

Ecclesiastically, they are all called upon
To love God and To Love one's neighbor.

The organization MARCC, the Metropolitan Area Religious Coalition of Cincinnati is still effectively fulfilling its mission today thanks to the initial support of Luther Tucker, Andy Sigler, Charles Fullgraf and many other Indian Hill Church members.

Luther Tucker retired in 1972 after almost 25 years as the formulating spirit of this unique ecumenical venture.

Fortunately for all of us, he has retained a vital interest in the Indian Hill Church and in the Cincinnati Community.

"They lived not only in ages past,
There are hundreds of thousands still,
The world is bright with joyous saints
Who love to do Jesus' will.
You can meet them in school, or in lanes, or at
sea,
In church, or in trains, or in shops, or at tea,
For the saints of God are just folk like me,
And I mean to be one too."

Luther Tucker: Truly a saint of God.

THE LIFE AND TIMES OF CHARLES AND RAY

May 8, 2000

George H. Rieveschl

In the late 40's and early 50's, Detroit was a hotbed of first-class designers, architects and pied pipers of the art world. Such greats as Eero Saarinen, Minoru Yamasaki, William Kessler, Harry Bertolia, Marshall Fredericks and Alexander Girard were

flourishing. My wife and I decided to build our first house and thus began an enduring and pleasant association with Alexander Girard, who was an exceptional personality with a unique background. He was born in New York in 1907, but shortly thereafter his family moved to Florence, Italy, where he spent the first 24 years of his life. To complete his education as a designer and architect, he graduated from the Royal Institute of British Architects and the Royal School of Architecture in Rome. In 1932 he returned to the country of his birth and after five years in New York, he and his wife moved to Detroit, where they opened an architectural and interior design office in Grosse Pointe.

We began the planning of the new house in 1949, and as our meetings became more and more frequent, we became more and more impressed with the amazing talents of Sandro Girard. He was a consummate craftsman and artist, brimming with brilliant, creative ideas. His feel for color and a dramatic design sense for interiors were exemplary. We were fortunate to have found a lushly wooded area at the dead end of Lothrop Avenue, just a nine-iron pitch from the Girard residence. Our fabulous house was completed in 1952, and we were ecstatic about all the Girard innovations, which included tables, chairs, dishes, and even kitchen utensils and towels and napkins - everything was selected to make a statement of elegance, functionality and creativeness. In addition, he designed an exquisite nine-foot high wooden Christmas tree assembled in three sections. The tree was accompanied by a detailed drawing showing specific places where the ornaments were to be hung and where the votive candles were to be placed.

Susan and Sandro Girard had an all-consuming passion for collecting folk art. Over many years they acquired from all over the globe the finest assemblage of folk art in the world. It included dolls, toys, figurines, paintings, textiles, costumes and religious objects - all superb examples. In the early 50's, we had an opportunity to participate in one of the Girards' "folk art hunts" in Guatemala and Yucatan. We spent six months exploring the Mayan ruins and seemingly every shop in Guatemala. Sandro spoke passable

Spanish, and he always managed to convince the owner to let us explore the storeroom. As Sandro used to say, "The best stuff is always in the back room."

In late 1953, the Girards moved to Santa Fe, New Mexico, where they purchased a 200-year-old adobe house, and within a few years he had transformed it into a dream house filled with many of the choice items from the collection of over 100,000 folk art objects. Ultimately these treasures were given to the State of New Mexico and are now housed in the Girard Wing of the Museum of International Folk Art, which opened in 1982. If you are ever in Santa Fe, don't miss seeing it!

I realize that this has been a long preamble to my telling you about the two people who are the primary subjects of this paper, but it is necessary to explain how we became involved with Charles and Ray Eames. Despite the obvious two male given names, they were man and wife. Ray's maiden name was Bernice Alexandra Kaiser, but she was known as "Ray Ray" as a child and later simply as Ray for the rest of her life. By 1952, when they entered our lives, Charles and Ray were widely known as designers of furniture, exhibitions and toys and as producers of short films.

