

Alumnus

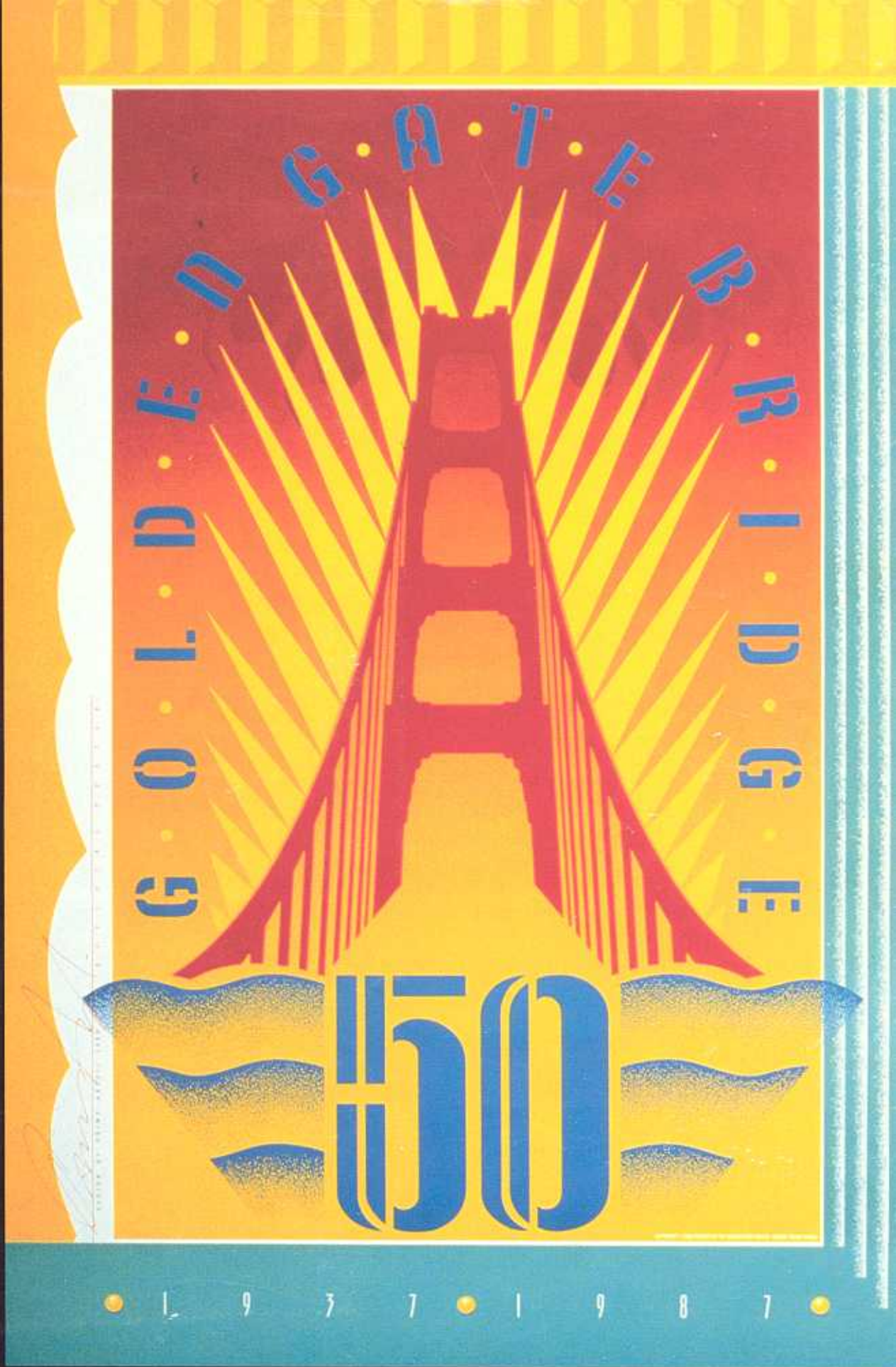
Southern Illinois University at Carbondale/Fall 1989

REBELS WITH A CAUSE

Early design
students tested
the status quo
of education
and society.



Primo Angeli of San Francisco



Design students of the 1950s and '60s had Buckminster Fuller as their guru and the problems of the world as their textbook. Decades later, what do they recall about their courses and what impact did their experiences have on their lives?

REBELS WITH A CAUSE

BY LARAINÉ WRIGHT



HE STOOD

before 600 people gathered on the SIU campus from around the world, and he talked to them about human communication and cooperation. He told them "all the political theories and all the concepts of political functions . . . are obsolete." Take away ideologies and politicians. Let people have machinery and the energy to run them, and mankind will survive.

His words rang through the hall. "The essence of the world's working will be to make every man able to become a world citizen and able to enjoy the whole earth, going wherever he wants at any time, able to take care of all the needs of all his forward days without any interference with any other man and never at the cost of another man's equal freedom and advantage."

