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The Modelshop

1 The middle of the “yellow” model shop located on the first floor. There were two model shops on the first floor, a yellow painted shop and a blue painted shop, each with the machines in the middle of the room with rows of the employee work areas against both side walls. (see LaSalle studio floorplan in the back of this book for further details). Notice the vibrant toy-like colors that all the machines were painted. You can see some work benches on the upper right side.

2 One wall of model maker work benches. Sam Cottone is shown on the far left while Terry Webb is in his work space on the far right.

3 Bennie Skinner working on a lathe.

4 A designer(standing) is discussing a project with a model maker.



Tight Security at the New Fortress

Now that Marvin was able to create his own building from scratch, he made sure state-of-the-art electronic security and surveillance was installed throughout the complex. His paranoid insecurities were all catered to and resulted in over-the-top secrecy. Stewart explained at the time, “Tight security that is rigidly enforced in toy designing was an important factor that had to be given serious consideration both in the design and construction phase of the building.”³ In a newspaper article titled, “Toy Trade No Child’s Play—Security Like a Fortress,” it was written, “At LaSalle the conference room is wired with anti-bugging devices, and visitors are screened via closed-circuit television camera trained on the buzzer and talk-back system.”⁴

A visitor would first have to pass through iron gates to get to the front door. Once they entered the small security room they were met with a locked door. When standing there on the first floor they pressed the intercom to announce their arrival. They were then scrutinized by a unique closed-circuit television system that was viewed upstairs at the receptionist area. Only after proper verbal and physical examination was a person buzzed in and allowed entry.

After being personally viewed on a monitor by the receptionist, a visitor would enter the first-floor foyer and walk up a beautiful staircase to the second-floor office area. They would then be restricted to the front office area with triple-locked doors. No matter how important the visitor was, they were never permitted behind the scenes into the model shop or designers’ work areas. Even family members, spouses, and some front office employees weren’t allowed back where the “magic” happened. After all, loose lips sink ships. “The merest hint, the merest slip could destroy me,” explained Marvin.⁵

Ideal Executive Stewart Sims explained what it was like for he and Lionel Weintraub, “There was no place that was more security conscious. It was getting to work, getting through the door, getting

identified, getting through another door, and then going upstairs, and then they would meet us and then we would sit down and see Marvin, or Anson and Jeff ... that was kind of novel. It wasn’t really like any other toy center, it was the whole idea that you were entering some sort of secret NASA base so top security was needed. You know, it was all very gracious, and I enjoyed working with these guys.”

Glass often dreamt of a personal fortress to help him get to sleep at night. His new studio started to become the embodiment of his dream. He even mentioned the next steps he was willing to take if further security was needed. “Pretty soon we’ll have to live in an underground fortress with electronic devices on top. And even then, a person will have to use the proper key to get in or he’ll vaporize.”⁶



ABOVE The front entrance of the studio with the iron gate acting as the first line of security.

BELOW A closeup of the iron gate with a glass door behind it. Shown through the gate you can see the small security entrance room where you get buzzed in by the receptionist. Notice the intercom and wood door on the left side. Once the wood door is opened it leads to a spacious foyer and a staircase leading to the receptionist upstairs.

