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THE IDEA OF BIG

The result is no small undertaking

By David Dillon Douglas

DON BAILEY and Stephen Wierzbowski like to think big. Bailey, owner and president of Rite-Way Reproductions, Inc., of Chicago and Wierzbowski, a Chicago architect and instructor at the University of Illinois at Chicago, recently displayed the results of that kind of thinking in an exhibit at the school entitled, "The Idea of Big."

It was no small undertaking. What began as more or less of a fluke on Wierzbowski's part blossomed into a month-long exhibit of drawings—there are hopes it



LEFT: "Frontispiece for the Disappearance of Maria"

will become a traveling exhibit—by 34 design professionals from throughout the Chicago area.

The exhibit, however, was more than just a display of architectural or engineering drawings to highlight scale changes inherent in the design process using the latest copier technology. Creativity was allowed to flow and imagination run wild: the exhibits ranged from serious architectural details to witty pieces to fantasy drawings. There were drawings done by hand, others done by CAD, there were even some collages. Some were hung on the walls; others were mounted on foamcore to give a three-dimensional effect, others were cut or folded or colored, one was even stretched out along the floor.

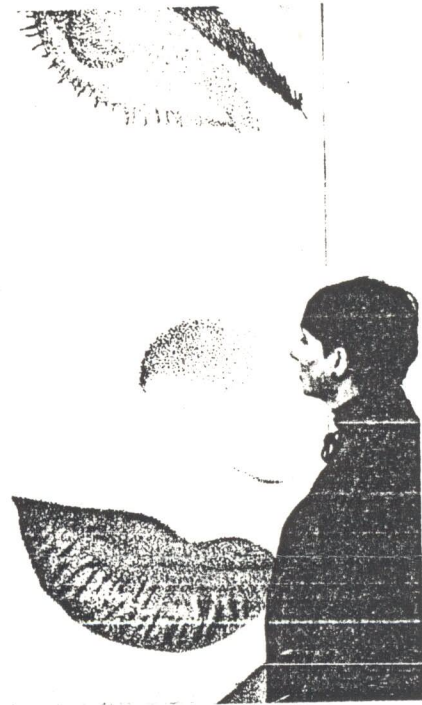
And then there was their size, which was the whole concept behind "The Idea of Big."

Bailey, using an electrostatic duplicating machine, enlarged the original $4\frac{1}{2} \times 13$ " drawings in three suc-

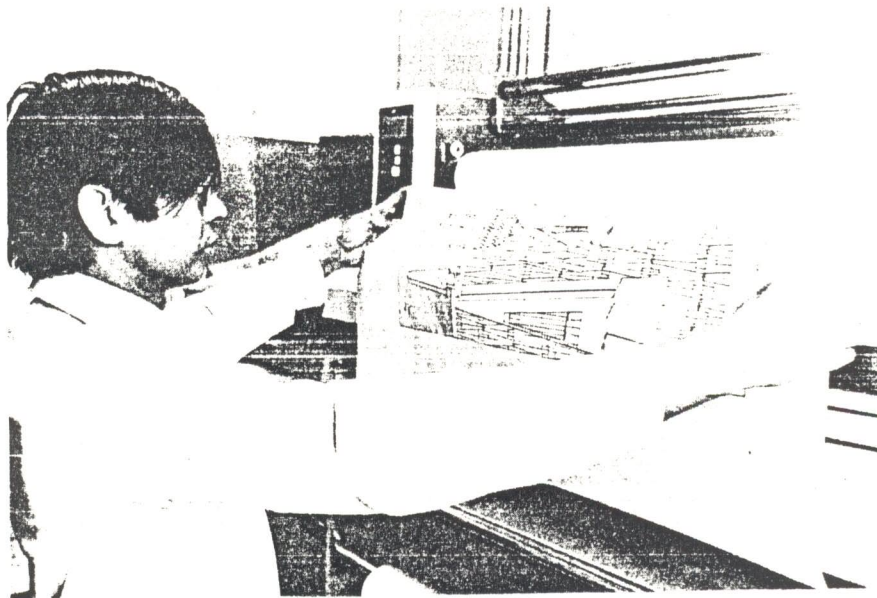
cessive passes to $3 \times 9'$. The resulting images are not just impressive in their size but in the new life they seem to take on in the larger size.

