

The Museum of Modern Art

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INFORMATION ART: DIAGRAMMING MICROCHIPS

September 6 - October 30, 1990

The first exhibition to examine the computer chip as an icon of our technological civilization opens at The Museum of Modern Art on September 6, 1990. Organized by Cara McCarty, associate curator in the Department of Architecture and Design, INFORMATION ART: DIAGRAMMING MICROCHIPS reveals the dynamic patterns and sheer intricacy of these exquisitely crafted designs. On view through October 30, this exhibition is made possible by the Intel Corporation Foundation.

Since its invention in 1958, the integrated circuit has grown increasingly smaller, more sophisticated, and more powerful. No larger than a thumbnail, today's microchips are layered with several million electronic components capable of performing millions of calculations per second. Impossible to design without computer assistance, the chip begins as a diagram one- to two-hundred times larger, which is ultimately reduced photographically and etched into a sliver of silicon. Color-coded by layer like multilevel roadmaps, these diagrams are used by engineers for guidance in correcting or verifying a circuit design.

INFORMATION ART: DIAGRAMMING MICROCHIPS presents thirty-one computer-generated plots of twenty-two circuits, along with the actual chips. Although not designed for aesthetic appeal, these diagrams--large, intricate, and richly colored--are powerful and provocative images in their own right. Their

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