Rochester Institute of Technology

A Thesis Submitted to the Faculty of The College of Fine and Applied Arts in Candidacy for the Degree of Master of Fine Arts

A Graphic Identity System for the Genesee Land Trust Maria DeLauro June 14, 1991

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Date: June 14, 1991

For my mother and father.

Without their love and encouragement this thesis would not have been possible.

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank the following individuals for their help and support

R. Roger Remington Mary Ann Begland Deborah Beardslee Keith Barr Donald Bujnowski Nancy Ciolek Robert Keough Malinda D'Attilio Kanchen Rajanna Joseph Yanick Daniel Richter Joseph Clough Barbara Schmidt Amy Bergin

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Introduction

The field of visual communication acts as a powerful influence on society. As a graphic designer, I am in the position to communicate to a large audience the importance of the need for environmental responsibility, the issue of the nineties. For this reason, when the opportunity arose to design an identity system for an organization which is dedicated to preserving land, I was not only thrilled to have a thesis topic but also delighted by the thought of being able to assist in informing our community of an issue of such great importance.

Professor R. Roger Remington approached me late in March of 1990, and asked if I would be interested in developing an identity system for the Genesee Land Trust. Rachel Edwards, the chairperson of the organization, had written to him inquiring about the availability of a graduate student who would be interested in designing a symbol and applications of that symbol within their newly formed corporation. An appointment was set up to meet with Mrs. Edwards. I wanted to learn as much as possible about their organization, so that I could determine the type of image they wanted to project.

The Genesee Land Trust is a non - profit land conservation organization within Monroe County that operates entirely on membership and private donations. With this money, Genesee Land Trust acquires land for conservation, public access, and helps to maintain a healthy diversity of land uses within the community. Through education and public information programs the land trust attempts to increase public awareness and understanding of the natural environment. The Genesee Land Trust cooperates with and assists governmental agencies, private individuals, and businesses in promoting the protection of scenic, natural, recreational, and open space resources.

Initial Steps and Research

As a first step toward developing an identity system for the Genesee Land Trust, I determined exactly what applications were to be designed, put them in a prioritized order, and estimated how long the design and production processes would take for each application. The land trust had informed me that, considering they were such a new organization with a small membership, they could not presently afford to print all design applications. Keeping this in mind, I had allowed time to develop mechanicals for the printed pieces, as well as comprehensives intended to simulate printed pieces for the thesis show in April. Using Claris Mac Project II software on the Macintosh computer, I produced a visual schedule (Appendix 1), including all deadlines for the rest of the year. A data sheet (Appendix 2) was produced to organize information about the land trust as well as research topics that would be involved within this thesis project.

According to the research developed by James Bare, identification marks should ideally be designed relative to a number of criteria which can be listed as follows: legibility, impact, appropriateness, adaptability, simplicity, distinction, and timelessness. The issue of appropriateness is an important one. I wanted to design an identity system that portrayed a responsible, professional look without seeming too corporate. It was necessary to collect more information from the board of directors. Professor Remington suggested I have my client fill out a marketing / communications analysis form (Appendix 3). The form helped the members of the organization to describe how they perceive themselves. From these forms I extracted four key words or phrases that best described the obiectives of the Genesee Land Trust and prioritized them in order of importance. They included conservation, protection, community - based, and environmental education. An interpretent matrix was composed in order to fully utilize these key words. (Appendix 4).

The interpretent matrix is a tool utilized to transform words and images into meaning. This visual brainstorming technique allows creativity to be focused on generating appropriate imagery for a specific subject. A chart was developed by placing the four key words horizontally across the top of a large board; three terms used to identify the key words were placed vertically on the side. The three terms used on the interpretive matrix were: iconic, a direct association of the key word; indexical, an indirect association of the key word; and symbolic, a symbol or representation of the key word. Images and words were then applied to the chart in their appropriate categories. This process helped me to visually understand what needed to be communicated.

Identity Symbol Research and Development

Theory and methodology can be helpful in the creation of a graphic identity system. I had reviewed several techniques of process in graphic design, and based the design approach toward the development of the Genesee Land Trust symbol on three. The three methods include: Karl Gerstner's Morphological Box of the Typogram, Yves Zimmermann's Fusion method, and The James Bare method.

According to Karl Gerstner, creative decision-making should be prompted by intellectual criteria, rather than emotion. The more precise and complete these criteria are, the more creative the work becomes. The creative process is to be reduced to an act of selection. Gerstner transformed a scientific method known as the Morphological Box developed by Fritz Zwicky into a design tool which he called the Morphological Box of the Typogram. It contains the criteria, the parameters, on the left; basis, appearance, expression, color, and message. To the right appear the headings or choices. This design method is intended to result in the design of a typographic symbol. I developed a morphological box (Appendix 5) for the Genesee Land Trust identity mark in which different selections were made for many possible solutions. (Appendix 6) The resulting symbol involves a superimpostion of the letters G, L, and T with each letter set in a different stroke width. The land trust felt this solution was too corporate looking.

The second theory I chose to explore would ideally lead to an abstract solution, a mark that is designed from non-representational forms. Yves Zimmermann created a method through which the deletion and addition of the parts of many geometric shapes would lead to a simple mark. These marks would then be fused with other geometric forms, again deleting and adding parts and refining to produce an abstract mark. This possible mark would then be compared to others for similarity and refined again to arrive at a final solution. To begin the Zimmermann Fusion method.

I listed the key words originally extracted from the marketing / communications analysis form to remind me of the message to be communicated. A chart was developed (Appendix 7) of geometric shapes, and I experimented with different ways of deleting and adding to them. A selection was made of the marks based on what best described the client's message. These marks were then fused and refined, and the process repeated several times, until the best possible abstract marks were produced. This time my thesis committee felt as though the result was too conservative and corporate.

The final method chosen as part of this design process was created by James Bare. Bare describes six types of identification marks to better understand the design process and possibilities available to the designer. The six types of identification marks are as follows: logotype, product / service, allegorical, literal / illustrative, abstract, and initial. In a previous project I had investigated all six categories, so in formulating a symbol for my thesis I felt the literal / illustrative method (Appendix 8) would be most appropriate for the Genesee Land Trust. The literal / illustrative method generates a symbol derived from the name of the organization and consequently a more representational image is created.