Example: An exhibit called "Egypt" used standard drafting instruments and architectural details for its inspiration. Among the items to be found in the drawing: erasers became columns and standard details became hieroglyphics. Because of the ability of the Shacoh machine to print on various types of paper, such as vellum, bond, film and yellow trace, the "Egypt" exhibit was printed on brown wrapping paper.

In addition to the huge blowups of the original drawings, Bailey also used the duplicating machine to reduce the images in successive passes to $1\frac{1}{8} \times 3\frac{3}{8}$ ". Those tiny images were placed in a model of the gallery (scale $\frac{3}{8}" = 1'$) that was built by a student at the university. The model was in the gallery during the exhibit, which opened April 17 and ran through May 11. It was held at Gallery 400 at the



Gallery 400 visitor Marcia Heller takes a close up look at "Elements," a drawing by Rael D. Slutsky of Rael D. Slutsky and Associates, Inc. Drawing was enlarged from original $4\frac{1}{2} \times 13$ " to $3 \times 9'$ in three successive passes on electrostatic copier.



Edilberto V. Chee, supervisor in the electrostatic copier area at Rite-Way Reproductions in Chicago, inspects enlarged image to be used in "The Idea of Big," the month-long exhibit held at Gallery 400, the University of Illinois at Chicago, College of Architecture, Art and Urban Planning.

Don Bailey and Stephen Wierzbowski, an architect with the firm of Florian-Wierzbowski in Chicago, discuss quality of image coming off Shacoh-920 machine for use in "The Idea of Big." Exhibit was held April 17 to May 11. Wierzbowski is an instructor at the University of Illinois.

College of Architecture, Art and Urban Planning.

The machine was also used to produce 18 x 24" posters to announce the show. Plans were also under way to utilize it in preparing a book on the exhibit. The electrostatic machine can handle work up to 36 inches wide by infinity and go from a 50 percent reduction to 200 percent enlargement in fixed steps; a new Shacoh machine is expected to offer variable reduction and enlargement.

Wierzbowski and Bailey agree that

the goal of "The Idea of Big" was not just to showcase the enlarged designs. It's a way to show people the different things we can do with the xerographic process rather than photographically," says Bailey, who donated his services to the project. "Most of the time, we tell people about the different processes but it doesn't always have an impact on them.

"When you see something like this, it opens up a whole new realm of things you can do," he adds. "In the

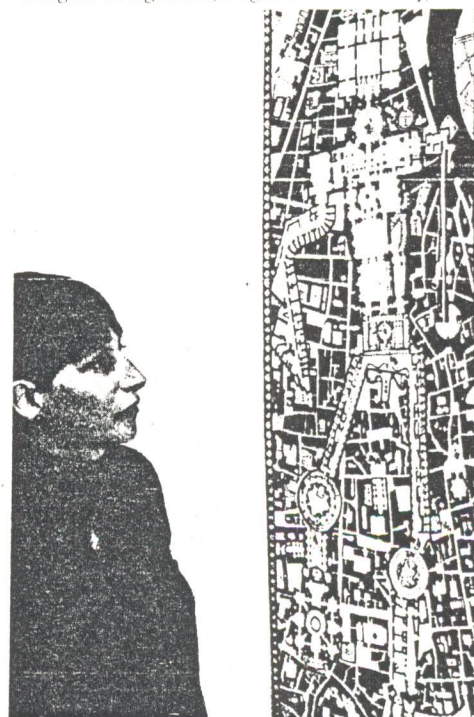
"The Idea of Big" featured not just enlarged architectural drawings hung on the walls of Gallery 400. One architect, Leslie R. Ventsch of Opus, had her drawing both on the wall and cut apart on the floor. Here, gallery visitor Gerald Epstein inspects her design entitled "A Tower On The Plain Of Shimar Built To The Glory Of Man With Its Top In The Heavens And On Which Ramparts Is Inscribed The Whole History Of The Heavens And The Earth As The Generations Of Adam Have Told It From Cain And Enoch And Seth And Enosh, Eenan And Mahalalel, Jared And Enoch, Methuselah And Lamech, Shem And Ham And Jay heth And All The Generations Of The Sons Of Noah."



