Eastern Montana Coll. Billings, Montana	3	☒	X	X						
Creighton University, Omaha, Nebraska			X	X						
Univ. of New Hampshire	4			X					X	
Dartmouth College, Hopkins Arts Centre, New Hampshire	14	☒	X	X						
Univ. of New Mexico	17	O	X	X			X			
Plattsburgh Coll. Arts & Sci. New York	9	O	X	X				X		
Syracuse Univ. of New York	35	O	X	X			X			X
Wagner College, New York	6	☒	X	X						
Pratt Institute, New York		O	X	X						
Cornell University College Arts/Science, New York			X						X	
										architecture visual com- munication.

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

III

FINE ARTS COURSE 231 EXPERIMENTAL CLASS

COMPOSITION OF THE CLASS

Course 231 Fine Arts at Sir George Williams University, Montreal, is an introductory art course required of all art majors and B.F.A. students and is also an elective for the general student.

In 1966-67 there were five day and five evening classes given in this course.

The university calendar relates the course to " . . . the recurring problems of the artist throughout the history of art." No previous art training or background is required of the students and it is intended that . . . "both the general student and the art major shall engage in certain activity and expression."¹ The aims are thus sufficiently broad to allow for considerable freedom in individual interpretation and in the particular class discussed, the instructor linked them to the problem which is the subject of this thesis, namely, how to educate the general student to a greater awareness of his visual environment ?

It was intended that the course of study would be of value to all students in the class, but because this experiment was concerned primarily with the needs of the general student, it was important to

¹ Sir George Williams University Catalogue 1966-67

discover how many students in this class could be described as such. In answer to a questionnaire thirteen of the twenty-three students stated that they intended to take continuation courses in a Fine Arts degree programme, while the others said that they had had little art experience, were generally uncertain about their future plans and were taking the course for credit, or out of interest. These are described as "general" students.¹

Because of some doubts about the accuracy of these classifications two introductory exercises were set as an approximate check. The first was a simple drawing test, done at home, in which students were asked to draw a chair. It was hoped that this would provide an idea of their technical competence as draughtsmen.² In the second they were required to write a short essay entitled, "Why I like this picture," in which the subject was to be an original painting or print, or a reproduction selected by the student.³ It was anticipated that the choice (with reservations) would give some idea of the student's knowledge of art and of his taste, and the verbal description or analysis an indication of his understanding of the visual and formal elements in the picture he had chosen.

In the chair exercise a greater understanding of form and perspective was shown than might have been expected from "general" students.

¹ Table 2.

² Introductory Lesson

³ Appendix

TABLE 2

FINE ARTS 231. EVENING DIVISION. INSTRUCTOR - F.L. BARRY

A	B	C	D	E	F
Student	Art background	Sex	Present Occupation	Aspiration at start of Course	
				Fine Arts Degree	Others
1	☒	M	Arch. Draughtsman	B.F.A.	B.A. History
2	○	F	Secretary	B.F.A.	
3	☒	M	Office work	B.F.A.	
4	☒	M	Draughtsman		
5	☒	F	Stenographer, Bank		
6	○	F	Elem. Sch. Teacher		
7	*	F	Housewife		
8	*	F	Elem. Sch. Teacher		
9	☒	F	Office work		
10	☒	F	Stenographer		
11	☒	F	Office work		
12	☒	F	Office work		
13	☒	F	Stenographer		
14	☒	F	Day Student		
15	☒	F	Elem. Sch. Teacher		
16	*	F	Housewife	M.F.A. (Prereq.)	Interest Credit B.A. Credit B.A.
17	*	F	Day Student	B.A. (Drama Major)	
18	☒	F	Stenographer		
19	☒	F	Secretary	B.F.A. B.F.A.	B.A. History
20	☒	M	Elem. Sch. Teacher		
21	○	F	Office work		
22	○	F	Profess. Dancer		
23	○	M	Day Student		

COLUMN B - ☒ = Little previous art interest or training
○ = Gallery visits, books, previous interest
* = Strong interest, previous art courses

N.B. Columns E/F do not accurately describe the proportion of "general" students to "art" students in this class, as it will be noted that of the thirteen who aspired to take a Fine Arts degree, six stated that they had no background or training in art and so could not know whether they would be equal to the demands of continuation courses in this field.

In the essays, the selection of pictures showed more familiarity with recognised works of art than the students' autobiographies had suggested was likely. The written descriptions also put more emphasis on the formal elements in the picture than would have been forecast as this had not been specifically asked for.

These findings hinted that some "general" students had a wider art background than they had been prepared to admit. In an effort to discover how they compared with other "general" students, and if in fact the word "general" can be applied to any student, an experiment was set up in which a measure of comparison was afforded by a control group of twenty-eight students in Course 211 English (Instructor - Mr. David Grey). For this, both sets of students were asked to write a short essay entitled, "What is Ugly in the City."¹ Although similar aspects of the subject were considered by most students some were aware of them in a strongly visual sense, and it is this aspect which has been sifted out and graded on a scale of low to high, 1-10 marks in Table 3.

<u>Aspect considered</u>	<u>Emphasis placed on</u>
Slums/Poverty	Visual aspects Moral and social
Litter/Dirt	Visual aspects Health
Noise	Psychological effects

¹ Appendix

<u>Aspect considered (cont'd).</u>	<u>Emphasis placed on (cont'd).</u>
Smog/Pollution/Smell	Visual aspects Health
Uniformity	Visual aspects Psychological
Crime/Exploitation	Social causes
Pressures	Visual aspects Psychological
Buildings	Visual aspects Function
People	Visual aspect Social/Psychological

In Table 3 only the emphasis that was placed by the student on the visual aspects of the subject have been tabulated. The 231 students are shown in the table as "fine art" and "general" students on the basis of the information taken from the questionnaire although, as has been suggested, the information given may not have been very accurate.

The difficulty of defining and isolating this visual quality is recognised. In this experiment "visual" means those qualities of colour, form, texture, proportion and relationship that can be observed with the eye and does not carry the more extensive meaning now given to the word by Marshall McLuhan.

In the comparison between the 231 and 211 students, it was seen that despite the slightly lower score of the 231 "general" students when compared with the 231 "art" students, their average mark of 5.5 was significantly higher than the 3.5 of the 211 English students.

TABLE 3
 EMPHASIS ON VISUAL ELEMENTS IN ESSAY ENTITLED
 "WHAT IS UGLY IN THE CITY ?"

Course 231 Students			Course 211 Students	
Student No.	"Fine Arts"	"General"	Student No.	English
1	4		1	5
2	8		2	3
3		3	3	3
4	7		4	4
5		4	5	3
6		8	6	4
7	8		7	4
8	8		8	2
9	5		9	2
10	8		10	1
11	7		11	5
12	6		12	5
13		5	13	4
14		3	14	3
15		5	15	7
16	7		16	2
17	7		17	2
18		5	18	6
19		6	19	5
20		6	20	1
21	7		21	6
22	6		22	2
23		8	23	6
			24	3
			25	1
			26	2
			27	1
			28	6
	6.8	5.5		
Average Mark 1-10	6.2		Average Mark 1-10	3.5

There may be two reasons for this. Firstly that a "general" student, by the simple fact that he has elected to take a Fine Arts course may be showing his more than average interest in the visual world and, secondly, that a student is likely to answer a question in the context of the course in which it is asked and to respond to what he believes to be expected of him.

If a course of this kind were to be made mandatory for all students only the second reason would be significant, and it suggests that the actual description of such a course would be most important. If it were described as a "visual environmental studies course" rather than an "Introductory Art Course" or "Art Orientation Course" (as in 231), students would already be prepared to consider visual factors in the environment they might otherwise ignore.

OUTLINE OF THE COURSE

For the purpose of this experiment no distinction was made between "fine art" and "general" students in this class. It was assumed that in this class there would be some whose future would lie in the field of fine arts, and others who would be responsible for the functional and everyday forms and structures that make up much of the common environment. Whether as contributors, or onlookers, all would be subject to the environments, influences and pressures and, therefore, the primary aim of the course, i.e., to help the student to perceive

his environment more completely and more clearly, would have significance for all.

The problem of how this aim was to be achieved was seen to be linked to the understanding the student had of the nature of perception itself. Through creative studio work and art experiences, perception (used formerly, perhaps, only for utilitarian or minimal ends but now stretched and expanded in its uses), was discovered by him to be a creative process and that, in fact, "vision is our creative response to the world."¹

However, there is no evidence that an awareness of aesthetic values which has been acquired through a particular kind of visual experience, i.e., the study of art, is automatically transferred when a different area, i.e., the general visual environment, is considered. In this course, through lessons designed for the purpose, the student was led to consider his visual surroundings in their actuality and totality.

In this respect the approach might be contrasted with that used by Professor Jay Wolff in his visual education course for general students, referred to earlier. Here the purpose, as he describes it, is to reveal to the student the aesthetic elements in familiar materials of the daily environment. He sets out to accomplish this by means of controlled lighting of selected fragments of that environment, the use of the

¹ Kepes, The Education of Vision, p.i.

enlarging camera and microscope and other devices, through which it is intended the student will learn to see these familiar things with intensity and sensitivity.

The assumption that the student will see his environment in its reality and as a whole with the same degree of sensitivity, is open to doubt. Indeed, it is possible that the selective and isolating method of the Brooklyn course may make it difficult for him to relate his art experiences to the outside world, Professor Trottenberg's reference to the paradoxical situation existing in American universities, mentioned in Section 1, in which he sees a greatly increased enrolment in Fine Arts courses, (possibly also concerned with selected parts of the environment), coinciding with a loss of interest in the visual quality of the general environment, suggests that such transference is not automatic.

In the 231 experimental class under review, the student examined the entities and structures in the environment through exercises which required him to look with concentration at familiar everyday objects, e.g., restaurant and store signs, street furniture, etc., to make drawings as factual records of these objects and to note the inter-relationship between them and their surroundings. His environment having been brought so strongly to his attention in its reality, whilst concurrently studio experiences were widening and deepening his sense of visual values, it was anticipated that he would see it with a fresh and educated eye. It was also foreseen that such a revelation might not

always be an enjoyable experience.

In these and other assignments students were sometimes also made aware of the loss of or lack of amenities in the city, as when they were asked to sketch part of the downtown river, but found it to be largely inaccessible. In the discussions that arose the underlying factors of economics, expediency, self-interest, etc., were revealed as important formative influences in the environment.

Through lessons designed for the purpose, the student's attention was directed to the dynamic structures and systems which often determine or affect the look of the visual environment, such as those around which a railway terminal, a big store, or factory might be organised. In such cases an attempt was made to relate the operational or functional necessities on which the structure depended to their expression in visual terms.

Research of this kind led to discussion of questions of disparity and disorder, honesty and efficiency, and of the relationship of form to function in the visual environment.

Notions regarding colour, line and tone, texture and pattern were introduced, sometimes through works of art, in which their use was exemplified, and sometimes through examples taken from the everyday environment. These in their turn provided a source for creative studio activity.

Work was planned which was related to the phenomena of "Kinetic"

art, (which, it was seen, employed the elements of light and movement familiar in the environment), and "Op" art, (with its obvious environmental references).

Through slides and pictures comparisons were made between the modern environment and those of other times and places. The social and dynamic factors, the fashions, transport, furniture and buildings, which shaped the look of the medieval city, the middle-west frontier town, the industrial slum, were debated and it was seen how our modern environment is the product of similar elements. In this context questions arose regarding the function of the architect, the town planner and the designer of the machine made artifacts of our culture. It was shown how developments in these areas often depended on psychological and economic factors as much as aesthetic ones.

At all times it was emphasised that the aesthetic factor in the visual environment, as in art also, is not self-revealing but becomes evident only through continuous and intense use of the sensory intelligence.

In planning the actual lessons an effort was made to keep a balance between those lessons which were more directly concerned with the student's development as an artist, (bearing in mind that this course was also a prerequisite for further Fine Art Courses), and those related to observation and interpretation of the visual environment. No actual separation was possible or desirable as it was hoped that there

would be continual interaction and "feed-back" between these two aspects of the course.

However, in the following pages it is those lessons which have a more direct reference to the environment which are described with short notes on associated studio lessons to show how "art" themes and "environmental" themes were integrated.

IV

ENVIRONMENTAL EXERCISES AND OBSERVATIONS

INTRODUCTORY LESSON

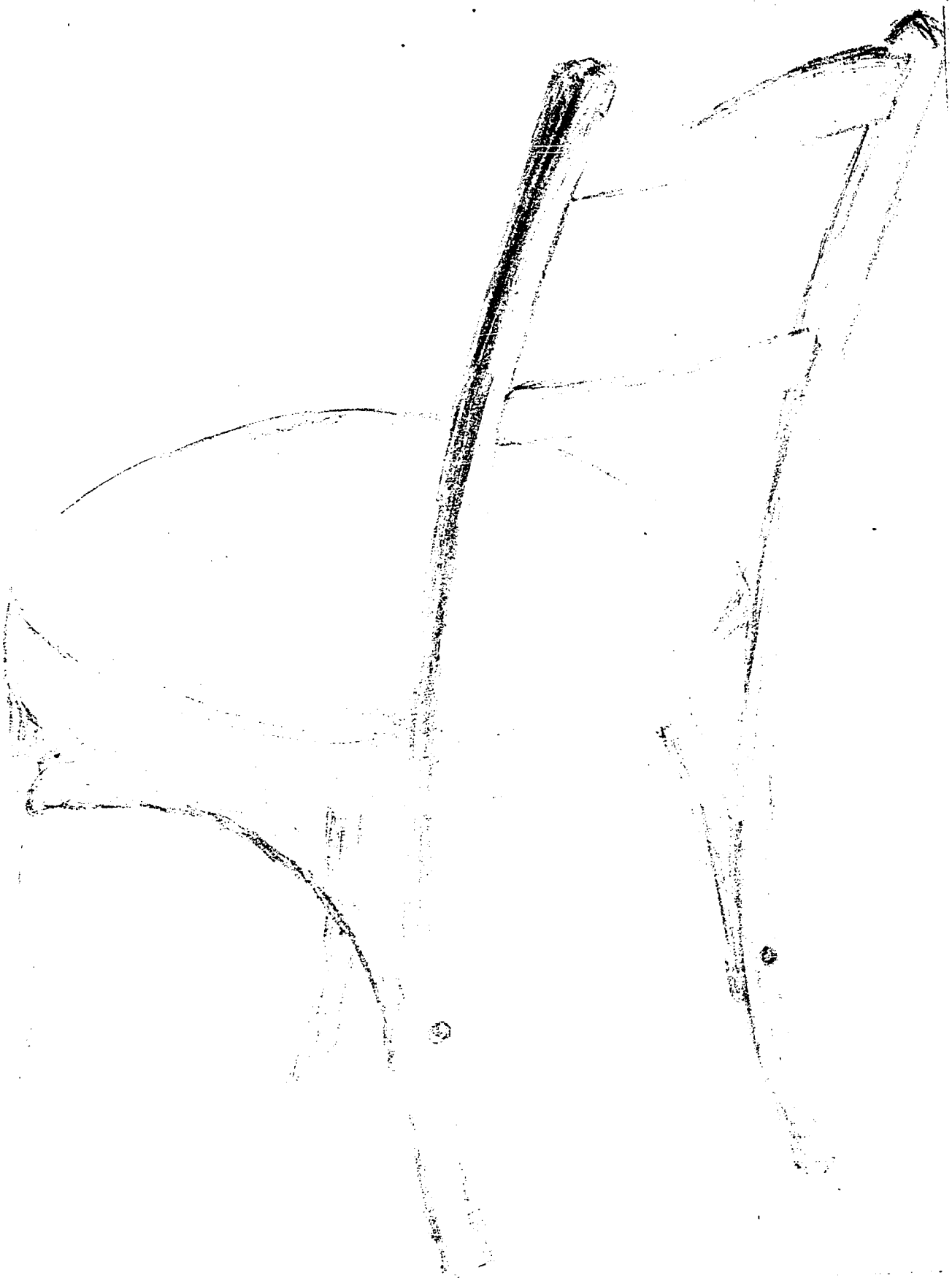
This was a probe to find degrees of understanding of the meaning of art and of art forms, e.g., form, colour, tension, texture, etc., in this group of students. Conducted as a talk and discussion based on three prints, i.e., "Arnolfini and his Wife", - Van Eyck, "London Bridge", - Kokoschka, "Crying Woman", - Picasso.

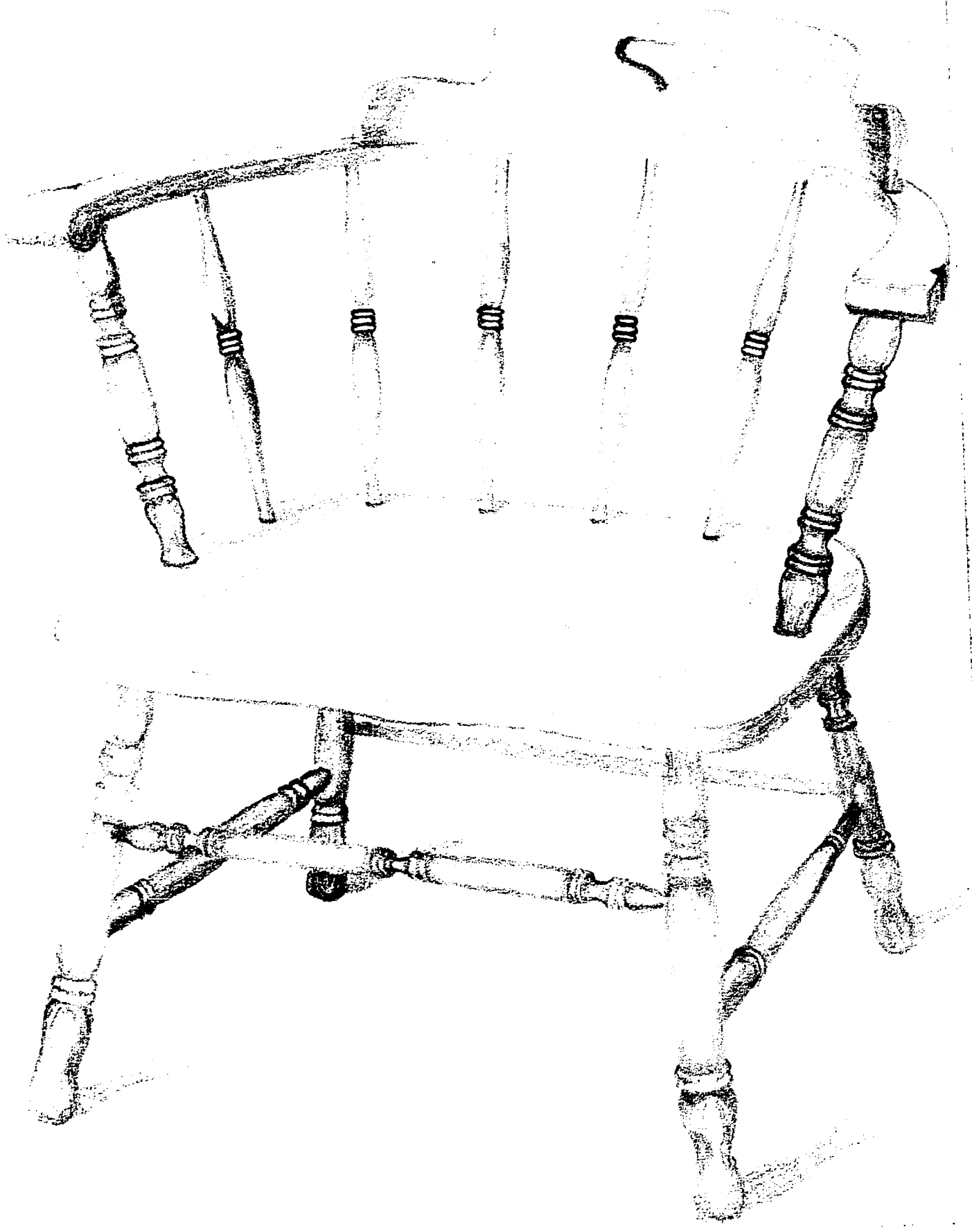
Considerable differences in the levels of appreciation of these paintings were shown, and the familiar anti-modern-painting prejudices voiced suggested that there were antagonisms to be overcome. Knowledge of art terms and art history varied greatly but was not related noticeably to the "art" and "general" student categories. (Table 2 and 3).

