

Landmarks Preservation Commission
April 23, 1985, Designation List 179
IP-1448

RCA BUILDING, ground floor interior consisting of the Rockefeller Plaza entrance lobby, the corridors extending westward from the entrance lobby on either side of the elevator hallways to the western wall of the westernmost double staircase, the elevator hallways, the stairways adjacent to the entrance lobby leading up to the mezzanine, and the stairways adjacent to the elevator hallways leading up to the mezzanine and down to the concourse; mezzanine interior consisting of the upper part of the Rockefeller Plaza entrance lobby, the upper part of the corridors extending westward from the entrance lobby on either side of the elevator hallways to the western wall of the westernmost double staircase, the upper part of the elevator hallways, and the mezzanine corridors; and the fixtures and interior components of these spaces, including but not limited to, wall surfaces, ceiling surfaces, floor surfaces, wall and ceiling murals, marble piers, metal waste receptacles attached to the piers, metal trim, lobby shop window enframements, lobby shop doorways, service doors, vent grilles, railings, decorative glass panels, revolving doors, light fixtures, information desk, directory boards, indicator signs, elevator doors, elevator indicator lights, and elevator bank indicators; 30 Rockefeller Plaza, Borough of Manhattan. Built 1931-33; architects The Associated Architects.

Landmark Site: Borough of Manhattan Tax Map Block 1265, Lot 1 in part consisting of the land on which the described building is situated.

On September 20, 1983, the Landmarks Preservation Commission held a public hearing on the proposed designation as an Interior Landmark of the RCA Building, ground floor interior consisting of the Rockefeller Plaza entrance lobby, the corridors extending westward from the entrance lobby on either side of the elevator hallways to the western wall of the westernmost double staircase, the elevator hallways, the stairways adjacent to the entrance lobby leading up to the mezzanine, and the stairways adjacent to the elevator hallways leading up to the mezzanine and down to the concourse; mezzanine interior consisting of the upper part of the Rockefeller Plaza entrance lobby, the upper part of the corridors extending westward from the entrance lobby on either side of the elevator hallways to the western wall of the westernmost double staircase, the upper part of the elevator hallways, and the mezzanine corridors; and the fixtures and interior components of these spaces, including but not limited to, wall surfaces, ceiling surfaces, floor surfaces, wall and ceiling murals, marble piers, metal waste receptacles attached to the piers, metal trim, lobby shop window enframements, lobby shop doorways, service doors, vent grilles, railings, decorative glass panels, revolving doors, light fixtures, information desk, directory boards, indicator signs, elevator doors, elevator indicator lights, and elevator bank indicators, and the proposed designation of the related Landmark Site (Item No. 3). The hearing had been duly advertised in accordance with the provisions of law. Nineteen witnesses spoke in favor of designation. There were no speakers in opposition to designation. The representatives of Rockefeller Center, Inc., expressed support for a limited designation.

DESCRIPTION AND ANALYSIS

The ground floor and mezzanine floor interior of the RCA Building, built in 1931-33, is one of the major components of what is the largest and most important buildings constructed at Rockefeller Center. As the RCA Building in its form and siting is the focus of the major east-west axis running through the Center from Fifth to Sixth Avenues, so is its ground floor and mezzanine floor interior an important continuation of that axis. The double-height entrance lobby symbolically welcomes visitors, drawing them from the Rockefeller Plaza entrance, past the information desk, into corridors flanked by shops, which create the sense of a grand concourse, and leading to six elevator banks with high-speed elevators which efficiently carry tenants and visitors up into the 70-story building. The experience of the visitor to the ground floor and mezzanine floor interior is enhanced by the extensive program of murals, executed by Jose Maria Sert and Frank Brangwyn, which were conceived as an intrinsic part of the building and a continuation of the overall art scheme used on the exteriors of the Rockefeller Center buildings.

The RCA Building and Rockefeller Center

Rockefeller Center is one of the most important architectural projects ever undertaken in America. It was unprecedented in scope, near visionary in its urban planning and unequalled for its harmonious integration of architecture, art and landscaping. The complex grew out of an ill-fated plan to build new midtown quarters for the Metropolitan Opera Company. When the original scheme collapsed, the project was transformed into the private commercial enterprise of John D. Rockefeller, Jr. Construction of the original complex began in 1931 and ended with the completion of the fourteenth building in 1939.