R. Buckminster Fuller was the man and Vision 65 was the setting, an international congress held at SIU in 1965 to promote new standards in mass communications. An architect, mathematician, engineer, and inventor, Fuller had achieved by the time of the congress a distinguished reputation for his egalitarian views and his sensitivity toward the planet. When Marshall McLuhan of Canada went to the podium, he told the crowd, "To have in front of me in an audience a man like Buckminster Fuller makes me feel . . . shatteringly humble."

But Fuller's genius sired a different reaction among the young. As an associate of SIU's Department of Design from 1956 through 1971, Fuller stimulated the students' intellect and creativity and became for many of them a guru. He introduced them to the world. He exhorted them to help conserve resources and to design better social systems. His was the name that lured them to Carbondale, and when they arrived they found in the Department of Design something remarkable.

In an otherwise small corner of the University, a group of faculty had created a program that captured the attention of renowned architects, educators, and designers from many countries. The

department's liberal, sensitive, and philosophical instructors (none had a Ph.D. and few had formal training as teachers) challenged students to learn something other than technical career skills. They instilled in students the desire to find solutions to the problems of mankind, particularly the necessities of food, shelter, energy, and cooperation.

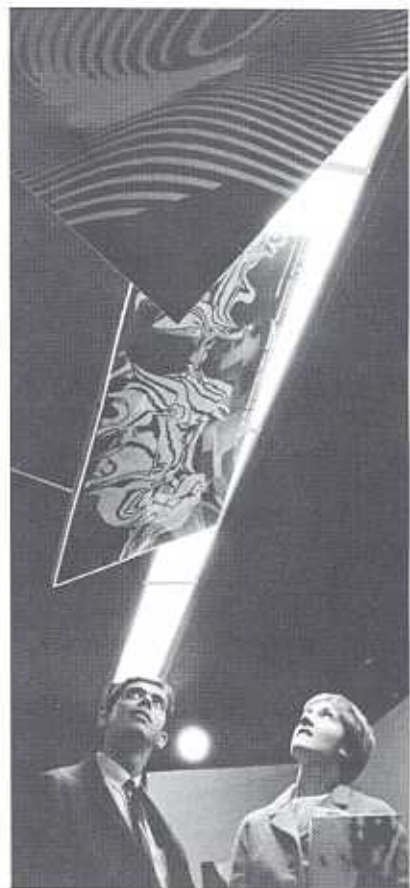
SIU's early design program was unique at the time in higher education, and it remains unique in the University's history. "We were just spell-bound," recalls alumnus Ross Parkerson '59 today. "Fuller engaged us in different ways of thinking about life and about what we would do with ourselves to make a contribution in society."

During Fuller's first few years on campus, he gave most attention to his ideas for geodesic domes and how they could transform the campus. In 1956 he said he would attempt to construct here the world's largest geodesic dome, and he put students to work on the mathematics for the 167-foot-diameter project. The dome would be "an enormous amplification of everything I've done up to now." The 23,000-square-foot interior would contain a controlled environment work space as well as grass and trees. No money was found to construct this building, but in 1962 another project—called the "Basketry Dome"—was set up temporarily on campus by design seniors. Its design, said Fuller, was "the most difficult problem ever attempted in applied spherical trigonometry."

As a lecturer, Fuller enthralled his audience. "He walked back and forth on stage and rambled on and on with no notes, just talking off the top of his head," says William Cotner '69. "He never ran out of things to say." His lectures occasionally lasted four or five hours, "but you know, everyone in the audience stayed. Nobody left. He was a very fascinating man to watch."

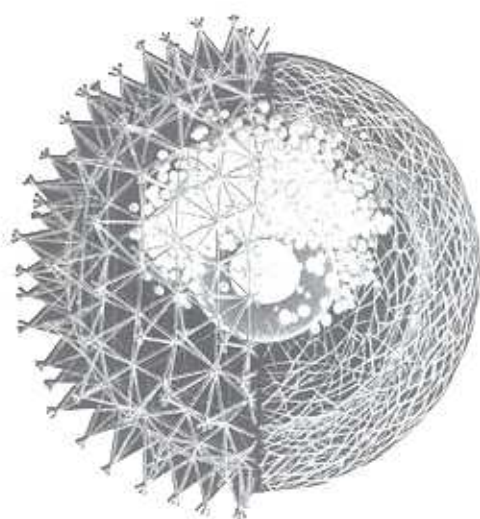
In the early 1960s, Fuller's Carbondale dome house (still standing at Forest Avenue and Cherry Street) was a beacon. Clark Absher '61 remembers Fuller and his wife, Anne, inviting design students to their home for dinner, followed by hours of brainstorming about the world and world events. Fuller could be very intimidating. "He could demolish you if you attempted idle conversation, which he viewed as a waste of time. His ideas tended to be either black or white. He allowed for only a fourth of an inch of gray in the middle."

