It is just incredible to find such important material in my old records, that I had completely forgotten about.

This 1980 Harold Haydon review of my art exhibit is of particular significance. It is his stained-glass windows at Rockefeller Memorial Chapel (University of Chicago) that were the inspiration for my light sculptures. The tall cylindrical shape of the wall-hanging LED light sculptures came from the shape of his windows. The colors of my pieces emulate his stained-glass window coloration.

He was an accomplished artist and taught at the University of Chicago. Once a week Haydon would write an art review for the Chicago Sun-Times. He was Chicago's preeminent art critic at the time. In this 1980 review, he covered a corporate bank's art exhibit, and my own. Out of all the exhibits at the time, to be the only artist selected by Haydon for coverage was an incredible honor.

The review itself is quite complimentary, given that this was so early in my art career.

He wrote that I was "blessed with a splendid imagination."

This review is in the same category as finding out that the Art Institute of Chicago and the Museum of Contemporary Art have had my art in their collections since the early 1980's. Unbelievable that I had forgotten all of this! Better late than never.

Audrius V. Plioplys, October 25, 2016
As support for art and artists, it is a drop in the bucket, but Chicago corporations are major patrons of the arts. To be sure, the artists they patronize the most need it the least, but that is the reward for success.

A sample, but only a sample, of local corporate collections was shown recently at the Chicago Public Library Cultural Center, drawn from 21 corporations. There are many more. A few corporations favor local art, but most seem attracted to internationally famous names.

The first public exhibition of the Sears Bank and Trust Co.'s corporate collection can be seen through Nov. 21 on the mezzanine level of the bank in Sears Tower. It was not included in the Cultural Center show. Sears Bank began collecting in 1977, following a series of fine exhibitions organized by Everett McNear, exhibition director.

The development of this collection is a story typical of corporate collecting. When the bank moved into its new quarters in Sears Tower in 1974 it owned no art. A design team from the architectural firm of Skidmore, Owings & Merrill introduced contemporary art in geometric style, including a large "Protractor" painting by Frank Stella, steel wall pieces after Albers, 14 large, quilted silk hangings by Jack Lenor Larsen and prints by Herbin, Bolotowsky, Vasarely and others, all very expensive, no doubt.

With "its new experience with art in the office, and the felt obligations of a newcomer," the bank launched a series of seven exhibitions. Failing to attract more than a smattering of publicity, Sears Bank ceased exhibiting until now, but began collecting a modest budget allowed for prints rather than paintings by "big-name" artists.

"The collection is being formed under the rubric of "Excellence,"" says Emory Williams, chairman of the board. "Most of the pieces are difficult, intellectually demanding and in some cases upsetting, especially to those not comfortably familiar with the art of our times."

In truth, the collection is run-of-the-mill modern, with such obligatory "right" names as Jasper Johns, Sam Francis, Paul Jenkins, Robert Motherwell, Robert Rauschenberg, Claes Oldenburg, Andy Warhol, Larry Rivers, Jim Dine and Tom Wesselman.

With 10 prints by Johns, eight by Rauschenberg, four by Lichtenstein and three each by Oldenburg, Warhol and Wesselman, works by Chicago-sculptors and painters Hunt, Ferrari, Ginzel, Martyl, Ito, Nickle and Siepka are outnumbered nearly 4 to 1.

One cannot blame Sears Bank for dealing in gilt-edged art, but its collection has much of the sameness and lack of adventure characteristic of corporate collections and many private collections. Hours of the exhibit are 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Monday; 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Tuesday through Thursday; 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Friday. A fine color catalog is free.

The Galeriea, 744 N. Wells, has a complex show of objects, photographs and books by Audrius Pliplysys, a medical doctor blessed with a splendid imagination, although at this point he relies too much on such well-tried genres as erased drawings, earth works recorded in photos and storytelling such as the photo series that follows a polar bear from ice floe to floor covering. The exhibit ends this weekend.