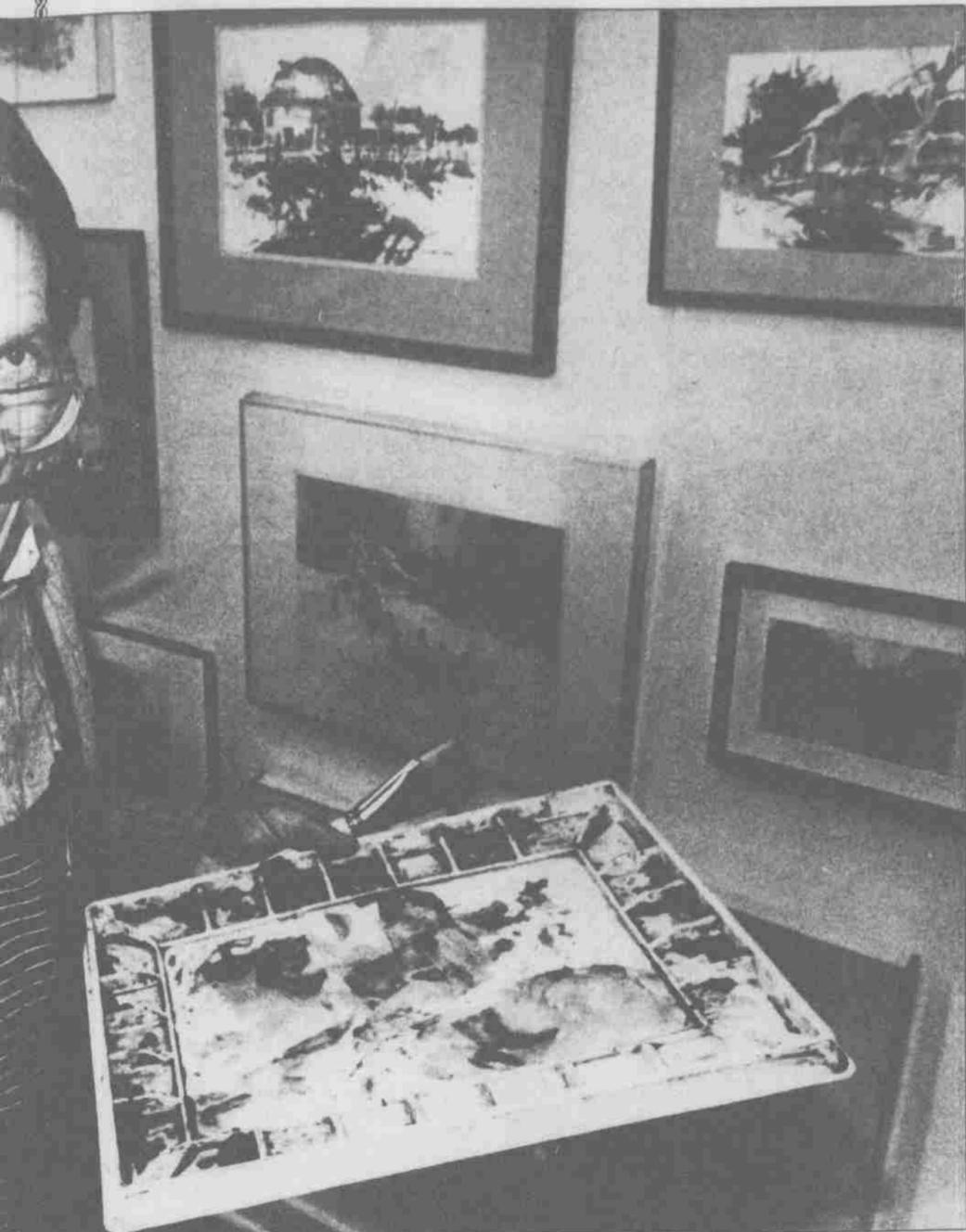


Hannah



"I enjoyed being an architect, but there were other things I wanted to do."