Students were asked to draw a chair at home. The results suggested that many students had more drawing experience than they had admitted in their short autobiographical notes.

They had also been asked to state their reasons for taking the course and these ranged from a desire to improve their cultural background to the expectation that they would receive ground training in artistic skills which would prepare them for more advanced studies.

Fig. 8.





Some sample autobiographies are included in the appendix.

LESSON: THE LINEAR FACTOR

The only art medium with which some of the students were acquainted was the pencil, and to build up confidence two introductory lessons were devoted to an exploration of the uses of line in art using the pencil and other drawing tools.

The exercises were intended to show that line could be used for other purposes than the purely descriptive one with which some had associated it. References for these lessons were Paul Klee, Saul Steinberg and Leonardo da Vinci.

The importance of lines in architecture, fashion and in the general environment was discussed, and it was demonstrated that lines could be used for expressive effects, to create harmony, rhythm, excitement or to disrupt, fracture or frustrate.

The underlying deeper influences of line in shaping the environment and determining behaviour was considered. References were made to Marshall McLuhan's assertion that it was the invention of moveable type that caused western man to think lineally and his belief that the advent of the electric media demands a more immediate and total kind of comprehension.

Environmental Exercise

Students were required to make a drawing of a familiar object in

their external environment in which they emphasised the directional linear elements. Suggested subjects, (a) Roof-tops with T.V. antennae, or (b) Power cables and pylons.

Observation

There were difficulties for many in this early stage of the course, in making the kind of selection and analysis that this exercise required and the drawings were disappointing. However, the beneficial side effects hoped for seemed to be working, students agreeing, despite pleas of economy and expediency, that there must be better ways of integrating such objects into the visual scene.

Line (Continuation) Environmental Exercise.

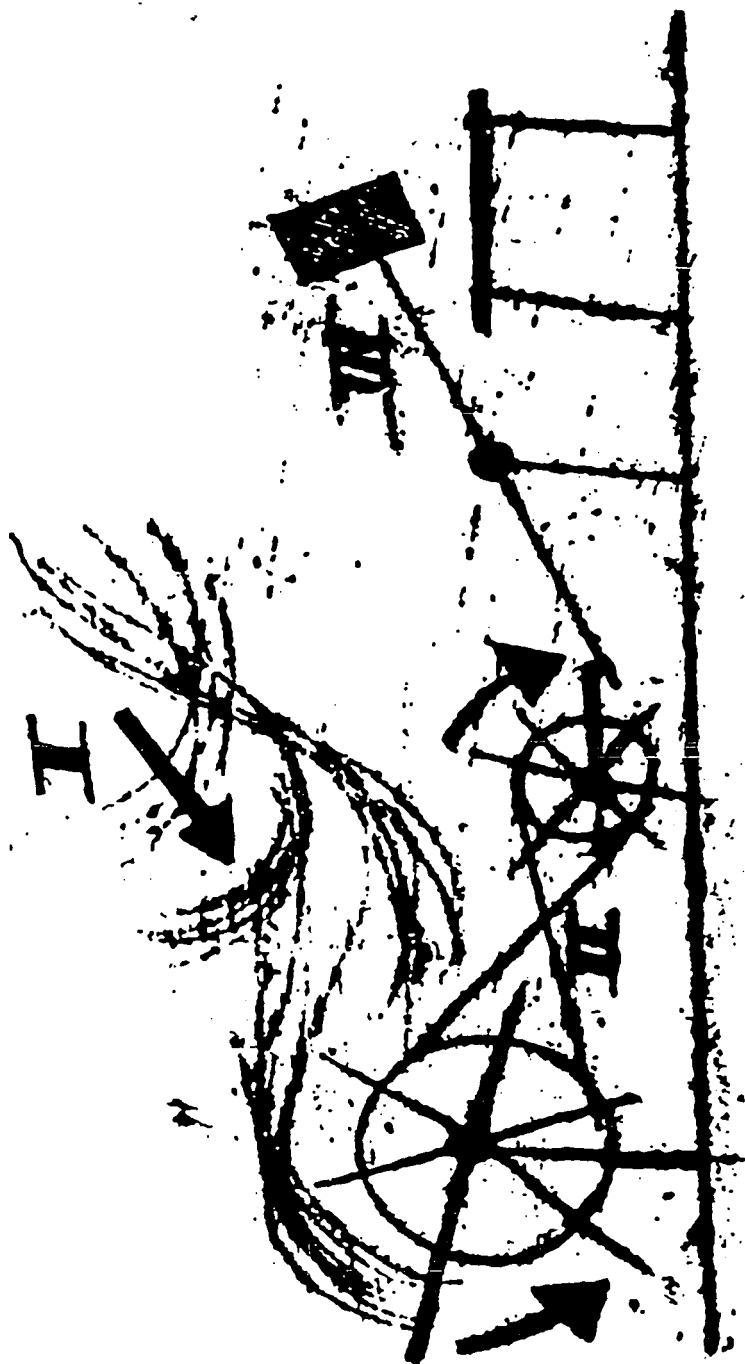
Students had been asked to make a drawing from observation of a telegraph pole with attached elevated transformer. They were also asked to note, but not to draw, its setting, i.e., its relationship to other objects in the neighbourhood.

Observation

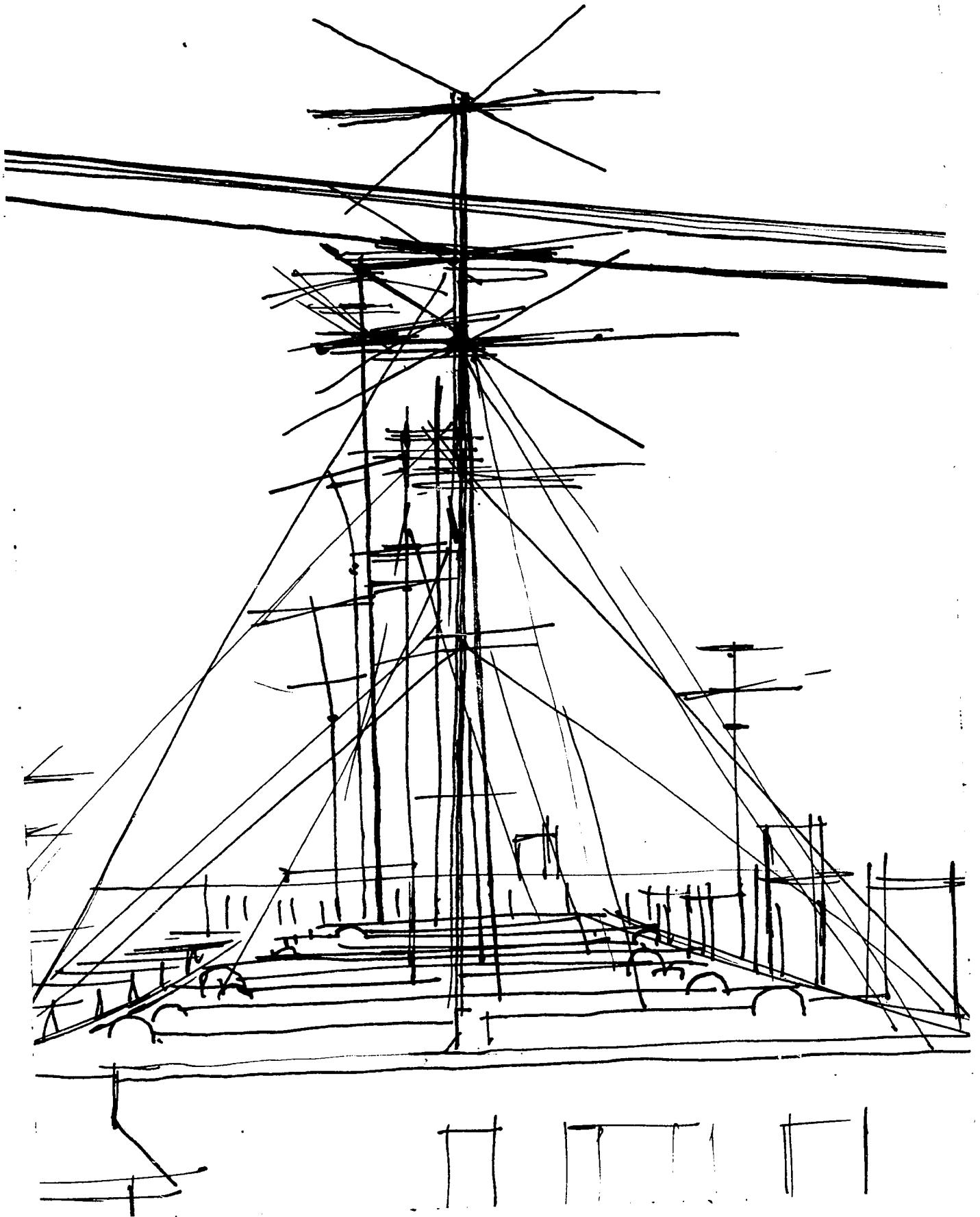
This drawing was far better done and understood, being within their experience of drawing as a factual record. Attention now being focussed on the object, it was generally agreed to be an "eye-sore" and an anachronism in this time and place.

An earlier discussion centring around McLuhan's insistence on our blindness to our own environment had provoked students to new assessments of their surroundings. One girl admitted, although she had

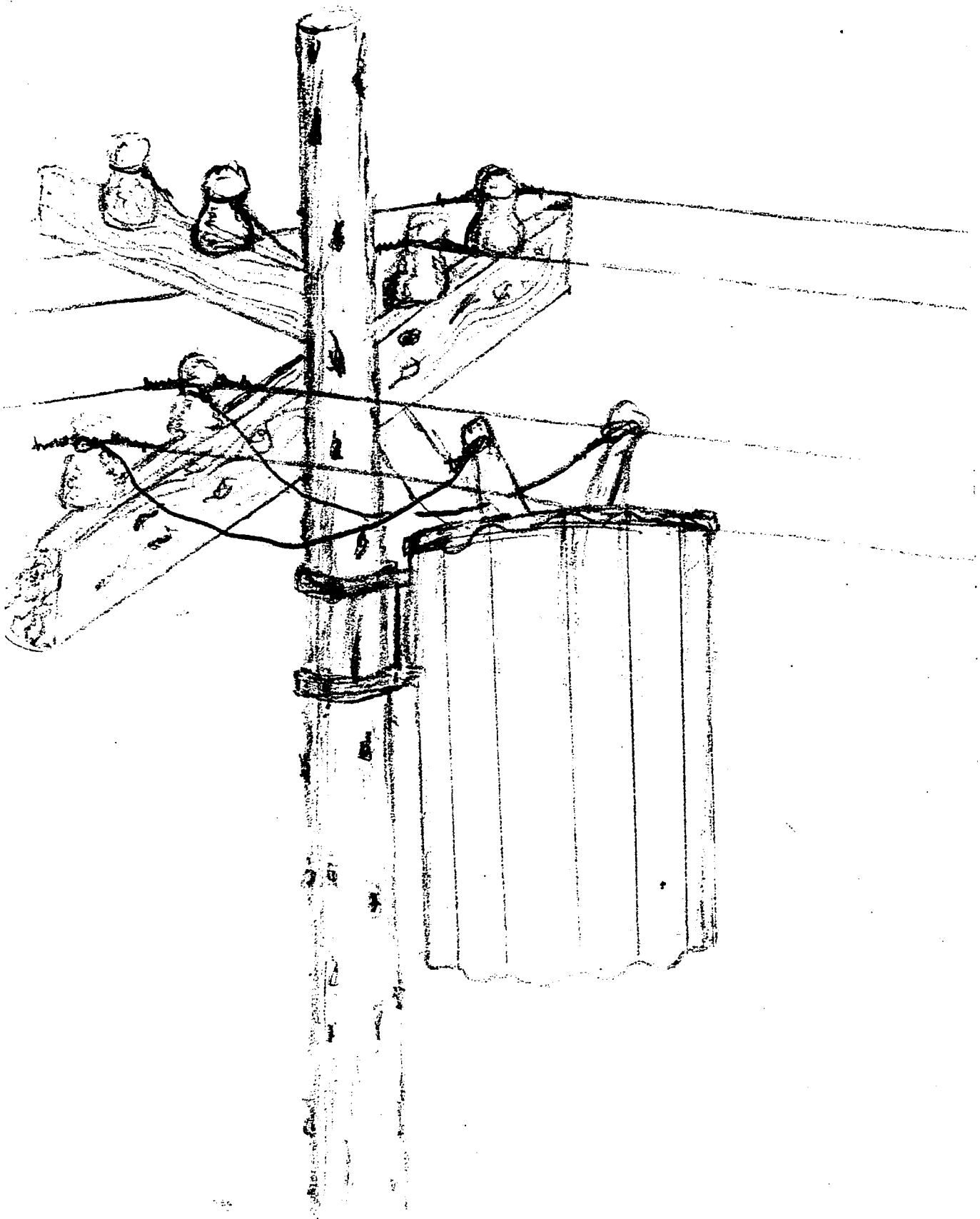
Paul Klee
Waterwheel and Hammer
 from *Pedagogical*
 Sketchbook by Paul Klee,
 published by Frederick
 A. Praeger, Inc.,
 New York, 1953
 (Photo: McCullagh)



JOHN DE VISSER







lived in Montreal all her life, that she had never before noticed the telegraph pole with the attached transformer which was in the immediate neighbourhood of her house. It was suggested that the disappearance of such makeshift devices was inevitable, not because of protests from an enlightened public, but because improved techniques would make them redundant.

LESSON: COLOUR IN THE ENVIRONMENT

It was found that the understanding of colour-terms and of the nature and uses of colour varied so greatly that it was necessary to make some simple definitions.

The idea of the colour circle, of warm and cold, of complementaries, of harmony, of simultaneous contrast, etc., were introduced through studio assignments, discussion and the simple analysis of paintings. It was pointed out that a knowledge of the objective laws of colour need not confine or restrict a student but should, in fact, assist him to a more personally expressive use of the medium.

A grid that had been derived from the telegraph pole drawing was used to divide up a rectangular surface. Students were asked to fill in these spaces with colour. It was stressed that in this exercise, as in all their work, they should be sensitive to the relationships and order they were creating.

This exercise gave an indication of the degree of sensitivity of the

student to colour relationships and of his skill in mixing and applying colours.

The use of colour for description and representation, (as with local colour and as in Impressionist painting), symbolically, (as in much religious and primitive painting), and expressionistically and psychologically, (" . . . to represent internalised and spiritualised experience")¹ was examined. In a home assignment students were required to collect specimens of a single colour, (in this case blue), on paper, tile, cloth, etc. A wall display of the samples demonstrated the great range of tints and shades that could be grouped around this single hue.

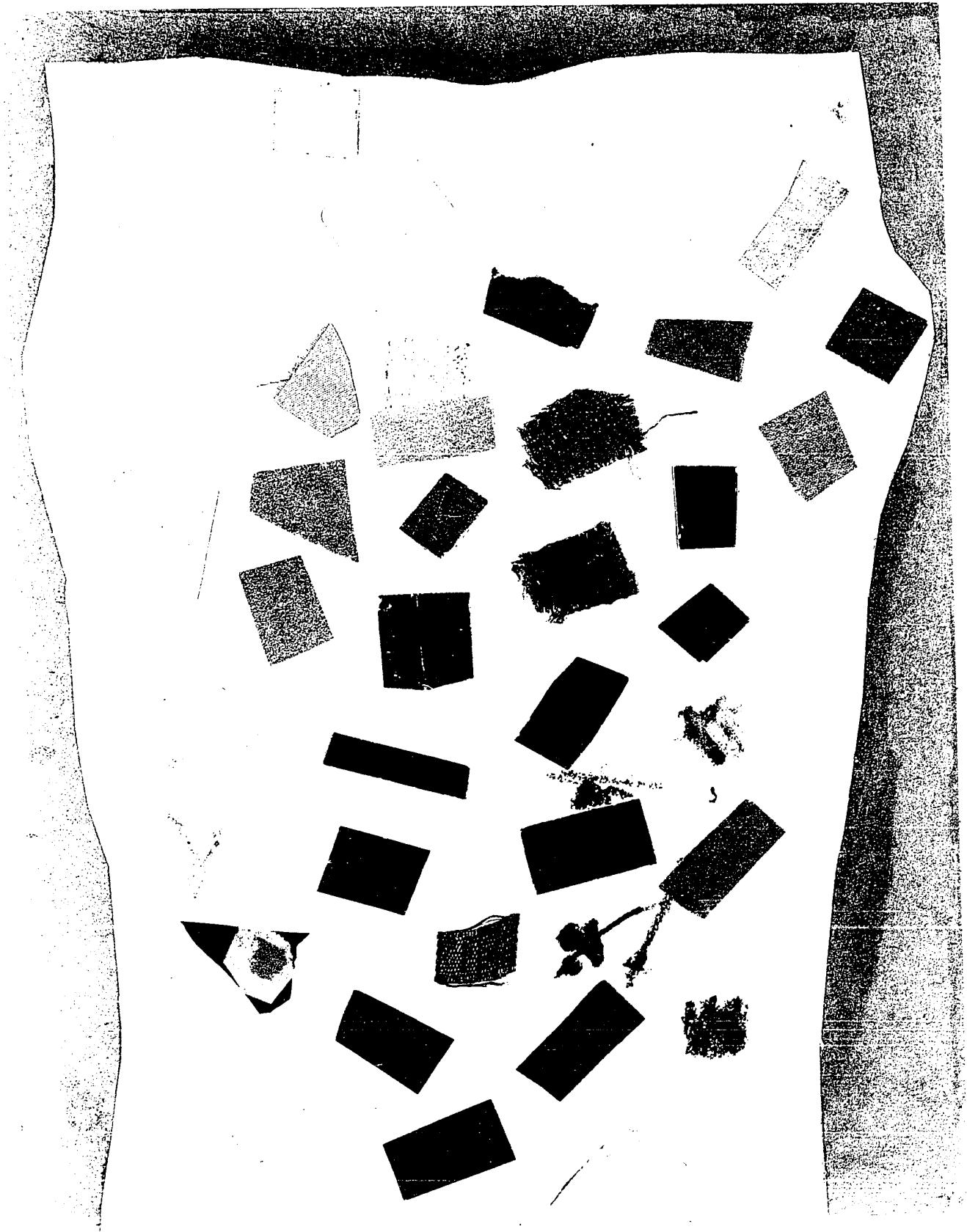
Environmental Exercise.

Students maintained that they were most conscious of the importance of colour in their environment, but Johannes Itten's statement "Colours are forces, radiant energies that affect us positively or negatively whether we are aware of it or not"² served to remind them that its effects may also be subliminal.

Traditional uses of colour in the environment were illustrated with slides and pictures of an Egyptian temple, Chartres Cathedral, the Tomb of Galla Placida, and other examples.

¹ Johannes Itten, The Art of Colour. (New York: Rienhold Publishing Corporation, 1961), p.16.

² Ibid., p.16.