The word 'land' evolved into 'earth' when the basic shape of the symbol was determined - a circle. I began to include many images from the interpretent matrix within a circular shape. Images of trees and animals were manipulated and transformed into graphic interpretations. These sketches seemed to have too much emphasis on animal rather than land. They all seemed to be too vague in communicating what the organization was about. I returned to my key word list and interpretant matrix to find a clearer understanding of the Genesee Land Trust. A more specific word list was formed which consisted of: earth / land, water. sky, and animal. I then graphically translated each word into a clear cut image and began to combine and manipulate them. The images that were included within the circle were more than what was needed and they began to clutter the symbol. To simplify the mark, I began to work with leaves only, then became

even more specific by working with only maple leaves which are commonly found in New York State. Experimentation with different sizing and placement led me to try to suggest the continents of the earth through use of Gestalt Principles. The figure and ground started to become more ambiguous by reversing the leaves out of the black circle. By extending the leaves over the boundaries of the circle, the edges were activated making the symbol more interesting, as well as putting the theory of closure to use. The principle of proximity was very important in deciding how close the three leaves should be in relation to each other to best suggest the earth's continents. After having my thesis committee review my sketches, it was decided that rather than abstracting the leaves to fit the shape of the continents, I should keep the leaves simple, making them dominant and just suggest the idea of the earth. Making the leaves more dominant and subduing the earth theme would also help communicate that the symbol was for a local organization, not an international one. After completing many sketches, Professor Remington and I went through the process of evaluation and elimination. It was now a choice between four symbols. The four were then enlarged and refined. The finished products were presented to my thesis committee. After mutually agreeing on one, I again refined the mark using only natural curves with a few straight lines within the leaves.

With the symbol complete, it was time to investigate typefaces which would be considered suitable. Following this investigation, I chose two sans-serif and two serif typefaces that were most appropriate for the organization. I then experimented with different placement of the typography in relation to the symbol. (Appendix 9) The final decision was the sans-serif font Avant-garde, justified under the symbol on one line. The identification mark complete with the typography was presented to the Genesee Land Trust in early February 1991. Along with the mark I presented visual examples of key words and a comparison of their mark with other land trust symbols. (Appendix 10) The Genesee Land Trust approved the symbol, but expressed their dislike of the sans-serif typeface as well as the placement.

The font later became Palatino Bold in one line, placed flush left beneath the symbol. (Appendix 11)

Stationery Development

The use of a grid may be helpful in determining a basic underlying structure for the positioning of design elements in a stationery system or other design problems. A golden section rectangle was converted into an interval system to develop a proportional grid. With the grid in place, I began experimenting with different relationships between the placement of the symbol and the necessary typographic elements. The typography included the name, Genesee Land Trust, the address, and a slogan, "guarding land for tomorrow" which was later changed to "land lover." After placing the elements in many different situations and discussing each possibility with my chief advisor, the final letterhead contained the symbol in the upper left hand corner. Genesee Land Trust was placed directly below the symbol on one line with a flush left alignment. The address was placed in the lower left hand corner, also flush left with the symbol.

The land trust suggested using recycled paper that could be used in a Macintosh laser writer printer. Although recycled papers recently are more popular, the selection of colors and textures is still very limited. I decided on a Passport Script recycled stock, in a beige speckled color, called gypsum. To simulate a printed letterhead the typography was laser printed onto the chosen stock in black, and the symbol was applied by using a khaki green Chromatec, a form of rub down transfer. A sample letter was applied to the stationery to suggest the best placement of the text and appropriate typestyle for an ideal look for a business letter. Using the same basic design approach as the letterhead, a design for a number ten envelope was developed. The symbol and name were placed flush left in the top left corner, the address in the bottom left corner. The envelope, like the letterhead, was laser printed on gypsum Passport Script stock in black with a khaki green Chromatec. (Appendix 12)

Newsletter Development

The Genesee Land Trust had planned to use the new symbol in their existing newsletter. After looking at their newsletter, I felt that it would be better to redesign it entirely. I wanted to reinforce a design standard throughout their printed materials. Not only did the existing newsletter not relate to the other applications, it did not have a strong layout as well. Basing my approach on the newly designed letterhead, I began adding other necessary elements using PageMaker software. In the past the board of directors and the advisory board were listed on each existing newsletter, but were always in a different place. The standard was set to list the board members under the symbol and name on the cover page. A bar was placed on the top of the page with "The Newsletter" reversed out in white, boldly explaining what it was, while not overpowering the symbol. A thin rule separated the text from the standardized cover. The text was placed in two columns on the front cover, while the rest of the newsletter was designed to have a three column grid format. The newsletter was laser printed on gypsum recycled stock in black with the symbol in khaki green in Chromatec. (Appendix 13)

Invitation Development

Robert Kraus of the land trust sent me information on a garden party the organization was planning for June. He asked if it would be possible to design an invitation and an A6 size envelope for the event, instead of developing the promotional brochure they had originally asked for. I had no problem with this, but first discussed it with my professor to see if he approved, which he did.

The invitation consisted of one flat two - sided card. The symbol was placed in the top left hand corner of the card with the title of the event stacked beneath it, to relate to the other design pieces in the organization. To relate the invitation to the newsletter, I placed a thin rule vertically separating the symbol and title from the informational text. The title and specific time information were printed in Palatino Bold while all other typography was printed in Palatino regular. The envelope had the exact layout as used in the number ten envelope. The invitation and envelope layout were developed using PageMaker software. (Appendix 14)

Membership Incentives Development

The Genesee Land Trust decided they would like to give membership incentives to those who donate money to their organization. These items would be used as gift items, as well as promotional pieces to circulate the Genesee Land Trust symbol throughout Monroe County and familiarize the public with it. The promotional pieces consisted of a coffee mug, t-shirt, window decal, key chain, and button. (Appendix 15)

The coffee mug is almond colored with the symbol and name printed in khaki green. To make a prototype of the mug, I sand blasted a white mug (I could not find an almond mug anywhere!) to take the finish off, applied primer, and then spray paint. A Chromatec image was used for the symbol and the name so that it would appear as a finished printed mug. The tshirt is long sleeved beige cotton. The symbol and name were silkscreened on the top left pocket area with the help of textiles Professor Donald Bujnowski. For the window decal, the symbol was placed to the the left of a bumper sticker sized decal; in relationship to the typography the symbol appeared smaller than in most applications. Below the symbol in Palatino Bold it reads the "Genesee Land Trust", a thin rule is just above that. The largest type just above the rule reads "Land Lover", the Genesee Land Trust's slogan, also in Palatino Bold. A keychain was made by cutting out a circular shape out of 1/8 inch plexiglass. The plexiglass was spray painted almond on one side, and on the other side a Chromatec symbol was applied. No name was included on this application. A Chromatec image of the identity symbol was placed on the gypsum Passport Script and cut into a circular shape to fit into a button making machine. No name was included on the button.