Watching colleagues wait until they were 60 or 65 before they started doing what they wanted seemed "odd," he says. So he decided, at age 35, to do what he wanted . . . then.

Since the career change, his work schedule has become a bit unorthodox. Hanna says his architectural work only takes about 80 percent of his time. The remaining 20 percent, Hanna says with a laugh, is spent trying to find something to do.

Much of this time is devoted to conducting watercolor workshops around the Midwest. The workshops are sponsored by area art clubs, Hanna says.

And he is enthusiastic about them, about the travel involved and about helping people improve their skills and develop an appreciation for the buildings and landscapes around them.

Hanna also participates in area art festivals. He says he likes to demonstrate his painting techniques as people look on. People are fascinated, he says, as if a miracle is taking place as the picture develops, and "all with no numbers on the paper."

The art festivals are also a good place to earn extra income, Hanna says.

People are anxious to buy the work, whether good or bad, because they realize each painting is one of a kind.

Hanna says the techniques and tools he uses are what gives his watercolors their distinctive style.

"The objective of watercolors is to make as many mistakes as possible, and then try to save it. It's best to just let the watercolor do what it wants to do, then you just tell everybody that that's exactly how you planned it."

The brushes he prefers are handmade and soft, which leads to better results, he says.

Hanna refers jokingly to the brushes. "I always buy two of them; one of them I just use to stroke myself and make me feel good, and I use the other one for painting. You gotta get in the mood."

Hanna says he doesn't regret bypassing formal art training during his college years. Had he gone to art school rather than majoring in architecture, Hanna says, he would have been a drop-out. The mood of art during the early 1960s was very abstract, he says, and he would have been "burned out" on art by now.

Instead, Hanna says, he is still learning. He participates in many workshops as a stu-

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Dulaney

dent, he says, keeping his artwork and techniques fresh.

A 1963 graduate of UNL, Hanna credits a four-year architecture scholarship with helping him earn a degree. The Leo A. Daly Scholarship paid \$500 a year, which Hanna says, got him "over the hump."

He supplemented this scholarship by working part-time for architecture firms.

"Because I could draw, I always had a job. But it was a big problem because I never really got to spend as much time with school because I was always working. School was a part-time job, which was a real mistake."

To save money, Hanna slept in his car for a semester. He parked the car outside the coliseum and would shower in the gym each morning.

That arrangement seemed to be working fine, Hanna says, until the police discovered him.

"An old cop pulled up and said, 'You wait here, and I'll be back.' Well, I could have driven away, but I waited until he came back. He gave me a blanket and said, 'Now I'll look out for you.'"

The following semester, Hanna stayed with friends at dorms and fraternities.

Once college was behind him, Hanna set a goal to have his own architectural firm by the time he was 27 years old. After finishing the required four years of apprenticeship, which enabled him to become a registered architect, Hanna formed a partnership with Deon Bahr in 1967.

The firm's first big project was designing a local liquor store. The building won the attention of a local beer distributor, and the firm ended up with a series of jobs for Anheuser-Busch, Inc.

"For awhile there, the liquor business was keeping us in business," Hanna says.

Following these projects, Hanna's firm redesigned the downtown Lincoln Hovland-Swanson department store.

Just two years after beginning private practice, Hanna and Bahr were awarded an American Institute of Architecture Award for the design of a Lincoln home. For a firm that young, Hanna says, the national award was a big push.

From there, the firm grew rapidly, and by the time he left to begin his own practice, it employed about 30 people.

Still, Hanna has no regrets. He says he enjoys the less competitive world of artists. He found that artists are much more supportive of each other.

Architects, he says, are too busy looking out for themselves to sit back and enjoy life.

"The artists are out there grubbing together. It's amazing how much they help you."

Hanna smiles as he contemplates his lifestyle.

"I guess it's just serendipity. I'm just glad that I've been lucky enough to get to do the things I have."