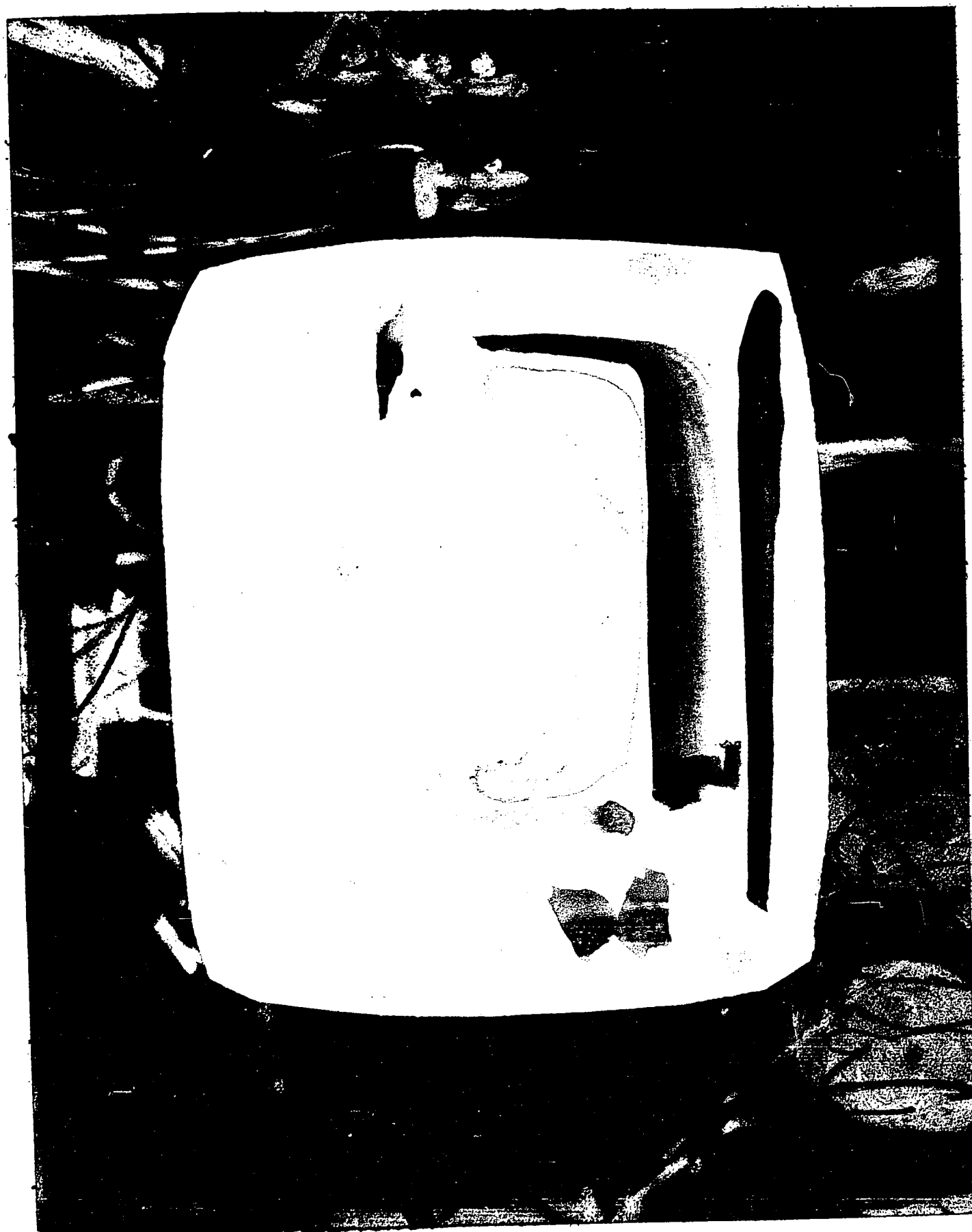


Modern materials and the use of colour in everyday life was considered, as in factories, supermarkets, offices and hospitals, to create suitable environments and to symbolise and identify functions, e.g., coloured pipes, machines, uniforms. Its use in prisons for punitive, depressive ends and its generally neutral and anonymous effect in institutions and public offices. The ephemeral intermittent effects of colour in the environment were also mentioned as manifested in transport, entertainment, advertising, display, dress, lighting, Nature (leaves, grass, snow, fog, etc.)

Environmental Exercise

Two assignments were set:

- (a) Students were asked to note predominant colours in work place or home - one room or whole house. Using these colours they were to make a free, abstract design which was to be set against a painted background symbolizing in abstract form the exterior environment, whatever it might be.
- (b) Students were asked to recall an occasion or scene in which colour was, to them, the most memorable factor. Examples suggested, "Ships in Dock," "Fall in the Mountains," "Ski Camp". In a grid of twenty-five two inch squares (5" x 5") to fill in the spaces with colours associated with the subject, in a balanced expressively organised arrange-



ment. (This was based on a similar exercise by J. Ittens used in his Bauhaus course).

Observation

Levels of achievement in these environmental colour exercises depended largely on previous art experience, as the few studio lessons had been insufficient to allow much research in this field. The main value was that it introduced the notion that colour, like other factors in the environment, becomes significant through relationships.

The answers given to question (a) reflected the general interest in interior decoration. It was understood of course that the interior is seldom seen simultaneously with the outside, but this symbolic arrangement asked for, compelled the students to look at the exterior world with some of the intensity and interest they gave to their interior private world.

In (b) an attempt was made to find how aware students were of colour in the environment outside the area of planned effects, e.g., the house interior or costume.

It was felt that in these exercises the aims of the course were being fully served; firstly, in getting the student to examine critically parts of his visual world he might customarily ignore and, secondly, in providing an opportunity for creative expression related to these environmental experiences.

LESSON: THE TACTUAL FACTOR

The previous lesson, although primarily concerned with colour, had made students conscious of the tactual quality of surfaces both in and out of doors and the wall display of coloured samples had shown how texture could modify or enhance colour. In discussing the exercise which had required observation of their own homes, students had indicated their interest in texture, as when they described the feel of materials as well as their colours, e.g., shiny black leather, embossed wallpaper, etc.

The next environmental assignment was preceded by talks and studio work related to the uses to which texture is put in art. These were illustrated with various prints.

In Holbein's "Ambassadors", it was seen how an illusion of texture was created by exact imitation of light and shade. In Rembrandt's "Man in the Golden Helmet", to show how the inspired use of real paint textures evoked the textures of actual materials. In Picasso's "Still Life with Cane Chair", (1911), which introduced collage as an art form, to show the ambivalence created by the use in one picture of real and simulated textures, and in Jackson Pollock's "Gothic", (1944), to show how superimposed paint textures can suggest movement and immediacy.

LESSON: SURFACES IN THE ENVIRONMENT

Studio assignments had included the handling of paint in a textural

LESSON: THE TACTUAL FACTOR

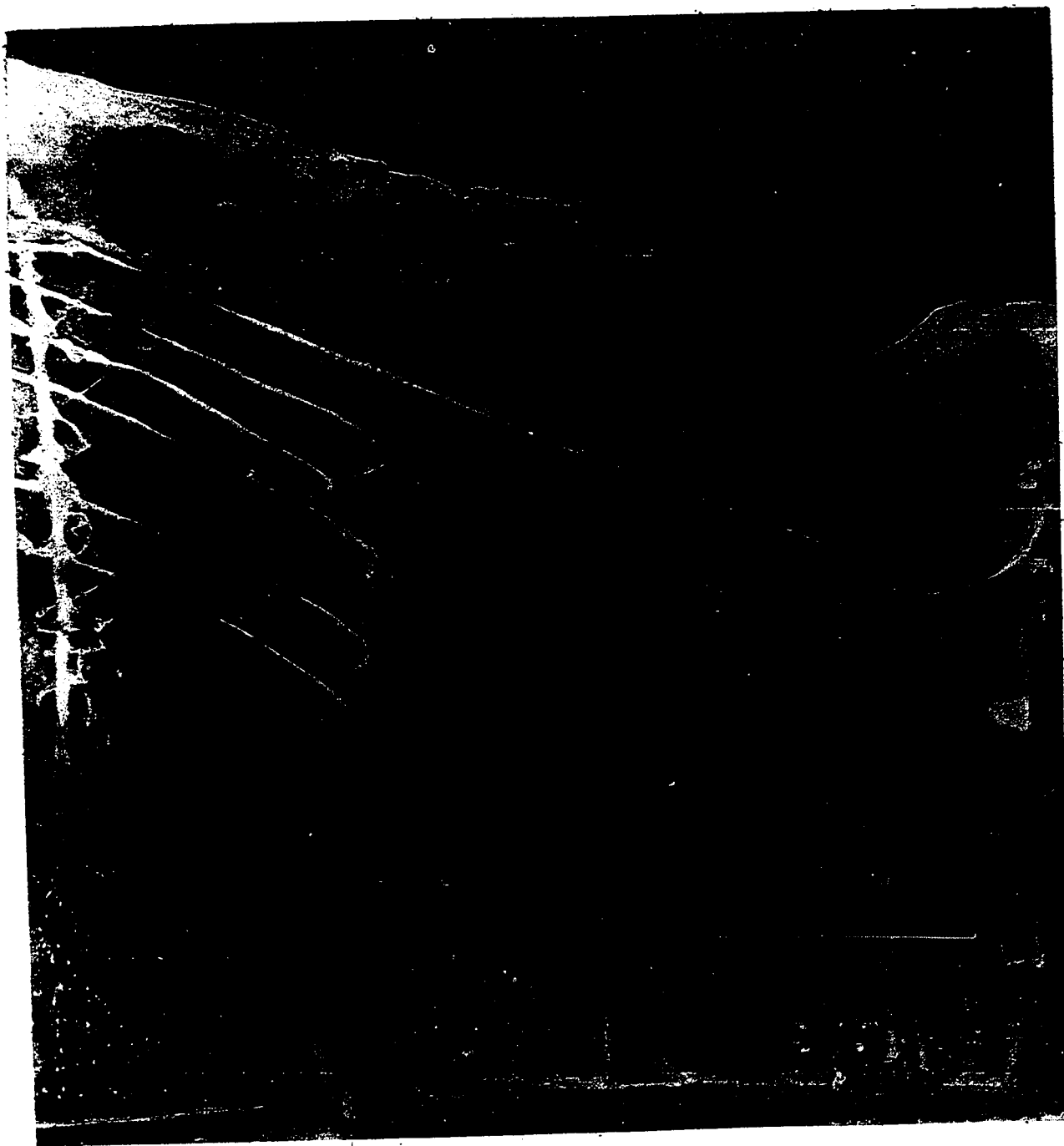
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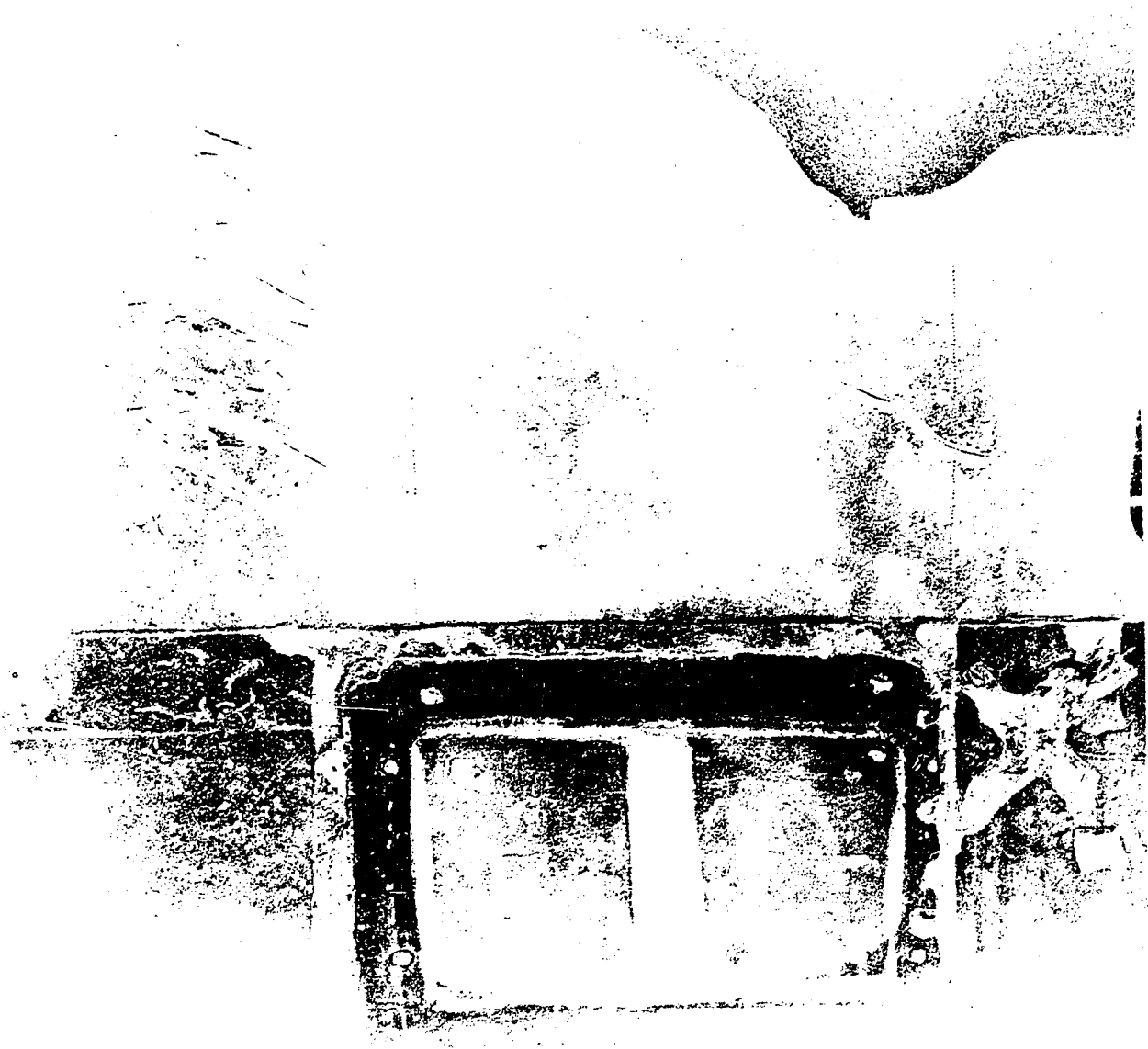
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LESSON: SURFACES IN THE ENVIRONMENT

Studio assignments had included the handling of paint in a textural



APIES: Gray Relief on Black. 1959.



manner, textural rubbings and the creation of textural effects with lines and dots.

Environmental Exercise

Discussion centred on the use or misuse of texture in the environment. Its employment by architects, dress and display designers, landscape gardeners, etc. The problem of the growing substitution of imitative, printed, or moulded textures for the real thing, e.g., bricks, wood, cloth, and the effect on the viewer who attempts to relate the visual to the tactile.

The inappropriateness of textures to settings, e.g., free-stone facing on reinforced concrete structures. The realization that the traditional uses of texture in which the use of local materials gave harmony to the building and the landscape, e.g., Cotswold Cottage, Habitant farmhouse, were no longer economically possible.

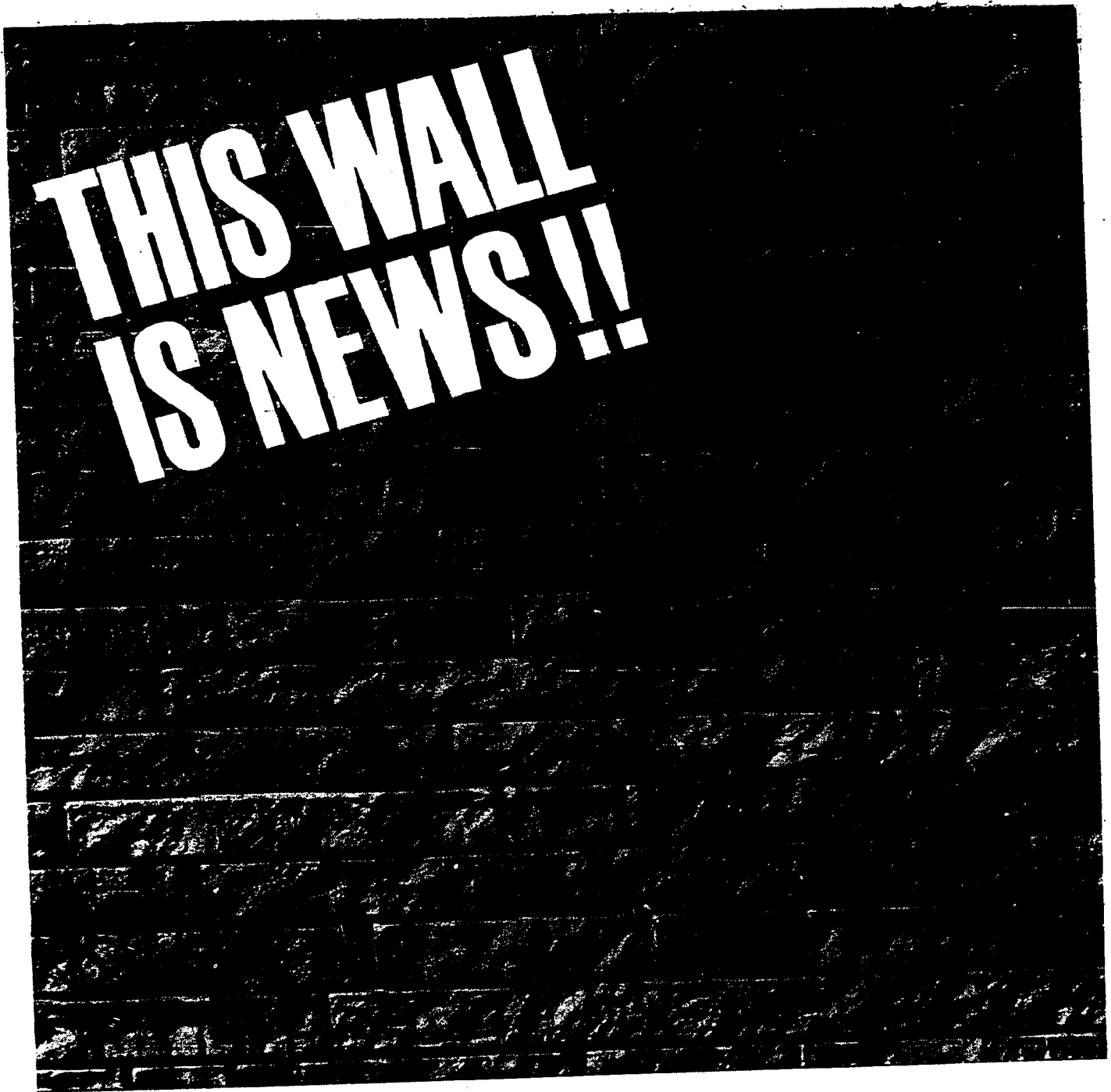
The cheap nation-wide production of standard and synthetic materials creates a new situation. What criteria to apply today ?

Two assignments were set related to the lesson.

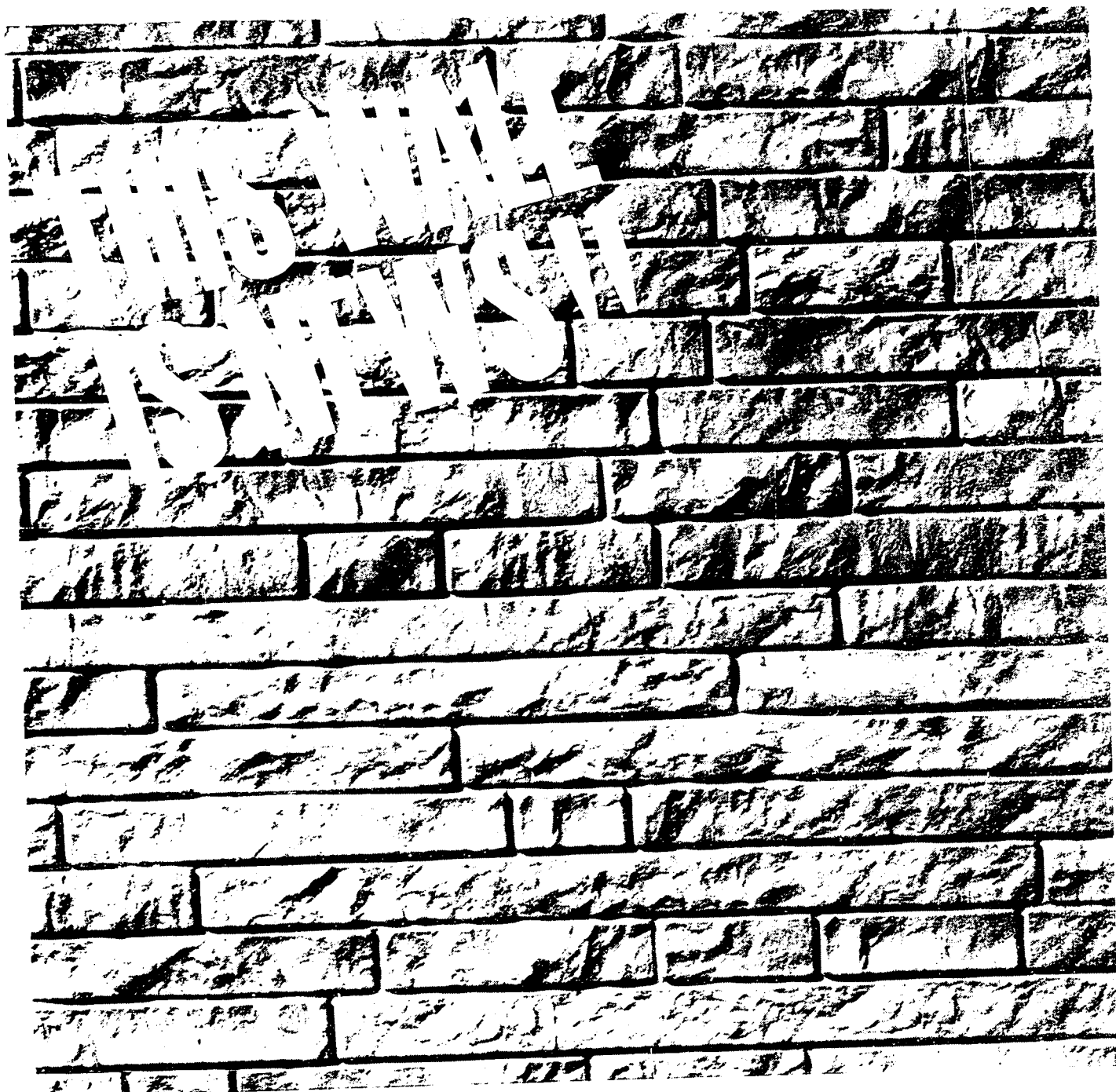
- (a) To find photos of appropriate and inappropriate uses of textures in buildings.
- (b) To collect and mount samples of different textured surfaces, real or imitation.