Poster Development

The poster was the most challenging application to design, possibly because I had more creative freedom than in the previous applications. Part of the problem was that the land trust asked for a generic poster to which they could add type, to advertise any event they might have in the future. April was coming to an end. Earth Day as well as my thesis show were not far away. I began the poster by taking photographs of trees at a local park, although many were damaged due to our recent Rochester ice storm. The photographs that were usable were then scanned into a Macintosh computer to produce 300 dots per inch screens. A film positive was made and I began to design a poster with the image of faded trees in the background. I was not pleased with this solution. I went back to the drawing board only to come up with other solutions which were not any better. Finally, sitting at the computer one day arranging and rearranging the symbol and typography, I formulated a poster that was more effective. The question was how to simulate a printed piece? I purchased matt board in the same PMS color as the other symbols, then carefully applied and cut a frisket in the shape of the identity mark, and spray painted a white symbol onto the board. In very large Chromatec, Avant Garde typography reads Earth Day, in a tangerine color. This type was placed on the lower half of the symbol suggesting that the symbol was rising up from the type. Below in the left hand corner a small black symbol and name were applied. In the upper left hand corner, touching both the top and the side, in black Avant Garde typography is the word celebrate. The poster. though not generic, communicated a very simple vet powerful message - celebrate Earth Day. (Appendix 16)

Conclusion

This thesis project has given me the opportunity to grow and change as a graphic designer, and throughout graduate study I have grown as a person. The goals I had set have been accomplished, and I am ready to continue to set and achieve many more.

As of May 1991 the Genesee Land Trust began incorporating the new identity symbol within their organization. Unfortunately many of the applications, because of budget reasons, will not be printed.

Bibliography

Gerstner, Karl. <u>Designing Programmes</u>. Switzerland: Arthur Niggli Ltd., Teufen AR, 1968

Meggs, Phillip. B.. <u>A History of Graphic Design</u>. New York, New York: Von Nostrand Reinhold Company, 1983.

Vignelli, Massimo. <u>Graphic Design for Non - Profit Organizations</u>. New York, New York: AIGA, 1980

Notes

- James Bare, "Symbols and Logos"
- Robert O. Swinehart, <u>Trademarks: Design</u>, <u>Evaluation and Classification</u>
- 3.
 Yves Zimmermann,"Research of the Fusion Method"

Appendix 1

Mac Project Chart

Appendix 2 **Data Sheet**

DATA SHEET Draft 6

PROJECT TITLE: Identity for the Genesee Land Trust

CLIENT: The Genesee Land Trust

P.O. Box 18405 Rochester, NY 14618

CLIENT CONTACTS: Rachel B. Edwards

259 Quaker Meeting House Rd.

Honeoye Falls, NY 14472 624-1397

Robert Kraus 2729 Pinnacle Rd.

Rush, NY 14543 H-533-2165 W-275-4124

DESIGNER: Maria DeLauro

44 Field Street

Rochester, NY 14607 244-3748

SUBJECT: The Genesee Land Trust is a non-profit, tax-exempt corporation,

formed in January 1990, operating entirely on membership and private donations. Their purpose is to preserve the quality of woods and forests, farms and open spaces, wetlands and water resources. The land trust provides a special service to the community, by maintaining some of the beautiful aspects of the Genesee Region.

OBJECTIVES: To design an identity system for The Genesee Land Trust that will

provide the following functions:

- To identify The Genesee Land Trust

To be legible, recognizable, appropriate, and memorable

- To promote membership

RESEARCH OF PROCESSES & PRODUCT

CONTEXT STUDY

1. Processes - Graphic Design Theory & Methodology

A. Semiotics - Interpretive Matrix

B. Methods of Zimmermann, and Gerstner

C. Symbol Classifications - Swinehart

D. Design by Context - Bare

2. Proposed Products

- A. Identity Element: The Genesee Land Trust
- B. Applications of above identity element:
 - 1. Stationery (letterhead, envelope)
 - 2. Newsletter
 - 3. Informational/Promotional Brochure with membership application
 - 4. Poster
 - 5. Membership Incentives:
 - a] window decal
 - b) bumper sticker
 - cl buttons
 - d] T-shirt

AUDIENCE RANKED IN PRIORITY:

- RIORITY: 1. Prospective Members
 - 2. Corporations & Foundations
 - 3. Farmers
 - 4. Developers
 - 5. Estate & Financial Planners
 - 6. Government Officials
 - 7. General Public

PROGRAM TIME LINE:

Assessment of Images - classification

- keywords

- interpretive matrix

Visual Development - Zimmermann

- Gerstner

- Swinehart

- Bare

Visual Development Options

Evaluation of Options

Selection

Solution

Refinement

Prototype Application

PROPOSED PRESENTATION DATE TO CLIENT

March 18, 1991

Appendix 3 Marketing/Communications Analysis Form

MARIA DELAUGO 44 FIELD ST. ROCHESTER, N.Y. 14620 244-3748

Marketing/Communications Analysis

1.	List below 10 words that to you best describe the nature or function of your organization.
	Conservation Stewardship Protection Protection Land-use planning Community-based
2.	From the words listed above, extract the five most important terms and place below in priority.
	1. Stewardship 2. Conservation 3. Protection 4. Community-based 5. Environmental Education
3.	What <u>difference</u> does it make that your organization <u>exists</u> ?
	Provides a vehicle for land preservation, and serves as a bi-partison intermediary between public planners and private develops; educates the jubic on land preservation techniques and on the importance of preservation; lets individuals in the community know there are many others who feel the same way.
4.	As you understand it, what is the <u>mission</u> of your organ-ization?
	Primite the preservation of open space, formfail and other land that constributes to an "epu-ronmentally balanced" community and helps ensure a land-use diversity.

