Correspondence and papers regarding the Duncan Guthrie Institute's mural titled, 'Medical Genetics in the Prevention of Handicap' by the Artists' Collective

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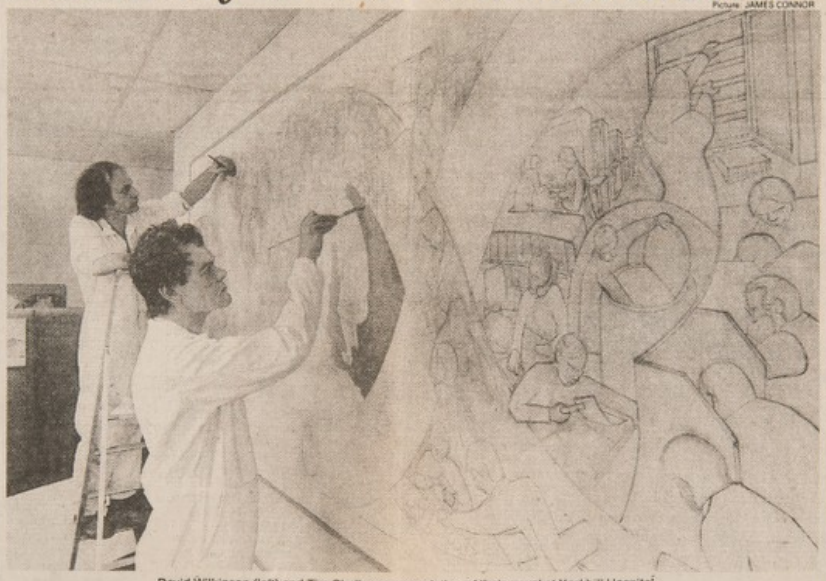
He said: "We can do without any more witchhunts in the Labour Party, the ony witch we

Scottish conference on this ... would require to go to the ... executive committee.

The study of how a mural evolves

Picture JAMES CONNOR



David Wilkinson (left) and Tim Chalk near completion of their mural at Yorkhill Hospital

STAFF and visitors at Yorkhill Hospital, Glasgow may have been accustomed in the past to painters brightening up the halls and corridors of the building, pausing to comment only on the colour scheme.

Recently, however, they may have felt more obliged to spend some time studying the style, nuance and content of the work in hand. The painters, or rather artists, are this time creating a huge mural in the foyer of the hospital's Duncan Guthrie Institute of Medical Genetics.

The mural, measuring 11ft by 5ft, is being created by the Edinburgh-based Artists' Collective, which consists of David Wilkinson, Tim Chalk and Paul Grime.

The collective was formed in 1981 after the three artists had worked together on a variety of projects. Its aim is to bridge the gap between artists and those involved in public art, such as architects, engineers and councillors.

So far, the artists' work has included a large mural in Bonnybridge, designing a gable end painting for St Peters Street, Dundee and designing and making inflatables for hospitals and mentally handicapped groups.

The present mural, which should be completed in the next few weeks, symbolises the application of genetic knowledge to the prevention of handicap in children. The centre piece shows a family group with doctors and nurses, and surrounding scenes depict scientists and technicians carrying out tests.

The successful design was chosen after a competition organised by the Scottish Arts Council in association with the Duncan Guthrie Institute.

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this country before he returns to the medical profession.

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summer's day and finds her wonderland.

I think that some of the bizarre inconsistencies of "The Magic Flute" are more readily brought into life if you make the assumption that it might be a dream of Tamino. One thinks of him as a sort of Masonic acolite, candidate, who is seen reading and drowsing in a library.

It is Tamino's dream, a phantasmagoria of some sort.

I'm attracted by dreaming. I find it very interesting. It's another form of reality. I don't think dreaming is an escape from reality, it's a reality which runs parallel to what we normally call reality.

Did your ideas for this production take shape slowly or was there a sudden flash of inspiration?

Jonathan Miller

I was thinking for a long time before I was asked to do anything for Scottish Opera of different ways in which it might be done, and one of the ways came from having seen a number of drawings and engravings of utopian architects of the late eighteenth century, notably Etienne-Louis Boullet and Nicolas Ledoux. All of them designed fantastical libraries and cenotaphs — huge utopian institutions, some of which actually got built.

Nicolas Ledoux actually built a strange sort of Sarastroville, a salt works with a great circle of workers' residences built around offices, with great salt pans in the centre.