Another design alumnus, Richard Helstern '59, describes Fuller as "a genuine thinker, an original. He had done things in the world, and he exposed students to his experiences. Occasionally I would



At the three-day Vision 65 congress held at SIUC, participants explored all facets of human communications.

Buckminster Fuller and the geodesic dome he designed for the 1964 World's Fair in Montreal.



Fuller based some of his concepts on the designs found in nature, such as the marine protozoans called Radiolaria.

We were just spellbound. Fuller engaged us in different ways of thinking about life and about what we would do with ourselves to make a contribution in society.

Ross Parkerson '59

The presence of Buckminster Fuller on the SIUC campus from 1956 through 1971 was a magnet that drew students to the design program.



discover that independently we had come up with the same thought, and that simply elated me."

Fuller taught his first design seminar here in the summer of 1956, meeting with a handful of students on the second floor of Allyn Building. He was named SIUC's first research professor in 1959. Twelve years later, disgruntled with campus administrators, he accepted office space at SIU-Edwardsville and then moved on to Philadelphia taking most of his papers and documents with him. By then, the design program his colleagues had worked so hard to establish here had been radically altered.

Yet design alumni from that era still remember the spirit here, and they remember the ideals of the people who ran the early program. "What's happened in the world since then are the kinds of things we envisioned at SIU in the 1960s," John Br '66 says. "We are just beginning to see those ideas coming into fruition. We are beginning to understand the communications environment—knowledge as an industry—and to come up with new models and metaphors to solve problems. If at SIU we would have had the desktop computing capacities that we have now, it would have been amazing to see how much more we could have accomplished."

Although Fuller's influence on the early design program and its students was profound, the department's faculty members were the ones who gave the program its shape and direction. Foremost among them was Harold L. Cohen, who established SIU's Department of Design in 1956, was its chairman through 1963, and arranged for Fuller's professorship.

Cohen had been a home furnishings designer and a teacher at the seminal Institute of Design, founded by Laszlo Moholy-Nagy as an offshoot of the German Bauhaus movement. The institute took as one of its leading philosophies that design was less a vocation and more of an attitude—"the conceptual approach used when attacking a human problem with contemporary resources," Cohen later wrote. But when the institute was taken over by the Illinois Institute of Technology (IIT) in the early 1950s, the curriculum shifted toward vocational skills and away from creative thinking and problem-solving.

Cohen resigned in protest and came to SIU in 1955 to set up his own design department modeled on Moholy-Nagy's curriculum. "I wanted to build something special, an environment where young people could grow," Cohen recalled in a recent interview. Inviting him here were two educators who approached education from a liberal perspective: Burnett Shryock, dean of the School of Art and

Music, and SIU President Delyte Morris. Both gave constant support to Cohen and his program. Of Morris, Cohen says today, "Delyte was a very special person, a Jeffersonian. I loved him."

Cohen launched the Department of Design with the belief that if trained to be creative problem-solvers, designers could be among the leaders of a new era in architecture, visual communications, product design, urban planning, ecological conservation, and many other aspects of social change. He found at SIU an almost ideal setting for exploring that philosophy. "It was genuinely a university of risk," says Herb Meyer '58, MS'59. "Morris was a man of guts, and it took guts to support such a free-wheeling program."

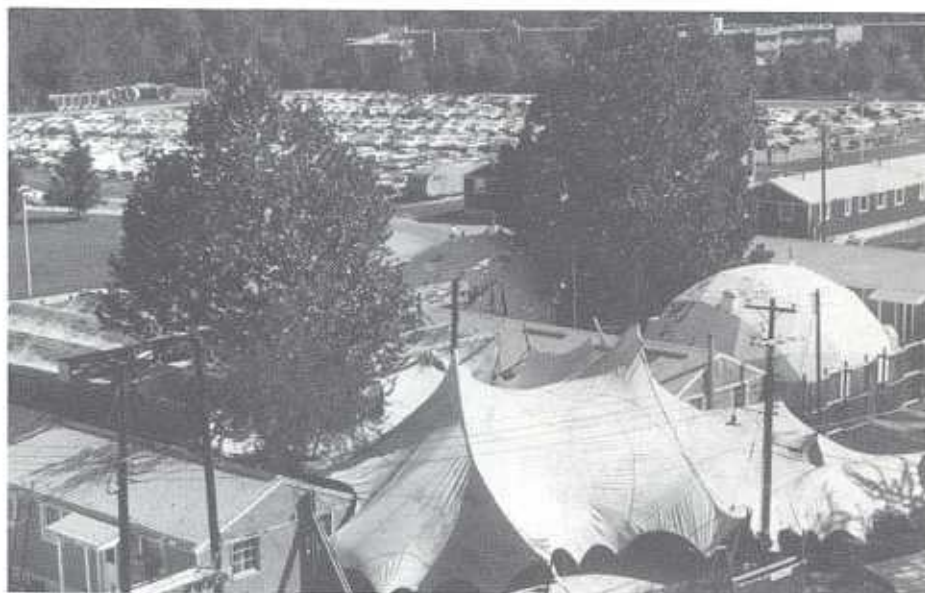
Cohen tapped into the American spirit of the times, the "excitement of possibilities." At the program's heart was the assembly of provocative professionals as guest lecturers. "I tried to bring together a group of special people as role models, important thinkers who didn't fit the normal pattern of architects, designers, and product planners," Cohen says. These professionals spent a few days to many weeks at SIU and worked directly with students on their projects. To the young students, the outside lecturers were mesmerizing. "I'd even study how they crossed their legs and held their cigarettes," Absher says. Designers Charles Eames and Will Burtin, photographer Harry Callahan, painter Josef Albers, psychologist B.F. Skinner, architects Paolo Soleri and Gyo Obata, engineer Felix Candela, architectural critic and historian Sibyl Moholy-Nagy, and astronomer Albert Wilson were a few of those distinguished guests.

