PUBLIC exchang

BY EDDIE SILVA

THE ARTIST MARY MISS IS PERCHED A BIT PRECARIOUSLY ON A stool in a cluttered design studio at Washington University. Architecture students surround her, standing, leaning on design tables or sharing space on a small, dilapidated sofa. In this cramped setting, the discussion is about space, the most advantageous use of it.

Laumeier Sculpture Park is serving as the semester's design problem — if there were to be a redesign of the park's facilities, how would it best be done? The students nervously present their models to Miss and to the class, muttering concepts of form and materials and scale and where to put a parking lot.

Miss, flown in from her home in New York for an evening lecture, isn't giving any nods of approval or encouragement. She keeps asking questions and is mildly flustered by the awkwardness of the give-and-take among strangers. She is tall and thin, and moves with the stiff grace of a large bird — a heron or a crane. A pale complexion accentuates her long, dark hair, which is developing streaks of gray. She has a wide mouth that easily breaks into — in this situation — an uneasy smile.

The students have neglected fundamental questions, she tells them. What is a sculpture park? What is it for? How does it relate to the surrounding environment? Is Laumeier to remain stuck in the 19th-century model of a high-art enclave, separate from the neighboring high-rises, strip malls and upscale suburban homes? Or can Laumeier develop a relationship with that environment, so the two begin to coexist and affect one another?

With these ideas now lodged in the room, the rickety scale models and the placement of the parking lot are swept out of mind.

Questions such as these are emblematic of the investigatory approach to art-making that has taken Miss on a journey from being a woman seeking acceptance from the gallery system — another artist waiting anxiously for an appointment with a slide sheet in her hand — to an artist who sits in boardrooms with judges, city officials, architects, bankers and developers, seeking ways to influence the shaping of public space.

Part of the public artist's role — in a new era of public art in which Miss is a prominent figure — is to seek approval for the art from the public it is (supposedly) designed to serve. Her lecture that evening is titled "The Art of Engagement," with the slide show/discussion functioning as part of that engagement. She's making a pitch — for interest, momentum, perhaps dollars — for her plans for a public space adjacent to the Thomas F. Eagleton Federal Courthouse under construction downtown. Speaking to a standing-room-only audience in Wash U.'s Steinberg Hall — with Eagleton seated in the front row like a benevolent Methuselah — she has a difficult task. The courthouse has become synonymous with the word "boondoggle," plagued by a list of problems — cost overruns, delays, mold, Chinese doors, the firing of the contractor by the General Services Administration (GSA) — that would sound funny if it were read aloud by Chico Marx. Miss has a tough, skeptical audience in light of what's already happened with the courthouse. It would take some kind of artist to spruce up the big pink penis violating the St. Louis skyline.

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ARTIST MARY MISS' PLAN FOR THE SPACE NEXT TO THE NEW FEDERAL COURTHOUSE IS VASTLY DIFFERENT FROM THE STATUES AND MONOLITHIC SCULPTURES OF THE PAST. IT'S PUBLIC ART THAT ACTUALLY KEEPS THE PUBLIC IN MIND.