Were there any similarities with what Robert Owen was doing at New Lanark?

Also the [illegible] of peculiarity, turmoil, ordeal. The music is the same for both fire and water, it's just the thin endangered sound of the flute which then is brought to an end by the triumphant sound of Tamino and Pamina as they emerge.

The fact that Mozart wrote no music at all to paint a picture of fire and water, though fire and water are both notoriously elements for which music has in the past and since been written, leads me to think that Mozart intended nothing and that these ordeals should be imagined as being something beyond human comprehension.

It's very tempting for producers who want to show their hand to do the lot but I think it's actually against the music. We simply have these two absolutely terrifying black entrances as if into a tomb. It's rather like the ghost train — you see someone disappear into the ghost train, you hear screams and shrieks from within, and then out from not these awful Eisteddfod figures usually seen robed and dignified, with whom the whole thing grinds to a hideously monumental standstill.

What about your treatment of the Queen of the Night?

When Sarastro talks about the rays of the sun driving away the shadows of the night I think it's an emblem for superstitious and sectarian obscurantism and there's an arguable case for seeing the Queen of the Night as rather like the great Catholic empress Maria Theresa . . . instead of being a piece of the furniture brought on wobbling unsteadily, a piece of masonry pushed forward on wheels, like an Aztec queen in a Copacabana stage show.

I've got her coming on surrounded by her confessors and altar boys and her bishops as if she had suddenly emerged from some retreat at one of the great Danubian monasteries.

City Hall, Glasgow

MALCOLM RAYMENT

Scottish Chamber Orchestra

BECAUSE the financial situation permits the SCO's wind section to go to America only for the first week of the coming tour with Jaime Laredo, Mendelssohn's Violin Concerto has been dropped from the repertory. This was made the excuse for taking it out of Sunday evening's programme, which was hard on those who had been looking forward to it.

The replacement was Bach's D Minor Concerto for two violins and strings, and, since this is included in the tour repertory the opportunity was taken of giving it an extra preparatory run through. However, it needs much more than this if the orchestra's reputation is not to suffer.

The fault lay in the interpretation rather than the execution. In the bad old days, not so long past, when Bach's music was blown up and romanticised, Laredo might have got away with his exaggeratedly warm approach involving a pronounced vibrato, but not so today.

John Tunnell, who played the second solo part, had no option but to follow suit. Subtle gradations of dynamics were non-existent, almost the whole work being played at the same rather loud level.

It was a very different story with the four violin concertos that make up Vivaldi's "The Seasons." Here Laredo was very much in his element, giving brilliant and colourful performances, as indeed he should, for he has played these concertos so often with the SCO.

By contrast the Symphony in D by the Spanish composer Juan Cristostomo Arriaga was probably new to almost everyone in the large audience. It is a superb work, slightly suggestive of Schubert whose symphonies, Arriago could not have known, and consequently quite a find. Involving the wind section for the only time during the evening, it was very successfully performed and conducted,

Morley Gallery, London

CLARE HENRY

International Art Association

THE International Association of Art represents the interests of professional artists in over 70 countries throughout the world. It is an affiliate of Unesco with its head office in Paris and its varied activities range from compaigning at government level to providing discounts on art materials!

It also holds exhibitions — and although previous ones were of a good standard, the present "IAA 1983" which has opened at the Morley Gallery is certainly well below par.

It includes much which is less than professional art: some the kitsch Venice plus Gondoliers by Moonlight; some pseudocubist, some psychedelic pop poster; some weak landscapes, pretentiously framed; some just plain weak.

But as usual on these gloomy occasions there are a few shining lights. Harvey Daniels shows two paintings which are a direct spin-off of the prints recently editioned for him in Aberdeen by Peacock Printmakers. They are in the style of the lively Matisse paper cut-outs which use shape and colour with gay abandon.

Susan Swale's work is not colourful, rather grey and graphic but it has a similar authority. Likewise Michael Hasted has produced an odd sculptural design which looks like a cross between an architecturally innovative watercolour and a suspender belt but which carries conviction.

The only photographs on show are two effective black and white studies by Heather Waddell. One, "Graham Nickson's Studio" will be familiar to owners of the indispensible little book "London Art and Artists Guide" because it features on the front cover.