Within the first five years of the new department, undergraduate enrollment increased from about a dozen to over 100, and a master's degree program was launched. Joining Cohen from Chicago as instructors were designers Davis Pratt and his wife, Elsa Kula. Many students defected from IIT and the University of Illinois-Navy Pier to come to SIU.

Fuller's own description of the early design department curriculum was "the comprehensive, anticipatory science of planning man's total environment." Moholy-Nagy's *Vision in Motion* was a handbook. Catch-phrases were "from the whole to the particular" and "form follows function." Students were trained not to carry out the ideas of others, but to conceive ideas of their own ("Prime design has no patron," wrote Fuller. "It takes the initiative"). "We were all chiefs, no Indians," says alumnus Garret DeRuiter '63, MFA'65. "The whole program was structured to teach people to go out and become leaders." Others describe the program as producing "generalists," able to fit into many roles in society.



Harold Cohen originated the Department of Design and was on the faculty from 1955 through 1963.



A 1967 senior class design project, this Pre-stressed Tension Surface Auditorium tent was erected by design seniors in 1969.

I wanted to build something special, an environment where young people could grow.

Harold Cohen



ARCHITECT

The newest project of Carbondale architect Richard A. Helstern '59 is the Goreville (Ill.) State Bank, scheduled to open at the end of this year. Before establishing his own firm in 1972, Helstern worked as a project designer for the Chicago architectural firms of Skidmore, Owings & Merrill, Naess & Murphy, and the Perkins and Will Partnership. His memberships include the American Institute of Architects and the National Trust for Historic Preservation. He was active in efforts to save such landmarks as Hull House and Wright's Imperial Hotel.

Idealistic, unstructured, and filled with the fervor of solving society's complex problems, the program suffered somewhat from being rarely well defined. As the years went on and the disgruntlements toward the program increased from other parts of campus, some of the design instructors found they had no skills in or heart for dealing with campus politics.

Post-graduation woes of students showed up early, as well. Design instructors were often brilliant in switching on the creative energies of students, but they paid scant attention to the realities of what those students would face in locating design-related jobs. The faculty held to the notion that SIU's Department of Design would not become a vocational school. Technical skills could be learned in other departments, if students so chose. Instead, the department concentrated on thinking, skills, says alumna Christine Svec '69, MS'75. "Although we were very aware of what tools could accomplish in problem-solving and communication, we were taught that in our careers if we wanted to use a particular tool, we could hire someone to operate it."

"We were a bit of a rebel group," DeRuiter says. "We were pushing the limits of design practice and pushing the limits of teaching. We took a broad scope, and that caused some resentment. Not many of the other faculty wanted to deal with us. I wouldn't say we were early hippie-radicals, but I guess that's how we were regarded by some people." That sentiment is shared by instructor Kula, who found design students to be "more rebellious and less predictable" than those enrolled in other departments.

The design faculty bombarded students with mental stimuli. Absher says his courses were characterized by an "information-gathering, brain-

storming attitude toward creative effort. Students were more into solving human needs than in making 'something pretty.' In one assignment, we had to depict our own lives graphically through two-dimensional and three-dimensional means. We had to show where we had been in life and where we were going."

The students who generally were the most comfortable in the program were those who had received earlier technical training or had experience that could be applied to the coursework. Like some of his classmates, David Burkstaller '58 was unprepared in the technical area and was faced with "a lot of architectural stuff that we could work on in theory only. Professionals would come down from Chicago for two weeks and tell us, 'Here is the problem, here are the parameters, now solve it.' Then they'd take our solutions and head home again." He laughs somewhat ruefully about it now.



Barracks holding classroom, exhibit, and workshop space for the design program are shown linked together in this 1963 photo.



One assignment in Design 275 (Visual Communications) in the fall of 1966 was to use style, color, and words to convey a concept. This poster is by Christine Ericson Svec.

