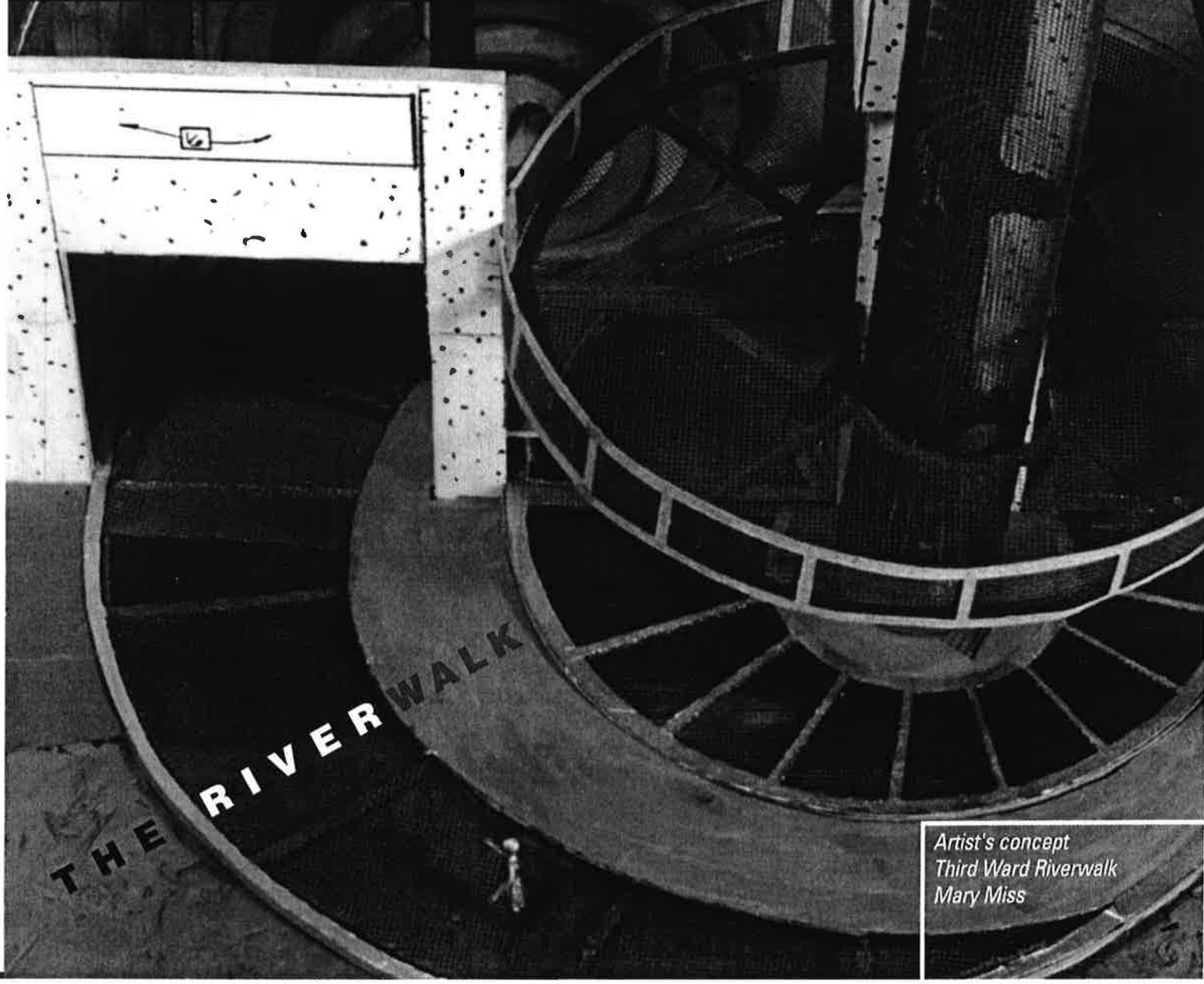


Milwaukee
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MIAD



*Artist's concept
Third Ward Riverwalk
Mary Miss*

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of Art & Design, the
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Creating an