5.	On a day to day basis, what specific ways do you see this mission becoming operationalized?
	Acquisition of land and development rights; subtre education; fundaments of land.
6.	Looking into your personal crystal ball, list <u>five words</u> that might <u>characterize</u> the <u>personality</u> of your organization in <u>10 years</u> .
	Professional Creative
	Environmentally responsible Forward-loolary
7.	From your own perspective, please list the key audiences for your organization's public messages.
	Prospective members boverment officials beneral public formers, develops, finan planes bopporations + foundations
8.	From the list above, please extract the <u>most important</u> and place below in a <u>priority listing</u> .
	2. Contrations + foundations 3. farmers 4. developers 5. estate + farmeral planners
9.	In terms of your personal point-of-view, how do you feel that your audience should perceive your organization. Simplify your answers to one or two words if possible.
•1	Awfessionel Enduring
	desorrable Essential
	Environmentally possonsible Plexible
	Forward-loolung

Appendix 4 Interpretent Matrix

Key Words

Conservation
Protection
Community - based
Environmental Education

Earth / Land Plant Water Sky Animal

saving

CONSERVATION



work shops lectures

neighbors Genesee region

government volunteers grassroots



nature walks



natural cycles esponsibility generations experience awareness nnovative heritage future



education wise owl children books cultural



schools

cooperation action recreational social



parades stewardship movements





mother earth







resources landfills

eaves













smokey the bear growth



forests wetlands farmland

wildlife

Appendix 5

Morphological Box of the Typogram

Morphological Box of the Typogram

	Basis										
-	Components	7	Word	12	Abbreviation	13	Word Group	14	Combined	15	Combined
7	Typeface	2	Sans serif	22	Roman	23	Egyptian	24	Other	52	Combined
က	Technique	3	Written	32	Drawn	33	Composed	34	Other	35	Combined
ı	Appearance										
-	Size	7	Small	7	Medium	13	Large	4	Combined		
7	Proportion	2	Condensed	22	Usual	23	Extended	24	Combined		
က	Weight	31	Light	32	Medium	33	Bold	34	Extra Bold	35	Combined
4	Inclination	4	Upright	42	Oblique	43	Combined				
5	Progression	51	Hor. Increase I-r	52	Hor. Increase r-I	53	Ver. Increase t-r	54	Ver. Increase b-t		
9	Balance	61	Symmetrical	62	Asymmetrical	හ					
7	Capitalization	7	nc	72	C	73	Combined				
	Expression										
-	Reading Direction	7	Left to Right	12	Top to Bottom	13	Bottom to Top	14	Other	15	Combined
7	Spacing	2	Narrow	22	Normal	23	Wide	24	Progression	25	Combined
က	Form	31	Unmodified	32	Mutilated	33	Projected	34	Other	35	Combined
4	Design	4	Unmodified	42	Part Omitted	43	Part Replaced	44	Part Added	45	Combined
	Color										
-	Hue	=	Single	12	Combined						
2	Value	21	Light	22	Medium	23	Dark	24	Combined		
က	Integrity	31	Chromatic	32	Achromatic	33	Combined				

Appendix 6

Sketches / Gerstner Method

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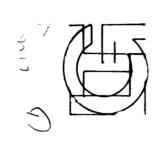
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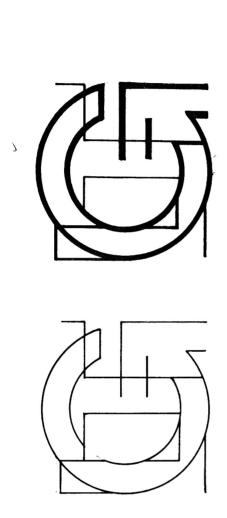
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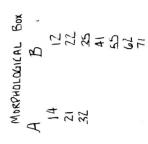




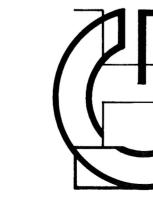




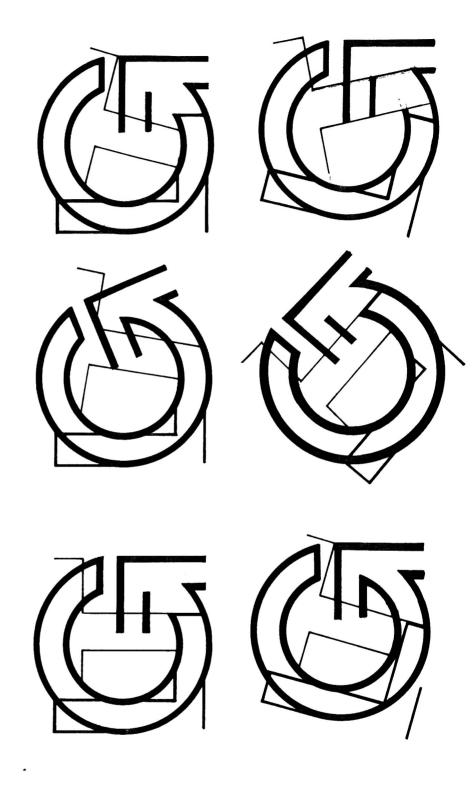








ENVIEDNMENT FOUTETTON FOUCATIONS (ONSENUMIN)



Appendix 7 Sketches / Zimmermann Fusion Method

Tage 1 Zimmermann math: 11/1/40 Key Woods
Conservation
Stawardship
Protection - So. ...
Community-based
Environmental

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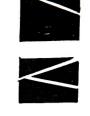




VINNINO)

Nastana Ang





15.2 17.2 17.2 FACE 3 ZIMMERMAN FUSION 11/25/90

GLT-conservation
Fro fection/security
community based
community based
consimmental education

Signs with greatest frequency of appearance ordered according to formal similarity.