John D. Rockefeller, Jr. (1874-1960) was born in Cleveland, Ohio. After graduating from Brown University in 1897 he joined his father's office and for some years held directorships of such businesses as the Standard Oil Company of New Jersey, United States Steel Corporation and Missouri Pacific Railroad among others. By about 1911, however, Rockefeller had become almost totally involved with philanthropic, civic, educational and religious enterprises such as the Rockefeller Institute for Medical Research, the Rockefeller Foundation, Rockefeller Sanitary Commission and International Education Board to name a few only. A devout Baptist, he also founded the Institute for Social and Religious Research and funded construction of Riverside Church (1927-30). The latter was just one of the many architectural undertakings which Rockefeller sponsored. He also funded the restoration of the palaces at Fontainebleau and Versailles and Reims Cathedral in France, the Agora and Stoa of Attolos in Athens, and in America, Washington Irving's "Sunnyside" home, Colonial Williamsburg and the birthplace of George Washington. He also supplied the land for the Museum of Modern Art, for the Rockefeller Institute and Fort Tryon where he built the Cloisters. Later, in 1946, Rockefeller donated land for the construction of the United Nations along the East River and gave generously to Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts.[1] Although never an opera devotee, he supported the Metropolitan Opera project as just one more worthy civic and cultural cause.

Rockefeller's involvement in the project to relocate the Metropolitan Opera began on May 21, 1928, when Benjamin Morris presented the scheme to potential investors during a dinner at the Metropolitan Club. Among the guests was Ivy Lee, Rockefeller's public relations manager. He recommended the proposal to his employer, noting that it would "make the [Opera] Square and the immediate surroundings the most valuable shopping district in the world." [2] Rockefeller was interested. He, his sister and father lived in three large houses on W. 53rd and 54th Streets (just three blocks north of the proposed Opera site) and owned a good deal of real estate in the area. Development of a cultural center would insure the quality of his neighborhood while increasing the value of his speculative properties. But before making any commitment, Rockefeller sought development advice from prominent real estate advisors, the Todd, Robertson & Todd Engineering Corp. among them.

John Reynard Todd (1867-1945) was a lawyer who, in partnership with Henry Clay Irons, became accidentally involved in construction and rentals. Todd & Irons developed their building activities into a lucrative business through which they erected and sold at large profits numerous hotels, apartments and commercial structures. Among them was the Cunard Building whose lobby was designed by Benjamin Morris and which stood directly across the street from Rockefeller's Standard Oil Building at 26 Broadway. When Irons retired in 1919 Todd went into partnership with his physician brother, Dr. James M. Todd (c.1870-1939), and Hugh S. Robertson (1880-1951), a specialist in real estate and financial management. Together they were responsible for the internal planning, construction and rental of the Ritz and Barclay Hotels, Postum Building and the fabulously successful Graybar Building which they linked to Grand Central Terminal with corridors.

John R. Todd was the personal friend of Thomas M. Debevoise and Charles O. Heydt, Rockefeller's legal and real estate advisors and it was due to them that he became involved in the Opera project. It was through Debevoise that Todd's son Webster (in the engineering firm of Todd & [Joseph O.] Brown) was engaged in Rockefeller's restoration of Colonial Williamsburg in 1928. And through Heydt that Todd, his brother and Robertson were hired to develop Rockefeller's midtown complex. Heydt informed Rockefeller that Todd had been involved "in very large enterprises, [had] architects in his own office, and --- [had] never made a failure. He [understood] thoroughly the matter of financing the construction of large buildings...and would be in a position to help prospective tenants...construct their own buildings." Todd, he said, was "a hard-headed business man." [3]

Todd, Robertson & Todd was one of five real estate firms to advise Rockefeller on the development potential of the Opera project in autumn, 1928. In addition to the Opera and its plaza (to be designed by Benjamin Morris), the firm recommended a remarkably progressive mixed use complex including hotels, apartment and office buildings, a shopping arcade and department store (the latter in continuation of the development of Fifth Avenue with such fashionable counterparts as Saks and Altmans). The plan also included two new private streets and a lower level for vehicular traffic, parking and freight deliveries. The scheme was prepared over Labor Day weekend, 1928 by two little known, 38 year old architects on Todd's staff: I. Andrew Reinhard and Henry Hofmeister.

Under Todd's directive, Reinhard & Hofmeister prepared an improved plan in mid-September, 1928. Two weeks later (October 1, 1928) Rockefeller made a commitment to lease from Columbia College the three blocks between 48th-51st Streets. The land stretched west from Fifth Avenue but stopped short of Sixth Avenue where street frontage was privately owned. (In subsequent years Rockefeller acquired the western lots as well). The Columbia contract was not actually signed until December 31, 1928, at which point Rockefeller agreed to pay approximately \$3.5 million annual rent during 1928-1952 with options for three 21-year renewals.