The famous Eames chairs were produced and marketed through the Herman Miller Furniture Co. of Zeeland, Michigan. Since at that time Sandro Girard was a fabric designer for Herman Miller, Charles and Ray had become close friends with him and were frequent visitors to the house next door. One evening in 1952, I received a call from Sandro inviting us over to meet the Eameses, who would be visiting the Girards the next day to shoot scenes for a film about toys, utilizing Sandro's old and unique collection. The technique was to shoot pictures of the toys frame by frame with a special Eastman Kodak 16 mm movie camera. After each shot the toys were moved a fraction of an inch, resulting in a movie film of interacting toys. This was painstaking work, and Sandro asked me if I could help out as a "toy mover." It was a fascinating experience, and during the many hours that I was in charge of moving a toy motorcycle following Charles' directions, I became well acquainted with the Eameses. Unfortunately, I never had the pleasure of seeing the

film being shot that day, but we were privileged to know Charles and Ray for the next 26 years.

Now I should tell you how Charles and Ray reached the pinnacle of the design world. Their reputation prompted the truism that the word Eames rhymed with the word chair.

Charles Ormond Eames was born in 1907 in St. Louis. His father was a Pinkerton security officer and an amateur photographer. The family lived for a few years in Buffalo and Brooklyn before returning to St. Louis. In 1915, Charles' father was shot by train robbers. He was never able to work again, earning money instead by writing adventure stories for the American Weekly.

At age ten Charles entered the world of work with a job in a print shop, and the next year he worked for a grocer. After his father died in 1919, the family moved in with two aunts. Charles' job in 1920 was with a druggist, and that year he also began high school. Throughout school he worked weekends and full time in the summers at the Laclede Steel Co. Despite this onerous schedule, he became president of his senior class and captain of the football team - all of which led to an architecture scholarship to Washington University in St. Louis. Charles did very well in architecture and won several first place honors. He spent his summers working as a draftsman in an architectural firm. But after two years, he was fed up with the rigid courses and unimaginative teachers and he left school. In 1929, he married Catherine Woermann, a Vassar graduate. Her father's wedding gift was a honeymoon in Europe, where Charles was thrilled to see buildings by Gropius, Corbusier, van de Velde and Mies van der Rohe. He said later that the experience was like "having a cold hose turned on you."

After their return to St. Louis, Charles joined with Charles Gray in opening an architectural office, which did fairly well for a while. The Eameses' daughter Lucia was born in 1930. By 1934, the Depression was in full swing and Charles was hanging on with a WPA job. Finally, in desperation, he left wife and child with her parents and went to Mexico. There

he survived by doing odd jobs, but little else is known about the eight months he spent below the border.

By 1935 he was back in St. Louis, where he opened the office of Eames and Walsh. Their design of St. Mary's Church in Helena, Arkansas was published in Architectural Forum and caught the attention of Eliel Saarinen, the director of the Cranbrook Academy in Michigan. Through correspondence and a visit, Saarinen and Eames developed a strong friendship, prompting Saarinen to offer Charles a fellowship in architecture and design in 1938. He relished the experience of being at Cranbrook amidst the amazing group of talented people who were destined to make their mark in the art world. One person in particular stood out - Eero Saarinen, the son of Eliel and a recent Yale graduate. In 1939, Charles became the head of the newly created Industrial Design Department at Cranbrook, and he and Eero began collaborating on design projects, primarily chairs, for which they won two prizes in 1940.

The year 1940 was also the year that Ray Kaiser came to Cranbrook, and a new chapter began to unfold.

Ray's birthplace was Sacramento; the year was 1912. Her father was a jeweler, theater manager and insurance man, in that order. In 1928 Ray entered the 10th grade at Sacramento High School, where her talent for art became very evident. Her father died the next year, and after she graduated in 1931, Ray and her mother moved to New York, where she enrolled in the Bennett School in Millbrook. After her graduation in 1933, the budding young artist began her studies of painting at the new school just opened by the famous artist Hans Hofmann. For six years Ray was a star pupil of Hofmann's. Her paintings were exhibited in the First American Abstract Artists group show at New York's Riverside Museum, and she became a founding member of American Abstract Artists. At the same time and, although she was only 5 feet tall and "pleasingly plump," she took modern dance lessons from Martha Graham.

Ray's mother died in 1940. A close friend at the Hofmann School convinced her to go to Cranbrook to study weaving and fabrics with Marianne Strengel.