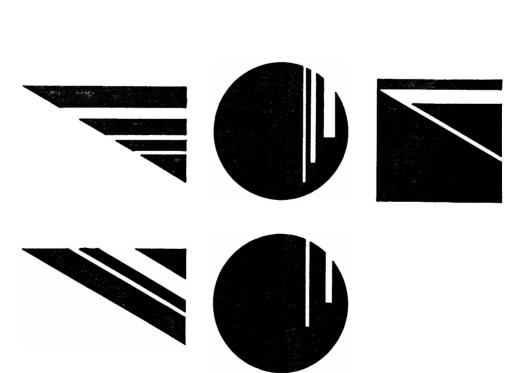




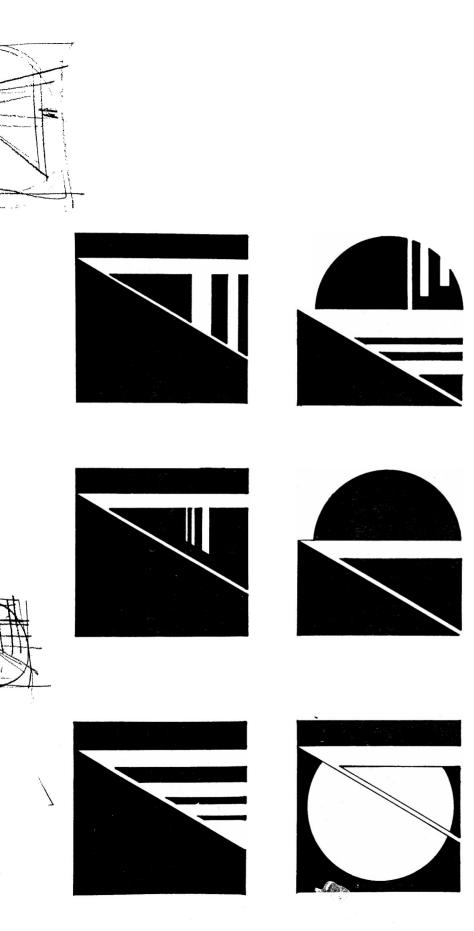


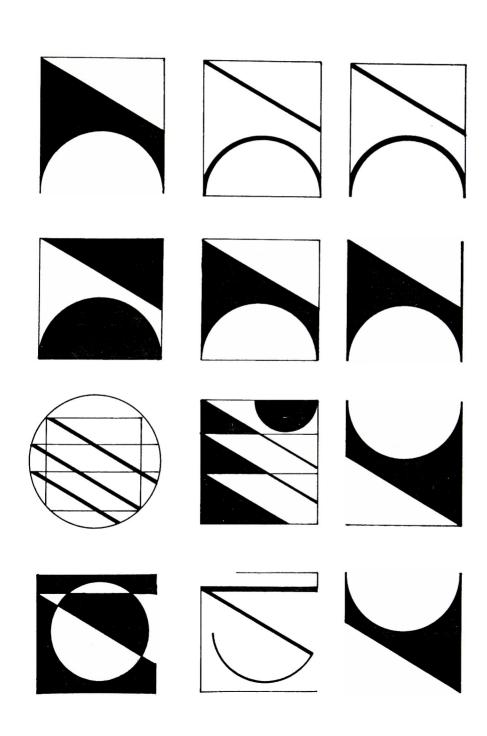
PAGE 4 ZIMMERMAN FUSION MAGIL #S REFINEMENT OF INTERNI

SELECTED SIGNS



SIGNS DRDERED ACCORDING to their Formal SIMILARITY





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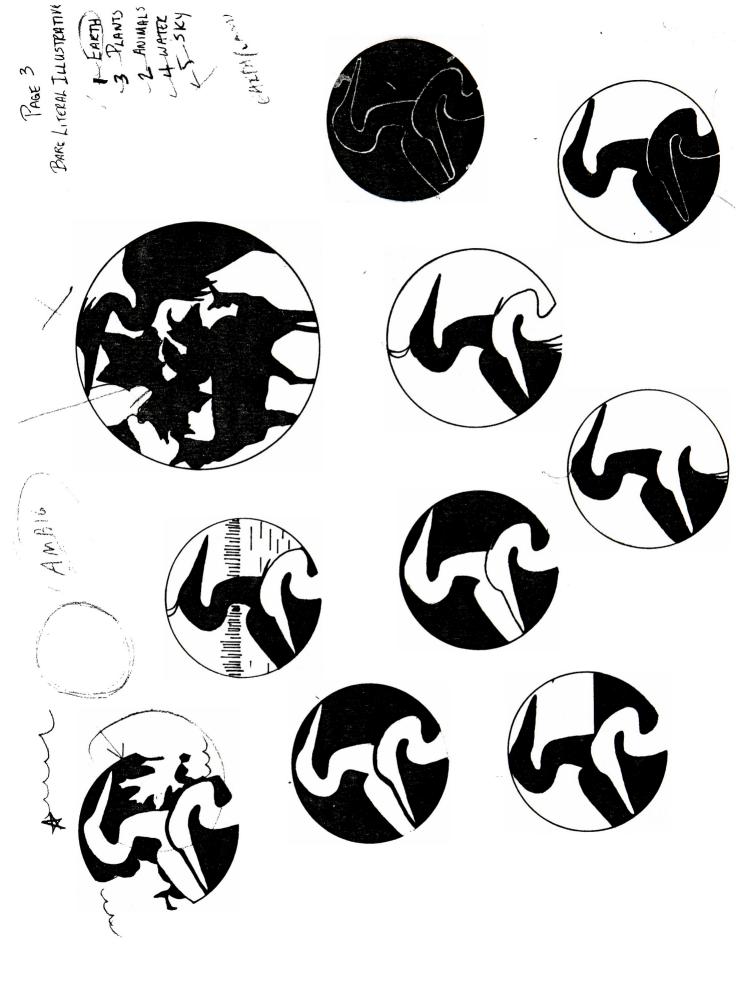
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Appendix 8