Observation

Although recognising the visual differences between real and false

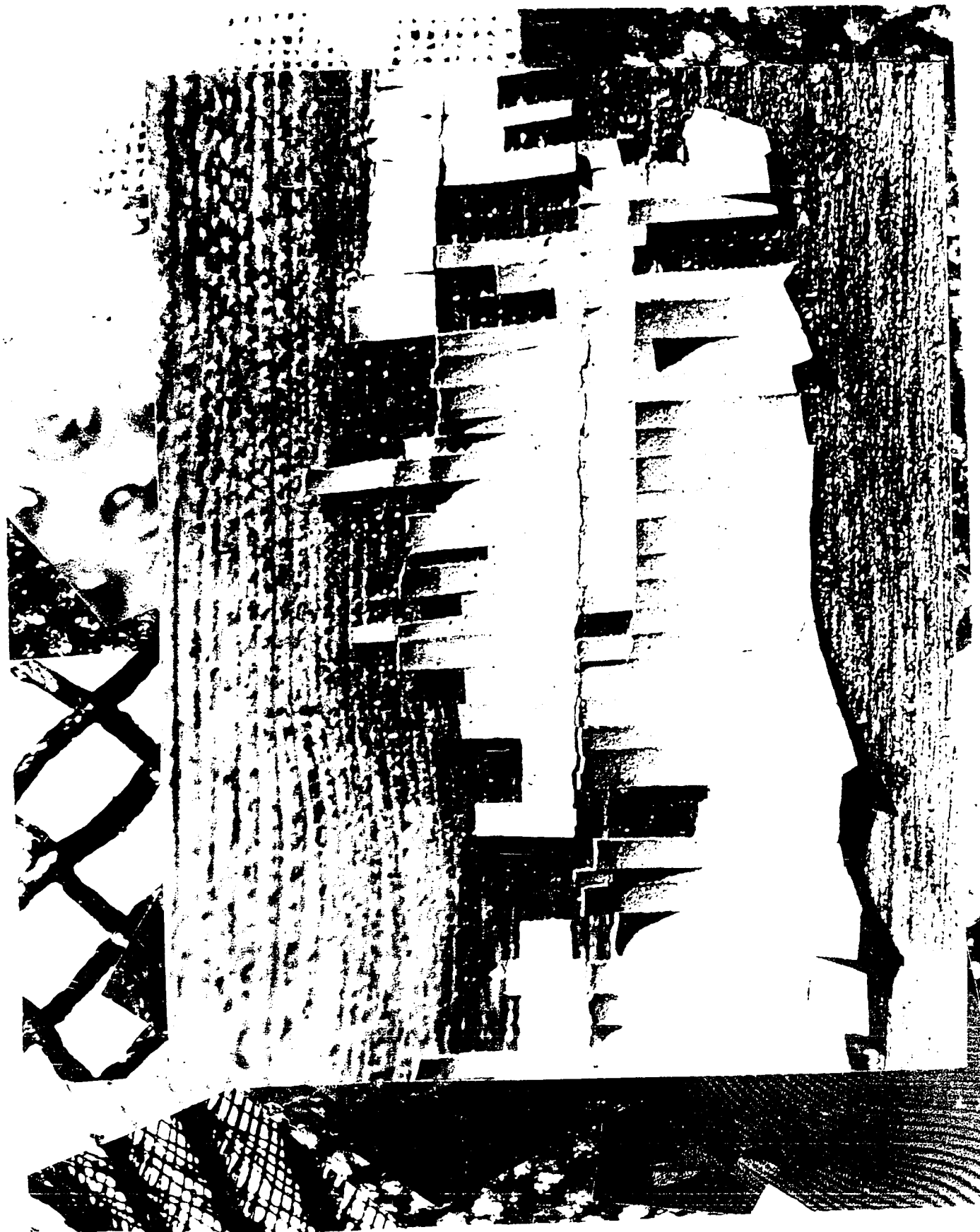


New, eyecatching PLEXYL rigid wall panels are realistically decorated in Stone, Brick and Wood effects. They capture—in crisp, high relief—all the subtle beauty of modern stone and brick. Washable, scrubable, hardwearing, with lightfast colourings, they give extra insulation from heat loss and help reduce noise penetration. Formulated for interior surfaces, the panels are easy to hang with their own special contact type adhesive. All PLEXYL panels are approx. 45½" x 23½" in size. Available exclusively through John Line. Write now to John Line or any one of their branches for full information about their latest exclusive collection.









textures, many students were willing to accept the fake for its practical advantages, e. g., the plastic simulating wood grain was tougher and more heat-resistant than the real walnut, the tarpaper imitation brick gave inexpensive protection to wood or other more vulnerable surfaces. It was suggested, however, that acceptance of the "ersatz" product would result eventually in a blunting of the powers of perception and a loss of confidence, as the message of the eye is betrayed by touch.

In exercise (a) most examples submitted were of suburban housing, taken from ads. Students recognised that texture had often been used to disguise or "dress-up" inadequacies of form or distract attention from poverty of design. Photos of Ronchamp and Scarborough College were used to show use of concrete textures in large modern buildings.

In exercise (b) students found a good range of samples. To emphasise the difference between colour contrast and textural contrast, it had been suggested that textures of only one colour should be used.

LESSON: THE URBAN SCENE (COLLAGE AND ASSEMBLAGE)

A brief mention had been made of collage in the previous lesson on texture, but it was felt that this kind of art with its strong environmental references had important significance for this class and deserved further study.

It was explained how in the early collages of Picasso and Braque the introduction of everyday objects into painting had enormously

broadened the range of material used by the artist and helped breach the wall between art and reality. Such works had influenced the development of Dada art in the 1920's and the collages and assemblages of our own time. It was seen how the irrational juxtaposition of objects in such works reflects the fragmented nature of the environment and how it may also allow us to see the over familiar and unassuming objects of everyday life, e.g., kitchen and household objects, musical instruments, with freshness and affection.

Environmental Exercise

Students were shown works by Rauschenberg and Schwitters and asked to produce a collage or assemblage. Suggested title "The City".

Observation

Many students were very hesitant about introducing irrational elements into their work. Reluctance to allow any but the most obvious associations between the different constituents used left no room for surprise or shock. The given title, or even the notion that they should start with a particular subject, was an inhibiting factor, the selected elements being those already associated by the student with his chosen theme.

It was pointed out how small was the impact of designs made of such predictably associative components, compared with the dynamic interaction which could sometimes be found in the confusion and chaos of the external environment and which was reflected so powerfully in

Celebration

merci



the works they had been shown, i. e., Rauschenberg's "Canyon" (1959), and Schwitters' "Painting with Star", (1920).

It is likely that a better solution to this problem would have been found with this inexperienced group if a random collection of articles could have been available, which would have provided a starting point for the work based on a direct response to visual stimuli.

LESSON: STRUCTURES IN THE ENVIRONMENT

"Structures should be understood to mean a network of relationships of elements or elementary processes. Structures appear wherever elements combine into a meaningful whole, whose arrangement follows definite laws."¹

The statement above, by the Austrian scientist Wolfgang Weisser, was related in its context to the study of cybernetics, but appeared equally valid in connection with the examination of structures in art and in the environment.

In previous lessons the need for a fuller understanding of the meaning of structure had become apparent and studio work was now undertaken that required a deliberate consideration of this factor.

The artist Max Bill defines the laws of structure as "the series, the rhythm, the progression, the polarity, and the inner logic of sequence

¹ Margit Staber, "Concrete Painting as Structural Painting," Structure in Art and Science, ed. Kepes, p.185, quoting Wolfgang Weisser, Organismen, Strukturen, Maschinen. Fischer-Buecherei, No.230, (1959).

and arrangement."¹

Under these headings some exercises were done in which an attempt was made to illustrate these concepts graphically.

In the discussion of structure, particularly with regard to architecture, there was some confusion in students' minds between "structure" and "construction". Eduard K. Sekler makes the distinction between the two. "Construction", he says, "carries connotations of something put together consciously, whilst structure refers to an ordered arrangement of constituent parts in a much wider sense."²

Some slides and pictures were shown of Gothic, Renaissance and modern buildings to illustrate these points. As a related exercise, students were required to make an outline, front-view drawing of a section of a street they knew well.

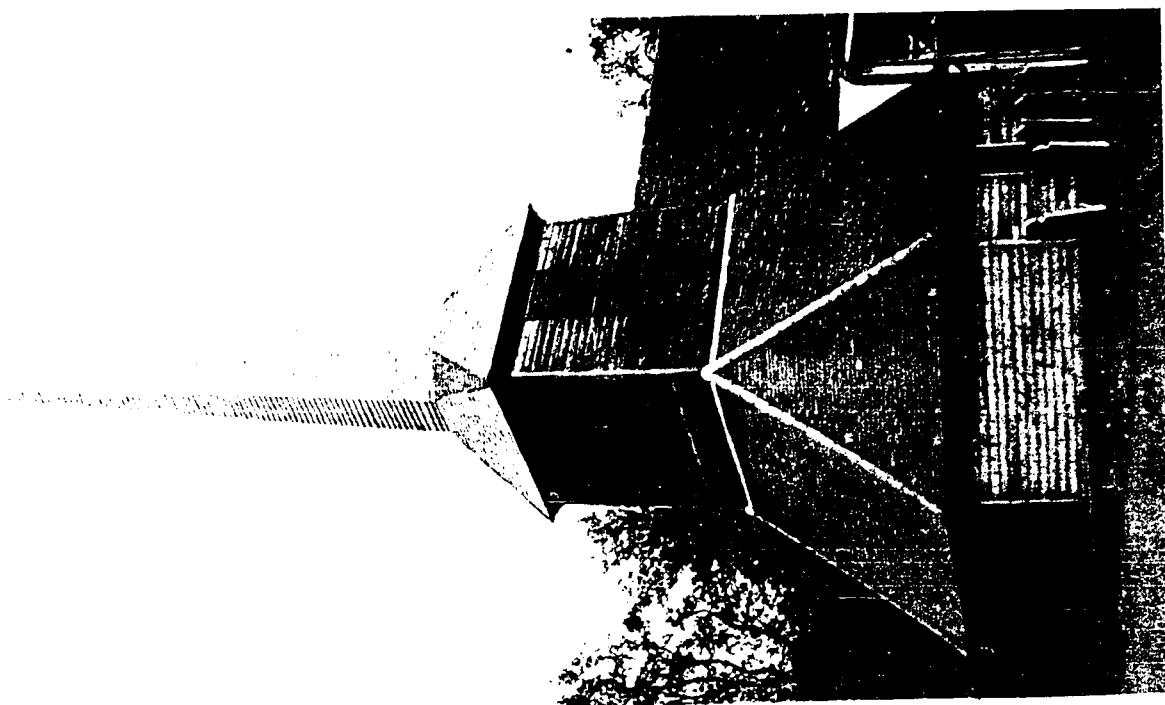
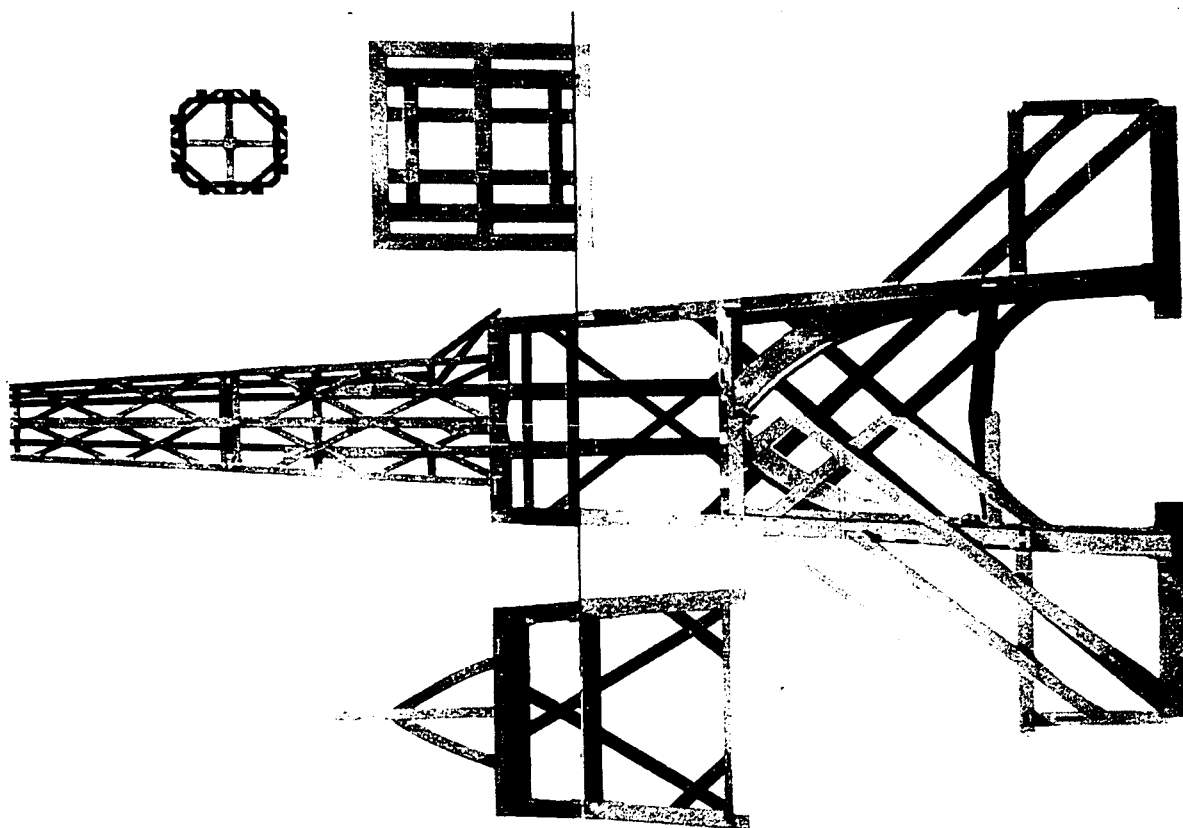
Structure (continuing). Environmental Exercise.

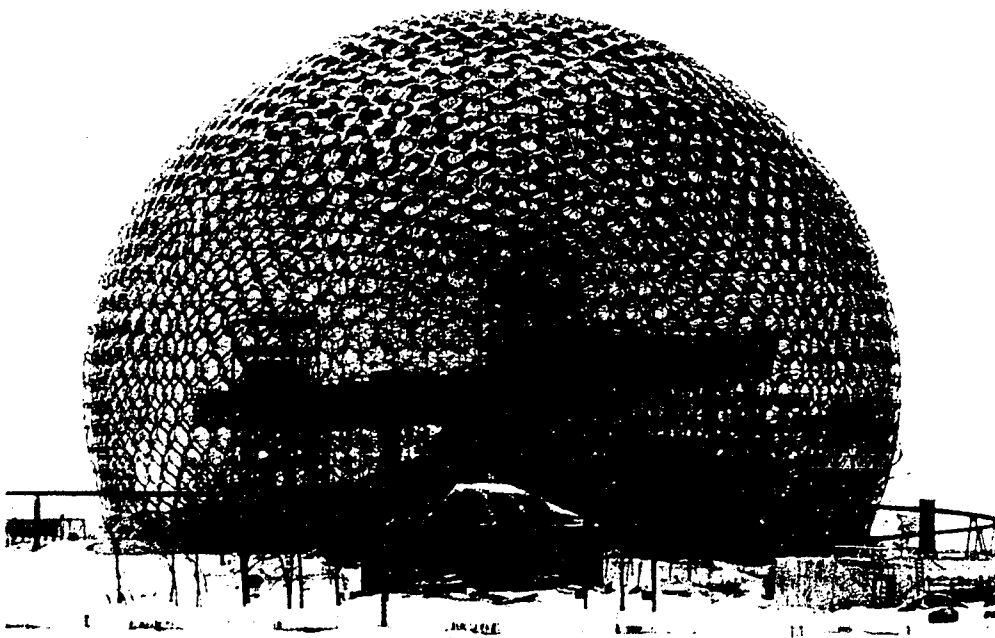
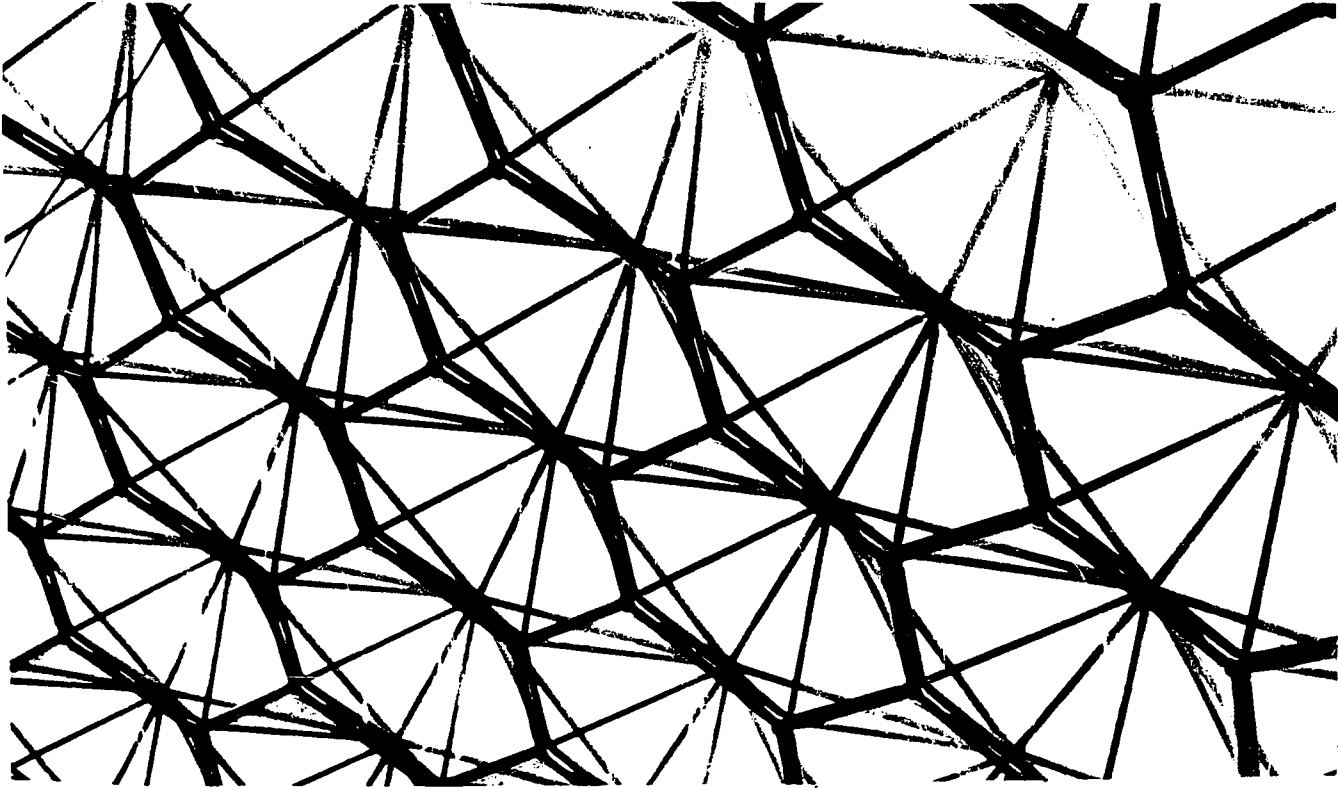
In the previous lesson it had been noted that although students often had a strong interest in, and detailed knowledge of, a particular building, e.g., the Bonsecours Market, Chateau Champlain, few had consciously considered the relationship of that building to others in the area, or of the other factors that gave the general "feel" of a neighbourhood. This exercise was more concerned, therefore, with the structure of the

¹ Staber, p.184, Quoting Max Bill from Exhibition Catalogue Milan, (1959).