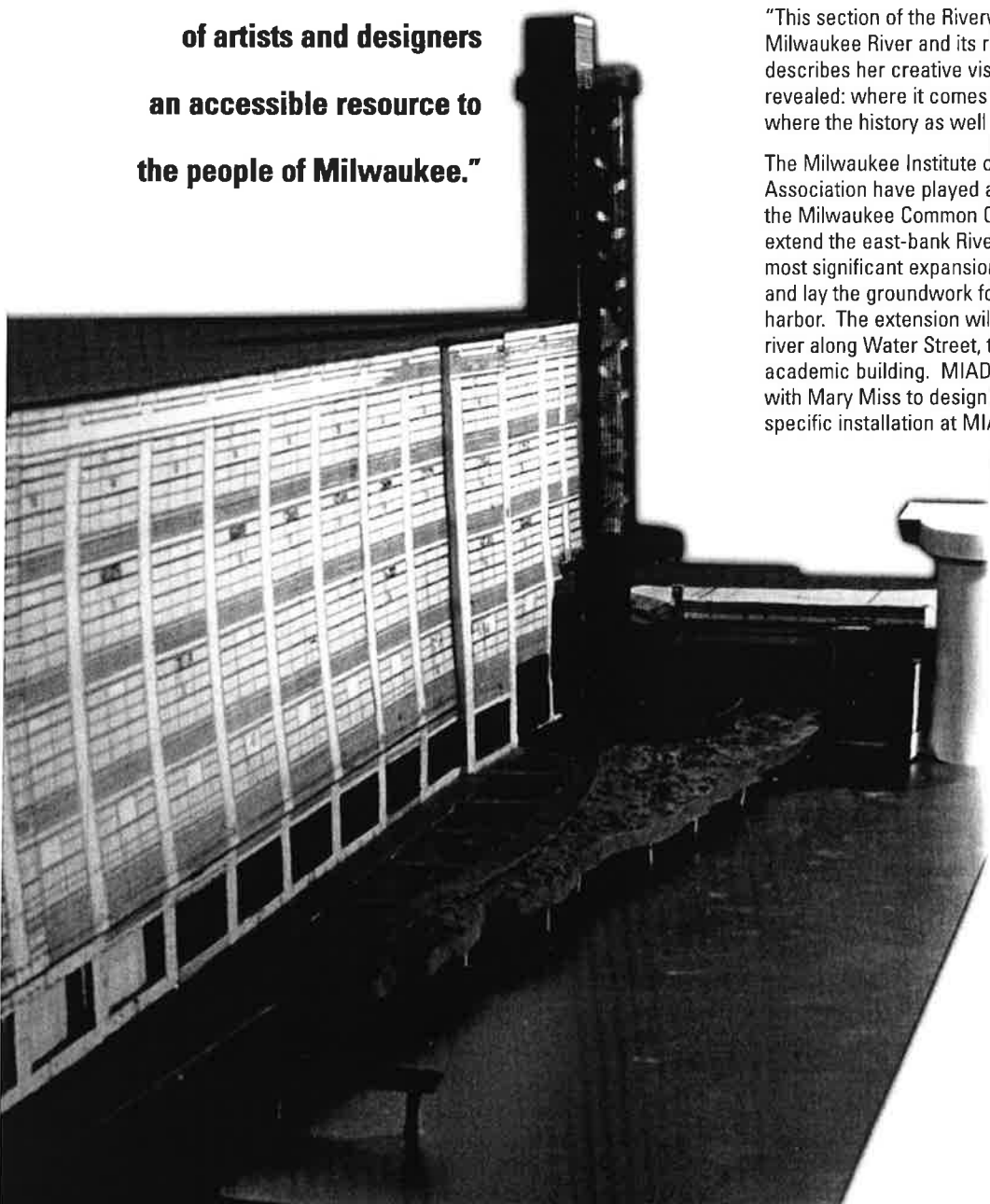
From rural Wisconsin, the Milwaukee River flows past small towns and meadows, curving into the heart of the city. The River changes character with its concrete, brick and steel surroundings, forming part of Milwaukee's infrastructure. Less than ten years ago, that role almost drowned the natural beauty of the river. It disappeared into the background of the city, an expanse to be crossed by bridges. In the early 1990s, the city focused attention on this precious natural resource, adopting pollution abatement measures and enforcing new codes. At the same time, the Riverwalk, a public path following the waterway, was begun. These efforts have encouraged people, fish and wildlife to rediscover the river, making it the centerpiece of downtown Milwaukee. Now, the renaissance of the Milwaukee River is extending into the Historic Third Ward through the Riverwalk expansion. Internationally known sculptor and environmental artist Mary Miss was selected to set the visual course of the Riverwalk, based on her expertise in balancing urban settings and natural resources.

"This section of the Riverwalk will explore new ways of experiencing the Milwaukee River and its relationship to the city and its people," Miss describes her creative vision. "The physical aspects of the river will be revealed: where it comes from, how it moves and how it changes. It's an area where the history as well as the future of the river can be imagined."

The Milwaukee Institute of Art & Design and the Historic Third Ward Association have played a major role in imagining the river's future. In 1997, the Milwaukee Common Council approved a \$6.2 million commitment to extend the east-bank Riverwalk. This project will bring about the walkway's most significant expansion since completion of its main downtown segments and lay the groundwork for a final extension of the walk to the Milwaukee harbor. The extension will begin from the Clybourn Street Bridge, follow the river along Water Street, then curve beside the riverfront bordering MIAD's academic building. MIAD put the Historic Third Ward Association in contact with Mary Miss to design the half-mile path, which will end with a site-specific installation at MIAD.