On October 1, 1929 (precisely a year after Rockefeller agreed to lease the Columbia property) Todd, Robertson & Todd were appointed managers of the project. Their mandate was to "build the thing, put it on a profitable basis, and sell it to the world." [4] By the end of October their staff architects (Reinhard & Hofmeister) were named architects of the development. They were experienced in the internal layouts preferred by Todd and familiar with his theory that "business property income production supercedes pure aesthetics." [5] Todd recommended at the same time that Harvey Corbett and Benjamin Morris be engaged as consulting architects (although the latter declined after December, 1929). He also suggested employment of Raymond Hood, the man of ideas whose reputation as a leading skyscraper designer had skyrocketed in recent years.

Todd selected architects "who would be primarily interested in good planning, utility, cost, income, low operating expenses and progress...[men who were not too] committed to the architectural past [nor] too much interested in wild modernism." [6] The pooling of eight different talents from three different firms allowed for a division of labor and for an undertaking too large for most private offices of the day. Architecture by committee modified the singular dominance of any one personality, but also seems to have generated competition and controversy. The situation was resolved in February 1930, when the architects united in a collective known as the Associated Architects. Thereafter all drawings bear the three firm names in strict alphabetical order: Corbett, Harrison & MacMurray; Hood, Godley (until 1931) & Fouilhoux; Reinhard & Hofmeister.

The Associated Architects

Corbett, Harrison & MacMurray

Harvey Wiley Corbett (1873-1954) was born to physician parents in San Francisco, California. He was educated at the University of California (1895), the Ecole des Beaux Arts in Paris (1906) and the atelier of the historicist Jean Louis Pascal. Between 1903 and 1912 he was in partnership with F. Livingston Pell and between 1912 and 1928 with Frank J. Helmle. While a lecturer at the School of Architecture of Columbia University (1907-11, 1920-35), Corbett trained many students in the "Atelier Columbia," which was modeled after the system of the Ecole des Beaux Arts. One of Corbett's major works was the Bush Terminal Building on W. 42nd Street (1923) which established his reputation as a practitioner of "modern" architecture. Its success led Irwin Bush to commission from Corbett designs for the \$10,000,000 Bush House in London. Dedicated to "the friendship to English speaking peoples," this American-English center was to find its counterpart in the British Empire Building at Rockefeller Center.

Corbett was an early and strong advocate of the skyscraper as an urban building form and wrote and lectured extensively in support of this concept. He was a practical architect who envisioned the future city with super-block skyscrapers, tiered streets and multi-level transportation systems. Corbett had a reputation as a skilled planner who worked within budget while remaining aware of the cityscape and urban design. He acted as a consultant to the Regional Plan Association and served on the architectural planning committees for the 1933 Chicago Century of Progress Exposition (beginning in 1929) and the 1939 New York World's Fair.

Corbett was a fellow of both the American Institute of Architects and the Royal Institute of British Architects and received honorary degrees from the University of California, the University of Liverpool and Columbia University. He was a member of the Fine Arts Commission of the State of New York and served as president of the Architectural League of New York and the National Arts Society.[7]

Corbett submitted his "Symposium" design after the retirement of Frank Helmle in 1928 and his establishment of a new partnership with William MacMurray and Wallace Harrison. Together they designed the Roerich Museum and Master Apartments on Riverside Drive in New York and the Horace Bushnell Memorial Hall in Hartford, Connecticut. Because of the latter experience in theater design and because of Corbett's formidable reputation, the Rockefeller developers were anxious to secure the firm's expertise.

William H. MacMurray (1868-1941) became associated with Corbett some time before 1927. His prime concern was the partnership's business affairs. He had little to do with the design of the Rockefeller Center project.[8]

Wallace K. Harrison (1895-1982), by contrast, was very much involved in matters of design and after the death of Raymond Hood in 1934 he exerted an increasingly strong influence on Rockefeller Center's architectural form. He was also responsible for one of the Center's new buildings on the west side of Sixth Avenue.