Finding herself among talented and creative artists, Ray found the Cranbrook environment very exciting, but more importantly, she found the new head of the industrial design division - namely, Charles Eames - to be the most exciting of all. Charles was still married and living with Catherine and their daughter Lucia. However, the mutual attraction between Charles and Ray was so strong that in 1941 the inevitable happened - Charles and Catherine were divorced in May and Charles and Ray married on June 20th. All of their earthly possessions were piled into Charles' vintage Ford for the bumpy ride to Los Angeles.

They set up housekeeping in Westwood. The extra bedroom became the laboratory for wood molding experiments, and the kitchen and bathroom were partially dedicated to photographic processing. Charles found work in the architecture department of Metro Goldwyn Mayer Studios, where he was assigned the planning of movie sets, while his evening hours were devoted to collaborating with Ray on researching the making of molded, compound-curved plywood chair seats. Their experiments were successful primarily because of Charles' invention of a contraption called the Kazam - obviously named because of its "Magic." Ray also used the process to make quite beautiful abstract sculptures from plywood.

In December 1941, a doctor friend saw the plywood process and told them of the war-time need for light-weight and compact leg splints that could be nested, cleaned and reused. The chair project was put on hold while they put a "full court press" on developing the leg splint. In a matter of months, prototypes of the splint were ready to be shown to the U.S. Navy in San Diego. The design was approved with only a minor change, but a new problem arose - the U.S. Navy wanted 5,000 splints. A good friend, John Entenza, who published Arts and Architecture magazine, provided the funds for shop space on Santa Monica Boulevard. Joined by two former associates from MGM, Charles set up the Plyformed Wood Co.

Quite soon the space on Santa Monica Boulevard was inadequate, and they moved to Venice, California. Harry Bertolia, a Cranbrook buddy, joined the group in

1943. The Navy kept the plant very busy, but they were pitifully slow in payment. An exasperated Charles went to Evans Products in Detroit and convinced them to buy the rights to produce the splints. When the end of the war arrived, more than 150,000 splints had been supplied to the Navy.

Both Ray and Charles continued to experiment with molded plywood with funding support from Evans Products Co. The goal was to improve techniques for mass production of curved plywood shapes to make possible low cost, high quality furniture. The technology was extended to fabricating molding plywood aircraft parts, and it was ultimately adopted by England for the Wellington and Mosquito bombers. The plywood work continued to 1948.

In her spare time Ray designed the covers for Art and Architecture magazine. They all reflected her admiration for Miro and for her former teacher Hans Hofmann, as well as photographs and drawings by Charles. She did another ten covers in 1943 - all quite beautiful - and more in 1947.

The same magazine announced a series of articles called "Case Study Houses," to be contributed by outstanding American architects. Charles and Eero Saarinen's offering, completed in 1949, comprised a 1,500 sq. ft. house and a 1,000-sq. ft. studio. The magnificent site was on a three-acre meadow at the top of a 150-foot cliff overlooking the Santa Monica Canyon and the Pacific Ocean. This dramatic house became the home of Charles and Ray.

With the plywood technology now readily workable and the war over, Charles and Ray launched into a most vigorous program of making quality goods functional, cheaper and more widely available. They conceived of a future world in which life is made better through design and technology, and they were to play a vital role in making modernism acceptable to the American populace.

The year 1945 was a very important one for Charles and Ray. Evans Products sponsored a show in New York consisting of 15 examples from the Molded Plywood

Division. George Nelson, the design director of Herman Miller Furniture Co., saw the products and he was impressed. The next big event was an exhibition of new plywood furniture, which opened at the Museum of Modern Art in March of 1946. Later that year, Herman Miller President, D.J. DePree, was introduced to the Eames, and they concluded an exclusive agreement to market the plywood furniture manufactured by Evans Products. The arrangements lasted for two years. In 1949 Herman Miller purchased the manufacturing rights from Evans Products and ever since the Eames furniture has been made in Zeeland, Michigan.

Charles Eames had already become a design consultant to Herman Miller in 1947, on the recommendation of George Nelson. In 1950, Charles, in turn, convinced Herman Miller that Alexander Girard should also be a consultant. The company soon became internationally known as the leader in producing contemporary furniture and fabrics.

