

Masking up for Covid was routine for me, I've been doing it for years!

It seemed like Deja Vu over and over again that I had to suit up and train yet another technician at the local Linex shop on how to achieve that beautiful glisten-y, specular finish that we applied to our airline travel cases. You know, the finish that brought people over to our booth from the other end of the conference hall at SuperBooth in Berlin or NAMM at Anaheim or SynthPlex in Burbank. Or that elicited the phrase "Cool as F...k!" from Microsoft's Head of Hardware Design.

So things like suiting up in positive air gear is just another day at the office for me. An Industrial Designer since the age of 5, zipping around my personal "Fab Lab" in the form of my grandfather's "AAA Cabinet Shop". And where, while he made speaker enclosures for the Air Force Academy, he also cut out anything I could sketch on a piece of scrap lumber like and boomerangs and ray guns or bazookas and other weaponry for our gang of alley rats at 423 E. 2nd Ave, Denver CO. And since then I've never minded getting my hands, or if necessary, my entire body dirty to achieve a design goal.

Like my first day as a new intern at a well known CT ID firm while a student at Pratt, where I stayed overnight to complete my first project, sleeping on the model shop floor, and ended up getting fiberglass in my shorts! And where I also got 10 models finished over the 5 the boss required. And where I was hired on the spot the next day, full time, for more than Andy Kostanecki had ever paid a Junior Designer. Or so he told me.

And where I got to work on projects like tools for Stanley Tools, sporting goods for AMF, watchbands for Timex, storage containers for Tupperware, a racing sailboat for Kransco/Coleman. And where I had the good fortune to be in the right place at the right time to do the first concept models of the IBM PC, tower, desktop and notebook.

Since then I've always been the creative guy that actually was invited onto the shop floor in collaboration with my trades and vendors to get that certain radius, curve, texture or finish that I envisioned, and often ended up using their tools or advising, by demonstration, how I wanted something done. Like using 220 glass beads instead of aluminum oxide on those 5052 aluminum struts. Oh yeah baby! Just look at that! Just clear anodize 'em and we're done!

Or like riding herd on design changes, methodologies and material sources like I did for Circuit City Stores where I managed \$35MM in design budgets and redesigned their entire Express Stores fixture program. And where I also published a 350 page Fixture Manual (see examples below) describing every nut, bolt and screw in the program, much to the delight of the installers that had never had an Instruction Manual before!!

