

For Release:
IMMEDIATE



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Designers' Statement

Charles Eames and Eero Saarinen Associates

IBM wanted its World's Fair presentation to be a valid and meaningful statement about the company and its products, entertaining to be sure, yet educational for all visitors regardless of their age or their knowledge of computer technologies.

In fulfilling these World's Fair objectives, we set forth to create an environment in which we could show that the methods used by computers in the solution of even the most complicated problems are merely elaborations of simple, human-scale techniques, which we all use daily.

We felt that we could best achieve these ends by creating a whole environment, rather than by providing a building to house exhibits. This way, by inviting the visitor to participate in a series of experiences, we could communicate ideas directly. We hope to make him feel, as well as understand, that the role of the computer is not only less mysterious but much closer to his own life experience than he may think and that beneath the most apparent complexity there is always astonishingly simple and logical order.

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Although our effort is to remove the mystique surrounding computer systems, the wonder remains. And everything in the environment and the experiences is devised to convey this sense of wonder and marvel in the world of computers.

Most of the one-acre site is covered by an architectural grove, consisting of 32-foot high steel trees bearing a sheltering cover of varied green-gray translucent plastic. Although the IBM Pavilion has been designed deliberately as "un-architecture," there is a serious intention in this use of thin sheet steel for the man-made trees; the suggestion that thin sheet steel might be developed and used as an expressive as well as a structural material for architecture in the future. Symbolic of the rational order that underlies the apparent randomness of natural phenomena, this geometricized architectural grove is intended as a pleasant green oasis in the vast World's Fair grounds. There is a place to rest and feel refreshed, and a garden-forest where various experiences unfold.

Events, facilities, experiences, devices, contraptions, entertainments, graphic displays and pavilions-within-the-Pavilion, such as the Probability Machine, the Pentagon Theaters, the Computer Applications Area, and the Scholar's Walk, stud this forest wonderland and lead up to the main spectacular of the "Information Machine."

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The three-dimensional maze-like ramps, leading to the unique "People Wall" and the main attraction, the "Information Machine," underscore again the idea of order emerging from apparent chaotic complexity, make the process of waiting to get into the main show a positive and entertaining experience.

The fifteen-minute spectacular inside the "Information Machine" is the climax. By means of a whole array of techniques involving sight and sound, the central idea of the computer as an elaboration of human-scale acts will be communicated with exciting directness and vividness.

It is our hope that the whole IBM Pavilion will have meaning not only to the absorbed and thoughtful visitor, but also for the distant viewer, the passer-by and the passer-through.

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