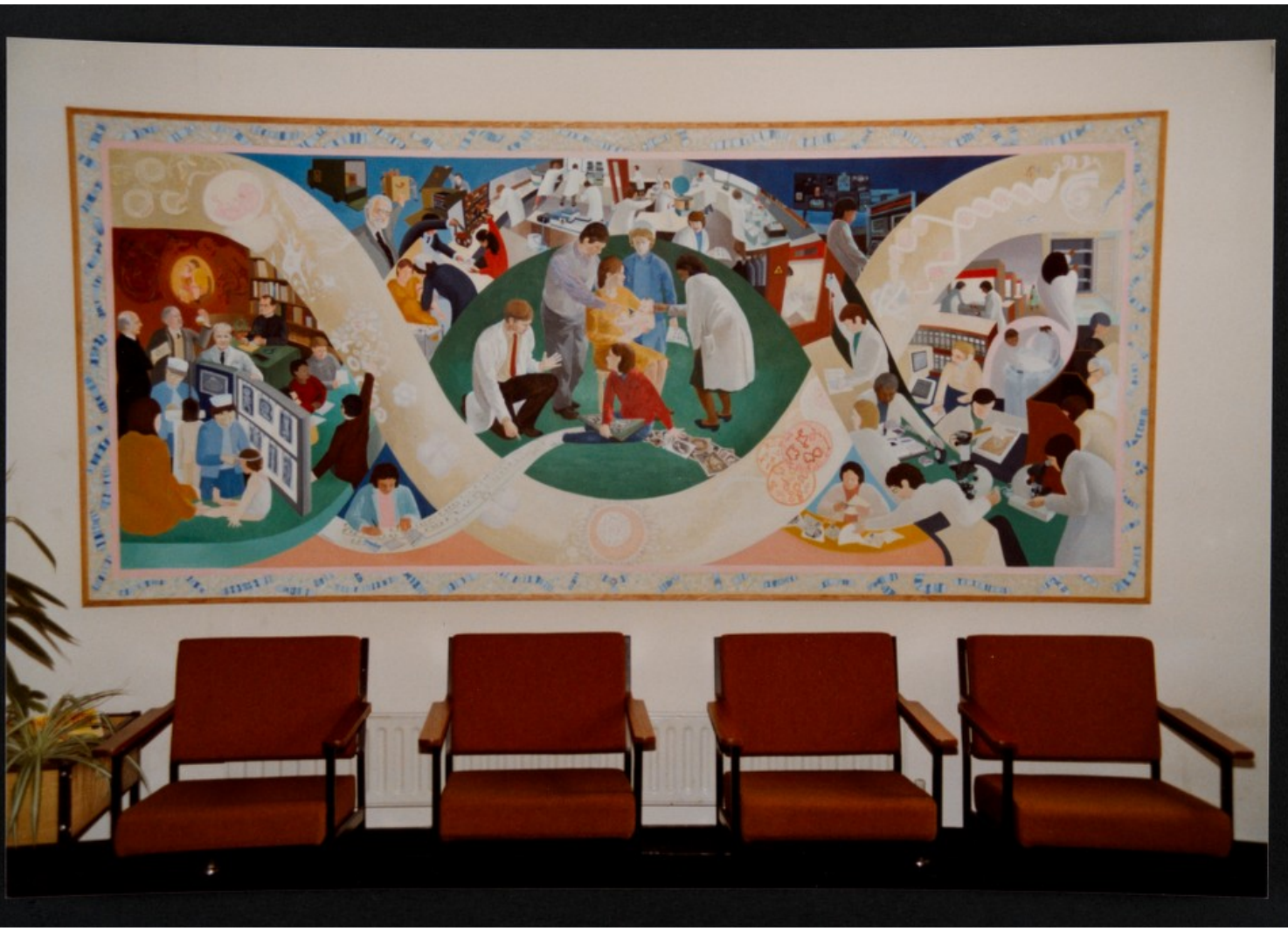
As well as being a photographer Heather Waddell also publishes the New York, Paris and Australian art guides, without which no art addict should ever venture forth.