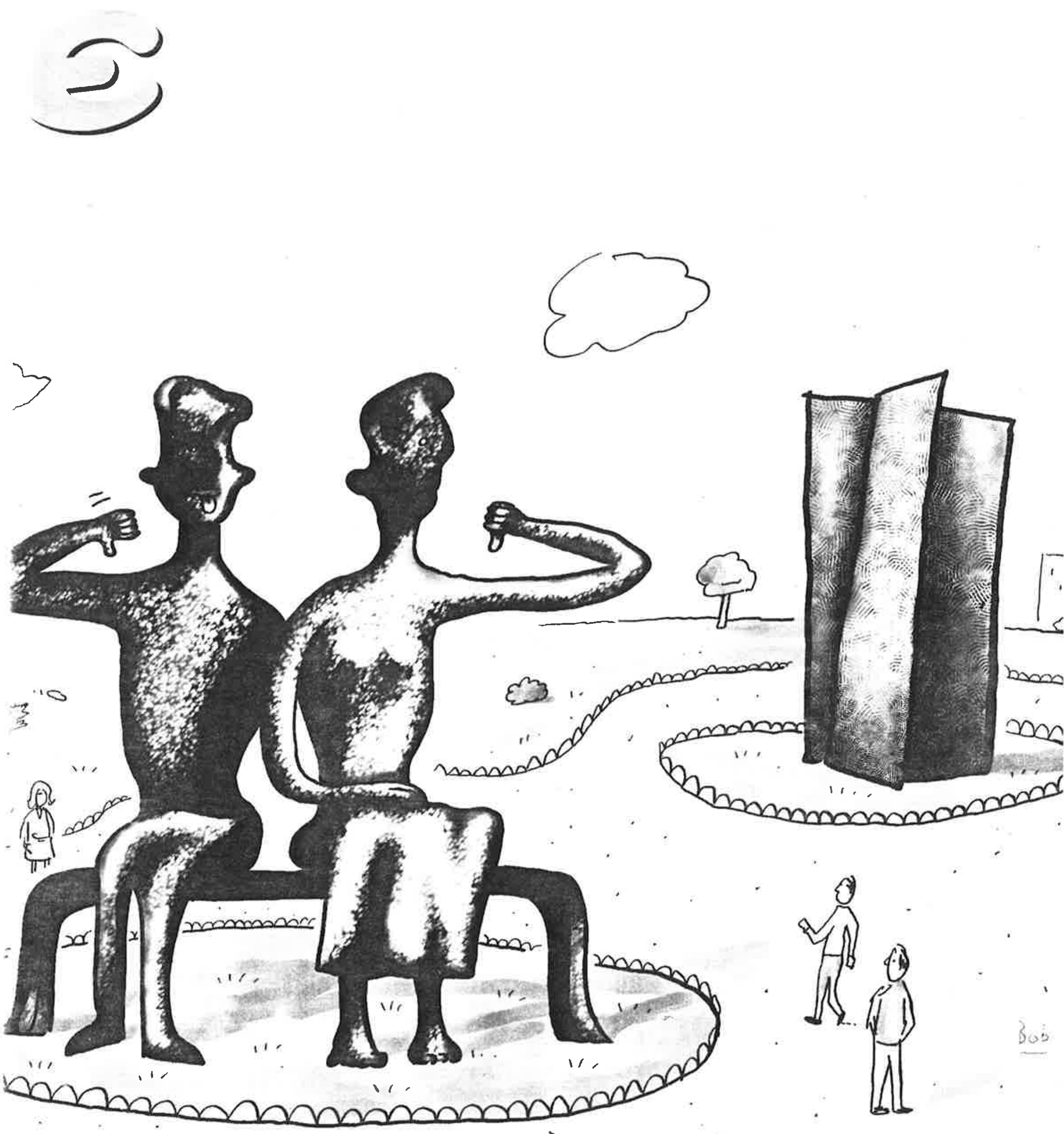

ILLUSTRATION BY BOB ECKSTEIN

Mary Miss: Her work asks the question "How can we deal with urban place-making in our time and redefine the way the built and the natural come together without a collision?"

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One advantage Miss has — before this audience, at least — is that whatever kind of artist she might be, she's not Richard Serra.

Que Serra, Serra

Richard Serra: the sculptor of Cor-Ten steel slabs; the creator of "Tilted Arc," the removal of which (from Federal Plaza in New York) was one of the storm centers of the '80s art-funding controversies; and the maker of "Twain," which, unlike "Tilted Arc," remains standing on its original site in downtown St. Louis as part of the ineffectual Gateway Mall. The debate over "Twain" has cooled over the years, but just as the piece blocks foot traffic through the square, it divides local sensibilities. "Twain" functions as either a cultural status symbol or as little more than a rusted public urinal.

Porter Arneill, who serves as an advisor on public art and education for the Regional Arts Commission (RAC), points out the irony surrounding the city's relationship to "Twain." Although St. Louis is linked internationally to one of the most recognized pieces of public sculpture of the 20th century, Eero Saarinen's Gateway Arch, "the most well-known public sculpture in St. Louis to St. Louisans is 'Twain.'"

"Twain," the forbidding rectilinear steel slabs that inhabit the west end of the Gateway Mall, arose unbidden before the community at large in 1982. The reception it received was not one of gratitude. To many people, "Twain" was forced on them by the distrustful "cultural elite" of the city, including Serra's principal patron, Emily Pulitzer. If this was public art, why weren't the unwashed masses consulted, or at least provided with some sort of educational access? Placed in the midst of a deteriorating urban core, "Twain" became a symbol of that decay, or even a cause. Aldermen began raising alarms about "Twain" as a structure that would encourage crime, with its tall steel slabs providing a hiding place for the nefarious.

Nearly 20 years since its installation, "Twain" is still a sore subject, as Miss has observed. "During the time I was doing my proposal," she says, "I was constantly hearing it referred to: 'Well, we don't want anything like that.' It's still such a negative image in so many people's minds. It is totally the opposite end of the spectrum from the way I approach my work, but I certainly respect its right to exist. I'm just doing something that's different. I've moved in a different direction."