The years after 1946 were exciting and were marked by a virtual torrent of projects and new products emerging from the "Eames Office." Located at 901 Washington Boulevard in Venice, California, it was originally a huge non-descript garage building, unidentified and without windows, in a seedy part of town. It had been a cavernous City garage for bus and truck repair. The manufacture of many molded plywood pieces of furniture by Evans Products and Herman Miller took place there. By 1958, the Eameses and their staff occupied the entire building. The Eames Office was a veritable fortress, isolated and spacious enough for a hundred creative and productive people to work on new furniture, photography, model making, exhibition planning, film making and architecture. All these activities were facilitated by the very latest sophisticated equipment and a huge library.

I cannot describe the hundreds of projects that occupied the Eames Office from 1945 to 1978. The fame of the Eameses as designers spread rapidly, and they had their pick of talented people, young and old, all of whom found it a very exciting place to work. At one time they had as many as 62 on their staff, one of whom was Bert Berenson, former dean of the DAA college at

U.C. After Charles' death in 1978, Ray was the co-author of an encyclopaedic book on their work together. I have made a count of 31 major projects they addressed from 1945 to 1978. In addition, they produced over 80 films, did hundreds of consultations and minor projects. In his later years, Charles was in great demand as a speaker.

The financial support for this unique operation came primarily from Herman Miller, and for many years the Eameses were the darlings of IBM, which funded over 50 major exhibitions, books and films featuring their work. IBM was deeply impressed by the Eames Office's ability to make the abstruse concepts of science, particularly mathematics, so fascinating and accessible. Most of these exhibitions were seen also in Europe and Asia. Additional support came from many major corporations, such as Polaroid and Boeing, and from the U.S. State Department, which contracted for major exhibitions designed for foreign countries, among them Russia, India, France and Great Britain.

Although the fame and fortune of Charles and Ray were based essentially on chair design, they became even more widely known through their exhibitions and films. They had a particular interest in India, and on one of their visits there, they were commissioned by a very wealthy family owning textile factories to prepare a report on the status of design in India. In 1958, they spent five months in India exploring Indian design tradition, and their subsequent report and recommendations were taken seriously by the Indian government. After Nehru's death in 1964, Charles and Ray accepted a commission to prepare a memorial exhibition dedicated to the statesman. It was a huge project. Sandro Girard joined the Eames Group to find fascinating items for the exhibit, and once more Girard spent days in the back rooms of Indian shops. The final assembly of the exhibit took place in New York City, where it opened in February 1965. Over 90,000 people who attended during the New York showing declared it a smash hit - as it was also in Washington, Los Angeles and London. The exhibit finally reached India, where it was also enormously successful.

Another exhibit, called "The World of Franklin and Jefferson," was sponsored by the Metropolitan Museum and IBM, which provided \$500,000 to help with the funding. Shown in the year 1976 during the Bicentennial of the Revolutionary War, it was a huge labor of love by the Eameses. The USIA came to the fore to fund the opening at the Grand Palais in Paris in January 1975, and from there it toured to Warsaw and London, before coming to the Met in New York. From there it went to Chicago, Los Angeles and Mexico City, where it concluded a three-year run. "The World of Franklin and Jefferson" was certainly the most elaborate exhibition ever created by the Eames Office, and it was the last to be mounted.

In the late 50's Alexander Girard and Charles and Ray were the gurus of a series of exhibitions at the Museum of Modern Art in New York that were simply called "Good Design." They featured an eclectic selection of new furniture, new fabrics and stunning new well designed gadgets. My wife and I attended one of the openings at MOMA in New York, and afterward we retreated with the Eames and Susan and Sandro Girard to the famous watering hole at the St. Regis Hotel, which had the equally famous murals by Maxfield Parrish. The waiter came promptly to take our orders. After scribbling down two scotch on the rocks, one gin and tonic, and one bourbon and soda for the Girards and Rieveschls, the waiter went into shock when Ray ordered hot chocolate and Charles, in clear tones, requested "a nice red apple." This was par for the course - Charles and Ray were always different, whimsical and unpredictable.