"In Chicago today there are projects that look a lot like what we designed as students."

Creative projects tested individuals and teams. An article in the British magazine *Architectural Design* (July 1961) describes a project in environment control. "Working to a very limited budget," each student "was required to design a 'survival kit' for a set number of days in open country—then dumped on a nearby peninsula [Little Grassy Lake] for the given period to check how well he had planned!" In another so-called "primitive problem," students were asked to use natural objects to create without tools a carrier for a given weight of beans that then could be carried successfully over rough terrain.

Christine Svec recounts an evening class taught

The whole program was structured to teach people to go out and become leaders.

Garret DeRuiter '63



BUSINESSMAN

After initiating the Product Styling and Design Department at U.S. Gypsum Co., Chicago, Wayne P. Cornstock '64 moved to Greenville, S.C., in 1976 and started High-Lite Corp., which manufactures and sells portable floodlight equipment. In 1988 he purchased Venture Ride Manufacturing, which designs, manufactures, and sells amusement rides for carnivals and amusement parks.



Former Chautauqua Housing barracks were converted to the use of design students in 1960-61 and housed the department until 1974.



Harold Grosowsky, a faculty member in design, and students pose with the Basketry Dome in 1962.

Once to a student's comment that began, "Well, I assume . . .," Grosowsky tore open his shirt to reveal the words "NEVER ASSUME" printed on his bare chest.

by Davis Pratt. "He would walk in at 6 p.m. carrying a black box that contained specific problems that we had until 9 p.m. to solve," she says. Anxious students trying to get a head start on the projects playfully tried to peek into the box when Pratt's back was turned. "A problem well-stated is a problem solved," Svec says she was taught throughout the program. "The courses prepared me for a life of constant change and for how to fill the gap between reality and the ideal."

For many years, students designed, wrote, set in type, and printed their own brochures, books, and posters. They set up exhibits, and they produced slide shows and films. One project created in 1961 was a 20-minute sound film called "Help Wanted—White" about racial discrimination in Carbondale.

Kula remembers that money for equipment and supplies was always in short supply. The lack of resources, however, actually had a good effect on the program and its students. "We were able to create



Herb Roan came to SIU from his own prominent design agency in New York in 1957 and remained an instructor until his retirement in 1980.



Elsa Kula Pratt and her husband, Davis Pratt, were professional designers who joined the design department in the late 1950s.

very interesting things even without the technology," she says. The department's type shop had a wonderful collection of wooden type faces and old presses that students used in designing and printing limited-run books. "We weren't stymied by our limitations," she says. "We became creative because of them."

The Department of Design had no glamorous facilities in which to work. After two-and-a-half years on the second (then unfinished) floor of Morris Library, the department came to rest in barracks and domes on the west side of campus. In 1962, students and staff constructed what they called "The Space Between" (between the barracks) to answer temporarily the increasing needs for workshops and exhibit areas. The budget for the project was just \$5,000 to enclose 5,000 square feet. Designed to last for only two years, The Space Between was used for 12.

Yet the somewhat ramshackle complex of buildings became a part of the teaching process. Says Kula, "We gave each sophomore, junior, and senior a home base in the barracks, a space that he could make into his own environment. He could work there day and night, and all the resources were open for use. He had the stimulation of other students working around him. We tried to make sure there was no excuse not to create."

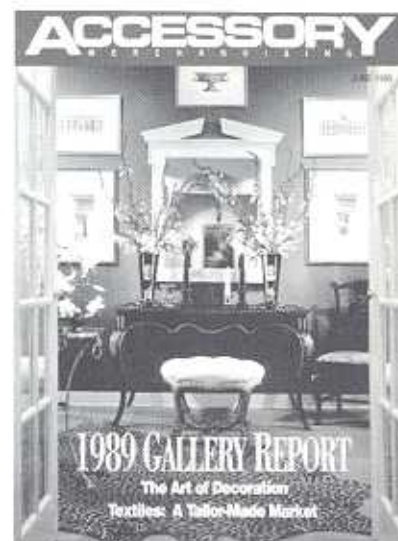
The instructors began to set up more special

projects (what one referred to as "big picturing") that took the curriculum and students down many side roads. Springing from a class project, a disposable laboratory mouse cage went into production in 1960 at Lab-Line Instruments in Melrose Park, Ill. (Still held by SIUC, the patent continues to produce royalties each year.) International interests also beckoned. Fuller took students to Africa. For a number of years, Pratt and junior design students spent a term in Haiti. In January 1969, Pratt and Kula left for Thailand on a cooperative SIU-Thai project to set up design education programs there.

Urban planning became another main concern in the 1960s. DeRuiter remembers that his senior class took on a project to redesign Carbondale and then presented the city council with their ideas, such as turning University and Illinois avenues into one-way streets. Throughout the mid to late 1960s, design students trod increasingly well-worn paths across Carbondale, knocking on doors to interview residents and gathering data on population, income levels, and economic trends.