At Gallery 400, visitors like Marcia Heller got to see not only vastly enlarged architectural drawings but also viewed a scale model of the gallery, complete with minutely proportioned reductions of the original renderings. Both the enlargements and the reductions were produced on a Shacoh-920 machine furnished by Rite-Way Reproductions of Chicago.



Marcia Heller views enlargements and reductions done on drawing entitled "A Shadow of Man" by James M. Plunkard, a designer at Tigerman, Fugman and McCurry, at



past, you might not have been able to do some of those things because of the costs involved in doing them photographically. Now you can do them electrostatically."

Wierzbowski agrees, especially with the cost savings involved with using the electrostatic duplicating machine. He notes the exhibition would not have been financially feasible if it had to have been done photographically.

Adds Wierzbowski: "It seemed like a way for Rite-Way to get some exposure with the new architectural practices in town and an opportunity for the architects to be exposed to the process and its potential."

Wierzbowski notes that the potential is something that others should explore. One advantage, he says, is the process will help bridge the gap between architects and clients in trying to explain scale.

"I think what will shock most people who see the show is the impact of the large pieces and seeing those large pieces with the very small drawings," he says. "You begin to realize

that you can mock up a full-size something you designed instead of looking at a model and trying to imagine the way it affects you.

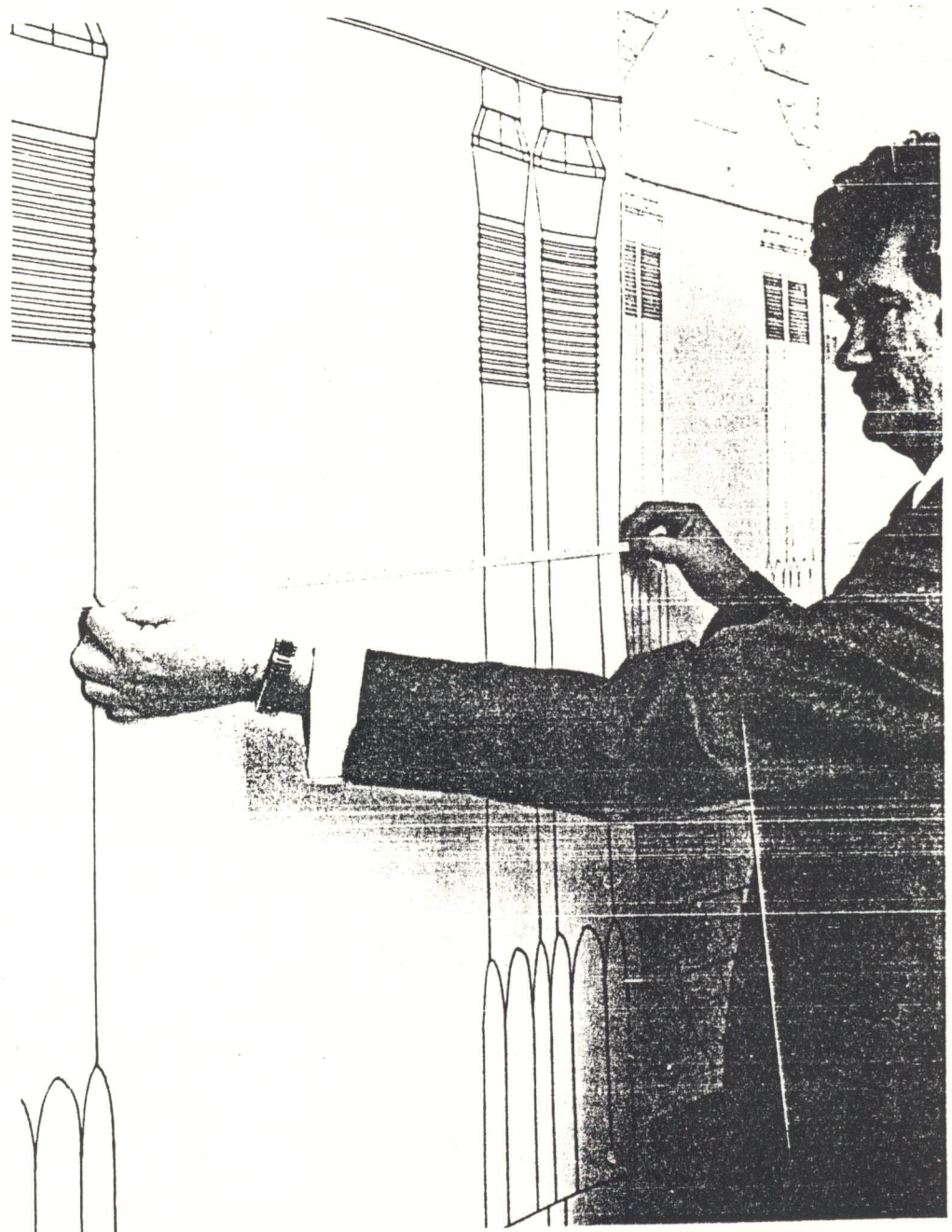
"It removes the need for the client to make that leap in imagination that the architect makes every day," Wierzbowski notes. "It exposes the client to what the architect does. He projects small things into larger scale inside of his mind. Now we can do it on paper . . . even showing full-size

