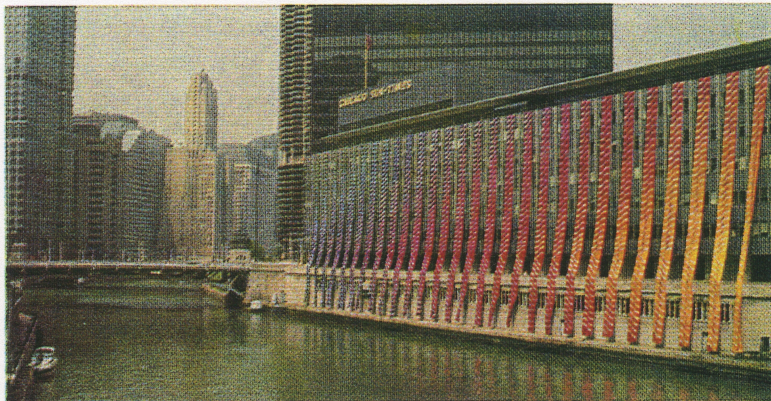


# TIME



CHICAGO Sprucing up a dingy city landmark

## THE WALL STREET JOURNAL.

### If This Is a Success, They Can Put A Nehru Jacket on the Sears Tower

By FRANCINE SCHWADEL  
Staff Reporter of THE WALL STREET JOURNAL

CHICAGO—Maya Romanoff is about to transform one of this city's ugliest buildings into his vision of Cleopatra's barge at dawn.

Mr. Romanoff, an artist who specializes in hand-dyed textiles, plans to drape his latest creation over the river side of the Chicago Sun-Times building, which squats like a giant barge alongside the Chicago River. The piece, to be unveiled this morning, will have 28 psychedelic banners connected by heavy-duty elastic cords so they can sway in the wind. Mr. Romanoff calls it "Bess' Sunrise." Bess was his mother.

#### Total Alteration

"It's going to alter the building totally," says the 47-year-old Mr. Romanoff, whose work was commissioned to mark an international gathering of textile artists here. "It's going to look like the sunrise on the sails of Cleopatra's barge."

Others are a bit less enthusiastic, although most agree that the banners can't help but be an improvement. Mike Royko, a columnist at the Chicago Tribune, says the piece might actually spruce up an otherwise "dumb-looking building." What's more, he suggests that the Sun-Times decorate its building more often, draping it in a giant surgical mask, for instance, when the American Medical Association meets

or a big black robe when the American Bar Association gets together.

Even Sun-Times officials concede that "Bess' Sunrise" will improve the building's appearance. "From an architectural point of view, there is nothing terribly special about the Sun-Times building," says Michael Soll, the paper's director of public relations. "Transforming this structure for two weeks will be a very welcome change."

Mr. Romanoff hopes to get a mention in the "Guinness Book of World Records." The former painter, who switched to textiles after helping his first wife tie-dye a T-shirt on her return from Woodstock in 1969, believes "Bess' Sunrise" is the world's largest hand-dyed work of art.

#### Never Before Tried

He isn't sure, however, precisely how the piece will turn out because it is so big—it covers 48,000 square feet of space—that Mr. Romanoff hasn't yet tried it outdoors. The artist acknowledges that the way the piece will move in the wind "isn't completely predictable."

Installing Mr. Romanoff's creation isn't likely to be easy either. The 120-foot-long cotton panels will be lowered nine or 10 at a time from the Sun-Times terrace. Mr. Romanoff predicts that Sun-Times employees and tenants will have the sensation of peering out through stained glass.

## American Notes

CHICAGO

### Draping an Old Eyesore

In a city attuned to architectural splendors and niceties, the squat, graceless Chicago Sun-Times Building, resembling an aluminum-and-marble houseboat run aground, has long struck its beholders as an eyesore. Suddenly it has become the visual star of the Windy Cityscape. Deciding that the structure would be a good backdrop for his latest creation, titled *Bess' Sunrise*, Textile Artist Maya Romanoff adorned the building with 28 brightly colored canvas strips, each 6 ft. wide and 120 ft. long. Suspended from the seventh-floor terrace and hanging down to the edge of the Chicago River the work offers a billowing spectacle of warm yellow-oranges and radiant blue-greens.

Many Chicagoans have urged that the work be left up permanently instead of the planned two weeks. It has cheered passersby and even improved the morale of people inside the unloved building. Said Sun-Times Spokesman Mike Soll: "Dressing it up is a welcome relief."