In Steinberg Hall, though, Miss is not about to discuss her personal reconciliation with the work of artists such as Serra — a generation of bulls known for their muscular, monolithic objects — even though her proposed project for St. Louis would connect the slim corridor between Clark and Market with the Gateway Mall and, ironically, with Serra's "Twain."

Miss presents herself as a different kind of artist, one whom local artist Bob Hansman introduces as "not one of those artists who leave town before the art hits the fan."

Again, in relation to Serra, Miss' proposal for public space adjacent to the courthouse has little to do with making singular objects marked by her signature style. For

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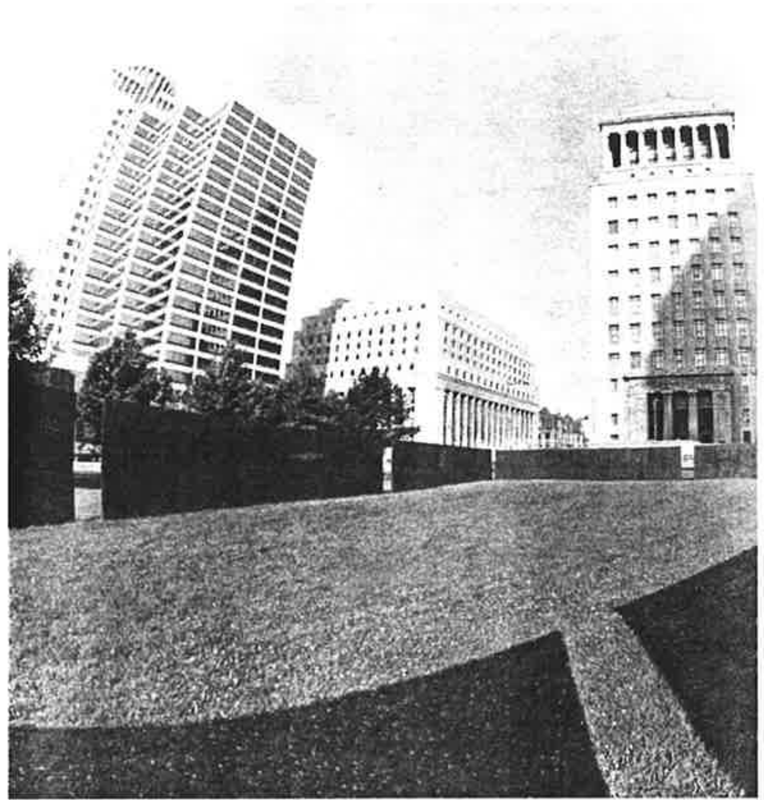

Richard Serra's "Twain" remains a sore subject in St. Louis 20 years after its installation.

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example, she has her own installation at Laumeier, "Pool Complex: Orchard Valley," where she took the site of an abandoned swimming pool and adapted it into a trellised walkway and seating area. Many people wouldn't think of this as a work of art, or as sculpture, which is fine with Miss. She chose the garden trellis-like structures for their sense of familiarity rather than to make structures that would stand out as exceptional forms. "I know that people would be able to relate to them in that way," she says. "Yet there is something different about them, and they're creating situations that are not just the same, so people are experiencing that. And when they go away from this place, they have the memory of having experienced it there, and as they move through the world, they'll start noticing these structures again. It's got a lot to do with memory — not nostalgia, but how memory functions in all of our lives and determines our future."

With the city in the throes of demolition addiction, crushing more of its heritage to dust by the hour, Miss' proposal for public space acts as an antidote, a reclaiming of memory and history. She seeks ways to make historical reflection a central component of the site. Part of her creative process has involved immersing herself in the city's history, with numerous visits to the Missouri Historical Society to explore artifacts on exhibit and in storage. She's examined a 19th-century book, Compton and Dry's *Pictorial St. Louis*, with images of the city as it existed at the height of the Industrial Revolution. She's visited the old Lemp Brewery to study the remains of former buildings in storage there, taking note of such details as the limestone foundations particular to the city.

