

The names on the walls of UIC's Gallery 400 read like a who's who in American architecture; Helmut Jahn, Bruce Graham and Charles Moore to name a few. The names are there in black and white. But the personalities are there in blue and green and yellow and red.

The Gallery 400 in the Formfit Building was the recent site of the 1992 World's Fair Drawings Conference sponsored by the Chicago Central Area Committee (COAC), a group of local businessmen, the architectural firm of Skidmore, Owings and Merrill and the University. Architects from all over the country examined the possibilities for Chicago's lakefront fair in 1992.

The drawings were executed during separate two-day sessions held in New York, Los Angeles and most recently, Chicago. During each session, four teams composed of architects and students, analyzed the fair site and completed conceptual drawings based on their ideas regarding the philosophy of the fair.

The Chicago session took place on Oct. 31 and Nov. 1 in the Gallery 400. Faculty members from UIC, other architects and students from UIC, IIT and the University of Wisconsin at Madison participated.

The teams spent the first day of the session discussing the program, theme and philosophy of the fair.

"But on the second day you could hear a pin drop," said architect Jim Nagle. "The first day you talk and the second day you play hard ball."

Most of the drawings, sketches and models of the fair ideas were completed by the teams on the second day.

The World's Fair Corporation designated "The Age Of Discovery" as the theme of the 1992 Chicago fair. The results of the architectural planning session are a diverse interpretation of that statement.

One of the Chicago teams, composed of Helmut Jahn, Ronald Kreuk and Peter Eisenman, devised a 1,500-foot scaffolding (50 feet taller than the Sears Tower) to be built for the fair. The idea, entitled "Remembrance of Things Future," would symbolize

construction and the impermanence of World's Fairs. The team suggested that the scaffolding might be continually built during the fair and dismantled afterwards.

"We were concerned mainly with one thing—architecture," said Jahn.

Other teams had different ideas.

A team from New York, consisting of Raul De Armas, Henry Cobb and Laurence Booth, envisioned a fair of connected floating barges. The barges could be made in the various countries and floated to the fair site. The team also depicted the impact the fair would have on visitors in a series of make-believe postcards. One postcard read, "Dear Mom—The world is not only flat...it floats! Love, Jim-Bob."

Denise Scott-Brown, James Polshek and Dirk Lohan of the Los Angeles team went as far as to consider the individual rapport the fair would have with every visitor. The team examined the problems of garbage removal, street furniture and public passageways. One of the drawings announced, "There can never be enough toilets."

Some of the teams connected their ideas to the Columbian exposition of 1893. Other teams were concerned with the impact the fair would have on the surrounding neighborhoods.

"The kind of architectural vision brought to the fair can affect the theme of the fair," said Tom Beeby, director of the School of Architecture at UIC and a session participant.

Jack Cornelius, the executive director of the CCAC appeared to agree. "The philosophy of the fair should be related to the physical design," he said.

The CCAC will now document the drawings in a publication and submit that publication to the World's Fair Corporation for consideration.

An exhibition of the drawings opened to the public today and continues until Dec. 3.

After two days of work and sweat, Jim Nagel summed up his feelings by saying, "If you can take 20 architects and their egos and get great ideas out of them like these....you begin to think there is hope for the world."