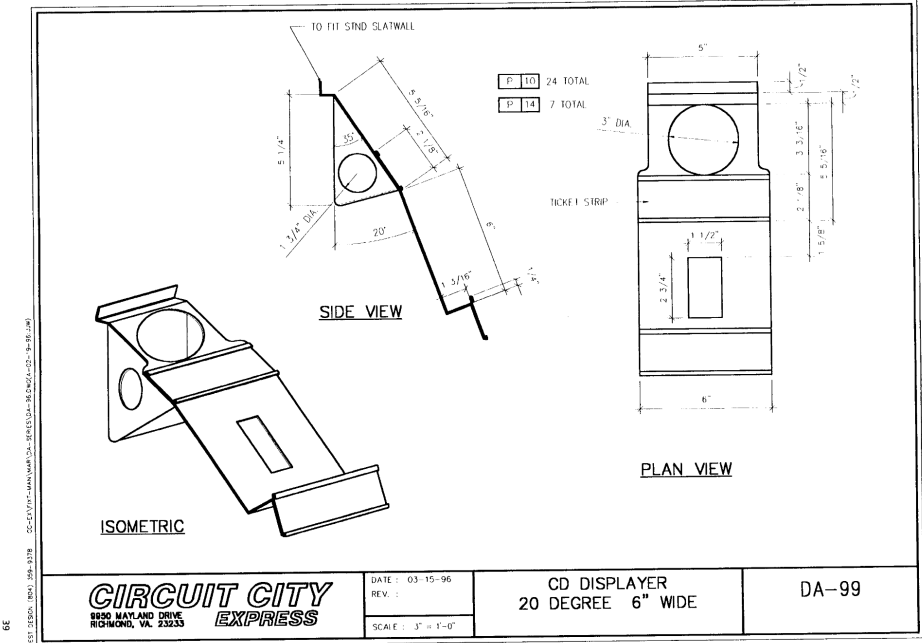
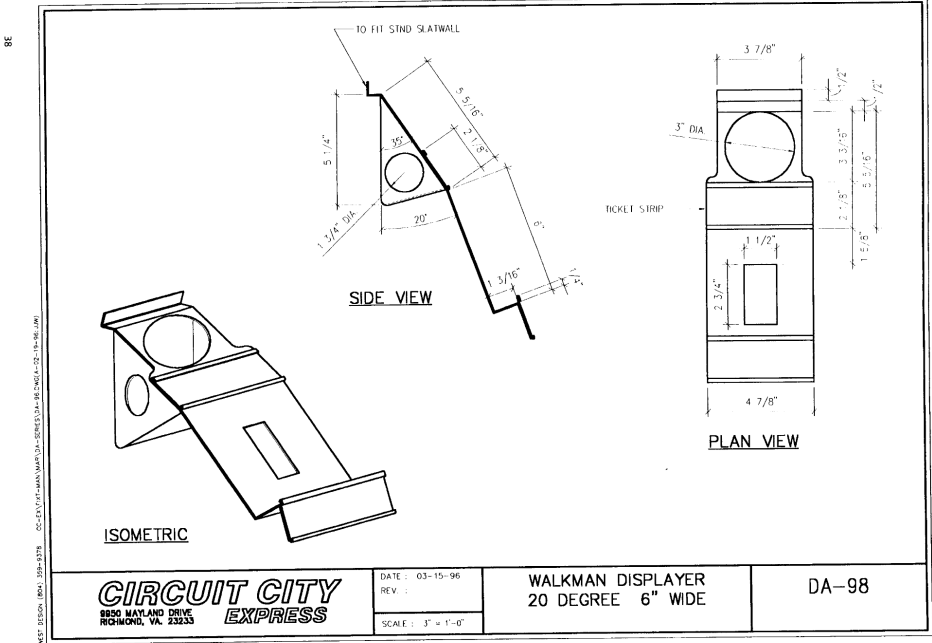
And where after installing a modem in a computer of their fixture fabricator in Ontario I was able to upload a drawing before noon and get a nifty powder coated, punched metal prototype on my desk by 10 the next morning, FedEx Express! Prior to the internet!

And where, taking them from a worn Slatwall and Formica program to a lively Jetsons punched metal vernacular, actually increased sales margins by several points. And where I was the first in the