Projects such as these are by their nature interminably on hold, so Miss is still exploring how these elements can become parts of a whole, to form an appealing public space within the urban environment. Instead of the traditional plaza of statues and fountains, or forged metal, Miss is thinking of a greenspace that reflects St. Louis' history and projects ideas of a more positive future. Her plan — a work-in-progress — includes a line of trees and native prairie grasses inserted in the urban corridor along 10th Street. Structural fragments from old buildings, saved from demolition, decorate the site, with some functioning as impromptu chairs and benches. The full facade of one of those buildings might be laid flat, working as sculpture, playground and seating area, and as a reference to St. Louis' past in juxtaposition to the skyscrapers that make up its present. In Miss' study of old city maps, she's found where the outline of Chouteau Pond was once located on the site. Now a forgotten bit of St. Louis history, in the 19th century Chouteau Pond collected toxic runoff from downtown industry, becoming the source of cholera epidemics in the city. Miss conceives of a narrow reflective channel that would collect storm-water runoff. Cleansed naturally by a series of plant beds, the resulting pool would mark the former Chouteau Pond and demonstrate advanced ecological practices.

"How can we deal with urban placemaking in our time," Miss asks the audience, "and redefine the way the built and the natural come together without a collision?"

She emphasizes that she is an artist — not an architect, not an urban planner, not a landscape designer — and to her this means she has an obligation to open new tracks of thinking, explore new territory. In the midst of a technological revolution as

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photo by Jennifer Silverberg

all-encompassing as the Industrial Revolution a century before, Miss calls for the artist's participation in this rapidly evolving society, to take part in the critical task of understanding "our future sense of locating ourselves."

Going public

The procedures through which public art is selected, funded and made have changed significantly since the day Serra's "Twain" appeared in the middle of the Gateway Mall or, more to the point, since his "Tilted Arc" was removed from Manhattan's Federal Plaza in 1989. The de-installation of "Tilted Arc" closed a decade in which artists, in Miss' words, "were the bad guy." An aggressive Republican Party, eager to condemn any ill-spent tax dollar, found artists an easy mark. Artists work in the territory outside the status quo, if they're doing their job, subverting institutionalized thinking. You don't discuss religion, sex or politics in mixed company, but here were artists such as Andres Serrano placing a crucifix in, he said, his own urine, photographing it with exquisite lighting effects and calling it "Piss Christ." Or Robert Mapplethorpe, photographing friends and lovers in bondage gear, or pissing on each other, or engaged in a good friendly fist-fuck. The '80s were a decade in which artists were told to mind their manners or all those government dollars would be taken away. And, for the most part, considering the 40 percent cut the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) sustained — accompanied by the elimination of grants to individual artists — the cultural money flow was stopped.

According to former Washington University professor Casey Blake, the debate over publicly funded art had been simmering since 1967, when Alexander Calder's "La Grand Vitesse" was installed in Grand Rapids, Mich., funded by the then-fledgling NEA. Blake, who recently accepted the chair of the art-history department at Columbia University, has been working on a book that examines the last 30 years of public art in America. He observes that although "La Grand Vitesse" has become a proud civic landmark over the last three decades — it is even included in the city government's logo — it spawned "a pretty heated debate during the two years before actual installation."

The seeds of the '80s conservative rebellion can be found in this ur-project. According to Blake, the debate over the installation of "La Grand Vitesse" included those "opposed to the notion of modernist or nonrepresentational art." Yet another contingent "felt the Calder in Grand Rapids represented a bid for public power and public space on the part of people who already controlled private cultural institutions, like museums or galleries. For these people, the objection to the Calder sculpture was that it wasn't in the end a public work, or it wasn't self-evidently a public work."

Within this debate was an objection to the procedures through which public art was selected — that is, by an elite group in Washington, behind closed doors. Blake refers to this era as the "liberal-modernist project in public art," in which cities were viewed as extended open-air galleries for the exhibition of artwork by prestigious contemporary artists. Monolithic objects made by artists such as Calder and Serra were meant to enrich a community by their very presence, quickening a city's cultural pulse. Miss says of the '60s and '70s, when she was a student and emerging artist, "the only public art we were aware of were steel-welded sculptures in a public park," a kind of art object that is now ingloriously referred to as "plop art."

Blake believes that underlying the opposition to the "liberal-modernist" model was an anxiety over the increasing decline of American cities. Public-art projects are usually connected to urban renewal (the GSA has a percent-for-art component as part of any building construction, for instance), but by the '70s most cities found themselves in the midst of severe fiscal crises brought on in part by steep declines in urban population. "There is often the tendency in this period for critics of public-art installations to focus on them as symbols of failed urban liberalism," Blake points out. "So within the course of a decade, or a dozen years or so, public-art installations have gone from being symbols of urban revitalization to symbols of modern projects for American cities that have gone terribly wrong."