Despite the changing focus of the Eames Office in the late 50's, they were still busy providing the best seats in America. The crowning achievement was the "lounge chair and ottoman." It is said that Charles hoped it would have "the warm receptive look of a well-used first baseman's mitt." Herman Miller began selling them in 1956. Charles was a bit unhappy that they were charging about \$400, but since it was so handsome and most comfortable, they have been a popular item ever since. This chair, like most everything else, has increased more than six times in price and

now retails at about \$2,500, but believe me, it is worth every penny!

Although I saw Charles and Ray a number of times in the 60's and 70's, our friendship was nourished primarily through exchanges of clippings and telephone calls. However, I followed their careers closely through art and design journals. In 1970, I left Detroit and returned to the University of Cincinnati to take the place of Dr. Hoke Greene, who was retiring. Hoke had been my mentor when I joined the faculty of the Chemical Engineering Department in 1940. I am sure many of you here tonight remember him as a member of the Literary Club for many years.

It was pleasing to come back to my old school after 27 years and even more satisfying in that I left as an Assistant Professor and returned as a Vice President. However, I was guilty of bad timing. The Vietnam War and the tragedy at Kent State transformed the serene groves of academe into a battleground. Even though my schedule was a full one, I managed to maintain contact with Charles and Ray Eames.

It was evident that they continued to be a happy, productive team. Charles was effusive in his remarks about Ray, such as, "What I can do, she can do better." Nevertheless, the media and most institutions centered their attention on Charles, who was viewed as the decision maker; yet it was quite true that the decision maker discussed every decision with Ray before implementation. I have heard Ray say, "My life began when I met Charles." She was a strong woman, serenely happy, deeply in love, but certainly not the "Japanese wife" many thought her to be. If you examine carefully the smooth, flowing curves of the Eames plywood furniture, you immediately note the influence of Ray, the abstract artist and creator of many pieces of plywood sculpture.

My file that I kept on the Eames revealed that over the years the honors bestowed on Charles included honorary doctorates from USC, Washington University and Michigan State. Other kudos were the prestigious Charles Eliot Norton lectureship at Harvard and a generous sampling of gold medals and honorary

appointments. Ray was included when the Art Center College of Design at Pasadena bestowed honorary doctorates on them both, his both "Fine Arts" and hers in "Communication Design."

On March 14, 1977, I sent a memo to Jed Small, who was Chairman of the Honors Committee at U.C.:

"I relish the opportunity to recommend honorary degrees for Charles and Ray Eames. . . It has been my privilege to know Charles and Ray since 1952, and my great admiration for their creativity has grown over the years. Their reputation is international; the diversity of their talents makes them unique in the visual arts. They are indeed most worthy and deserving of honorary degrees from the University of Cincinnati."

On March 25, 1977, the Academic Affairs Committee recommended Charles and Ray Eames for Honorary Fine Arts Degrees. The Eameses were very pleased with the honor, which would be conferred in late fall or early January. I was particularly pleased that this would be the first time that both Charles and Ray would be cited on a single Doctor of Fine Arts Degree.

In his first week as President, Henry Winkler sent out invitations to a luncheon at the Contemporary Arts Center to be held on January 17, 1978, at which time an honorary degree would be presented. In addition, an exhibition of one of the Eames IBM projects would be installed in the brand new University Gallery in Tangeman Center.

All of our plans were perfect except the weather. While I was waiting for Charles and Ray at the airport late afternoon on January 16, a heavy snow began to fall. First of all, their plane was late, and by the time we were headed toward Cincinnati, the driving was treacherous; nevertheless, Charles wanted to go to the Tangeman Center to see if the exhibit was ready. We managed to make it there with difficulty. I waited for them, kept the car running and the windshield wipers going, while the snowfall increased. Finally they returned to the car and we set out for Cunningham Road in Indian Hill. The trip proved enormously slow as I

attempted to minimize the number of hills between Clifton and Indian Hill. As I was agonizing over the difficult driving, Charles and Ray were gaily chatting about the magnificent snowstorm. I ascribed their reaction to the great scarcity of falling snow in Santa Monica, California. After two and a half hours of snail-pace travel, during which I silently prayed, we came to our steep driveway at 9150 Cunningham Road. The toboggan ride down the driveway fortunately ended before we reached the front door.