Sketches / Bare Literal Illustrative Method

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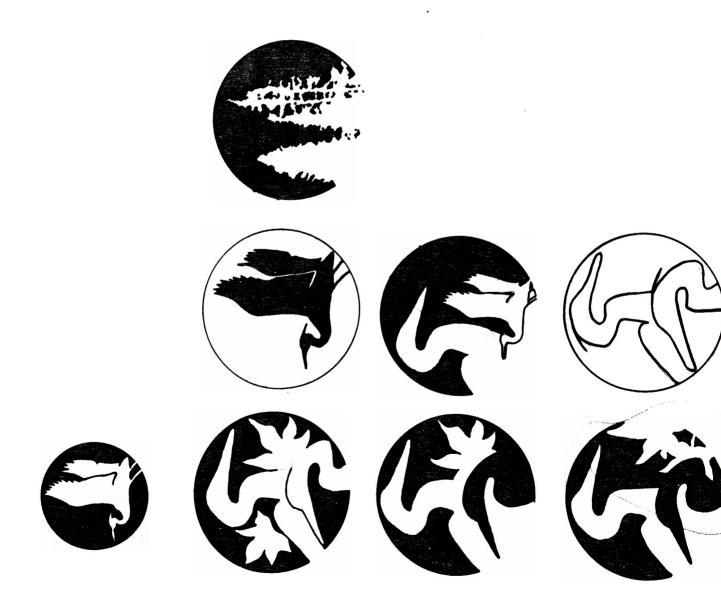






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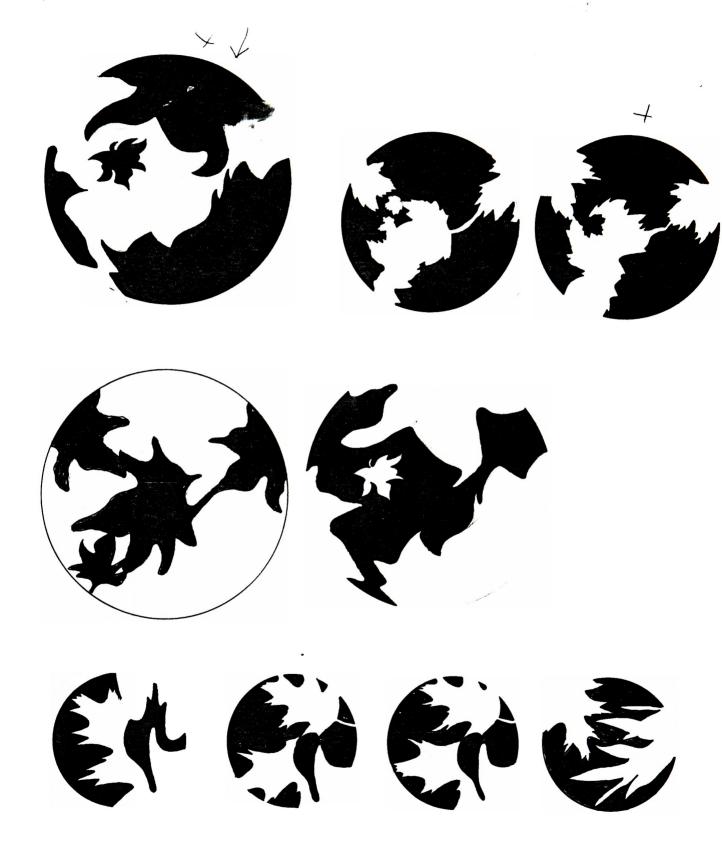
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PAGE 10 FUSION OF PLANT EMETS



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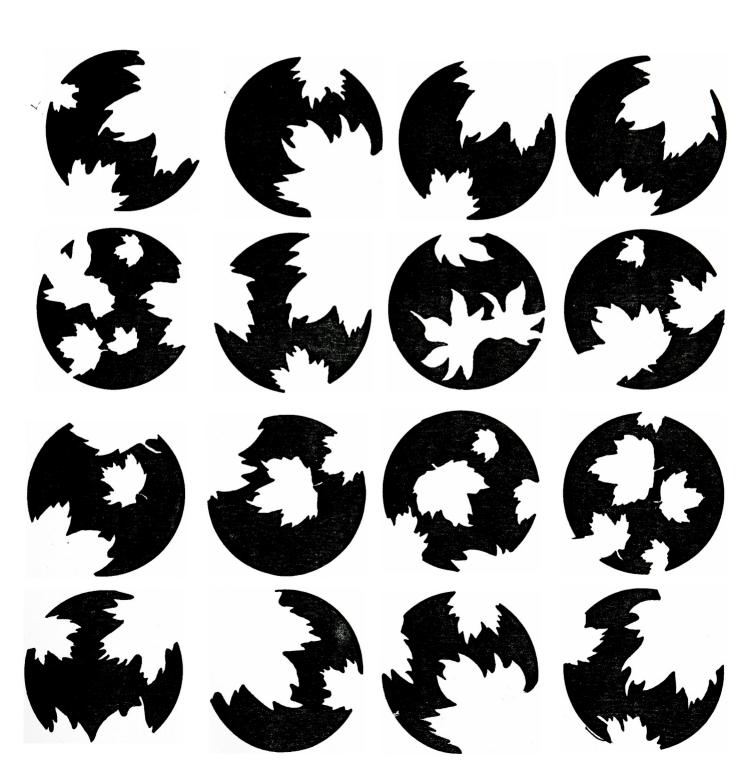
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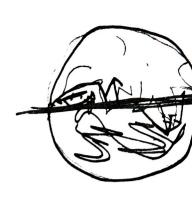


PASE 16
Enlarged view refined
Energy LAND
PANT



Fredayd Viw
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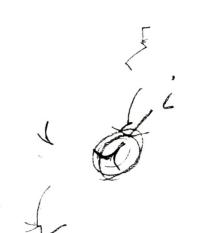