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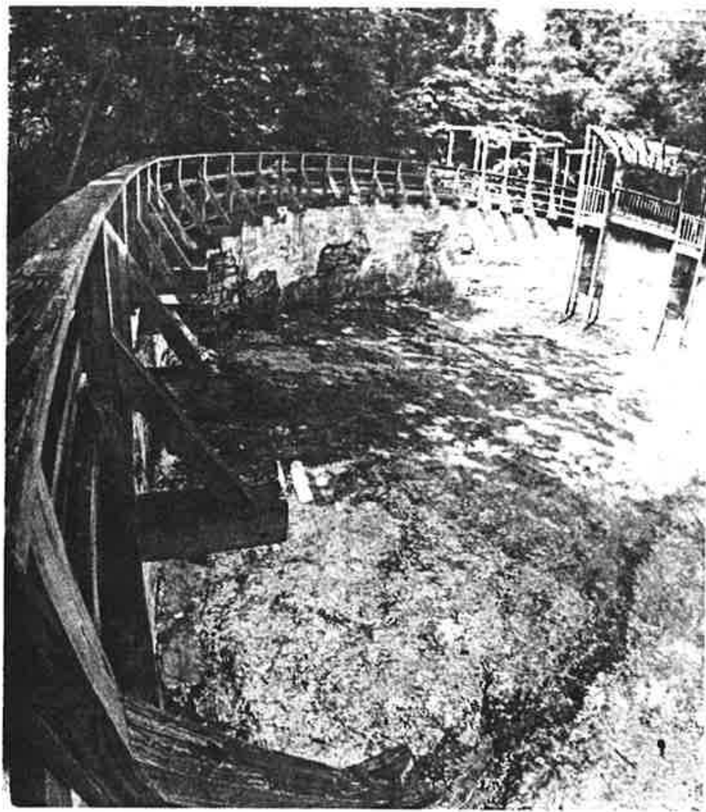
photo by Jennifer Silverberg

Mary Miss' "Pool Complex: Orchard Valley" at Laumeier Sculpture Park

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"Twain" manages to touch on all of the elements of controversy Blake describes. Situated as it is in a public square, it remains an object of public debate. Blake finds that debate unproductive, with one side of the argument looking on the other as nothing more than rude philistines. "There are still a large number of artists and arts administrators who assume that all opposition to public-art installation comes from know-nothing reactionaries," Blake observes. "That's the immediate response to such criticisms.

"One of the real contributions people like Mary Miss and her successors made is to force us to stop and listen to the criticisms and try to respond to them creatively. If there is ever going to be a public-art program that is publicly funded in St. Louis, it will have to start with the premise that you have to involve the community in some way with the discussions. Unfortunately, this is still a lesson that much of the arts community has to learn. That may have been one of the real unfortunate legacies of the 'Twain' controversies here in St. Louis. It hardened people's positions on all sides of this issue."

Mark Weil, Blake's colleague in the Wash U. art-history department, is one of those who could easily be lumped with the city's "cultural elite." He is not only one of the city's most significant art collectors; for an interview on public art, he calls on his cell phone from a cafe in Seville. But in regard to "Twain," he's part of the "know nothing" opposition. He believes the sculpture to be problematic "not because of Serra or the design, or if the finished work was successful based on aesthetic issues, but because there was no attempt to involve the public in a reception of the work.

"I've seen Serras on private lands that are impressive," he adds, but some of the issues Serra is involved in deal with a confrontational use of space, "and that becomes problematic in the public sphere."

Weil figures as an advocate for Miss' St. Louis project. "That's the kind of public art that works. It's part park, it's part urban development, and terribly ambitious. My feeling is that if one is going to do public art, there's no point in doing it unless you're going to do something major, to make a location that works for a great many people. You can't make a small ornament.

"To me, the key is that if art is placed in public, it needs to address public needs as opposed to the private creative dreams of an artist or patron. Public art needs wit, and it functions when it entertains and makes a place where people can and want to gather." Weil believes that if St. Louis can "rise to the occasion," Miss' project could "take the notion of public art to another level."

Where have all the cowboys gone?

After "Tilted Arc" was removed from Federal Plaza in the dark of night on the Ides of March 1989 — the culmination of eight years of letter-writing campaigns; panel hearings, lawsuits and countersuits; and a heated public debate in the New York and national press — what Casey Blake calls the "liberal-modernist" model for public art was dismantled along with it. The GSA, which had worked in partnership with the NEA's public-art component since the 1960s, has gradually distanced itself from the Endowment, preferring not to be associated with those wonderful folks who brought you "Piss Christ."