One of Cohen's most enterprising projects here was his Experimental Freshman Year Program (1962-1963), an attempt to introduce the possibilities of a college education to students from the lowest third of their high school classes. The project used a specially designed curriculum and a stimulating, individualized learning environment set up on the second floor of the Student Center.

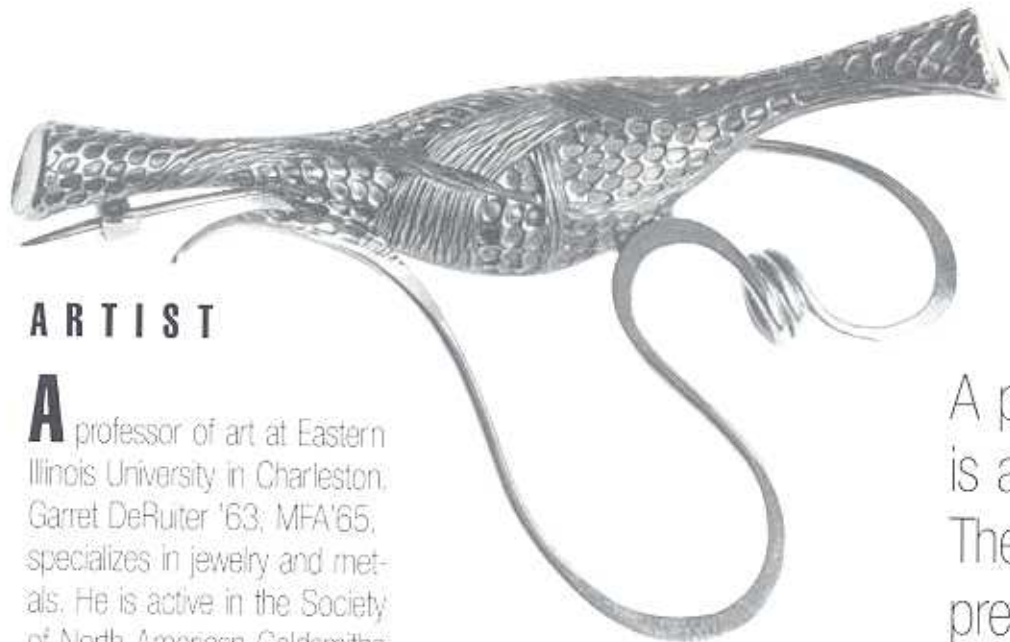
Taking in, as it did, the whole of the University meant stepping into the territory of other faculty members. Some of them were extremely opposed to offering higher education to so-called "low achievers." "Those people," says Cohen today about his opponents, "knew only how to grade beef. They knew how to test past performance, but they had no ability to judge the capabilities of people." (Cohen's own assessment of those students was vindicated. Two-thirds of those who were enrolled in the program that year went on to earn college degrees.) But the bickering about the "low achievers"



PUBLISHER

An employee of Commerce Publishing Co., St. Louis, since 1974, William G. Cotner '69 currently is publisher of *Accessory Merchandising* magazine, one of five national business publications owned by the firm. He operates "like the head of a subsidiary," he said. "I'm involved in all aspects of the magazine—the editorial product, advertising sales, circulation, defining the reader and advertising audiences, personnel, printing contracts, and design."

Lab-Line Instruments in Melrose Park, Ill., still sells disposable mouse cages that were developed from a design class project.



ARTIST

A professor of art at Eastern Illinois University in Charleston, Garret DeRuiter '63; MFA '65, specializes in jewelry and metals. He is active in the Society of North American Goldsmiths, serving on its board of directors and editing its newsletter. He also heads the graduate program in art at Eastern.



A sophomore design student (around 1960) demonstrates his solution to a problem: A hypothetical tribe of people dated 1200 A.D. possess a spoken language, knowledge of fire, and a cutting tool (simulated by a pocket knife). Students were required to design weapons, shelter, cooking methods, clothing, tools, play objects, and seating for a tribe member "in good standing."

wore Cohen down. "I remember a cartoon that someone drew about the 'peculiar' students. It showed them as three-headed people."

In 1963, the Institute for Behavioral Research in Washington, D.C., approached Cohen with a job offer, and he talked it over with Morris. "I told Delyte that the University had become too tight, too overspecialized. I said that I had become a threat to the faculty, and that I had to work in a place where people wanted me." After Cohen asked for a year's leave of absence, Morris regretfully but correctly predicted that Cohen would not return.

In summing up his years at SIU as the head of a group of creative instructors, Cohen says, "We were available. We had parties, we did theater, we had music, we wrote, we printed, we sponsored lectures. We respected people and their backgrounds. We were a family. We were part of an environment of believers." A 40-year retrospective of Cohen's impressive career as a designer and educator was held last spring in Buffalo. His SIU years were featured as part of the exhibit. About his accomplishments here, he will only say, "You'll have to judge them by the accomplishments of the students."