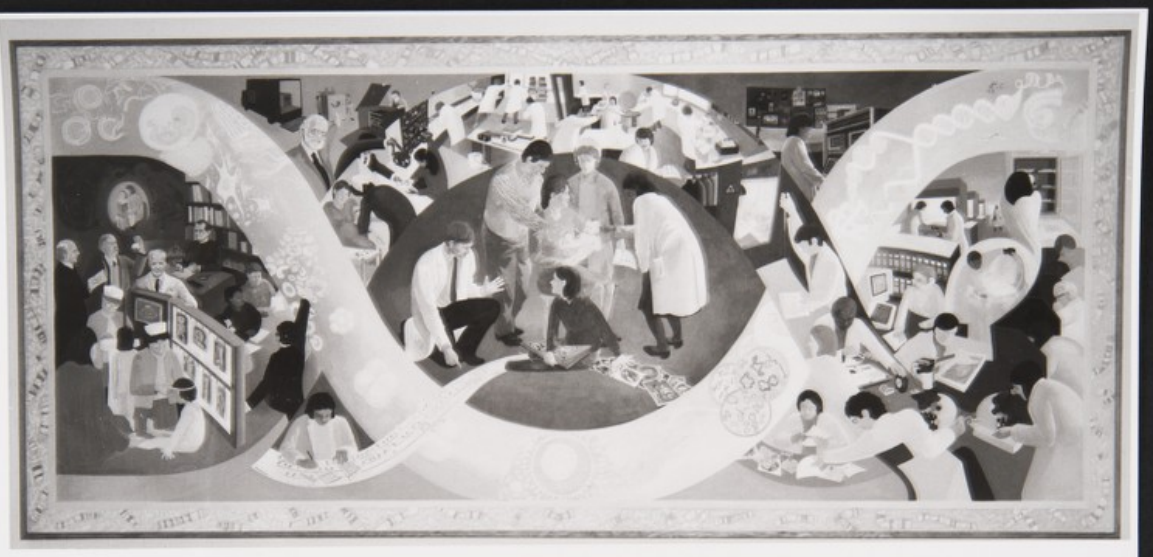
In tune with the past

By DON WHYTE

AFTER an excess of festive fare it sometimes happens that people break

Perhaps the most ambitious venture of the week was launched on Thursday





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May 9, 1983

Medical Genetics in the Prevention of Handicap

A mural, with the above title will be "unveiled" in the entrance foyer of the Duncan Guthrie Institute of Medical Genetics at Yorkhill on Wednesday, 11 May. Dr Duncan Guthrie, OBE, will perform the ceremony at 3.30 pm.

The mural, in acrylic on plywood, was painted by the Artists' Collective (Timothy Chalk, Paul Grime and David Wilkinson). Work started on 29 November, 1982 and the mural was completed 3 months later, on 25 February, 1983.

Notes on the mural and the story it depicts are enclosed, together with a small photograph and notes about the artists.

Members of the press and photographers are invited to view the mural during the morning of 11 May and are welcome to attend the "unveiling" at 3.30 pm.

THE DUNCAN GUTHRIE INSTITUTE'S MURAL

"Medical Genetics in the Prevention of Handicap"

by ARTISTS' COLLECTIVE

(Timothy Chalk, Paul Grime and David Wilkinson)

Acrylic on plywood February, 1983

In 1982, the Scottish Arts Council in association with the Duncan Guthrie Institute organised a limited competition to find a suitable design for a mural to decorate the foyer of the new Institute. Five artists were selected from 20 nominees by a selection panel comprising representatives of the Institute, Glasgow University and the Scottish Arts Council. Five designs of high quality were considered by the panel in October 1982 and the commission was awarded to the Artists' Collective. One half of the cost of the commission was met by generous donors, the other half by a grant from the Scottish Arts Council. The painting was started on 29 November 1982 and completed on Friday, 25 February 1983.

. . . . . .

The design symbolises the application of knowledge of genetics to the prevention of handicap in children. A family group receiving reassurance and guidance from doctors and nurses fills the centre of the picture (A). The knowledge on which this guidance is based is derived from laboratory tests provided by the scientists and technicians shown in the surrounding scenes which include aspects of biochemical genetics (B), chromosome diagnosis (C) and pedigree analysis (D). More peripheral areas of the painting show research in tissue culture (E), flow cytometry (F), genetic engineering (G) and chromosome mapping (H). The biological basis of the science of medical genetics is symbolised by the DNA double helix which provides the underlying pattern of the whole design; one strand of the helix represents the busy life of the Institute in clinical diagnosis, laboratory testing, teaching and research; the other strand represents the continuum of life from the DNA molecule within the chromosome in one generation, through early development and differentiation to the fully developed fetus emerging into the next generation. In this strand of the double helix, the fusion of the gametes in the fertilised egg (I) represents the narrow bridge of heredity between the two generations.

