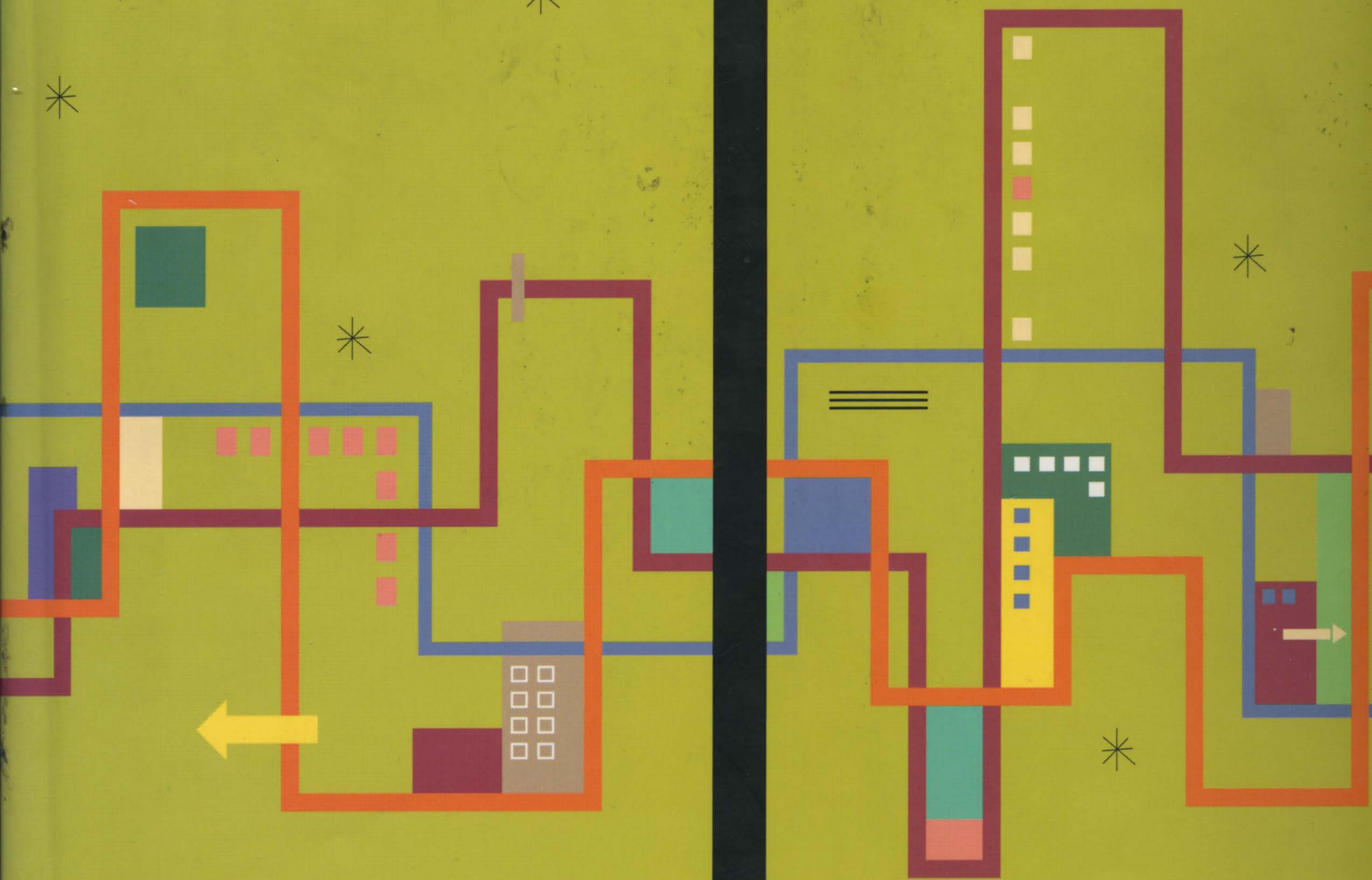


City Signs

**Innovative
Urban Graphics**



g a i l d e i b l e r f i n k e

Neighborhood of Discovery



University Center

Saratoga St

700
W. SARATOGA ST.



university center

BALTIMORE, MARYLAND

A new identity and mission for an academic neighborhood

A 1991 sign program designed by Cloud and Gehshan Associates gave Baltimore's University Center neighborhood an identity and vitality it had never known. Centered around anonymous university medical buildings and suffering from comparison with a nearby festival marketplace and Camden Yards ball park, the neighborhood needed signs that would communicate that a lot was going on behind

the scenes. At the same time, the program had to emphasize a new state plan to build excellence in life sciences.

Bright colors and unexpected shapes breathe life into simple directional signs and markers. Banners and a new motto, "Neighborhood of Discovery," add a friendly touch. And the striking double helix of a DNA molecule repeats everywhere: twisted into the nylon banners, bent into the metal signs.

Designer Virginia Gehshan reports that the project included scores of consultations with the University of Maryland Medical Systems as well as presentations before two sign commissions and a city manager. Consultants included an engineer and landscape architects. The program's second phase was installed in 1993.

design

Cloud and Gehshan
Associates, Philadelphia,
Pennsylvania

fabrication

Nordquist Sign Co.,
Boulder, Colorado

photographs

Cloud and Gehshan

Bright colors and a twisted "double helix" motif provide a high-tech but friendly identity for a formerly faceless urban neighborhood comprised mostly of medical and graduate school facilities.



university center



university center



Vehicular directional signs are simple aluminum blades painted the project red and purple. Red indicates parking.



Cloud and Gehshan devised two sets of banners for the neighborhood. The first set of 40, which attach to light poles, pair traditional banners with twisted ribbons repeating the double helix shape. The second set, installed along a 4-lane boulevard in 1993, can be read at a greater distance. Instead of the twisted ribbon, a graphic representation of the double helix accompanies the area's new motto: "Neighborhood of Discovery."



The new identity has been so popular that the designers have been called on to apply it to even more uses, such as this construction barricade and a stylish trophy for a new annual award commemorating achievement in the life sciences.