industry to institute VR to speed up Rick Sharp's approval times for new store designs since that retired Navy Pilot could now "fly" through new virtual layouts.

So if you are looking for someone to not only **envision** your product features like fit and finish, surface texture, color and ergonomics but can also test, demonstrate and **prove** them and in necessary, get dirty doing it, then I just might be your guy. Have CNC, Will Travel.

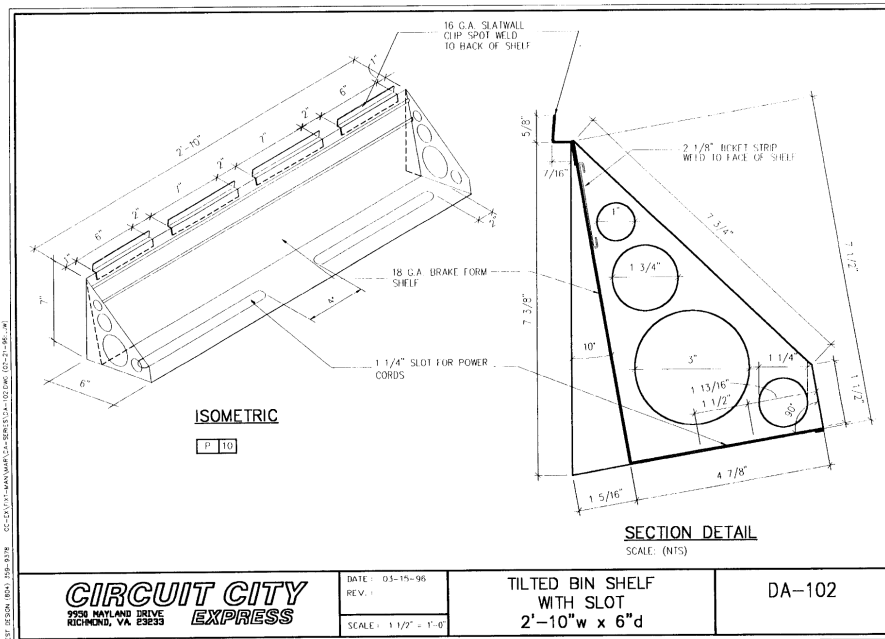
Rob Thomas,
Industrial Designer,
804-833-4470