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EARTH/LAND



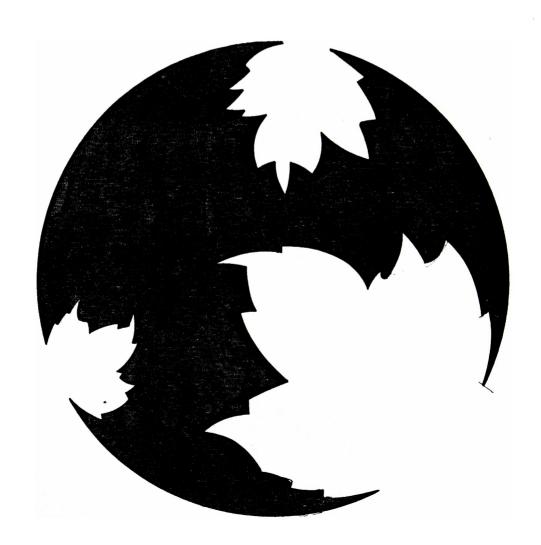
Frak 19
ENETH/LAND
HAND







Tage 20 Enlarged view EMETH/LAND



-

Refined Identity elements
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EARTH/LAND-PANT









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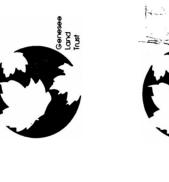






Experimentation with Typography

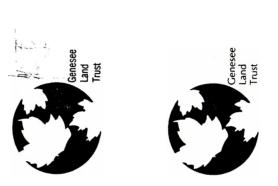






Genesee Land Trust

Genesee Land Trust













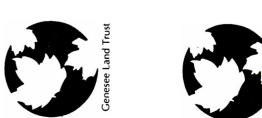






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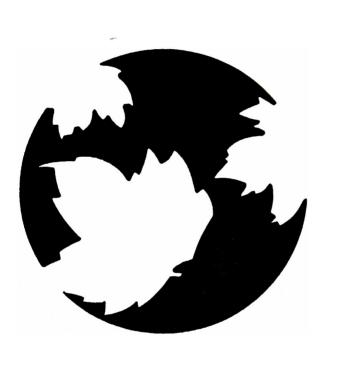


Presentation to Genesee Land Trust

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Earth Land Water





















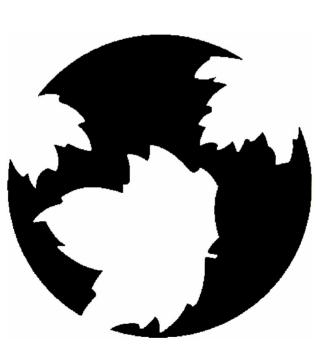








Symbol and Typography



Stationery Development



Genesee Land Trust



P.O. Box 18405 Rochester, NY 14618



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Guarding Land For Tomorrow





P.O. Box 18405 Rochester, NY 14618

Guarding Land For Tomorrow





October 25,1990

Robert Kraus 2729 Pinnacle Road Rush, NY 14543

Dear Mr. Kraus,

I am writing in regard to the conversation we had on October twenty third, when we discussed my graduate thesis which involves the creation of an identity system and various applications for the Genesee Land Trust. Enclosed is a copy of my data sheet (draft 6) which gives you a general idea of my goals and objectives in creating the identity system, process in which it will be carried out, and timeline which I would need to follow in incorporating this project for my thesis.

I realize that the Genesee Land Trust was hoping to receive an identity system by this Autumn, unfortunately because of the academic timeline I am working with I will not be able to produce an identity mark until January 1991 at the earliest. The other applications (stationery, poster, etc.) will most likely be completed by March 1991. This being the case, I was hoping you would be able to temporarily incorporate a simple typographic identity as a shortterm alternative, until my identity system package is complete. Should you decide not to make use of my design work, please let me know. In any case, I will continue to work on this project as a part of my thesis. Whatever the outcome I will still value your input and feedback, to create an effective and appropriate system. I would appreciate an evaluation of my data sheet and would like to meet with you at your next meeting. If possible I would also like a copy of the latest newsletter and a list of other local land trusts or environmental groups, which might be considered competition for membership. I look forward to working with you and hope to hear from you soon. I can be reached at 244-3748, or by mail at the address above. I just decides to add a few more sentences to this letter, to see how the longest possible letter would look on the newly designed letterhead. The letter above was sent in October, I am now definitely working with the land trust.

Sincerely,

Maria DeLauro



Mr. Robert Kraus 2729 Pinnacle Road Rush, NY 14543

> P.O. Box 18405 Rochester, NY 14618

Newsletter Development

OF WALL FLO



Genesee Land Trust

The Newsletter

Published by The Genesee Land Trust, A Not-for Profit Corporation

Volume 1, No.3, Spring 1991

Board of Directors

Nancy Baran-Mickle
William Baran-Mickel
Roger Cass
Richard Dollinger
Rachel Edwards
Rita Gow
Robert Kraus
Gay Mills
Hannah Rosenblatt
Maria Rudzinski
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Andy Wheatcraft
Andy Zepp

Advisory Board

John Berggren Larry Dressner Denise Heischman Carol Hinkelman Alan Knauf Thomas Nally Tom Silco Barbara Van Arsdale

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The Newsletter

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What is a Land Trust?

Land conservation is a major concern both locally and nationally. As communities, planners and public officials search for innovative and responsive local initiatives to preserve cherished resources land trusts have sprung forth to meet the challenge.

A land trust is a not-for-profit grassroots conservation organization directly involved in protecting natural, recreational, scenic, agricultural, historic or cultural property. Each trust has a community focus and sets its own specific preservation goals congruent with its chosen mission. Established trusts are able to respond rapidly to protect property of community, regional and often national signifigance.

Although the concept of land trusts has existed since the "village improvement societies" of the mid-1800's, it was not until the 1970's that the conservation groups burgeoned. In 1950 there were only 53 trusts, 132 by 1965, over 300 by 1975 and by 1988 there 743 trusts with over 640,000 members throughout the United States and its territories. Collectively, the trusts have been responsible for protecting 1,906,971 acres.

Land Trusts employ a variety of conservation techniques, as diverse as the land they protect. Among them are outright acquistion (through donation or purchase), conservation easements (when a landowner agrees to limit the uses and rights of their property to preserve the natural value of his or her land), and limited development (which allows development within a specified part of the property while protecting other areas through conservation easements).