² Eduard K. Sekler, "Structure, Construction, Tectonics", Structure in Art and Science, ed. Kepes, p. 89.

Fig. 22.





environment as a whole.

The British architects, Allison and Peter Smithson, describe the architects responsibility in this matter. "Buildings", they write, "should be thought of from the beginning as fragments, as containing within themselves the capacity to act with other buildings. They should be links in systems."¹

Later they concede that the responsibility is not the architect's alone. "The city as a big house lived in by us all, the sum of individual acts freely undertaken is a fine dream, but one not even fragmentarily possible unless the citizen realises that it is the way he adds the garage to his house and the way in which he shapes and disciplines himself, his children, his household objects, that shapes the neighbourhood, and unless the architect relearns his discipline so that it can respond to that sort of realisation."²

The class opinion was that unless such a citizen had himself a lively and creative attitude and was receptive to the changing needs of the evolving environment, the discipline suggested could have a stultifying and cramping effect, eliminating the unforeseeable active elements that give excitement and human interest to the visual world.

Students were prepared to accept architecture as an art form,

¹ Allison and Peter Smithson, "Building toward the Community Structure". Structure in Art and Science, ed. Kepes, p.112.

² Ibid. 112.

but there was some surprise that engineering constructions should be considered in this context. A work by the artist Lippold, "Variation within a sphere, No.10", (1953), in which the structural principle and the construction were united in a powerful tectonic statement could be seen, however, by the students as related to engineering problems. Photos of Brooklyn Bridge, the Eiffel Tower, a Buckminster Fuller geodesic dome, showed that there is no sharp division between art and structure, but that a structural principle expressed in appropriate materials and techniques may become art.

Environmental Exercise

Students were asked to make a structure or sculpture from materials of their choice, which in utilising the special qualities of those materials, e.g., the resilience, the rigidity, the pliability, would express some structural principle.

Observation

The works submitted ranged from (a) which was regarded as being successful, to the most elementary kind of model making. The exercise, which was still only concerned with a single structure, did not by itself show the dynamic inter-relationship of structures in the environment, and other means would be required to show how such entities create the larger structures of the communal environment.

A sense of structure is beginning to appear as a most essential need in this course and more exercises are needed to help introduce

Fig. 24.

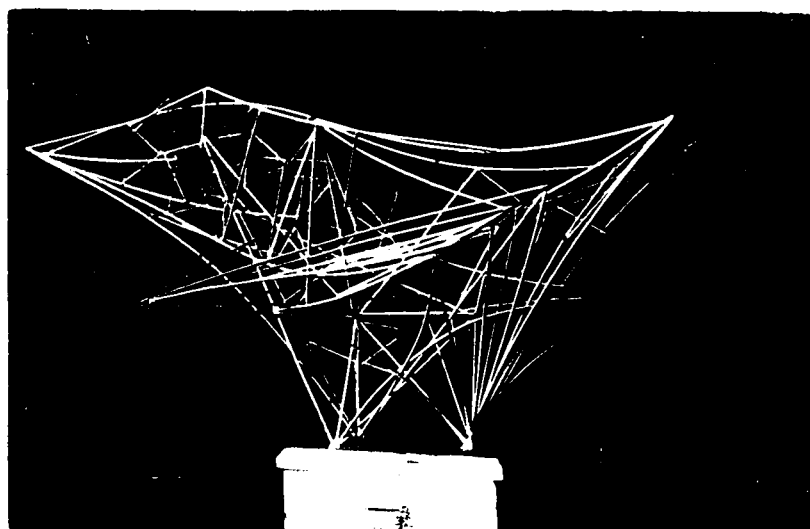
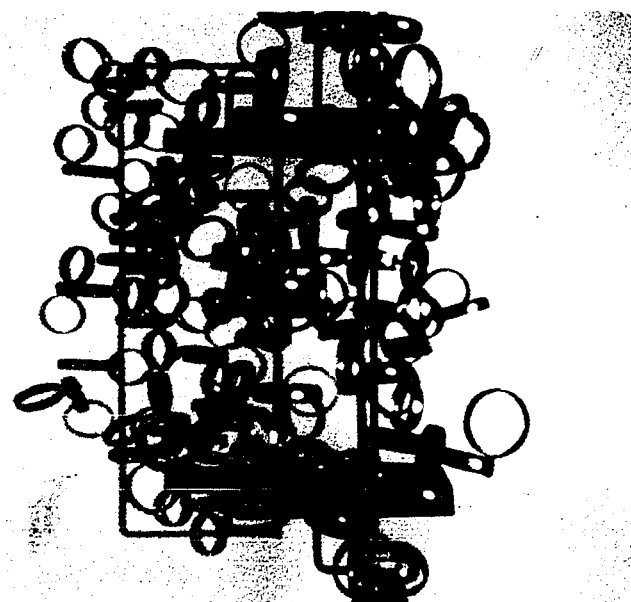


Fig. 25.



ideas concerning structure, both in art and in the environment. To show, for example, how the rapid spread of standard materials and technical know-how in the modern world need not necessarily lead to standardisation or inflexibility as the association of the elements rather than the character of the element itself, becomes the means of expression.

LESSON: WORDS IN THE LANDSCAPE

In their examination and analysis of structures students had noted and commented on the role played by words in the urban scene, and it was considered an opportune moment, therefore, to explore this subject further.

In discussing the use of words in the environment and in art, it was pointed out "that a word carries with it . . . an image or idea surrounded by a vague aura of associations,"¹ and that this associative factor cannot be divorced from the formal one unless the language used was unfamiliar.

Because generally the students' understanding of letter forms and design was so slight and superficial, time was taken to consider these vital aspects of the subject. Proportion, legibility, shape and layout were discussed. A brief survey was also made of its historical evolution

¹ Seitz, The Art of Assemblage, p.13, quoting Giedion - Welcker, Contemporary Sculpture, New York, Wittenborn, 1961.

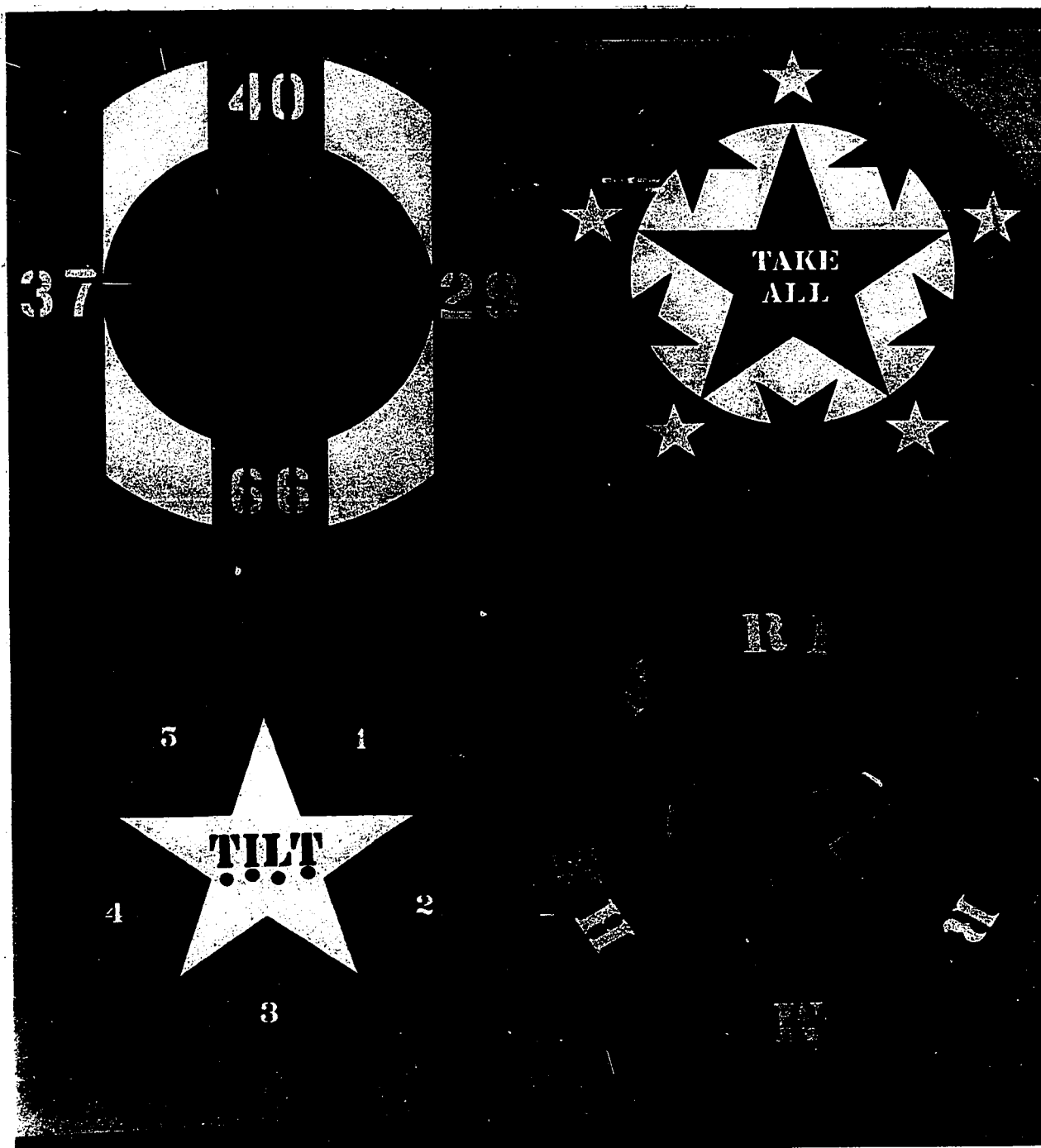
and the letter forms of other cultures. Techniques for script and drawn lettering were described, and an assignment given to provide students with direct experience of the problems involved in planning and making a piece of lettering for a particular purpose and to a specification.

Provided with this fuller understanding of the medium, the purposes that some painters have in including words and letters in their works was discussed. In his book "Assemblages", William Seitz writes, "It is perfectly legitimate to use numbers and printed letters as pictorial elements; new in art, they are already soaked in humanity."¹ Reference was made to the collage and texture exercises and students again shown works by Pablo Picasso and Georges Braque into which artists had incorporated words or parts of words, or letters or figures. Contemporary works by Indiana and Mark Tobey showed how, in the hands of such artists, the familiar letter or figure may become a powerful cabalistic sign.

Students were asked to consider the many ways in which words formed part of the visual environment. Newspapers, magazines, ads, packages, books, signs, were seen as major contributors. The contrast between cultures which use phonetic and non-phonetic alphabets was discussed. McLuhan's assertion that it is the non-phonetic, ideographic nature of the Chinese script which has "enabled them to

¹ Seitz, p.85.





INDIANA: The American Dream. 1961. Larry Aldrich Foundation Fund

retain a rich store of inclusive perception in depth of experience, which has been eroded in the civilised culture of the phonetic alphabet,¹ was seen to be related to the kind of utilitarian, minimal seeing that people often have regarding their environment.

Environmental exercise

- a) From type and letters taken from newspapers, magazines, posters, etc., students were asked to paste together an arrangement which expressed for them "The Dance", "Modern Times", or a similar theme.
- b) To make a drawing of an electric street sign from outside a store, tavern or elsewhere, which included lettering as well as other pictorial or design elements.

Observation

Students maintained that, far from there being a diminution in the influence of printed or written words in our culture, (which is happening, McLuhan suggests, because of the impact of electronic means of communication), there is, in fact, more visual verbal information available than ever before, more books, verbal signs and messages. It was pointed out that this is possibly because there is now more literacy, money, and people, but that there are, nevertheless, significant indications, e.g., T.V. to show that non-verbal ways of thinking and communicating are increasing greatly.

¹ McLuhan, p. 86.

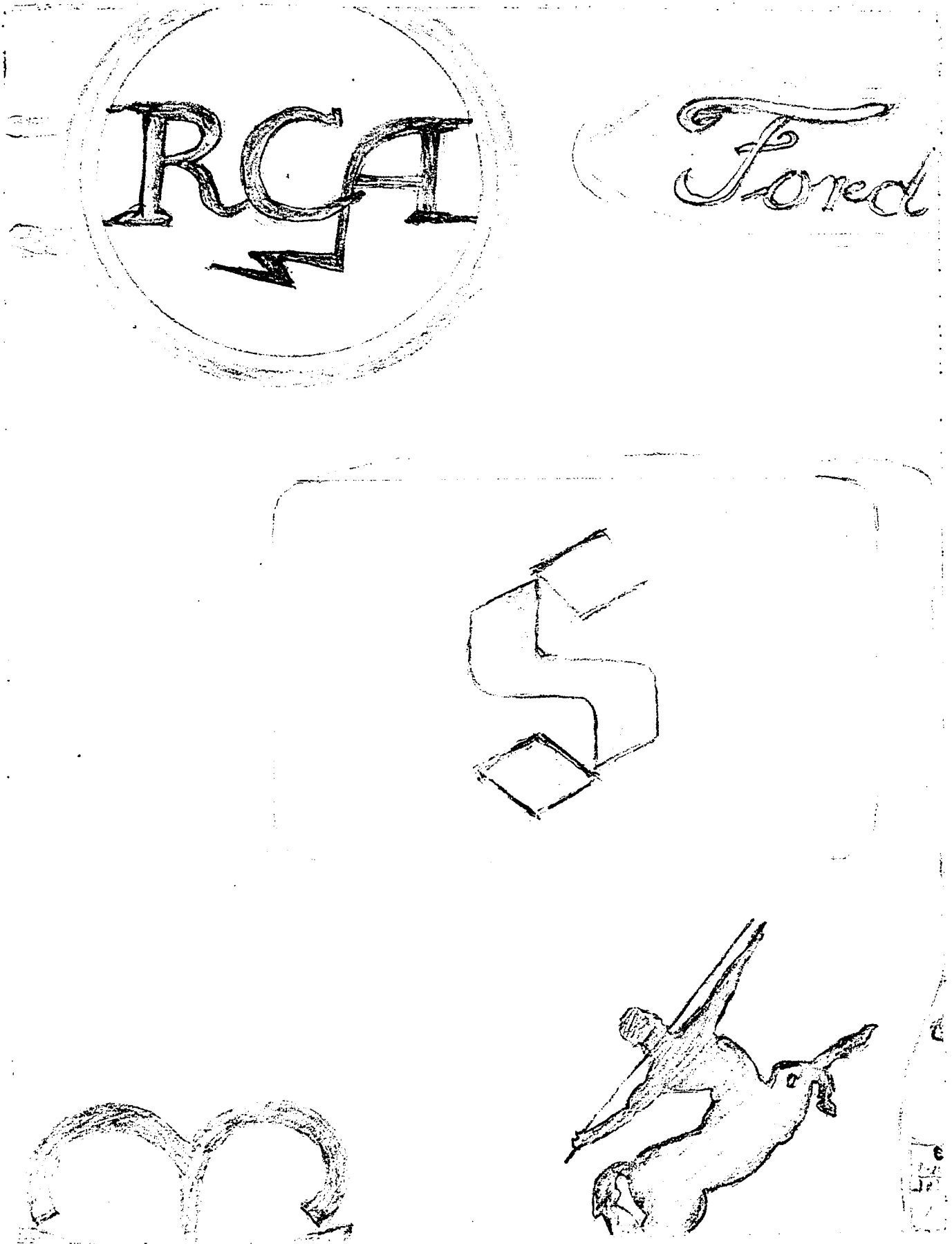
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BSESSION

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Hoot Mon WHA' A LUCKY DAY (1) Two Seals the



In collecting lettering samples for exercise (a), students, although often choosing exotic, dramatic forms, were critical of the many letter forms in use which they found ugly and inefficient.

Similarly, in sketching the store sign (b), they noticed the vulgarity and banality of many of the electric signs they saw, the bad placing that made them ineffective and the clumsiness of the structures that supported them and which were aggressively visible during daylight hours. However, most insisted that such signs had a stimulating and transforming effect at night and that the city would be duller without them.

LESSON: REPEAT IMAGES IN THE ENVIRONMENT AND ART

There was a close connection between the lesson on words and lettering and this one which was concerned with printing processes as both dealt with the use of the repeated image.

The introduction to the subject was made through the simpler autographic methods, e.g., relief printing in the form of line and potato cuts and made-up surfaces, and stencil prints. The more complicated techniques such as lithography and etching were described and students recommended to visit the museums and art galleries in Montreal to see original prints and familiarise themselves with the look of the different printed surfaces. Students made several printed designs and a monotype.

Environmental Exercise

The development of mechanised versions of traditional printing techniques and the invention of new photographic methods of printing has increased immeasurably the number and variety of images to which man is exposed or subjected today. References were made to Malraux's "Museum without Walls", and the vast new art conscious audience for the photographic copy of the work of art. It was pointed out that through distortions of scale in reproduction, a view of the original work was sometimes given which was far from the intention of the artist.

A discussion on the more commercial and popular uses of mechanical printing methods followed such as are used in magazines, comics, posters and in packaging. Students were shown work by Roy Lichenstein and Andy Warhol in which such material had been a source or reference.

The use of printing processes for the decoration of the surfaces of paper, cloth, plastics, lino, etc., and the transforming effect that these have on the environment was related to earlier lessons on textures.

Environment Exercise

Students to make a 'paste-up' design from different printed materials.

Observation

The making of prints was a fresh experience for most students or associated only with brief lessons in elementary schools. There had

VICKI! I-I THOUGHT
I HEARD YOUR VOICE!

UNDERSTAND HER!
GROOVY BUT
GET OUT OF IT!



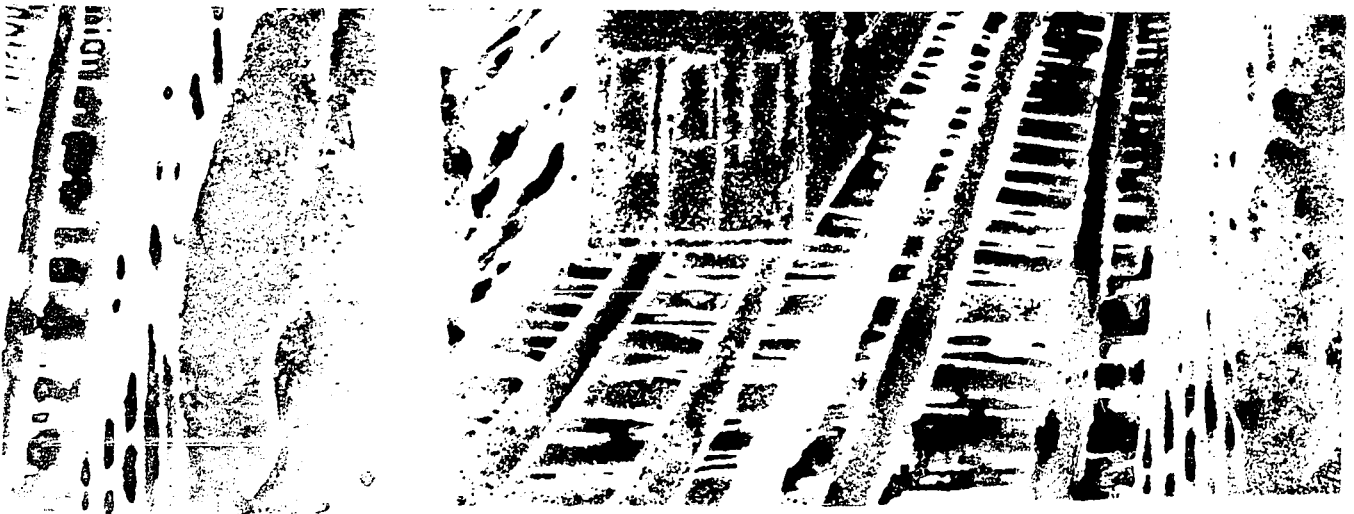


Fig. 4.