details."

For the design professional, the "magic machine," as Bailey's customers call it, is a time-saver, eliminating the need to redraw or rescale work.

"Instead of having to redraw or rescale something, it's just instantly at that scale," Wierzbowski says. "And anything that saves time is really helpful. We can spend more time on design than on production."

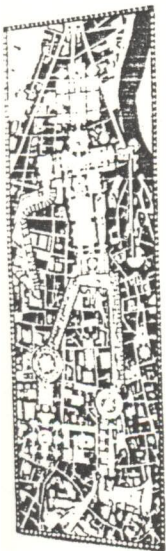
Bailey, whose father started Rite-



Don Bailey, owner and president of Rite-Way Reproductions in Chicago, measures one of the projects, entitled "Egypt," to be used in "The Idea of Big." Images were enlarged in successive steps to 3 feet by 9 feet on an electrostatic machine. To right of the display, Bailey is measuring a somewhat smaller version of the same exhibit.

"The Idea of Big" exhibit at Gallery 400. All enlargements and reductions were done on

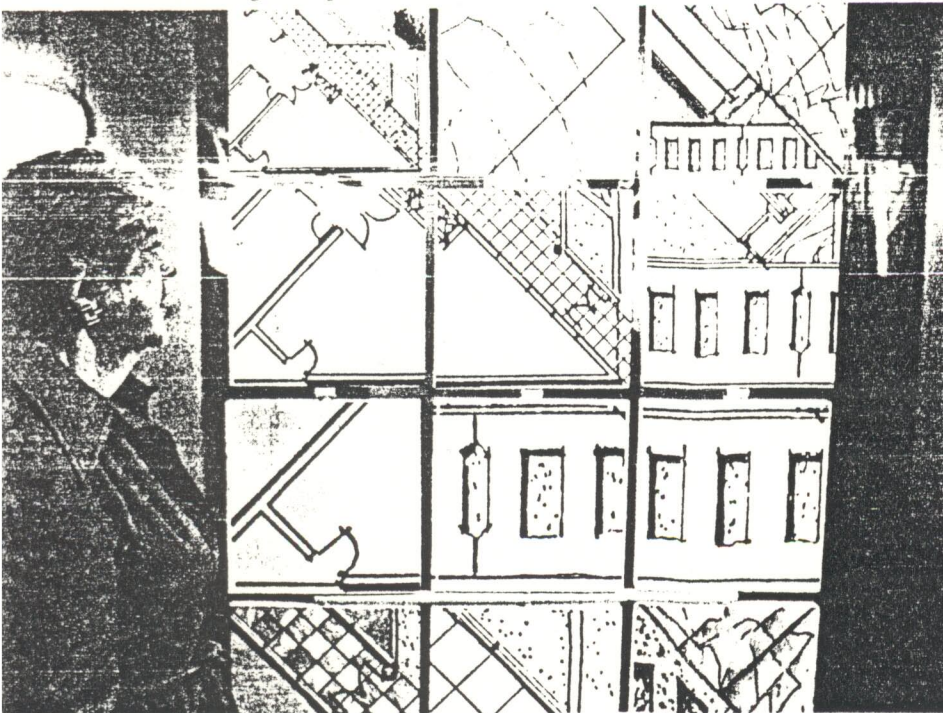
Shacoh 920 machine provided by Rite-Way Reproductions, Inc., of Chicago.





Gallery 400 visitor Marcia Heller appears to be looking out the window of "Window House," a 3-foot-by-9-foot drawing by Richard Solomon which was among the works on display at "The Idea of Big" exhibit at Gallery 400 at the University of Illinois in Chicago, College of Architecture, Art and Urban Design.

Lillian Epstein views enlarged architectural drawing that had been cut apart and mounted on foamcore at "The Idea of Big" exhibit. The design she is viewing, "Manipulating The Idea of Big," was done by Victor I. Dziekiewicz and Dario Tainer of InterSource Design Group.



Way some 30 years ago, purchased the Shacoh machine about one year ago at the urging of his clients, who wanted larger copies than could be produced on Rite-Way's other duplicator, which was limited to 24" wide output.