Michael Faubian, who works as a division coordinator at the Endowment, is chagrined by the NEA's pariah status. After the "Tilted Arc" fiasco, it was the NEA's

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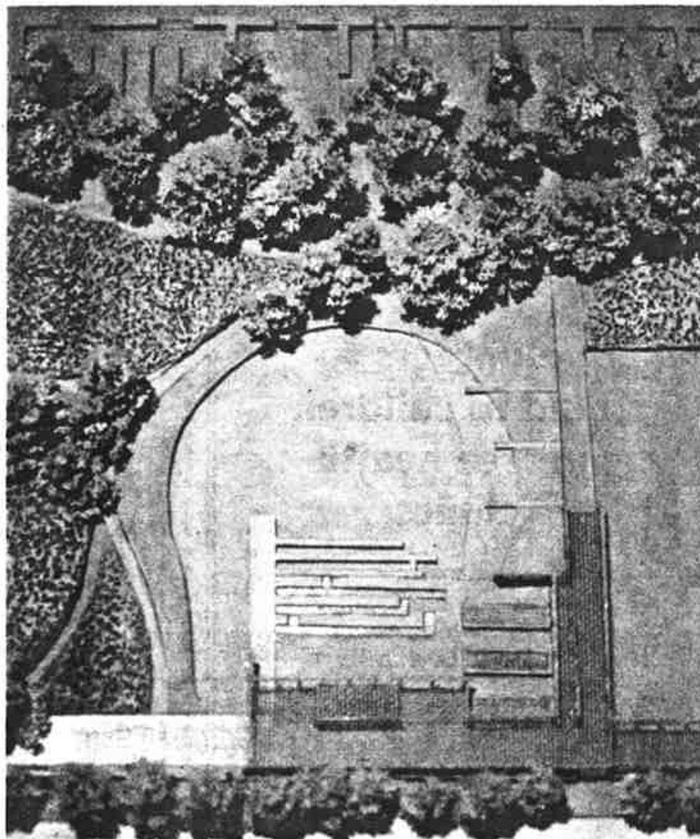

A scale model of Mary Miss' proposed public-art project adjacent to the Eagleton Federal Courthouse. Washington University art-history professor Mark Weil describes it as part park, part urban development. Native trees and grasses work as a natural filter for stormwater runoff to create an oval pond, at center.

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Richard Andrews, director of the Endowment's visual-arts program from 1986-90, who advised the GSA on the redesign of its selection process.

The changes that Andrews suggested and that were later implemented sought to "involve the community and tenants of the public building more integrally in the whole process of selecting public art," Faubian explains, "so perhaps in the future the outrages that happened with 'Tilted Arc' could be prevented."

The key to the approach the GSA now takes (the NEA's Art in Public Places program was cut when the Endowment's budget was slashed) is expressed by Susan Harrison, head of the GSA's Art in Architecture program: "We don't like to make decisions in a vacuum without community input."

A panel of 10 or 11 volunteers is put together. "We try to bring diverse interests to the table," says Harrison, "in terms of art professionals as well as people from the community, people that represent constituencies larger than themselves. We always include our client who's going to be in the building — typically that might be a judge, that might be a clerk of the court, it might be somebody from the U.S. attorney's office." In St. Louis this panel includes Judge Edward L. Filippine, RAC's Jill McGuire and architect Gyo Obata — a group that might be considered diverse but doesn't exactly sound as if it encompasses members of the vulgar public.

This group comes together, discusses the parameters of the project and selects the artist. And it is with this group that the artist must achieve consensus as to what the project will be. As Miss describes the process, "It's to get through this whole bizarre, complex labyrinth of local sentiment, politics, needs, desires — it is a very complex situation."

It's a process that calls for a diplomatic, managerial personality, one antithetical to that of "the artist who gets to be the cowboy and comes in and talks tough and behaves badly and chews tobacco and spits on the floor," as Miss describes her own "caricature of the guy artist."

"It's such an opposite role for anyone who is trying to work in this public domain. You have to go to meetings. You have to talk people into things. You have to really convince people that you're going to be with this the whole way through, that you're reliable, that you're not flaky, that you're serious, that you're a real citizen participant in this realm."

In this new era of public art, it is an inappropriate time for the uncompromising artist. Critics argue that public art that has emerged since "Tilted Arc" — an art created through community input and committee consensus — is a watered-down art that lacks a distinctive artistic vision.