After being greeted by my wife, who wanted to know where we had been, we settled down to some hot coffee and a pony of Courvoisier. The snow was still coming down, and the temperature was dropping faster than the snow. I began making phone calls and listening to the 11 o'clock news, and between school closing announcements we were warned to stay off the roads, stay indoors and prepare for 25° below zero temperatures and 20 m.p.h. winds. It was very obvious that on January 17 there would be no luncheon and no honorary degree. The Eameses and the Rieveschls were tired and we went to bed.

The view next morning was unbelievable - snow was everywhere. There were great white mounds where bushes had been the day before. I found Ray and Charles with cameras slung around their necks, busily clicking away at the cardinals feasting at the bird feeder outside our window. They were ecstatic about photographing the birds and the beautiful snow. They said nothing about our University plans for this day, which were now buried under two feet of snow.

The phone rang, and I heard the quite unnecessary message that all scheduled events were off and the University would be closed for at least two days. More snow was expected - and came it did. We were most grateful for a full larder, a good wine cellar and a smooth working furnace, because it did reach 25° below zero.

We had a leisurely breakfast, and I began contemplating our agenda for the day, which was a big fat zero! At first I was concerned that Charles and Ray would be in high dudgeon over having come all the

way from Los Angeles to sit out a snow storm. Not so at all! They were as happy as two kids at an Easter egg hunt. As the day wore on, I began to realize what a fabulously rich opportunity these snow flakes had handed to us. Here we were snowbound with two of the most fascinating people on the planet.

One of the first subjects to come under discussion was photography. You have to remember that Charles' father was a skilled amateur photographer. I would guess he always warned him, "never run out of film." I was amazed at the number of rolls of film that were eaten up by their hungry cameras. They found a great many things to photograph, indoors and out. It is possible that many of these slides are now at the Library of Congress, which houses the 750,000 slides and prints from the Eames archives.

It was a most rewarding time listening to them recount their experiences around the world. Charles had a colorful vocabulary and he knew just about everybody in the world of architecture and design. Ray delighted us with accounts of her days studying with Hans Hofmann. My only contribution was locating a young man with a snowplow who agreed to dig us out the next day.

The wonderful moments spent with Charles and Ray came to an end and we emerged from our cocoon. We had a less terrifying trip back to the airport, and best of all, they promised to return in April - but only if we could arrange a trip to the Great Serpent Mound.

This time the weather behaved, and on April 3rd, at the Emery Auditorium, Charles and Ray Eames received their honorary doctorates in fine arts from Dr. Henry Winkler. Charles gave a short speech filled with good humor, and several of the delightful Eames short films were shown.

The next day we drove in a light rain to Adams County airport, where we met Len Larsen from the U.C. Geology Department. Charles and Ray boarded Len's small plane, and in minutes they were over the Great Serpent Mound taking dozens of photographs. When they got back wearing big smiles, we drove to the Mound.

After a picnic and more photography, we returned quickly to the Cincinnati airport.

In August of that same year of 1978, my wife and I made a trip to California. We visited the cavernous Eames Office in Venice and later that week, on Sunday, August 20 we had a lovely breakfast in their famous house overlooking the Pacific Ocean. As we were leaving, Charles stood at the front door, and I took a photograph of him. This photograph that I cherish is most likely the last picture ever taken of him. He left that afternoon for St. Louis and died of a heart attack in his home town the next afternoon, August 21, 1978, at age 71.

His tragic death was devastating to Ray, but her great inner strength kept the Eames Office intact and running for a number of years. Her grandson, the son of Charles by his first wife who had remarried, bore the name Eames Demetrios, and he became Ray's right hand man. The imposition of a huge Federal estate tax forced a great scattering of assets. This was a heavy load for Ray, and she fought her way through some very difficult years. Photographs and films went to the Library of Congress, prototypes of furniture and licenses for manufacture were purchased by Vitra AG of Basel, Switzerland, which, along with Herman Miller, still produce Eames furniture.