Appendix I - CAD Examples



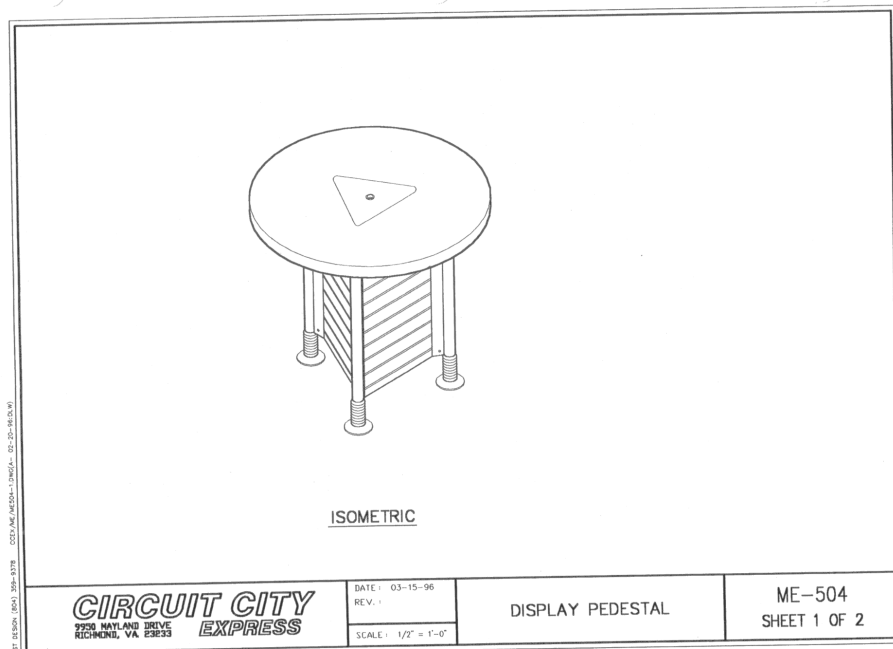
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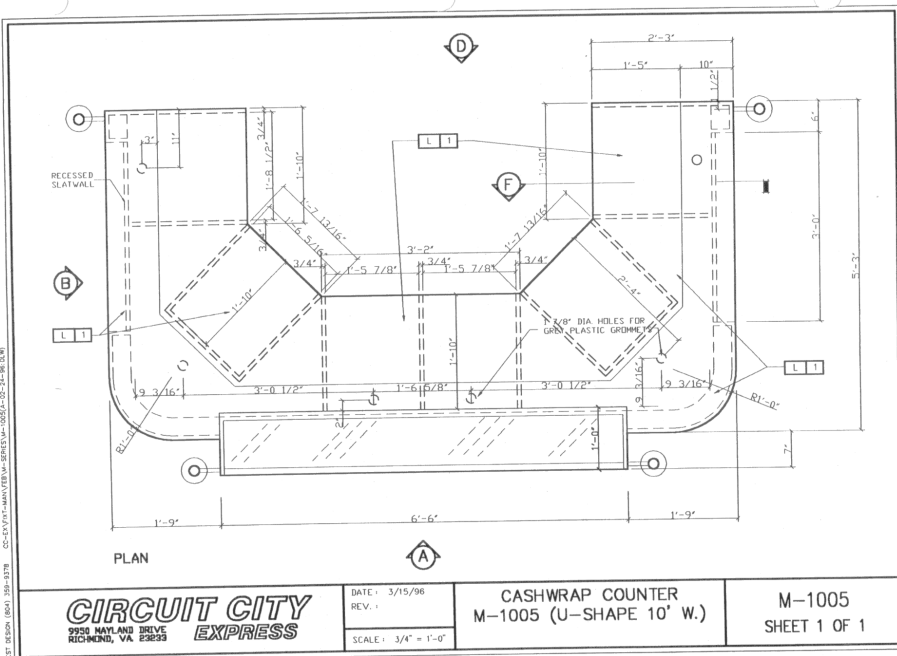