In her response to this criticism, Susan Harrison defines the territory the artist and the government patron must negotiate together in the public realm: "I feel like I'm often in a difficult place because the work that we may commission may be more conservative than the art world would like it to be. In terms of our clients, they think it's

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cutting-edge. If I'm getting beaten up by the clients and by the art world, I'm in the right place."

Miss acknowledges the risks inherent in such a process but doesn't believe public art inevitably loses any potency: "I did this project at the South Cove in New York City, and I was working for the Battery Park City Authority, which isn't that much different a client than the GSA. What I wanted to do was to make a place that really engaged people, that had a potency to it in a public place along the water's edge in New York City."

The Battery Park Project is one of the most highly regarded public-art projects in the country. A landfill was created along the river in lower Manhattan from earth removed for the building of the World Trade Center. Miss designed a public space within a dense city, providing people with air, water, sky, views of skyline and sea.

"I don't think that's watered-down," she argues. "Many people are taken by this place. Many want to return. They want to spend time there. It's a space for reflection. I make that with absolutely no apologies, and I feel there's absolutely nothing watered-down about it.

"Is it different from something that would be on the grounds of some collector in Texas or California? Yes, it's going to be different. There are all kinds of safety codes, all kinds of things that one has to deal with in this real world. But the thing that's interested me all these years is finding a way to enter that realm and affect it in some way.

"It's absolutely the most important territory that artists can be investigating. It has to do with our lives, with how to proceed with the future, about changing people's attitudes toward each other, toward the way they relate to each other. It's about absolutely essential issues of our lives, and for the first time in a very long time artists are having a chance to address those issues. It's the cutting edge."

Miss' work dissolves boundaries. Landscape design, urban planning, architecture — these are all terms her artwork could be called. Is it art only because an artist makes it? Actually, that's not a bad definition of art. But as Miss attempts to create spaces where people would want to be, she is simultaneously erasing the distance between art and audience. People inhabit her art, participate in it. It can be beautiful, pleasing to the senses, observable, but it is not separate. It is art so fully integrated into life that the difference between the two disappears.

Off-site, off-budget

Contacted in New York, months after her last visit to St. Louis, Miss hasn't a clue about the status of her project. She laughs wryly over the phone: "Unfortunately, I wish I knew. I'm about in the same state I was the last time I was in St. Louis. This complex group of people trying to bring this all together are still congregating and trying to figure out what's happening. It's beyond me."

Part of what has kept the project on hold, however, is what the GSA's Susan Harrison refers to as "exuberance" — in this case, an exuberance that has taken a federally owned one-block site, with a budget of some $600,000, and transformed it into a three-block, $3 million-$8 million project.

Harrison, reached at her office in Washington, D.C., doesn't sound the least bit alarmed, although it has been four years since Miss received the original commission. Working in a department that's overseeing some 90 federal arts projects at one time, Harrison keeps a cool head. "These projects all blow up at some point," she blithely remarks, "for a jillion reasons." The St. Louis project isn't near the detonation point, in Harrison's view. Harrison doesn't complain about the delay but, rather, speaks of the project as a possible new model for the creation of public art in America. "What we're trying to do in St. Louis is quite extraordinary," she says. "It's an art project that encompasses more than just the land of the federal government. It's designed to enhance the quality of that part of St. Louis and help with its revitalization.

"The federal government likes to build in downtown areas and in areas that need redevelopment," Harrison continues. "This project is extraordinary in that regard because it's looking to give something back to both the city of St. Louis and, in particular, that neighborhood."

As upbeat as Harrison sounds, locally there has been grumbling among a few arts administrators, as well as a few local patrons. In these closed circles, Miss is being described as difficult. Isn't one block and more than half-a-million dollars enough? Miss' "exuberance" has complicated what many hoped was a done deal.

Miss explains the need for an extension of the project in terms of scale and optimal impact. The Eagleton Courthouse is now the biggest pink edifice on the block, and the space allotted for art, a slim block on the east face of the building, to Miss "was so minimal that it could barely be effective. Also, the budget was — though a very generous amount of money in terms of traditional artwork — if somebody's trying to make a public space, it was not enough money to do that easily."

So Miss, in her self-defined artist-as-explorer role, chose to venture off-site, combining public and private interests. She proposed extending the project north to the Gateway Mall and south to the Cupples Station/Westin Hotel development. Part of her motivation was "to take into consideration the highway ramps (off Clark), because otherwise they would be overwhelming the project, so I wanted to adapt them and make them function as part of the area."

This method of including all the variables at a proposed site, rather than neglecting or ignoring what might be considered unattrac-

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tive, is typical of Miss' approach to public art. But with this project, that has meant gaining approval, and investment, from outside the traditional "public" sector.