100



Fig. 31.



been a general acceptance of the commercial printed image but little understanding or interest of the techniques by which it was produced. The actual involvement in lino cutting and other autographic processes and the search for printed surfaces had aroused a more discriminatory interest in the whole subject. It was suggested to students that the gigantic field of packaging and visual commercial presentation with its extensions in T.V., and the communications media, although strongly overlaid with economic considerations, was probably the biggest single art factor in the modern environment.

LESSON: SPACES AND VOLUMES IN THE ENVIRONMENT

The various devices and systems used by painters to explain or give illusions of space which had been considered in earlier lessons, led to a discussion of the use of real space and actual forms by artists, as in sculpting and modelling.

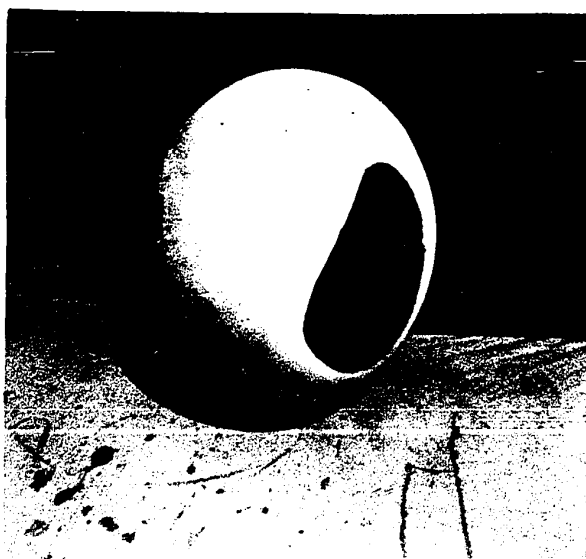
As a realistic introduction to the subject some modelling was carried out in clay and this in itself provided many students with a new tactile experience. As a corrective to the popular idea that this art form depended on the use of "art" materials, (modelling clay being recognised as such), a further three dimensional exercise was carried out, this time in scrap wood or metal.

Because of the way in which some students identified modelling with model making some simple enunciation of sculptural aims was

Fig. 32.



Fig. 33.



necessary, works by Moore, Rodin and Arp being used as illustration.

Environmental Exercise

The interplay between the solid forms and negative spaces in the works of artists like Henry Moore, Barbara Hepworth, and Pevsner, was linked with similar relationships between the volumes and spaces of the environment to show how the city itself may be revealed as sculpture.

Students described the different environmental spaces in which they worked or lived and discussed the effects, restricting, liberating, oppressive, relaxing, etc., that the enclosed spaces of the environment could have on the individual. They were asked to make a piece of sculpture which suggested a certain kind of enclosure or trapped space, e.g., compressed, netted, organic, etc. The work to be carried out in material of their choosing.

Observation

Some pieces submitted, although often weak in form expressed the enclosed feeling well. The hollow cement egg illustrated was 15" high, had nails projecting internally and was the first piece of three dimensional work ever done by this student who got great satisfaction from making it. Other pieces exhibited a sense of spatial organisation indicating a strong sensory awareness in the student of the three dimensional nature of the physical world. In some, however, there seemed to be little feeling for depth or volume, the student losing

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confidence in attempting to move from his secure frontal viewpoint, and it is possible that a fuller understanding of space will only come for such people through a re-education of the tactile senses. This might possibly be achieved through some body activity, (such as dancing), carried out in specially created spatial environments.

LESSON: LIGHT MODULATION OF SURFACES

In the introductory lesson on modelling it had been shown how the understanding of solid form depends to some extent on a sensory recognition of tactual qualities made through a reading and interpretation of light falling on surfaces.

Pictures of relief effects used in buildings, e.g., Parthenon frieze, Mayan wall, Gothic porch, were shown to demonstrate how through projection and recession of surface planes, shadows of different qualities are formed, dense or transparent according to the artist's intention.

The reasons for such surface enrichment was discussed, e.g., the desire to focus attention on a particular part of the structure or to exploit certain lighting conditions.

Some modern uses of relief projection in architecture, sculpture and painting were also illustrated.

Environmental Exercise

Students asked to construct with paper, cardboard or other material

Fig. 34.

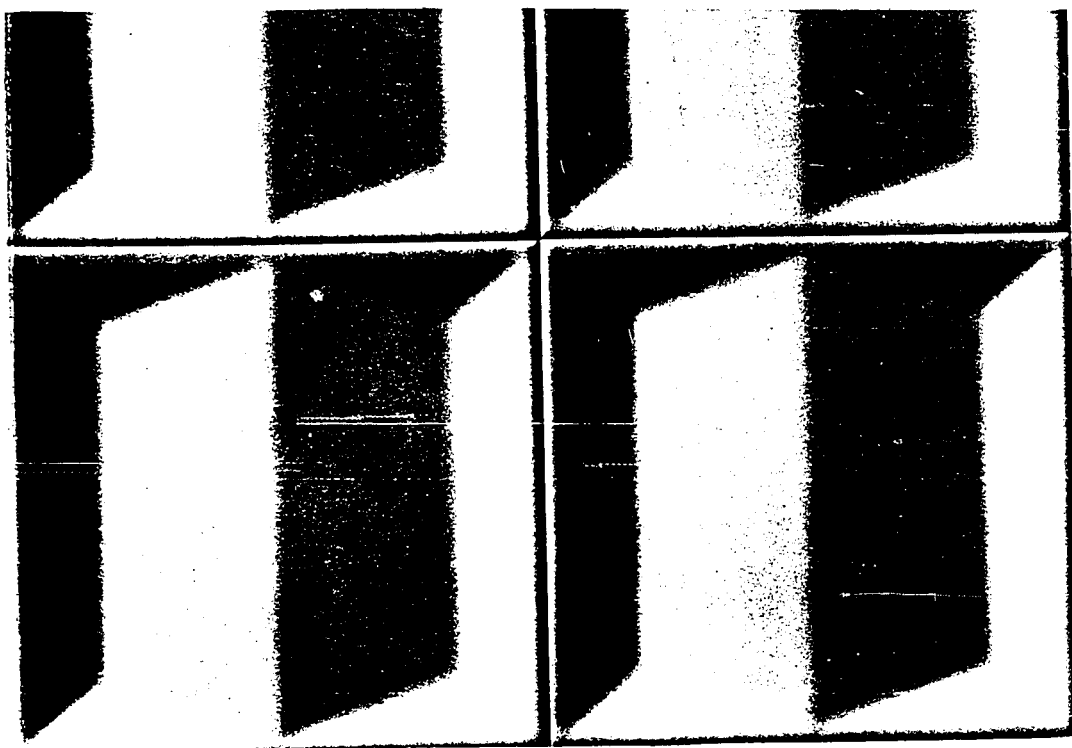
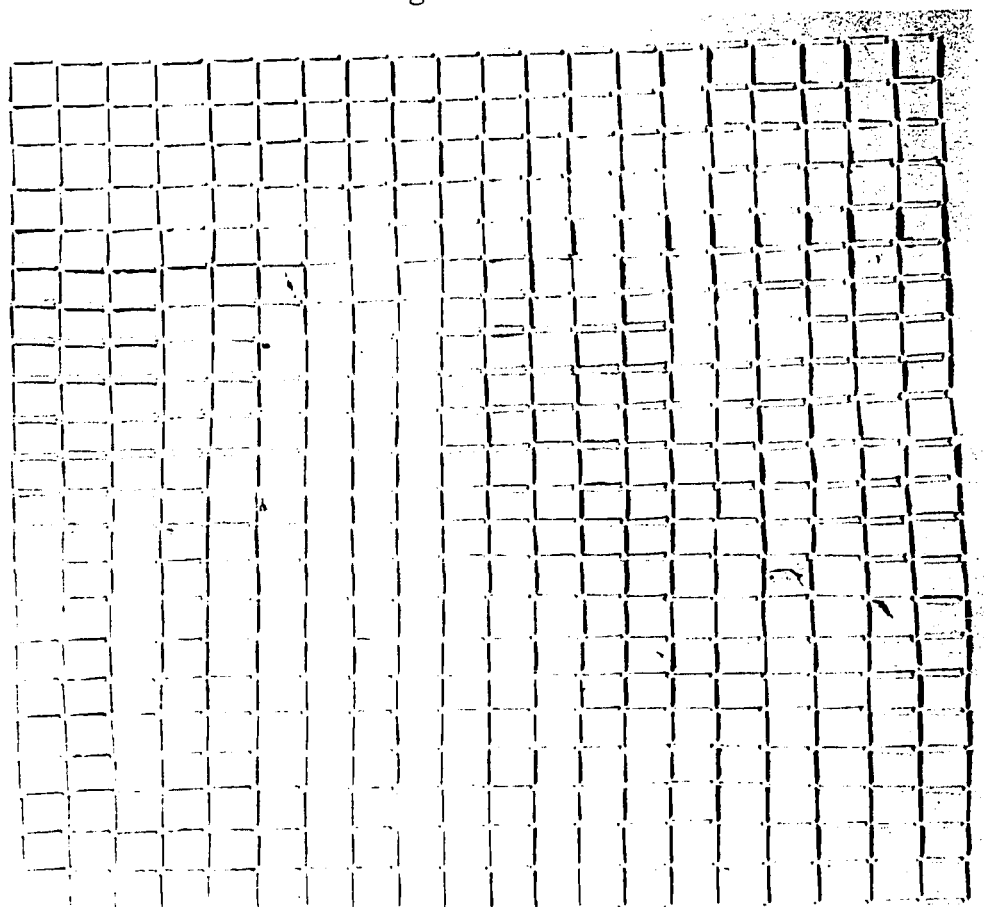


Fig. 35.



a relief panel in which shaped forms were used to modulate the light falling on surfaces.

Observation

The materials were easy to handle and students found many original ways of carrying out their assignment. In their search for tactual ideas they became more conscious of the interest and enjoyment such sculptural effects added to many areas of their own environment.

This was a much less difficult exercise for most students than the earlier ones which dealt with three dimensional structures, as attractive effects depending on a frontal viewpoint only were more easily achieved. It was necessary, therefore, to stress the need for structural logic in the use of such decorative effects and the dangers that arise when surface enrichment is accepted as a substitute for integrated design.

LESSON: TRANSFORMATION THROUGH ARTIFICIAL LIGHT

The work with the light modulated surfaces presumed a single fixed light source, i. e., the sun or a room light. Students were now reminded that artificial and changing light effects are being used by some contemporary artists and that in this century the flashing electric sign has produced fantastic transformations in the environment. Reference was made to the power electric light has to transmute into luminous space the drab physical structures of the workaday world, to suggest movement, to instruct or direct, or sometimes to confuse or harass.

Environmental Exercise

A piece of work was requested which depended for its expression on a changing light pattern. Rather more technical "know-how" was required for this exercise than most students possessed, and technical assistance, (if available), was allowed.

Observation

Despite the technical difficulties most students produced a piece of work which fulfilled the conditions, although it was clear as in other exercises, that few students had much understanding of the expressive potential of the medium. Nevertheless, there were some ingenious solutions to the problem, one of the most effective having a concealed light focussed on a revolving, reflecting, disc which, in its turn, projected a changing light pattern on the inside walls of an enclosed space.

Accepting the modest performance of the students as the best that was possible under the circumstances, it was still felt that this was an inadequate way in which to deal with the vitally important subject of artificial light in the environment. It is possible that for a real understanding of the potentialities of artificial light to transform or create environments, an experimental studio is required in which movable lighting equipment of many kinds and other aids, e.g., projectors, reflectors, mirrors, etc., would allow the students to design artificially illuminated environments in which they were participants as well as observers.



LESSON: THE DYNAMIC FACTOR

In the lesson which was concerned with the use of artificial light it was shown how it is often used to suggest movement. This was followed by exercises which were concerned with actual movement in works of art. An illustrated discussion on Baroque painting and sculpture showed how the idea of movement was powerfully expressed by these artists. Pictures of early Greek and Byzantine work supplied examples of more static concepts to point the contrast.

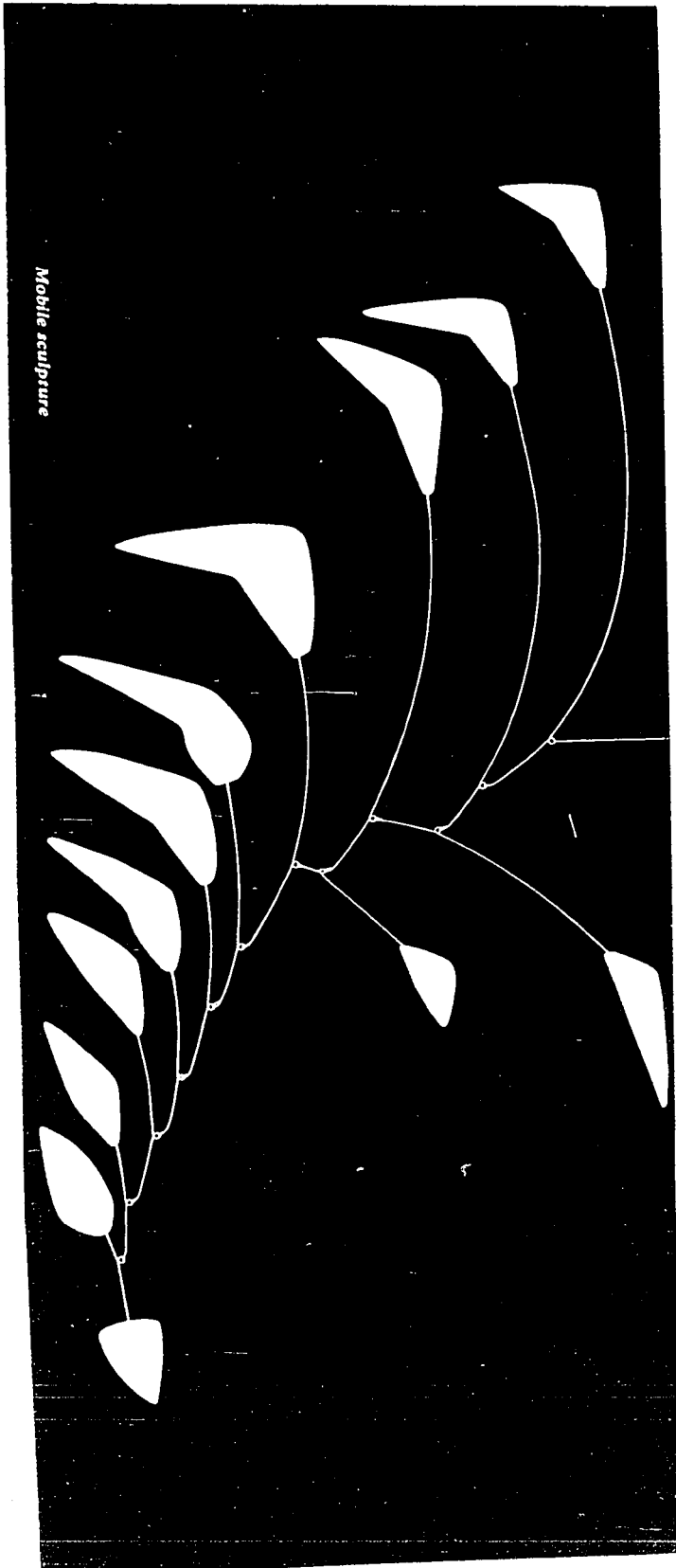
Environmental Exercise

Students were referred to work of twentieth century sculptors in which there was actual movement, e.g., Tinguely's machines and Calder's mobiles, and more recent pieces by kinetic sculptors. It was agreed that the appreciation of such works may be related to a heightened awareness of the moving forms in the everyday environment, e.g., traffic, dance, ritual, flying birds, kites, aeroplanes, people in elevators and escalators, etc. It was pointed out that in our own movement also we awaken to apparent movement the static forms in our surroundings and, therefore, there is no single viewpoint from which the environment is to be fully apprehended.

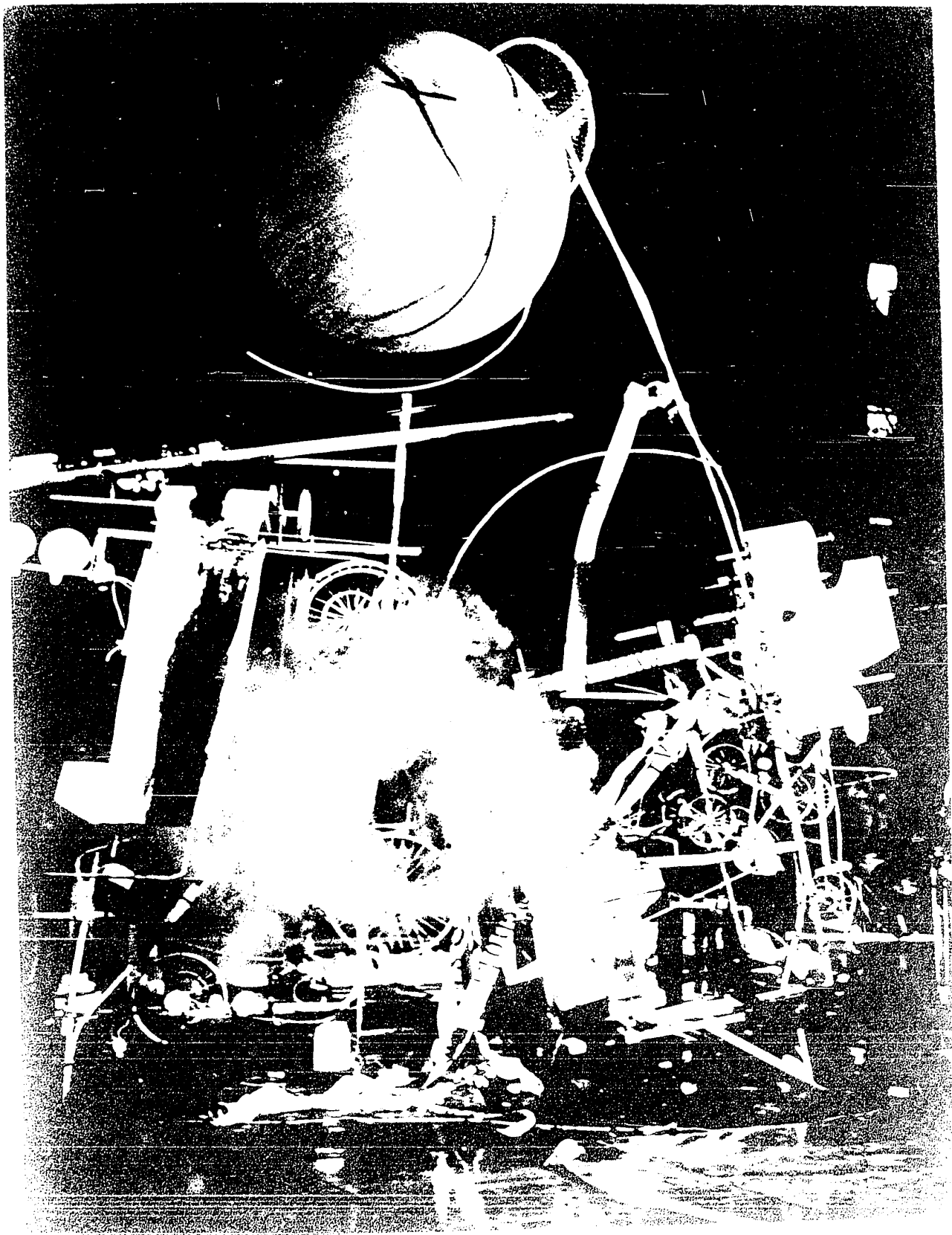
Students were required to make a mobile, or moving construction, which would work randomly, or on a controlled time cycle.