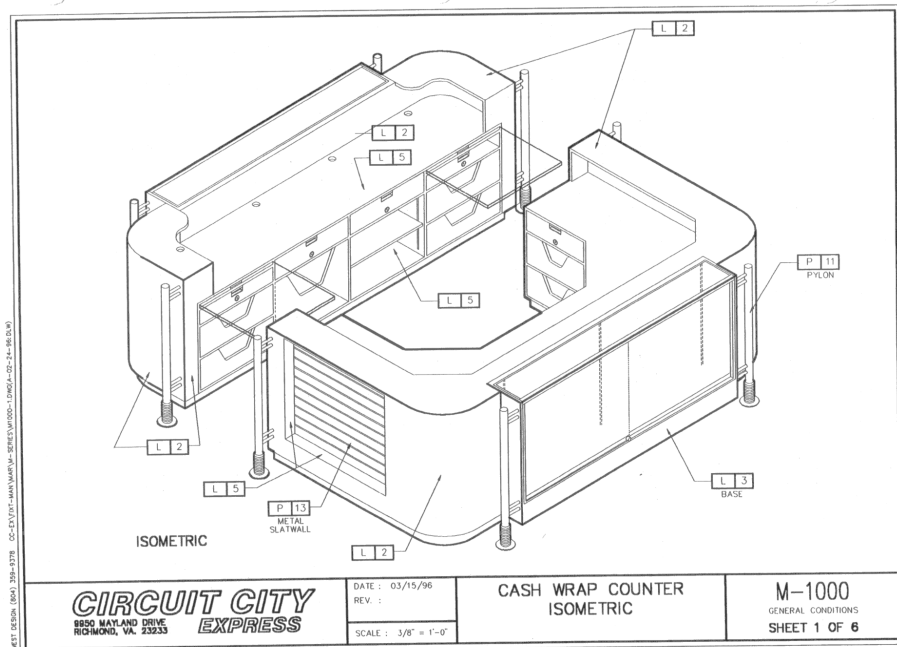
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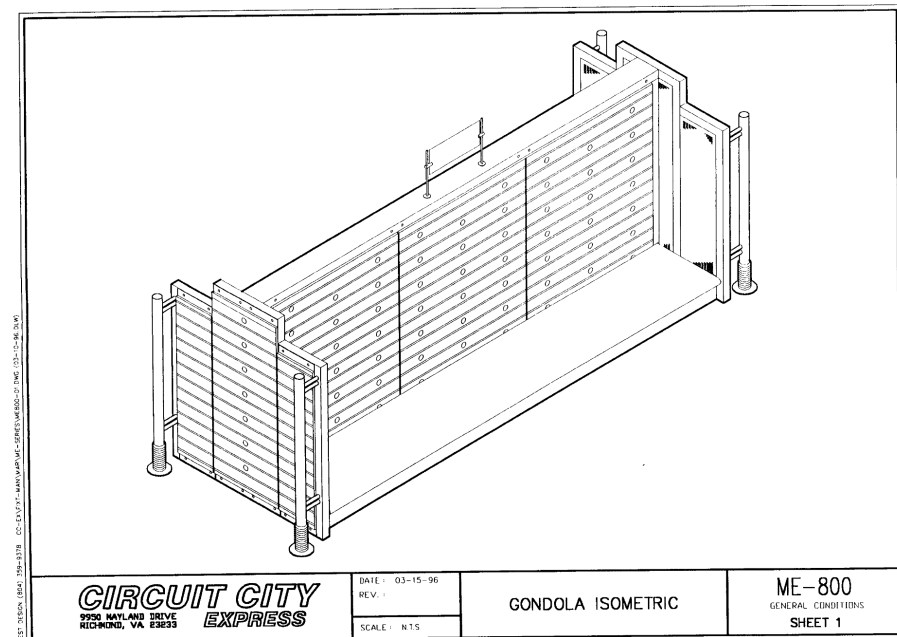
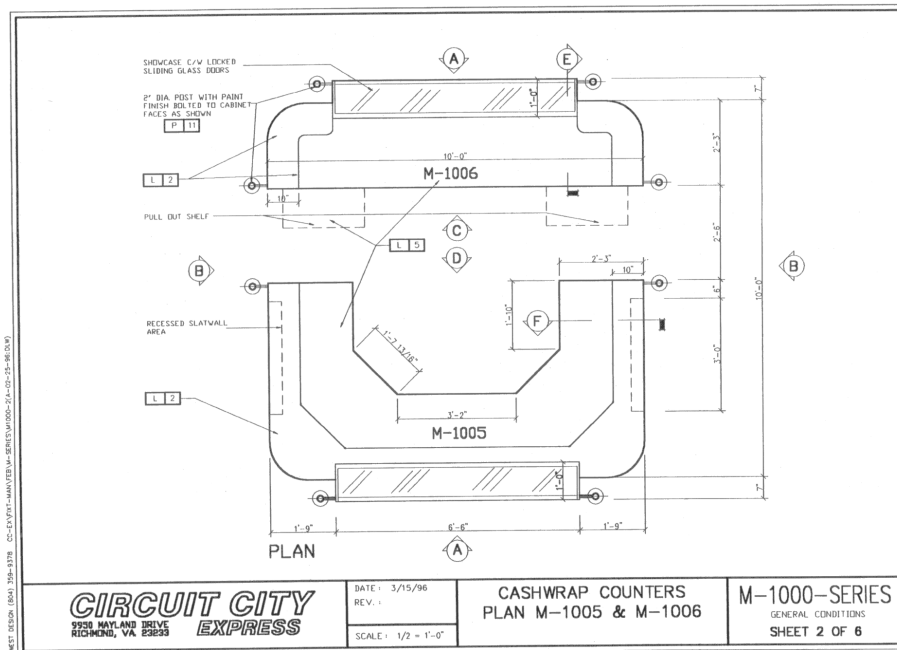