Throughout the painting and around its border are numerous representations of human chromosomes which, because they carry the genetic information, are a major object of the medical geneticist's attention. They are the source of the biological variation evident in many aspects of his professional work such as clinical measurement (J), X-ray examination of the skeleton (K) or in blood group typing (H). The discerning visiting scientist may identify chromosome aberrations among the normal chromosomes which decorate the painting.

On the centre left-hand side of the painting the early pioneers of medical genetics can be seen, including Mendel and his garden pea plants; Francis Galton whose contribution to biometrical genetics is indicated by the palm print; and Archibald Garrod observing biochemical variation in a sample of urine. They turn their backs on the mythical monsters of antiquity which represent the extremes of biological variation, the genetic diseases, thus symbolising how the ignorance of the past is being replaced by new knowledge and understanding. The modern clinical geneticist's role in the skilful diagnosis and prevention of disease is depicted by a well-known figure of international reputation who supervises the clinical examination of the young family in the lower left-hand side (J).

The important role of the community in promoting the search for new knowledge and providing the necessary resources is shown in the top left-hand centre scene (L), where the distinguished founder of Action Research for the Crippled Child, who has given his name to the Institute, announces the arrival of new equipment granted for specific research projects by several different charitable organisations recognisable by their distinctive logos.

Artists' Collective

Having worked individually in community arts for some years, we feel that artists commissioned to produce public art have a responsibility to those who must live with or work around the finished product. For this reason, we formed Artists' Collective, which aims to produce public art works through the combination of our artistic skills and the needs of the client or community group. By involving the client as much as possible in the creative process we aim to produce work which the residents can both identify with and enjoy.

The first work of Artists' Collective was the foundry mural for Smith and Wellstood, Bonnybridge: it received the 1981 Saltire Society Award for Art and Architecture. Community-based projects include the Salamander Street Backcourt mural in Leith, Govan Home and School Centre Glasgow and Wall Mosaics, 2 Linksview Square, Leith. For the Royal Edinburgh Hospital, we have produced murals, door panels and mobiles in the Jardine Clinic, and will return next month to work with staff and patients in the Social Centre. We also design and build inflatable structures specially for work with the handicapped, in hospitals or community groups. In 1982 Artists' Collective instigated the Blackness Public Arts Programme, which has been jointly funded by the Scottish Development Agency and the Scottish Arts Council. This programme aims to develop large-scale public art works in the industrial redevelopment area of Dundee, and is run by local artists.

Genetics Mural - Duncan Guthrie Institute of Medical Genetics, Yorkhill.

The Mural is based on a very comprehensive brief from Professor Ferguson-Smith, and attempts to work at three levels. First, to illustrate the workings of the Institute for the visitor; second to depict the history of genetic research and its unending progress; and finally to work as a teaching aid by the inclusion of accurate scientific information.

Artists' Collective
May 1983

BRIEF FOR A DECORATIVE WORK ON THE THEME: "MEDICAL GENETICS AND THE PREVENTION OF HANDICAP"

Background

Genetics is a comparatively modern science and it was not until the beginning of this century that the main laws of inheritance were generally appreciated. Although there has been considerable application to animal and plant breeding, the impact on Medicine has been comparatively modest until the early 1960ies. A few clinicians in the U.K. had a special interest in the subject before then, but the first Genetics Clinic dates from 1946 and there were no NHS consultants in the specialty until the late 1960ies. Despite this, it is now recognised that some 5% of children are born with a significant genetic defect or malformation, 60% of which are apparent at birth.

Glasgow University appointed the first Lecturer in Medical Genetics in 1961, and since then the main aim of the Glasgow group has been to introduce the principles of genetics into the practice of medicine and so achieve a more rational approach to the management and, particularly, the prevention of genetic disease in the community. Formal teaching courses in Medical Genetics to undergraduates in Medicine were introduced in 1963, and clinical and laboratory services to patients were started at Yorkhill two years later. The Department now acts as a Regional Genetics Centre for the West of Scotland. We serve a population of about three million who have 36,000 babies each year. Our patients thus attend our clinics from Argyll in the North West, Dumfries in the South, as far East as Falkirk,

and often from even further afield. Couples with handicapped children, adult patients affected with genetic disorders, pregnant women at risk of having a child with a congenital malformation come for examination, specialised investigations and genetic counselling. At present, about 500 new families are seen each year, but one family may comprise anywhere between one and 20 individuals. A major part of our service commitment to the Region is to provide laboratory diagnosis for chromosomal, biochemical and other genetic disorders which are unavailable elsewhere. Thus each year 1,500 chromosome analyses are undertaken on blood samples sent to the Department and we screen blood from 32,000 pregnant mothers for spina bifida and related fetal abnormalities. In another 1,500 pregnancies, amniotic fluid is tested for chromosome abnormalities in women who have elected to have amniocentesis because of an increased risk.