Observation

Most students attempted mobiles (with which they were familiar,

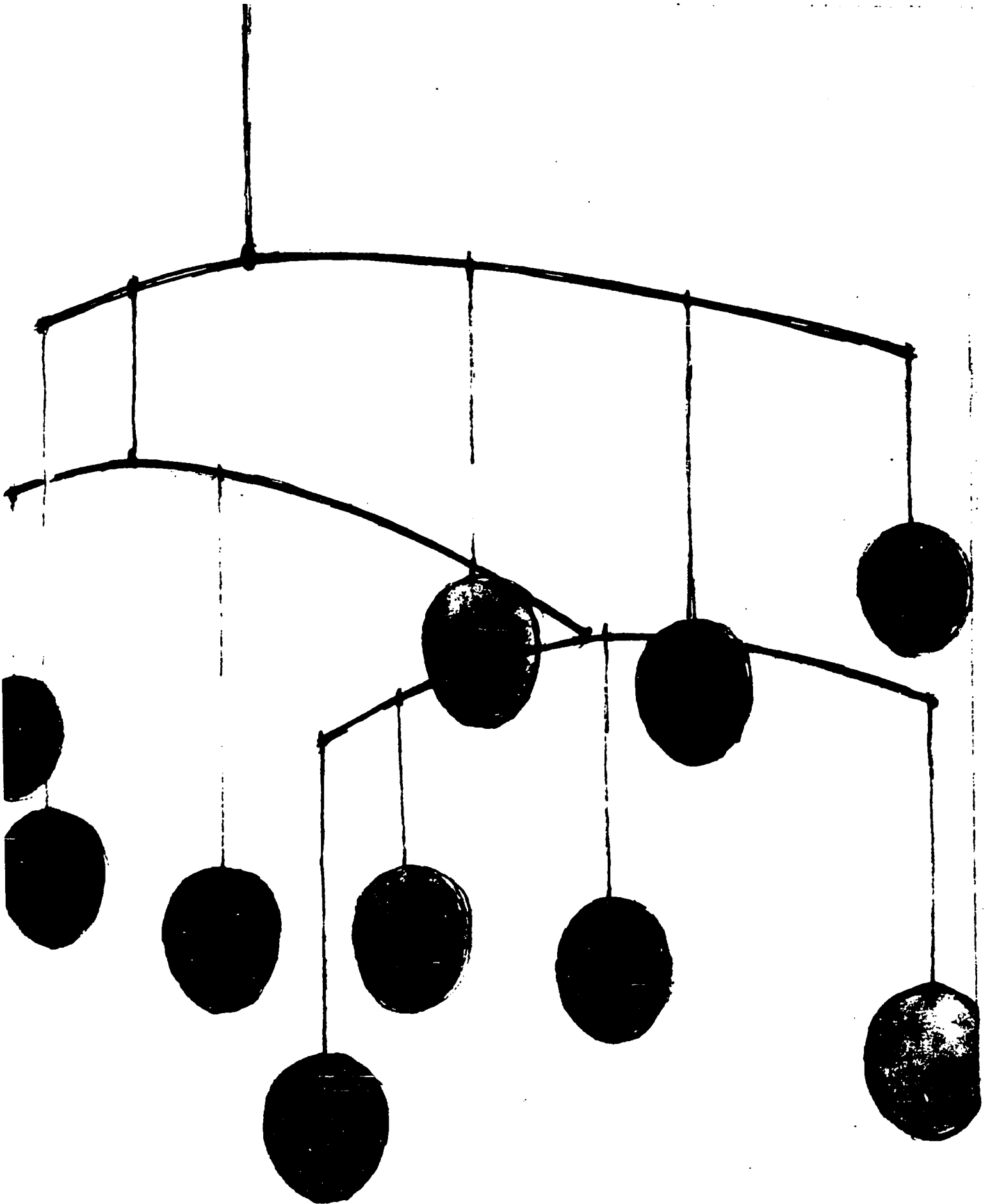


Mobile sculpture



mainly because of the commercial uses to which they have been put, e.g., swinging ads,) but few introduced much variety of movement into their inventions, being content with objects or shapes suspended on a single straight axis. One exception was the mobile made of blacked, blown, hens' eggs, hanging from thin wire supports, which responded sensitively to every air current.

The understanding of the movement of, and in, structures is of vital importance in any study of the modern environment, but it is doubtful whether this brief lesson could do more than provide an introduction to the subject. To quicken the student's awareness of the dynamic factor in the environment may require exercises that involve him quite directly in actual movement. Projects which depend on detached observation rather than personal involvement may have experience value similar to that gained in operating a model railway by remote control, and may not touch the person whose kinesthetic responses have atrophied or have never been developed. Stereoscopic film may come near to inducing such responses in the viewer, but the creation of environments in which actual movement, fast and slow, smooth and jerky, straight and curved, were experienced, would have much more value. Such exercises might provide yet another use for the proposed studio mentioned in the lesson on artificial light.



LESSON: UNDERLYING SYSTEMS AND STRUCTURES IN THE ENVIRONMENT

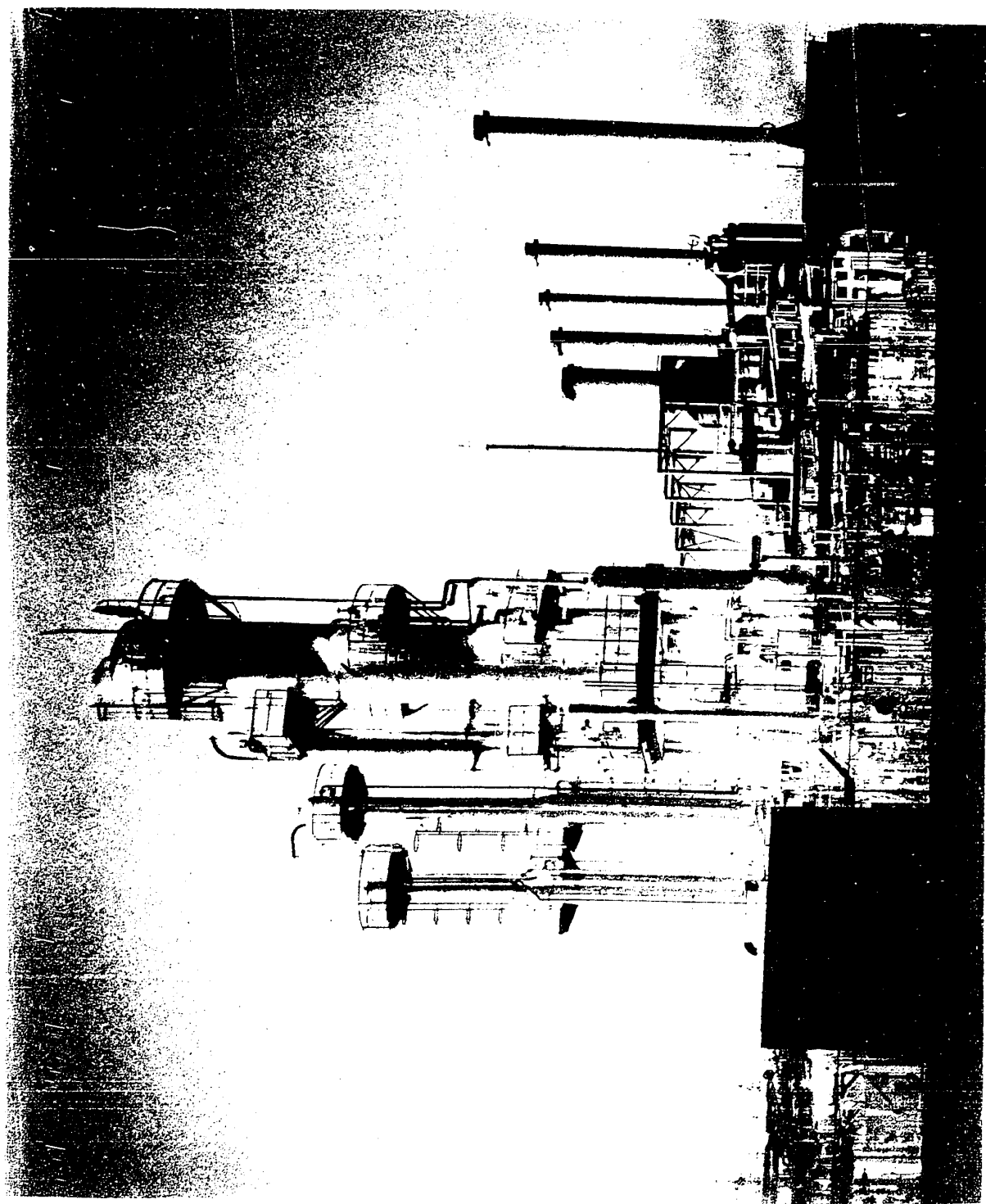
The lesson on mobiles and the creation and use by artists of moving forms in their work led to a consideration of forms and structures in the environment which depended on systems of movement, on processes, or the dynamic interaction of parts. It was suggested that a great part of the visual environment, in fact, relates to such hidden forces.

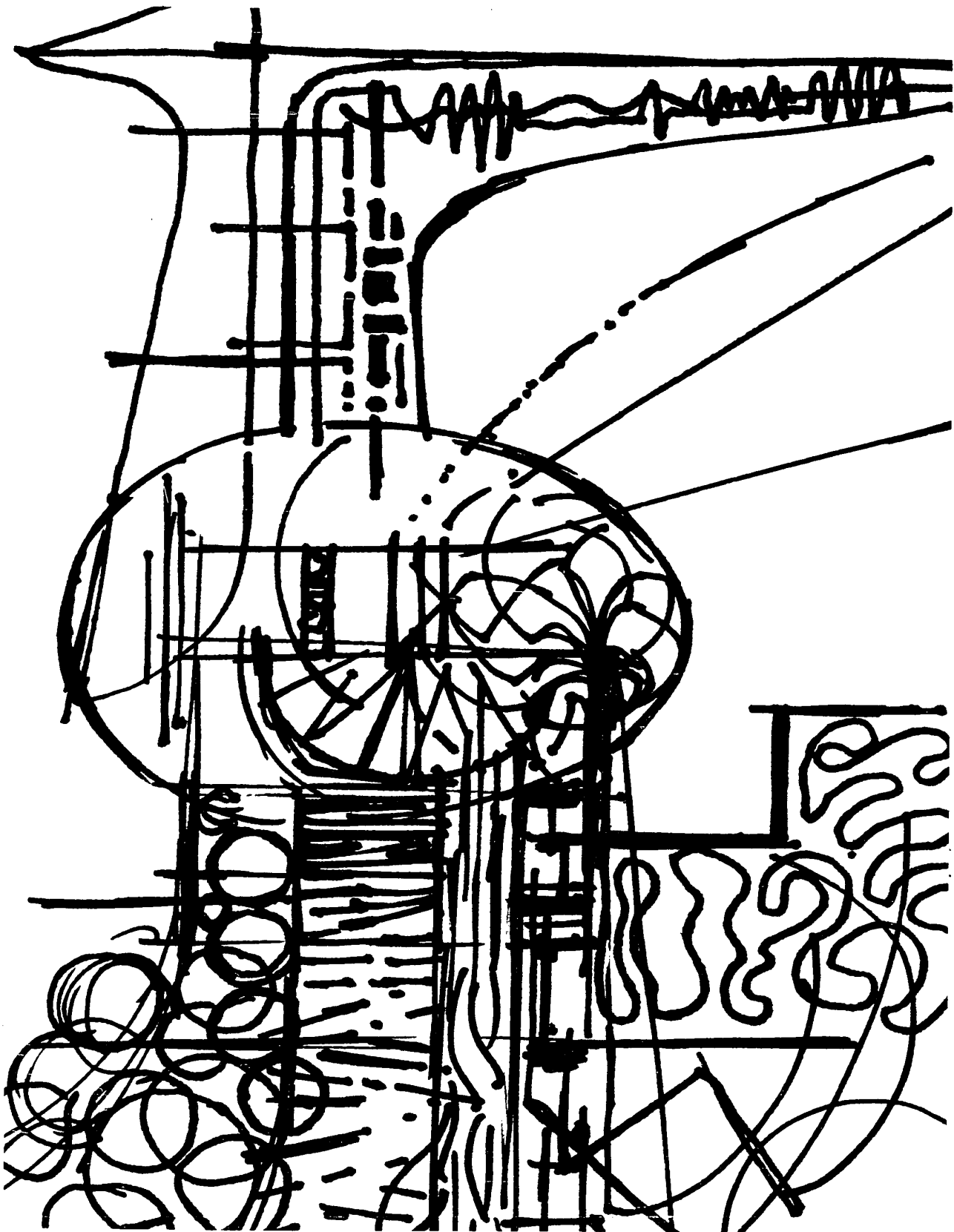
Environmental Exercise

Students were asked to examine and analyse an organisation or process with which they were familiar, e.g., the processing of raw materials, the reception and dissemination of news, the complex movement of pedestrians and traffic at some busy junction in the city. They were required to make a drawing which would express the complex pattern of relationships involved, which would not be merely a descriptive diagram but which would explain the dynamics of the subject in plastic terms.

Observation

This exercise, though valuable in terms of environmental experience because of the exploration and research that was necessary, proved difficult for most students. While it is certain that a fuller understanding of the environment requires an understanding of function as well as an appreciation of external appearances, a more profound examination would be needed than was possible in this brief exploration,





or with these students. However, such an exercise would have much value for more mature students working in specialized fields, e.g., engineering, science, business administration, who would have the necessary knowledge and background of experience to provide material for the exercise.

LESSON: ARTIFACTS IN THE ENVIRONMENT

Although the danger of suggesting criteria by which the design of common useful objects could be judged was recognized, it was felt that a discussion on this subject would be worthwhile, if only to suggest to students that this area was their concern and eventually if they wished it, one they could control.

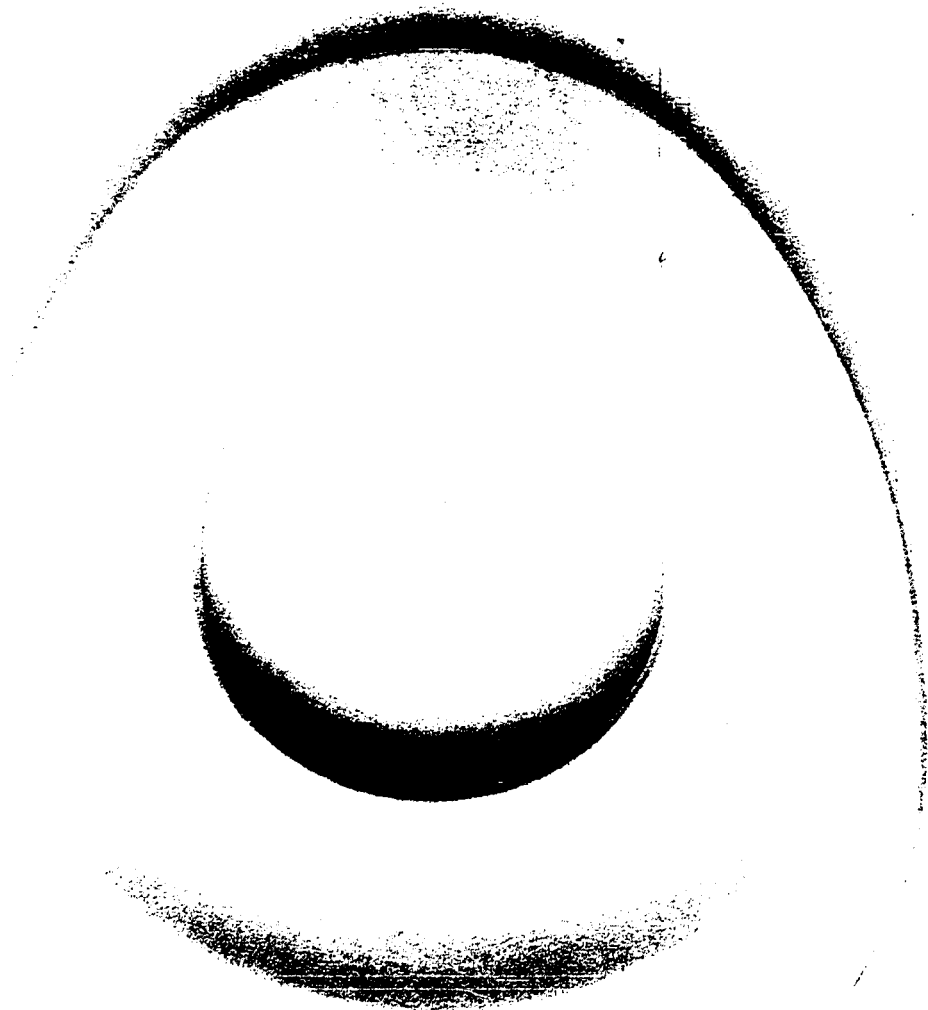
For a drawing exercise, related to other drawing lessons, they were asked to bring common domestic objects such as electric irons, kettles, record players, etc. They were then asked to comment, from the point of view of design and function, on these objects.

Illustrations of work by early designers of handmade and machine made artifacts were shown, and reference was made to the struggle to improve the quality of household goods, which had been the concern of artist-designers, such as William Morris and schools of design, of which the Bauhaus was the most influential and the best example.

No studio exercises were set, it becoming clear to the students through the discussion, that in this kind of design, technical expertise based on an intimate knowledge of machine processes conjoined with a

Fig. 42.

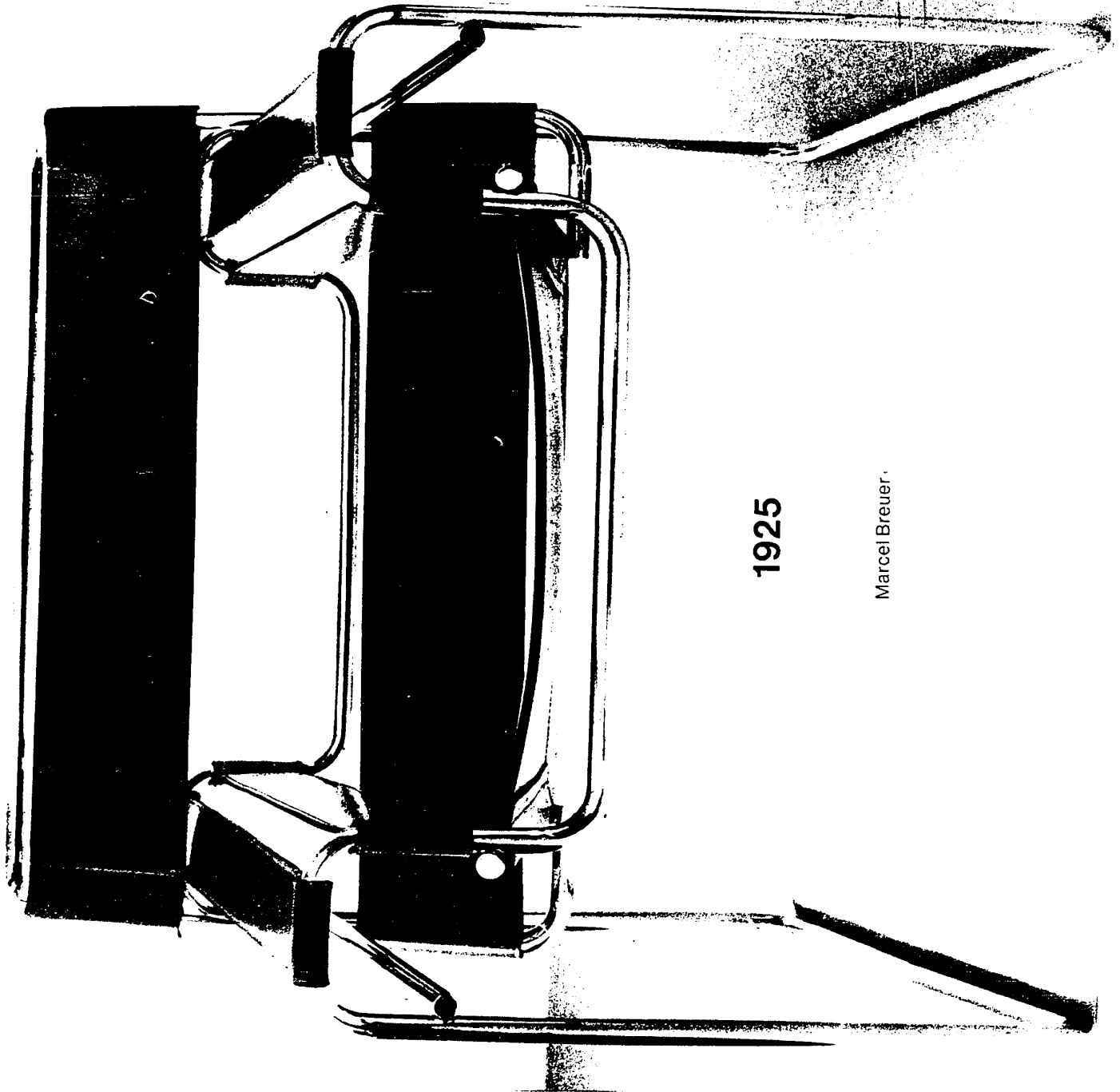
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Churchill, Holmes, Killey

1925

Marcel Breuer



strong feeling for formal and sensory values was required. It was conceded that this was no field for the amateur, but one that required a very specialized kind of training. The responsibility of the public, however, as users of such objects to insist on quality in design was recognized, as was the fact that the buyer must also have a sense of aesthetic values to make such judgements. There was a general feeling that there should be more design centres, where the best of industrial design could be seen by the public.