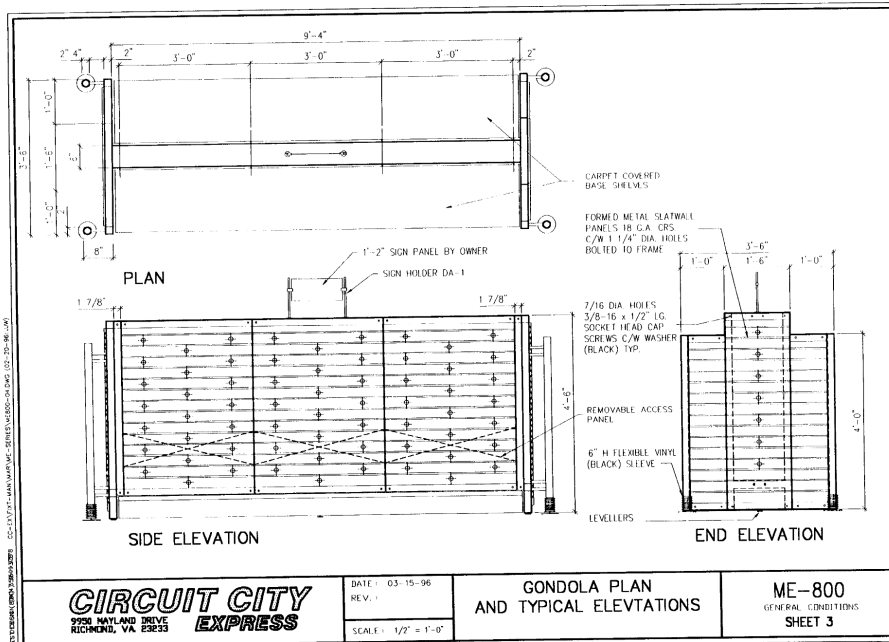
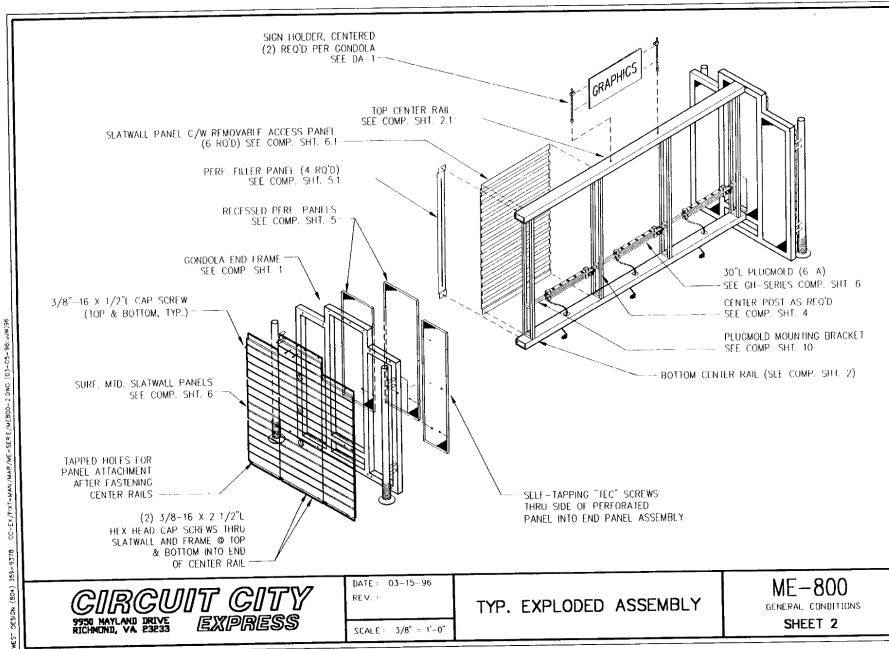
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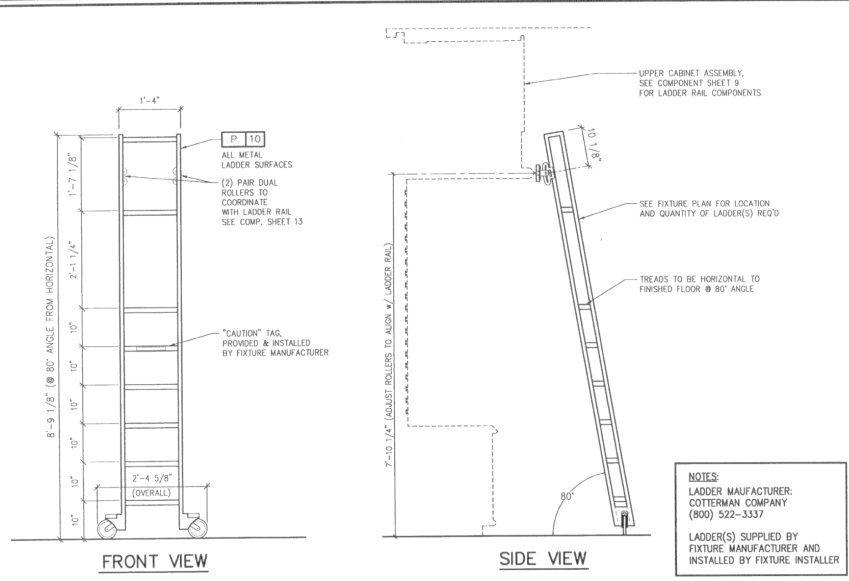








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CIRCUIT CITY
9950 MAYLAND DRIVE
RICHMOND, VA. 23233
EXPRESS

DATE : 3-15-96
REV. :
SCALE : 1/2" = 1'-0"

ROLLING STEP LADDER

B-2003
SHEET 1 OF 1