Cohen's departure from the University ended the first phase of a program that has gone through perhaps four or five others since. Each phase has produced remarkable energy, and each has its share of satisfied, productive alumni, but each also moved the program further away from its original emphasis.

A major shift began in the late 1960s with an increased interest in computers among the design faculty. At the same time, colleges across the country were reacting to students who wanted to have a personal say in what they would learn.

Perceptions about what happened in the design

A problem well-stated is a problem solved. The courses prepared me for a life of constant change and for how to fill the gap between reality and the ideal.

Christine Svec '69

department in 1968-69 are contradictory, at best. William Cotner says he is still somewhat bitter about his experiences in his senior year. He recalls neophyte freshmen and "Old Guard" seniors "screaming and yelling at each other" as they tried to work out a new direction for the program. Students dismantled the type department with the blessings of the faculty, and the old wooden and metal typefaces that had been used for years in creative projects were thrown out by the barrelful. The barracks and The Space Between were redesigned. The use of computers in coursework became more important, but Cotner remembers that the equipment was slow and frustrating to operate. "For me," he says, "it was a lost year."

Other graduates from that period recall that the changes were well-organized and that students were looking forward to the future of what they perceived as a revitalized program. Christine Svec views the 1968-69 year as an exercise in group dynamics, and that it was beneficial for students to help change the direction of the program.

The changes in the original program were apparent to Kula, however, who returned to campus



Design students and instructor Davis Pratt (standing at right) meet in departmental space on the second floor of Morris Library in this photo taken around 1960.

in 1974 after five years in Southeast Asia. "The green barracks and domes were gone," she says, "and the program had been moved to the blue barracks." The department, too, had been shifted administratively from the School of Art and Music to the College of Human Resources. A succession of chairmen followed. At one point a professor of clothing and textiles—a trained chemist—served as chairman of the Department of Design.

Fuller was gone, as well. His influence on the program and his interest in it had waned by the end of the 1960s. Over the years he had set up working relationships with other universities and was less frequently seen in Carbondale. Faculty members questioned the big salary SIU continued to pay him. By 1971, both the Carbondale administration and Fuller himself had reasons to be relieved that the official association had ended.

In the 1970s, the demands of accreditation and the desire of students for well-defined skills led to courses that concentrated more on specific technique and less on general process. Today the design major is found in the School of Art and Design within the College of Communications and Fine Arts. Students specialize in either visual communications or product design. A master's degree in design is no longer offered.

Yet one of the SIUC courses that alumni, regardless of major, continue to recall most vividly is a class that today is known by the title GE-C 205 ("Innovation for the Contemporary Environment"), a general studies course launched by Cohen in the

early 1960s and taught for many years by Harold Grosowsky. Affectionately called "Mr. G." or "Weird Harold" by students, he had a big bag of creative teaching tricks to keep them interested and alert. During his lectures, he addressed comments to an imaginary lover named Zelda. Once, to a student's comment that began, "Well, I assume . . ." Grosowsky tore open his shirt to reveal the words "NEVER ASSUME" printed on his bare chest.

Now taught by design alumnus Larry Busch '70, MS'70, the course is still so innovative and successful that he frequently gives seminars about it around the country. He estimates that at least 35,000 people have taken the course here since its introduction. "Although many of the projects in the course have evolved," Busch says, "the intent is still the same. We're interested in *how* one thinks, not *what* one thinks."

In numbers, design program graduates are small indeed. From 1957-88, the University has graduated only 958 of them, less than one percent of all graduates of this institution. Measured in terms of the program's impact on their lives, however, design program graduates can be said to be among the most satisfied.

John Bis came to SIU after two years of stifling regimentation in the armed services. The atmosphere here was "very creative, very refreshing. Mentally, I began to blossom. Essentially, it gave me a solid grounding in the belief that learning is



ARCHITECT

As a teacher, Carroll Bowser '69 began working in the summers as a designer and on construction sites. In 1979 he and his family moved to Vero Beach, Fla., and the following year he opened his own company. He and his associate now design and construct \$2 million in homes a year with price ranges of \$250,000 and up.

GRAPHIC DESIGNER

Primo Angeli '57, MS'59 (featured on the cover of this issue) is today one of the pre-eminent graphic designers in the United States. He and his staff of Primo Angeli Inc. work from studio space on Folsom Street in San Francisco.

In a recently published book, *Designs for Marketing: Number One* (Rockport Publishers, 1988, \$29.95), Angeli describes 12 specific packaging design problems brought to him by clients and shows the process of arriving at the solution. The firm's lengthy list of projects includes packaging for Christian Brothers wine, California Coolers, Shasta canned beverages, Capri Sun fruit drink, TreeSweet fruit juices, Formula 409, and Conoco motor oil; logos, signage, and other identities for Banana Republic, the Oakland Athle-

tics, and Pizza Hut; annual reports; and posters.