On April 4, 1979, Ray Eames sent the following telegram to Dr. Henry Winkler: "Remembering a year ago the happy occasion of our double doctorate with thanks to you and the University." This telegram prompted me to write the only long letter I ever sent to her. The date was April 3, 1979:

"My Dear Ray,

"My head has been filled today with thoughts and images of the wonderful occasion merely a short year ago when you and Charles graced our University with your presence. And now I see from your telegram which has just come that you are remembering, as we are, the pleasant and happy time when U.C. conferred upon you and Charles the honorary doctorate - the 'double doctors' - as you gleefully referred to it! I

had never seen Charles more pleased - lots of grins and a superb twinkle in his eyes. All of us at the University felt very privileged to bestow an honor on two people who had earned and justly deserved even greater accolades. Your obvious pleasure that day was warmly shared by all who came to Emery Auditorium, to see the films and hear Charles' short speech. I remember quite well his incisive and sage observations about our world and the human condition.

"Certainly the awarding of honorary doctorates to a husband and wife is unique in academic circles; but I am very confident that your honors ceremony (which you remember had been originally scheduled for January 17) is the only one ever cancelled because of a snowstorm. How well I remember the splendid isolation of being snowbound in our house in the woods on Cunningham Road and your fascination over the huge quantities of sunflower seed that chickadees and cardinals can consume! We were very pleased when you both promised to return in April. I recall tossing an extra carrot in the pot - namely, a trip to the Great Serpent Mound - and judging from the glee in your faces, I knew we could plan anew.

"Just a few days ago I looked at the photographs of the famous expedition to the Serpent Mound. They were a lovely reminder that despite the rain, your flight over the Mound with Len Larsen went beautifully. It was a narrow squeak getting from Adams County to the Cincinnati airport. Everything had gone well - your doctoral citation tucked away safely in your luggage, a farewell drink with Bert Berenson - and there had not been a single flake of snow!

"But that was not the last time I saw you and Charles in 1978. We spent Saturday, August 12, at the wonderful Eames headquarters in Venice. The tour through your laboratories and studios, having a preview of the Cezanne film, and the great project for the new IBM headquarters in New York, the sunny, cheerful lunch - all of this added up to one of the most fascinating days of my life. However, the Eames hospitality never ceases! The Sunday breakfast at your classic and justly famous home on the Santa Monica cliffs was highly pleasurable. When Charles left for the office

that morning, I photographed him smiling and standing at your front door, with the warm California sun lightly touching his face. My remembrance of him at that moment is a beautiful and unerasable memory.

"It is hard for me to tell you of the incredible shock that we suffered when we learned of Charles' sudden death on August 21. I am not capable of fashioning the prose to convey my sadness to you, nor to express my joy and feelings of great satisfaction of having known Charles for so long and of having benefited in so many ways from his friendship.

"Do you remember your promise to come back to the University and give a lecture to the students and faculty of the DAA college? So, Dr. Ray Eames, we expect you back in Cincinnati whenever you want to come.

"We send you our best and most genuine affection. Please keep well and let us know how all the projects are coming along.

"with love and admiration, George."

This saga of two unforgettable people came to an end on August 21, 1988, when exactly ten years to the day after Charles' death on August 21, 1978, Ray Eames passed away.

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REMEMBERING NEW YORK

May 15, 2000

James A. Schiff

At last Ben had the boys asleep, though both were soaked from fever and would soon require dry shirts. For three days now, while Maggie was in Los Angeles prepping witnesses for depositions, Ben had been dispensing antibiotics and antihistamines, wiping vomit from Afghans and bathroom tile, massaging backs and chests. This was the first moment of calm all day. He had even flipped on the window unit air conditioner despite it being mid-December, anything to drown out street noise. Closing his eyes, he rubbed his temples - throbbing sinus pressure. Maybe he was allergic to the Christmas tree, a Scotch pine he had dragged five city blocks, then up three flights of stairs. If I can just sleep, he thought, but as soon as his body relaxed, the wailing saxophone cranked up again. "Christ," Ben muttered, looking at his watch. It was eleven. He switched the AC to high, then sunk into the couch.

Sixteen months in New York City had taken a toll on Ben. The pushing and shoving on the Sheridan Square subway platform, the painfully long lines at the post office and Korean deli, the all-night sirens that whined from St. Vincent's, the foul odors from the pet store below. Worst of all their apartment, which ran thirty-two hundred a month - a steal, according to Maggie's boss - had thin, moldy walls that shook with the subway, a ceiling that peeled and dripped into a black metal bucket, a bathroom crawling with cockroaches, and gated windows that made Ben feel he was living in Attica.