Prior to 1980, our work has been undertaken largely in temporary (portable) accommodation, in makeshift, overcrowded laboratories and offices. However, this year, we have moved to a new Institute built by the combined efforts of generous donors, University grants, and Health Service resources. This venture started in 1975, when our Department was awarded £150,000 by the National Fund for Research into Crippling Diseases, to help build research laboratories for a project aimed at the prevention of genetic diseases and congenital malformations. The sum was given

on condition that it would be matched by a similar sum provided jointly by the University and the Greater Glasgow Area Health Board. A further £100,000 was donated by the Fraser of Allander Trust and work was started on the building in 1978. The total cost of building and equipping our Institute now stands at about one million pounds. There are four floors comprising a working area of 12,000 sq. ft., divided into Clinics, Laboratories, Offices, plus Lecture Theatre, Staff Room, and Library. It is to be named after Duncan Guthrie, the distinguished founder of Action Research for the Cripplied Child.

It is believed that our Institute is the first of its kind in the U.K. (if not the World), which has been designed and built to provide the community with comprehensive genetic services and to provide facilities for teaching and research in Medical Genetics. The Institute will be used by patients and their families, by doctors, nurses, scientists and technicians, and by medical, science and nursing students. Visiting scientists will collaborate with local research workers in projects aimed at discovering the precise defect in particular genetic diseases, at mapping human chromosomes, at exploiting genetic engineering methods for the diagnosis of disease, and at developing new strategies for the prevention and treatment of genetic causes of handicap. There will thus be a varied traffic in and out of the building and all will pass through the main entrance hall and reception area.

The reception area is bright, but has a distinctly

clinical appearance. One side is bounded by a large expanse of empty wall measuring 4.520m x 2.650m (14'10" x 8'8" which forms one side of the waiting area used by patients and visitors, and is immediately to the left of the main entrance. The project is to commission a suitable mural or hanging to provide a more appropriate atmosphere to those who come into the building. Part of the funds to be used on this project have been provided by friends and patients who have from time to time donated money to further the work of the Department.

The Theme of the Work

In general, this should represent the aims and spirit of those who work towards the prevention of handicap in children. It should also help to provide a sense of hope and cheer to those of our patients and their families who have first-hand knowledge of handicapping illness and who are in the building as a direct result of this, or from anxiety about the possibility of handicap in their future children. In view of the rather "clinical" surroundings it would be helpful if the work was colourful and generated a feeling of warmth and reassurance.

Medical Genetics abounds in visual imagery. The genetic material, from the universal DNA helix at the molecular level to the beautifully-fashioned chromosome, which we can see under the microscope, is full of pattern and symmetry.

On the other hand, genetics is rightly considered the science of biological variation. Each individual is unique through a combination of heredity (inherent factors), and environment (experience). The medical geneticist is particularly involved when the genetic variation is extreme, leading

to abnormal development or disease. The mythological monsters of antiquity probably all have their origin in rare observations of genetically-determined foetal abnormality. Past ignorance about the origin of monstrosity, about the stigma of inherited genetic predisposition, are now being replaced by knowledge and understanding of inheritance and the causes of abnormality. The reassurance that knowledge can bring to families misinformed about these matters is one of the most gratifying aspects of the work of a medical geneticist. It is true (but not appreciated), that one of the main results of genetic advice is to encourage couples to have more children rather than the reverse. Putting it another way, for every abnormal conception avoided 20 healthy conceptions are encouraged.

In short, one has in mind a design indicating the excitement of past discoveries in genetics and the promise of future application to medicine, and showing how knowledge of the material and mechanisms of heredity may not only lead to ways of reducing the burden of genetic disease in the community, but also may help to dispel ignorance and fear about fetal malformation and the risks of producing handicapped children. If some of these concepts could be encapsulated in one picture the purpose of the project would be truly realised.

The Wall

The proposed site for the decorative work is a wall measuring 2.650m x 4.520m overall. The usable space is restricted by a low radiator 2.15 x 0.5 (ht) x 0.12m, at centre of wall

(1 metre from LHS). A vertical expansion joint extends down the face of the wall one metre from the LHS.