V

CONCLUSIONS AND PROPOSALS

ANALYSIS OF RESULTS

The aims of the 231 Fine Arts Course at Sir George Williams University, quoted in Section III of this paper, were in this particular class related to an investigation of the visual environment. It should be noted that it was only within the framework of existing art courses at the university that an opportunity occurred for this experiment to be carried out.

The degree of success that was achieved in the aim of developing in the general student a greater environmental awareness, would have been impossible to measure in individual cases with any accuracy, because of the difficulty of isolating this factor from others with which it was inextricably bound up. However, some broad effects were observed which could be identified with this aspect of the course. It could be assumed, for example, that the students of this 231 class are unlikely in future to disassociate art and the visual environment, as do the Fine Art students (Professor Trottenberg asserts, see Section 1, page 2), in many North American universities today. The constant reference back to the environment as a source and point of departure for studio experimentation demonstrated graphically to them the inter-

relationship of art and environment. It can also said to have been successful in that, through a wide variety of creative studio experiences carried out in many different media, the student's understanding of the power of art to enrich daily life and to give coherence to the visual world, was noticeably increased. From discussions revolving around assignments, it also became apparent that many had a growing consciousness of the absence of this unifying and leavening factor in their surroundings. From this new awareness there sometimes arose a feeling of ineffectualness, despair or cynicism, at their apparent inability to make any difference in this state of affairs. In that the course was unable to probe these problems to much depth, or to suggest appropriate action to deal with them, it was less successful.

By the end of the second term the groupings of the students into "general" and Fine Arts students had become noticeably less definite. Some "general" students had discovered in themselves unsuspected potentialities for expressive, creative work, and had changed their future university plans accordingly. On the other hand, some few B.F.A. aspirants who had had a superficial previous acquaintance with the arts, found the broad range of the course disturbing, and the constant reference to the environment irrelevant to what they thought the purposes of a Fine Arts course should be. These had expected more instruction in the basic techniques of painting, drawing and sculpture to prepare them for more advanced Fine Arts courses. It is probable that the course had salutary

effects on such students in breaking down their narrow conception of the function of art in society, and opening new perspectives for work.

PROPOSALS FOR FUTURE COURSES

Although this experimental course may be said to have fulfilled in large measure the purpose for which it was planned, in the light of the experience gained through it, the writer now feels that some amendments to the original format and the introduction of new considerations would be desirable in setting up environmental studies courses in the future.

These are enumerated below :-

- 1) The teaching problem would be simplified if the courses were to be frankly described as an Environmental Studies Course. The result of the essay experiment "What is Ugly in the City" - Table 3, although on too small a scale to justify generalizations would seem to be in accord with the findings of those sociologists and educationalists who maintain that students will respond best to what they assume is required of them.
- 2) For the course to have lasting value, the importance of the visual aesthetic factor in the environment must still be strongly in the mind of the "general" student when he graduates and is in a position to make a contribution in his chosen field. The writer believes that taken in a first year, it could be overlaid subsequently with other matters and its message lost, whereas in the final year, it

would be related to an established field of interest and activity.

Although it would be desirable for all students to take the course, initially it should be a requirement only for those working in areas which have an obvious selection with the shaping of the environment, e.g., engineering, business, communications, and an elective for others. In this connection it should be noted that the visual studies course at Harvard and Radcliffe, Table 1, is a requirement for all architectural sophomores, but open also to "general" students. However, it will be seen that the permitted total enrolment of only thirty students in this class suggests that its influence in a university would not be widespread.

- 3) The inter-relationship between all the arts and the environment could be more fully acknowledged in the course. Studies should include consideration of cinema, t.v., drama, dance, and arts other than the purely plastic ones. It would then be possible to engage in a more integrated study of the total environment which would include kinesthetic, tactile, and auditory factors.
- 4) Specialists working in fields with which environmental problems are associated should be invited to lecture to the students of the course. It may be necessary, for instance, that the student should learn something of modern manufacturing processes, before he can evaluate the aesthetic work of the machine-made artifacts of our culture. He should know the nature of natural

and synthetic materials, and the complex problem of the industrial designer whose task it is to synthesize form and function. He should also become acquainted with the economics of marketing, this last very important consideration being the one that may eventually determine the quality of products reaching the public.

Other areas to be examined might include engineering of different kinds, communications and some that have a more direct connection with art, such as architecture and town planning. A comprehension of the principles on which such planning depends would help the student to realize the structures on which the visual world depends and the correspondence that exists between the elements of the visual pattern and the underlying social, physical and functional factors.

- 5) Often the environment is apprehended as we move in it, sometimes at speed, and means should be found to make the student directly conscious of this dynamic factor in his surroundings, possibly through conducted tours in which contrasted visual sequences could be experienced and later analysed in a filmed record. However, even these might be regarded as vicarious experiences and, as was suggested on page 86, it may be necessary to awaken or recapture the students bodily experience of space and movement through dancing, acting, or exercise.

- 6) Some facilities should be provided to accommodate this kind of activity and other environmental projects in which the students would be participants and not mere observers. These might take the form of a large studio equipped with the necessary items to transform it in a multitude of ways, so that actual environments can be created by students. There would be included in such a place, building units of many kinds, rigid, flexible, extensible and expandable, overhead tracks and floor rails, mirrors, mobile trolleys, projectors, special lighting, water tanks, air blowers, and screens and materials of many kinds and textures. The experience of existing inter-media centres should be drawn on in designing such a studio.
- 7) Many environmental projects introduced in the 231 Course, particularly those concerned with observation and analysis of parts of the environment, would be greatly expanded in a full environmental studies course; for example, the interior / exterior exercise, page 52, might be considered in terms of function and movement, as well as colour; the abstract structure project, page 96, would be based on a visit to a factory or plant, and entail a close examination of processes and operational sequences.

The examination and recording of selected objects and entities in the urban landscape, particularly where they are

judged to be unsightly or anachronistic by the students would be followed by suggestions from them for alternative design solutions. These in turn would be exposed to criticism on technical, aesthetic and economic grounds by specialists in these fields.

Students would also be encouraged to pose problems arising from their own interests and disciplines. This, as has been suggested, would be easier if they already had a particular sphere of activity and experience.

- 8) Mention has been made of the sense of frustration felt by some students who suddenly found themselves deprived of some visual amenity in their landscape, or who considered themselves captive in an inhuman, hostile, environment, or whose social conscience made them resent the imposition of such conditions on others. In such instances, the Law School or Legal Department of the University could explain if and how it is legally possible to combat infringements or encroachments on the visual environmental rights of the individual or of the community. Indeed, a law student, who happened also to be student of the course, would find possibly that this was a field in which he could make a career and perform a valuable service advising preservation societies, town planners, Ombudsmen, and those who wish to improve or introduce legislation regarding visual amenities in the environment.

Despite the suggested contributions to be made by different disciplines, it would be essential that the course should originate in the Fine Arts Department of a university. The education of vision would be basic to all other considerations in the task of developing in the student a more intense awareness of the environment, and it is through art that this would be achieved. However, in the redesigned course there would be more emphasis on process than on the art product.

Professor Robert Preusser, in describing his visual education course for engineering students at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, writes, "the goal of studio experience is not emulation of the artist's product, but comprehension of the thought processes in developing capacity to plan, organize, clarify and integrate in visual terms."¹

As with the 231 Course described, this would be a most difficult course to evaluate. The effectiveness of the M.I.T. course would be indicated, one assumes, by an improvement in the quality of engineering design. In the much broader field of the whole environment, success might be gauged in terms of its social effects, in the setting up of design centres, preservation societies, tree-planting societies, smoke and noise abatement societies, "anti-ugly" movements, an improvement in the quality of goods in the stores, in the siting and designing of

¹Robert Preusser, "Visual Education for Science and Engineering Students", Education of Vision, ed. Kepes, p.209.

buildings and in a gradual almost imperceptible improvement in the look of things. It would also be reflected in a lessening of the tensions and stresses born of the existing urban environment.

In the individual student it would be manifested in action and behaviour rather than in words and at times and places remote from the classroom and the evaluator. One would not expect the student of such a course to accept squalor, chaos, monotony or a submission to others blind-self interest or "the deadening imprint of arbitrary planning on the interplay of life",¹ as the inevitable concomitants of progress in a freely-moving, evolving culture. Whatever his sphere of activity and influence, he would be alert and responsive to the changing shapes of the visual world and conscious always of his own and society's deep environmental needs.

¹ Seitz, p. 76.

VI

APPENDIX

DOCUMENTS

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Elementary School Teacher

1.

I am taking this course with the hope that by getting a new approach to art ~~both~~ the children in my class and I will benefit.

I have had very little previous experience in the subject. I took art in high school and a methods course on teaching it at Macdonald College.

I have visited a few art galleries. I saw the Picasso exhibition in Montreal, a few New York galleries. I saw the Louvre, the art museums in Madrid and Lisbon. I visited the Montmartre in Paris where young and old painters display their works and a similar display in Madrid but which included sculptures, ceramics, carvings etc all by students. I visited El Greco's home in Toledo and many Palaces and churches.

However, my European exposure to art was done in three weeks.

Occupation: Wife and mother

2.

Previous Art Experience:

1. Fine Arts 261.....a course in life drawing and painting
taken at McGill, BA 1 Guy Viau
2. Fine Arts 211, 411, 412, 461.....taken at Sir George Williams
University where I took my last 3 years,
graduating with my BA in 1961.
1st three courses taught by
Ghitta Caiserman
461 taught by D.B. Clarke

3. Ecole des Beaux Arts..Montreal

Took the 2nd, 3rd and 4th years there ⁱⁿ the evening
school. The first year was an elementary one and I was
permitted to skip it.

2nd year included life drawing and painting Jean Bertran

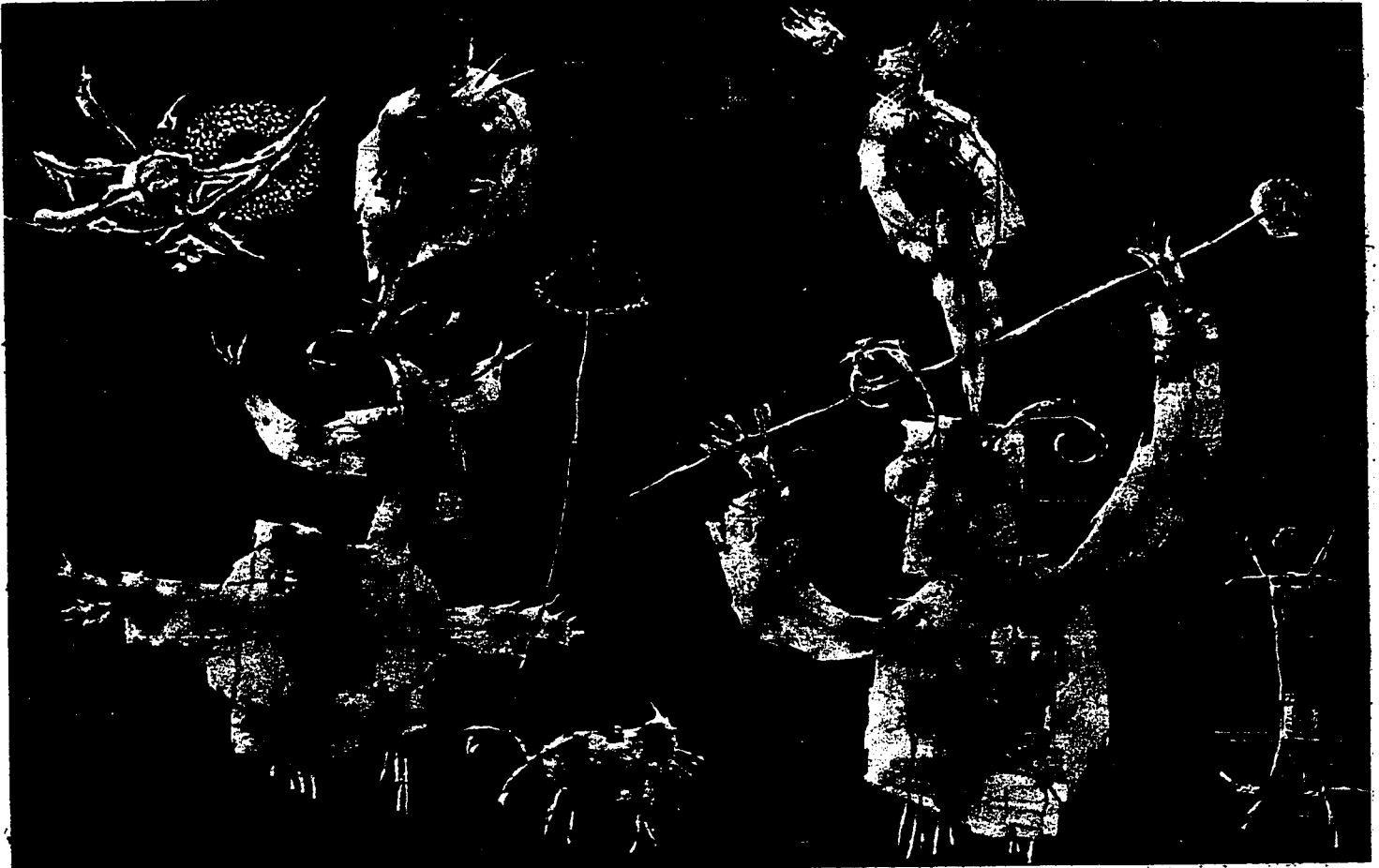
3rd year included the above adding construction
collage and some graphics Lise Gervais

4th year was a special Advanced Painting class
with special emphasis on personal projects.
Monique Charbonneau

4. I have exhibited in various exhibitions both student ^o and other
..one the Young Painters' Show presented by JAMM at the Montreal
Museum..63/64.
Have sold some of my work. Enjoy going to galleries though avoid
them when I'm working on something as I find the work shown can
influence or affect the work in progress.

Reasons for taking the course:

I am taking qualifying subjects in the Fine Arts so that I can
go on for my Masters in Art Education^o. I would eventually like
to teach. This was a course I missed on my BA. Am also taking
Art 240 and Art 281 this year in the evening.



"Alonzo-alonzi"

by

Jean Dallaire

3.

Although this painting has something serious to say about the human condition, for example, the robot balancing the scarecrow, it says it with whimsy.

There is a feeling of carefree movement in the figures. The coolish blue of the figures is mixed with warm yellows and green and orange making them seem warm and lovable. The predominant orange is a warm basic colour which sets up the gay mood. The fact that blue and orange are complementary colours causes on the one hand a strong feeling basic primitive and direct and on the other a cool and carefree sophistication.

Section EE

Instructor: Mr. F. Barry
October 10, 1966

Artist, Paul Klee

Reproduction of 'Senecio'

I find myself very much attracted to the work of Paul Klee. In this reproduction a sense of ambiguity seems to come forth from the semi-representational head in the picture. At first glance the eyes seem placid, if only for a moment, and then seem to become activated as I continue looking at it; At one moment stultified, at another they move and then stop leaving the head with a different expression on its face, as though of a fiercely angry mute, and then again, the head appears frightened. The more I look, the more I seem to see. This is what interests me about this plate; the sense of dualism that it has.

what makes a
city ugly?

October 6

5:

what makes a city ugly? -
a cold rainy day with no place to
go but a train station, people
on street corners talking languages
you can't understand so you feel
like a stranger, people people people
all pushing and shoving on a sidewalk
while the dirt is blowing up into
your eyes and nose making you feel
as though you were lost in a muddy
surging river. Everyday humdrum
life in a city is ugly if you walk
with your head glued to the sidewalk
and your spirits stuck in your shoes.
Slums and poverty are always ugly
but if you are happy the rain is
exciting, the crowds are fun and

strange languages intriguing the
city is only ugly when the people
who live in it make it so by
seeing only the gloomy side of it.

Buses and cars clanging and screeching
are only annoying to those who take
the time to worry about such trivial
things. To me nothing could be more
wonderful than walking along
Sherbrooke Street on a warm sunny
day and being proud of the best the
city can offer in quaint shops and
sparing buildings. Ugliness^{is} in your
eyes alone and if you are happy
nothing in the city is really all that
ugly.

231.

Vi's score, 4/10

October 12, 1966

6.

UGLINESS IN THE CITY STREETS

Underfoot, the streets are cracked and weather-beaten. The sleet and ice have discoloured the exterior of buldings which were originally beigy tones. With a slight tilt of the head we hope to see to the top of the skyscrapers, but usually the fog-ridden sky is concealing all above the tenth floor.

A maze of neon, car and traffic lights blur our vision. Montreal is an island, but a view of the water from the centre of the city, is unlikely. Buildings in every shade of grey, each one grimmer than the next, surround us everywhere. The farthest point the naked eye can see, views only older structures.

Even modernization offers no regality, or any sense of elegance to the architecture. The window panes are all of one color, dusty and steamy. The exhaust, and fumes of industry leave their mark.

If we climb to the lookout over the city we breathe fresh, healthy air, see the autumn leaves ablaze with color, the water of the Montreal Harbour, the horizon in

Page 2

6.

shades of red, and the lights of the city sparkle as if they were gems. We pull our collars up as the early evening breeze offers a chill, and with a sigh of sadness, wish that we could work in a lovely country atmosphere, not in an ugly grey city!

231. Vis. score 8/10

ENGLISH 211

SECTION 2P (D. GREY)

FEB. 23, 1967.

What's Ugly in the City 7.

There are numerous ugly things which exist in the city such as ~~poor~~ the slum areas, poor roads, shabby houses which are ready to collapse and many more. But a situation that arises in any big industrially developed city is air pollution. Commonly known as ~~smoke~~ smog, it engulfs almost an entire city. ~~The~~ Factories, automobiles, ordinary chimneys are some of the factors that contribute to unhealthy air pollution. This smog is combined of heavy smoke plus a fog which creeps in predominantly in low lying areas near a river or an ocean.

In some cities, smog prevails for nearly a total week and so thick and dense that ~~traffic~~ the possibility of driving

a car especially at night is practically out. 7.
Breathing becomes dangerous and smart people
are advised to remain indoors. Darkness
persists and outdoor illumination becomes a
necessity twenty four hours a day. Indeed
fog^{are} ~~is~~ ugly for ^{they} ~~it~~ not only makes the
outdoors ugly and uninviting but all outdoor
activities are either greatly disrupted or
cancelled ~~be~~ because of them.

211.

Vis. Score. 3/10

English at 15.20
Mr. Grey 8.

What is Ugly in the City

Red-bricked flats, cracked sidewalks, unpainted lampposts and littered streets surrounded the vacant lot. It was a barren and filthy place that spurred passers-by into a feeling of pity or contempt. In the centre, a pile of black mud and pungent shit pierced both eye and nose. An untrimmed pine tree stood isolated against a background of gravel and dust. Patches of burnt and green blades of grass surrendering to a stiff breeze, bent defectively to the ground. At the back of the lot, set against a row of tenement houses, a

grey path, sprinkled with torn weeds[✓]
8. provided a play area for some small
children. A tough old man typical of those
living in the area, tugged at the leash
of his mongrel who had just snapped
viciously at a scurrying rat. And strewn over
this wasteland, newspaper, candy wrappers, and
paper bags, blown from place to place,
emphasized the look of poverty, carelessness
and laziness. The vacant field provided
an ugly picture of the city.

211. Vis. score 7/10

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