"There was a great interest in this approach," Miss continues, "but of course it called for additional funding. It wasn't clear whether that money would be raised or not, but people liked the idea enough that they went to a couple of the foundations in town, as well as NationsBank, which is the owner of the northernmost block, and talked with these different people about coming up with the additional money it would take to do this.

"It really petered out after a while, and nothing seemed to be coming of it. The development of the Cupples Warehouse became an active, real project, with a hotel planned for that southern end. I think the developers of the hotel realized they needed to have something happening in this space for it to really come together and happen as a development project. That's when I was in town with Richard Baron (Cupples' primary developer), starting last May about a year ago. The project came alive again at that point. There were subsequent meetings over the summer about how this would happen. NationsBank has always been a prominent player in this and was — the first time around — very supportive of the idea and willing to participate. But it was a matter of getting the other pieces in place.

"That's my version," Miss laughs, "or as much as I understand."

New territory

Meetings have been planned; meetings have been canceled. The project remains on hold. Miss uses a swimming analogy to describe her strategy for enduring in the public realm: "It's like you're jumping into a very fast-moving river and trying to get to the other side without you or your ideas being washed away. And believe me, my swimming muscles have been highly developed over the years. In spite of that, I frequently don't get to the other side." As she extends the metaphor further, she begins to laugh: "I find myself downriver, gurgling."

The GSA's regional director in Kansas City, Linda Phillips, says, in regard to a timetable, "It can't go in until the trailers are gone," meaning that as long as courthouse construction is delayed, Miss' project stays on hold. "It's a lovely proposal and a lovely idea," she adds, but the additional funding sources are no more fully realized than the native grasses and trees in the center of the urban corridor.

With St. Louis on hold, Miss has two projects in different stages of development. A commission for a subway station in New York is finally coming to fruition — she's been involved in that project since 1993 — and she's designing a half-mile stretch of river walk in Milwaukee.

The Milwaukee River project involves "this old industrial river in this old section of the city. They built a river walk through the downtown area, and it's very corporate, formal. This next section is going into this old warehouse area. It starts out under this huge double highway, going out because all the buildings go straight to the river, so the walkway needs to be out over the river, actually. What's interesting to me here is engaging all this infrastructure. Going under these two highways — what are you going to do? Right now, it's a big parking lot — nobody wants to proceed in this direction at all, because it's so daunting. Well, let's not have a parking lot there. Let's see if we can look at how this whole area used to be wetlands. Can we do something that's like a demonstration showing how a wetland works? Not that it's a re-creation of one; it's really like a diagram of how they function. Then, can we take people by this deep tunnel access point that's 300 feet deep and let them see into it? It's really trying to engage the infrastructure of the city.

"At the same time I'm really interested in making people aware of the river, where it comes from. I've been quite curious about how to do these demonstrations, such as stormwater-treatment projects. It's not just to be ecologically correct, it's that we have to redefine what this river can be for us. It's been all of these other things — it's been a place where the Pottawatomie were gathering wild rice in the early 17th century; then settlers came and filled this whole area in and built a city on top of it. What becomes a big shipping area becomes a big industrial area, which becomes a total waste river. Nobody can even stand to be near it. Those days are gone. What's it going to be in the future?

> **"The work that we may commission may be more conservative than the art world would like it to be. Our clients think it's cutting-edge. If I'm getting beaten up by the clients and by the art world, I'm in the right place."**
>
> ***— Susan Harrison, head of the General Services Administration's Art in Architecture program***

"If we don't figure it out, our possibilities are going to become more and more limited."

Miss confesses to some frustration with the locations her commissions take her: There's a whole other territory for artists to investigate. "One might do that just as easily with a shopping mall," she says. "I have to take what comes to me, for the most part. Unfortunately, most of the things are percent-for-art projects in connection with, say, this federal courthouse.

"But the really important questions are, how we begin to reclaim this territory, the public space? Public space is now shopping malls. Shopping malls are run by private security forces. They're not truly public, but they are where people gather. Parking lots are spaces people use; swap meets are places people go. I'm really curious about how we can affect and infiltrate and have something to do with those places.

"I may be very idealistic, thinking there's any way to affect those situations, because they're so tightly controlled. Developers know they can have so many square feet and so much light, so many elevators or escalators. It's a science. They've got it down tremendously pat. Maybe it's the parking lot (as an artist's entryway). I'm not sure where these points are. But it's about an investigation of how we're going to be making our places, our spaces." ■