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May 6, 1961

**Ford Motor Company
Box 117
American Road
Dearborn, Michigan**

**Attention: Messrs: Henry Ford
Charles Moore**

Gentlemen:

**May I first thank you for the privilege and honor of being selected as
Architect for your 1964 New York World's Fair Building.**

**I had sincerely considered this commission as one of the most important
I have ever received and had planned to go all out in my efforts to design
with you a truly significant and meaningful building.**

**However, in view of recent events, I regretfully believe that I must take the
position that I could not fulfill my obligations to you as partner to the design
team you have chosen and the course you have set.**

**Try as I might I cannot have enthusiasm for this concept which I feel has
little or no meaning aesthetically and as a display quite dull. Thus I would**

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be derelict in my duty as an Architect to you and as a member of society to work on something so important for which I have no sympathy.

I am grateful for this opportunity to speak to you today. I fully understand that you have probably made an irrevocable decision and appreciate your listening to my comments which come after the fact.

Because I have visited several fairs starting with the 1933 Chicago World's Fair, the 1939 New York World's Fair, the 1958 Brussel's Fair, the 1959 World Agricultural Fair in India in which as you know we designed the American Pavilion and a recent large Trade Fair in Tokyo, I have some thoughts as to the type of exhibit most successful in a fair.

Moreover in the few months which have passed since we learned of our selection, I have given serious thought to this particular assignment, its purpose and its objectives.

The eminence of the Ford Motor Company - its role as a leader in World industry - its high purpose - its ideals have been clearly assessed by the quality of its products, the leadership in good taste, and by important statements such as Mr. Ford's recent speech in Minneapolis.

A wonderful book on America written a year or two ago by Father Bruckberger states that the Five Dollar Day initiated by the Senator Mr. Henry Ford caused

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the greatest peaceful revolution that the World has known. That the dignity of all men which had only been idealism became accomplishment and that American Democracy is much more meaningful because of the impact of this great idea.

So I had hoped to be a part of presenting physically in your Fair Building this great and idealistic aspect of the Ford Motor Company.

To accomplish this, I set in my mind these several objectives.

1. That the architecture of the building would express the dignity, the imagination and the idealism of the Ford Motor Company.
2. That it would tell the story of its products and their relation to the enhancement of living for mankind.
3. That it would give the visitors a wonderful experience, a thrilling and magical one which would never be forgotten.
4. That it would give an image of beauty to make imaginations soar and through the story of our achievements make man be proud of our way and our country and the better life for which we stand.

I cannot believe that with the concept you have chosen you will accomplish these objectives.

The decision to display the skyride so obviously makes impossible any dignity for the building. It also tends toward a carnival like impression which

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would deteriorate any attempt for an uplifting quality. Furthermore, the possibility of surprise so delightful such as in the G. M. World's Fair Building of 1939 in New York would be completely lost.

In the chaotic environment which all World's Fairs have been and this one will surely be, another chaotic building will be lost as ever brighter and louder signs are lost in an environment such as Broadway at night.

The character of the selected concept is one of hard sell and I sincerely believe that the people of this Country are calloused by the hard sell.

In the India World Agricultural Fair where we were Architects for the American Pavilion, we were competing with the Russian Pavilion. They also took the approach of hard sell with displays of Sputniks and the products of Five Year Plans. We on the other hand took the approach of an extremely friendly building, light and gay. The results could be seen in the attendance. We had 3,000,000 visitors in a two months period whereas the Russians had only 2,000,000.

As for the basic display in the Disney concept millions of people are familiar with Disneyland and its artificially created reproductions of natural beauty. To go to the World's Fair, a proposed world of the future, and see again something which has been in existence on the West coast for years could only be a let down.

To: Mr. N. ...
Advertising and Sales Promotion
Central Office Building

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The artificially created natural landscape can never replace the real beauty of nature and thus leaves in most mature minds a skepticism of whether large funds should have been spent for this purpose.

The really wonderful man made experiences such as the great Cathedrals, the Taj Mahal, the Gardens of Japan and Italy, are all deliberately man created and products of the imagination of man.

The true delight of man is either in the wonders of real natural beauty or in areas where man's imagination is allowed to soar.

I believe the W. B. Ford Concept would be such a magical experience, one which would never be forgotten.

In a sequence where the above purposes are realized and with this concept as a highlight, Ford could create a marvelously exciting experience for the visitor, with an impact far greater than the G. M. Show of 1939.

Through all of this could be woven the importance of the efforts of the Ford Motor Company to the World.

I am suggesting the following kind of exhibit. That the entrance pavilion be a multi domed and columnared structure soaring 80' high. This would be a proud building serene with dignity and yet delightful, set in a tremendous pool of water with fountains everywhere.

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The entrance would be over platforms and bridges crossing the pool surrounded by fountains. Here in an imaginative way would be displayed the theme. I might suggest, "The Magic World of Ford".

The visitor would then walk through the entrance pavilion. The experience of this interior looking down on gardens from raised platforms in space with a multitude of slender columns 140 of them 8" in diameter and 80' high crowned with domes interwoven with skylights should be cathedral like. There is no space in the World like this.

Here he would be welcomed to this "Magic World of Ford" and gain pause from the chaos of all he has seen and the masses of people in the other areas of the fair.

From here he would enter the float and ride for 10 or 15 minutes through a dark tunnel in which there is a narrative in film, sound and models of a description of the work of the Ford Motor Company.

Because of time limitations it was not possible to develop this phase, but with the aid of truly imaginative people in story telling like Sol Bass or Charles Eames this could be a wonderfully exciting show, and must be of the high standard of the rest of this exhibit.

We all know the material is unquestionably there, the Story of the Model T, the Five Dollar Day, and on up to the great stature of the Ford Motor Company today with its manifold activities.

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This would be a totally different experience, a contrast from the brightness of the welcoming pavilion and place the whole exhibit in its proper perspective by giving the impact of the tremendous scope of influence the Ford Motor Company had on the world in the past and today.

From there the floats would pass in the "Magic World" which W. B. Ford has conceived and which I think is just wonderful. It has tremendous excitement in a visually beautiful way. It will be a never to be forgotten experience. Woven through this would be a continuation of the narrative of the Ford products and their relation to man, such as the farm story and the tractor, seeing the wonders of the World by Ford cars, etc.

Finally the floats move into the final great pavilion by models of the latest cars on floating platforms and unload. Here would be shown the products, the parts and the future or into the crystal ball.

Here also would be expressed the Ford Philosophy, its purposes, its ideals, and a recap of Ford's contribution to the Magic World of Man.

By this kind of imaginative and beautiful World's Fair display, Ford will have given the visitor:

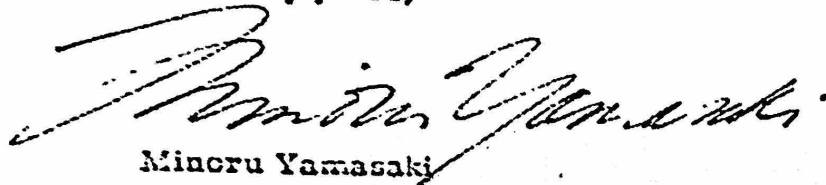
1. A physical expression of the imagination, the idealism and the basic dignity of the Ford Motor Company.
2. A fundamental orientation of the work of the Ford Motor Company.

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3. A magic experience never to be forgotten.
4. A total image of beauty which is the true essence of discovery
for technological man.

Thank you.

Sincerely yours,



Minoru Yamasaki

jb

[Faint, illegible text]