When the term "the silent majority" was coined in the Nixon-Vietnam War era, Angeli and photographer Lars Speyer created a black and white poster showing the words above a photo of a hillside of tombstones marking the



graves of unknown dead. The famous poster is now in the collection of the Museum of Modern Art in New York. Angeli has received more than 250 professional awards for his work.

In his book, Angeli pays acknowledgment to 17 people who have most influenced him, "both personal and distant." Four of them were a part of SIU's early Department of Design (Harold Cohen, R. Buckminster Fuller, Herb Meyer, and Herb Roan). Angeli and Meyer remain close friends. As SIU classmates, both were advertising majors who transferred to the new Department of Design, sensing in it something more exciting and stimulating than the field that Meyer calls "lying in print."

Design instructor Elsa Kula remembers Angeli as a student, as well. A sensitive and kind teacher, but ever the tough taskmaster, she recalls that Angeli entered the program as "just a kid out of one of the little towns in Southern Illinois; and he was full of rough edges. His stuff wasn't extra special. But he learned the process, and the polish came along later."



Students were more
into solving
human needs than
in making
"something pretty."

Clark Absher '61

a key element in human development." For William Cotner, the design curriculum "opened my eyes to look at both sides of an issue and to figure out alternatives to any situation." Adds Richard Helstern, the design faculty "made you aware of how interconnected everything is and how mankind cannot be divorced from the environment." Another graduate, Terry Svec '70, says the program taught him to "solve aspects of everyday life. I'm in control today, and I learned it in design. Anticipatory design science is a way of life."

The program and its faculty didn't coddle students. Before they were allowed to enroll, they had to show a portfolio or otherwise prove that they could handle the program. Once in, some of them discovered the courses were too demanding or not specialized enough. Of the 60 or so people who entered the program with Garret DeRuiter in the late 1950s, only seven remained by his senior year. Ultimately, DeRuiter says, the program "gave you a sense of assuredness about yourself. You had to have fortitude to get through a very demanding program."

SIUC's listing of known job titles for design alumni shows business owners and managers, engineers, photographers, city planners, publishers, surveyors, and deans, as well as visual designers, product designers, and architects. Alumni may also be discovered among educators, winemakers, brokers, geologists, woodworkers, landlords, and computer programmers. They work in the Peace Corps and with the World Bank.

That a Cohen-Fuller style program is still needed in society could be argued affirmatively by many early graduates. That it is *desired* by society is another matter. The early design program—noisy, colorful, rebellious in the sense of challenging the status quo—was a reflection of its times and its students, but times and students change.

"I do not hesitate to say that for all its complications, the Department of Design was the most valued learning experience in my life," says Herb Meyer. "As messy as the department always was, the people who emerged from it had their lives

touched and affected in extraordinary ways. The older I get, the more I understand what a profound impact that program had on those of us who were there, and how our lives were enriched because of it."

Clark A. Absher '61 became a graphic designer and art director and later owned a Ford franchise. Today he is assistant vice president of The National Bank in Carmi, Ill.

John S. Bis '66, now associate dean of the School of Architecture and Planning at the University at Buffalo-SUNY, is active on the boards of Buffalo Historic Preservation and of the Erie County Development Administration.

David E. Burkstaller '58, for many years a broker, took an early retirement and now is president and CEO of Marlen Business Systems in Sarasota, Fla.

W. Larry Busch '70, MS'70, is assistant professor of design at SIUC. He holds a number of product patents and is a consultant to businesses and a lecturer in education about creative problem-solving.

Harold L. Cohen spent 10 years as educational director of the Institute of Behavioral Research in Washington, D.C. In 1974 he became dean of the School of Architecture and Environmental Design at SUNY-Buffalo (now the University at Buffalo-SUNY). Although retired, he continues to be an active researcher.

Elsa Kula retired from SIUC in 1978 and lives in Gainesville, Fla., where she is a painter and continues to design. Her husband, Davis Pratt, retired from SIUC in 1982 and died in 1987.

Herb J. Meyer '58, MS'59, of Carbondale retired this year as director of University Photocommunications. He remains an active consultant for SIUC and pursues numerous photographic, historical, and writing projects, including film/television work for Marlon Brando.

E. Ross Parkerson '59 recently retired after 30 years as a city planner for Marin County, Santa Rosa, and San Diego in California. He is a resident of Pentaluma, Calif.

Christine Ericson Svec '69, MS'75, MA'87, worked for planning commissions in Harrisburg, Ill., and Carbondale before joining SIUC, where she is director of the Office of Project Development, Management and Evaluation in the College of Technical Careers.

Terry J. Svec '70 is director of University Photocommunications at SIUC. The unit produces videos, multi-screen slide shows, public service announcements, photography for publications, and exhibits.



Members of a 66-member student design team discuss their prototype of a low-cost housing plan for Carbondale. The setting is a geodesic dome classroom-workshop.