Funding for such projects comes from contributions and grants from members, individual donors, foundations, and corporations. Land trusts also borrow money from banks, foundations, and individuals to buy land that is later repurchased by government conservation agencies. This is done because many times a land trust can respond much more rapidly to acquisition opportunities.

Land Trusts play a unique role in bridging the gap between private development and public municipalities. Private landowners who work with intermediary land trust often find conservation of their land to be economically viable because of tax deductions offered for charitable donations Continued on Page 3 ...

Conservation Easements

What are they?

A conservation easement is a legal agreement between the owner of a property and another party, typically a not-for-profit entity, that limits the use of land. It allows the donor of the easement to retain owenership while often enjoying current income tax benefits. Congress has allowed a deduction for conservation easements donated to not-for-profit entities because it recognizes the benifit that the public receives when open space, scenic views, wetlands, and the like are preserved. Typically a conservation easement will resrict the amount of development that may occur on a particular parcel. The easement is recorded and will protect the land forever - no matter who the future owners of the property may be.

What are the benefits of conservation easement? Conservation easements protect dwindling natural resources by allowing the land to remain undeveloped or by restricting its development. In many instances the gift of a conservation easement to a not-for-profit organization such as the Genesee Land Trust can result in significant reduction of state and federal income taxes as well as local property taxes. Additionally, when the property is passed to heirs the value of the conservation easement therby reducing estate tax liability.

What does the gift of conservation easement require? A qualified recipient of the easement such as a land trust; a land plan of the property that designates restricted and unrestricted areas; an appraisal of the property to determine the value of easement; professional advice to draft the terms of the agreement and determine your individual tax benefits; and a current property survey that will be recorded with the easement.

Why would a not-for-profit organization such as GLT want to own only a partial interest in land? In many instances the donation of a conservation easement to a land trust accomplishes the land trust's objective of preserving the land in its natural state or protecting it from irresponsible development. Because the owners, as well as future owners, will retain the primary interest in the land a land trust does not have to address issues of liability nor spend as much money to monitor the use of the property. Municipalities often prefer easements because the property owner is still responsible for property taxes computed on the Continued on Page 3...

Invitation and Envelope



You are invited to the annual Spring Celebration of the Genesee Land Trust.

Join us to find out about our involvement in preserving wetlands, farmlands, and woodlands in the Genesee Region.

A

Celebration

June 1, 1991

of Spring

Sibley Watson Garden

with the

6 Sibley Place

Genesee

4 to 6 pm

Land

RSVP 454-7400 • P.O. Box 18405 • Rochester, NY 14618

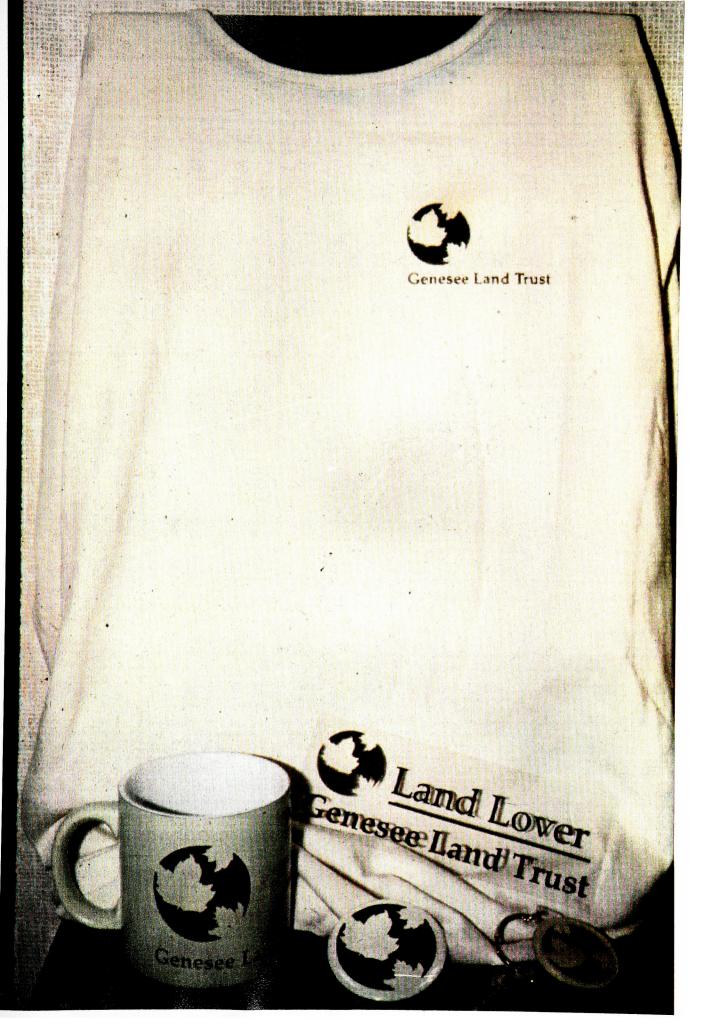
Trust

Suggested Donation \$15 (tax deductible contribution to the Genesee Land Trust)



Genesee Land Trust

Membership Incentives



Appendix 16 Poster Development



Celebrate Earth Day!

Genesee Land Trust



Celebrate Earth Day!





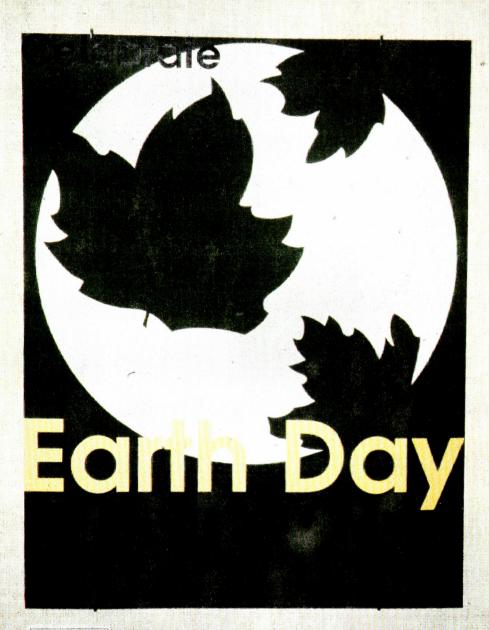


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Celebrate Earth Day





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