One of Rite-Way's clients was Wierzbowski, a partner in the firm of Florian-Wierzbowski in Chicago. The idea for the exhibit came about after Wierzbowski made a mistake in sizing an enlargement for his firm.

"Instead of being two feet square it came back four feet square," he recalls. "We were really impressed with the ability of the equipment to do it and the price at which it could be done. It was one of those pleasant accidents that happens now and again."

Wierzbowski subsequently pursued the idea of putting on "The Idea of Big," utilizing the Shacoh machine. He approached the university, as well as Bailey. He solicited exhibit material from 45 architects and engineers with whose work he was familiar ("I went to them and said, 'I admire everything you do. Will you submit something?'"). The exhibit is also funded by a \$2,500 grant from the Illinois Arts Council, a state agency. The exhibit is the first of three planned for the gallery that deal with architectural issues.

The following is a list of exhibitors at "The Idea of Big" (a slash indicates a team): Brad Angelini; Darcy Bonner; John Clark; Jacqueline Clawson; Howard Decker; Victor Dziekiewicz; Paul Florian; Daniel Garber; Richard Gibbons; Janet Goodman/James Lieberman; Julie Hacker; Ray Hartshorne; Aki Knezevic; Tannys Langdon; Jill Lerner; Sam Marts; Andrew Metter/Jim Law; Jordan Moser; Anders Nereim; Peter Noone; James Plunkard; Alan Schachtman; Randy Shear; Rael Slutsky; Peggy Smolka; Richard Solomon; Darryl Strouse; John Syvertsen; Dario Tainer; Leslie Ventsch; Nick Weingarten/Walt Barnsford; Daniel Wheeler; Jan Yoder; and Charles Young.

Organizers of the exhibit are Stephen Wierzbowski, curator, and Laurel Bradley, coordinator and director of Gallery 400.