Miss describes herself as an artist whose work combines elements of architecture, landscape design and sculpture. Her best known projects include New York's South Cove Park on the Hudson River in Battery Park; installations at the Museum of Modern Art and the Fogg Museum at Harvard; and her transformation of Greenwood Pond at the Des Moines Art Center, from a forgotten urban lagoon into an educational wetland.

"I like places that are immediately engaging and change the way people look at things. My work is really about place-making," Miss says. "I'm



**MIAD installation
Mary Miss design concept**

Experience:



The Riverwalk *Expansion*

fascinated by the juxtaposition of built and natural environments that form an integration, rather than a collision. Essentially, I'm interested in creating situations that make experiences like this tangible."

For the Milwaukee Riverwalk project, Miss researched the geography and history of the area as a starting point for her design. In her words, the goal of the Riverwalk is "to demonstrate the importance of layering the experience of scientists, historians, artists and designers to suggest new ways to think about our resources and our use of them."

To accomplish this goal, Miss' design incorporates a wetland between highways 794 and 94, storm water treatment projects, and educational signage that reveals the history and natural characteristics of the river. The wetland forms one of two design focal points along the Riverwalk, visually recalling that most of the Third Ward was once a marsh on one of the largest Great Lakes inlets. Miss envisions the areas as a "planted diagram," showing the relationship between storm water runoff and the river. Water will flow into cisterns near the freeway, then will be treated before flowing through the native plantings into a pond of clean water. People will be able to observe how the city's infrastructure works by looking through a glass covered opening into a deep tunnel access system. A long shed near the tunnel will explain the River Project and provide access to the river for kayaks. Along the walkway, information about the river will also be embedded into paths, seating areas and appear as measuring devices.

From this first focal point, pathways will go through several levels, passing beneath bridges at St. Paul Street, Erie Street and ending at Young Street. The pathways will use the same materials found in these bridges — diamond plate, steel grate and wood — and will be juxtaposed with native grasses and plantings. Two S-shaped ramps, one at Buffalo Street and another at Erie Street near the Fire House, will offer vantage points to view the river and draw attention to storm water treatment projects.

The second focal point of the design is at the Milwaukee Institute of Art & Design.

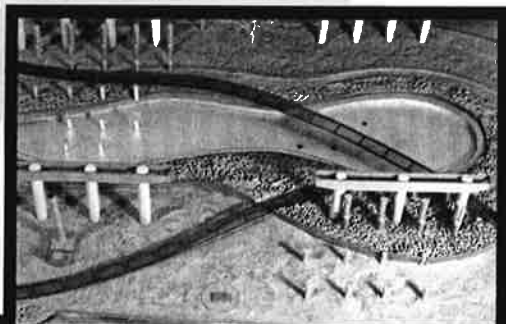
"At the Milwaukee Institute of Art & Design, the intention is to give the river a visual and physical presence inside the building as well as along the Riverwalk," Miss explains her concept. "The MIAD section will make the school and the vision of artists and designers an accessible resource to the people of Milwaukee."

A curved boardwalk with cut-out areas will offer a new way to experience the river and a view into MIAD's galleries, revealing installations, paintings, sculptures and design projects. Finger piers will extend from the boardwalk, providing an outdoor studio for students. Students could create works or installations that explore the river or test designs for boats or canoes.

The boundary between inside and outside will become blurred at the end of the building near Young Street. The glass wall of the gallery and an overhead balcony accessible to students will give the appearance of being inside the building, while spiral stairs will lead pedestrians to three outside viewing platforms. The first two are planned close to river level, with the third at the top of the chimney. This vantage point will offer a view of the river and city from Lake Michigan to where the Menomonee River flows into the Milwaukee River.

Through her Riverwalk design, Mary Miss redefines the Milwaukee River's relationship to the city, uniting its distinct roles as a public utility and natural habitat. Her design has already met with approval from the Historic Third Ward Association and city officials. It is a major project for the city which will involve government agencies, city officials, designers, engineers, artists and architects. Yet, in her words, "It is the individual who follows the seam of the Riverwalk, experiencing it in all of its configurations, who will begin to create a new sense of the river and what it will become in the future." ©

Over the past decade, MIAD has thoughtfully developed an urban campus for the benefit of its students and the Milwaukee community. It has renovated three historic buildings into a spacious academic facility, residence hall and student union, reclaiming the past while looking toward the future. As an institution, MIAD is associated with numerous public art projects that enhance the aesthetic nature of our urban landscape, such as the Midwest Express Center and the Riverwalk. MIAD has been connected to the Riverwalk since its inception in 1994. Students, alumni and faculty have contributed their expertise, creating public art installations and signage along the walkway (See Spring/Summer '98). By involving internationally acclaimed artist Mary Miss in this project, MIAD will introduce features into this major civic enterprise that are both directly associated with the College's academic mission and reflect the distinctive characteristics of the river's path through the Third Ward.



Wetland installation
Mary Miss design concept



Buffalo Street installation
Mary Miss design concept