

The columns, the bays, the thin column capitals, the panels above and below the windows — and, of course, the windows themselves and the reveals — all existed as substantial cen-

ters in their own right. It was this process, the instilling of the centers with life, in these construction details, which gave the whole process its energy — and its success.



17 / PLASTERWORK EXPERIMENTS

COMPARABLE DETAILS BEGAN TO EMERGE FOR THE INTERIOR PLASTERWORK (DETAILS WHOSE CHARACTER WAS STARTING TO BE WORKED OUT NOW) EVEN THOUGH THE ACTUAL PLASTER WAS STILL NOT GOING TO BE BUILT FOR SEVERAL MONTHS.

Before I knew how to make the plasterwork surface inside the building, I knew we would need to cast the panels ourselves, but didn't yet know how to do it. We began experiments. Randy Schmidt started a number of plaster models, exploring the possibility of making flowers and other simple reliefs in plaster and trying the kind of casting techniques we might be able to use. What we were looking for was a treatment of detail in the plaster which would have a shimmering surface in the large, and be simple and touching in feeling: NOT-SEPARATENESS and INNER CALM. We did the experiments by gluing cardboard and balsa

wood surfaces, then casting from them, until surfaces began to appear which had a feeling of light in them.

By the end of these experiments with real casting plaster, the plaster panels emerged as flower-covered surfaces, embellished with leaves and latticework.



Closeup of one type of floral ornament which we tried



Early experiments in trying to make beautiful, but inexpensive, plaster panels for the interior