Harrison was born to a foundry superintendent in Worcester, Massachusetts. He quit school at 14 to take a \$5.00/wk job as an office boy with the contracting firm of O.W. Norcross, simultaneously attending Worcester Polytechnic Institute. In 1915 he became a draftsman in the New York office of McKim, Mead & White and attended evening classes at the atelier of Harvey Corbett. In 1917 Harrison enrolled in the Ecole des Beaux Arts. He then returned briefly to McKim, Mead & White before winning a Rotch Traveling Scholarship and a year at the American Academy in Rome. Upon his return to New York in 1922 Harrison became a draftsman for Bertram Goodhue who was then engaged on the Nebraska State Capitol. In 1926 Harrison married Ellen Milton whose brother was the son-in-law of John D. Rockefeller, Jr. and in the following year, joined in partnership with Corbett, Helmle (soon to retire) and MacMurray.

In 1935 Harrison left Corbett's office and formed a partnership with J. Andre Fouilhoux who had worked with Raymond Hood until the latter's death in 1934. Six years later Max Abramowitz (1908-1959) was taken on as

a partner. When Fouilhoux died in 1945 the firm survived as Harrison & Abramowitz and went on to become one of the most successful postwar architectural concerns in America. Included among its works are parts of Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts, Nelson Rockefeller's Empire State Plaza in Albany and the United Nations (for which Rockefeller donated the land in 1946). In 1967 Harrison was awarded the gold medal of the American Institute of Architects for his "demonstrated ability to lead a team in producing significant architectural works of high quality over a period of more than 30 years." [9]

Hood, Godley & Fouilhoux

Raymond Mathewson Hood (1881-1934) was born in Pawtucket, Rhode Island. He studied at Brown University before transferring to the Massachusetts Institute of Technology in 1900 and later, the Ecole des Beaux Arts in Paris (1905, 1908-10). As a draftsman he was employed in the offices of Cram, Goodhue & Ferguson, Boston; Palmer, Hornbostel & Jones, New York; and Henry Hornbostel, Pittsburgh. He set up his own office in New York in 1914, but did not achieve any great architectural success until 1922. In that year John Mead Howells asked Hood to join him in submitting a design for the Chicago Tribune competition. Their winning scheme was a soaring tower terminating in setback peaks and flying buttresses of neo-Gothic design, distinguished by its logical plan and clarity of design. The competition established Hood's reputation as a skyscraper designer and brought his firm several notable commissions: the American Radiator Building, Daily News Building and the McGraw Hill Building, all in New York City, and all in the years immediately preceding Rockefeller's development. Hood was also associated with Harvey Corbett on plans for the Chicago Century of Progress Exposition of 1933. [10] His good working relationship with Corbett, together with Hood's originality and the publicity generated by his previous skyscraper designs, were positive factors in his selection for the new complex. Before his premature death in 1934, Hood played a dominant role in the design of Rockefeller Center. He was responsible for the introduction of building setbacks and rooftop gardens, the establishment of uniformly low-rise elevations along Fifth Avenue and significantly, the suggestion to bring the radio industry to the Center.

Hood was a fellow of the American Institute of Architects, a president of the Architectural League of New York, and a trustee of the Beaux Arts Institute of Design. He received the Medal of Honor of the Architectural League in 1926, and in 1940 was posthumously awarded a gold medal from the New York Chapter of the AIA.

Hood brought to the Center Godley and Fouilhoux, his partners since the mid 1920s. Frederick A. Godley (1887-1961) received his B.A. from Yale University (1908), an M.A. from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (1910) and a diploma of architecture from the Ecole des Beaux Arts (1913). After working in the Boston architectural office of Guy Lowell, he established his own firm in 1915 (Godley & Haskell, 1913-18; Godley & Sedgwick, 1918-24). In 1924 he joined Raymond Hood in the firm of Hood, Godley & Fouilhoux, specializing in the business affairs of the office. He left the firm in 1931, while the Rockefeller Center project was underway, to join the faculty of the Yale University School of Architecture, where he taught until 1947. Godley was also a fellow of the American Institute of Architects and chairman of the educational committee of the Beaux Arts

Institute of Design.[11]

Jacques Andre Fouilhoux (1879-1945), a Paris-born engineer, received his training at the Ecole Centrale des Arts et Manufactures. Emigrating to the United States in 1904, he established the firm of Fouilhoux & Whiteside in Portland, Oregon in 1908. He later worked for Albert Kahn, noted industrial architect, in Detroit, among others. After World War I Fouilhoux moved to New York where he formed a partnership with Raymond Hood in 1927. Following Hood's death, Fouilhoux became partners with Wallace K. Harrison (formerly of Corbett, Harrison & MacMurray) and together they continued to be involved with Rockefeller Center. With their new partner Max Abramowitz they designed the Rockefeller Apartments, general plans, major buildings, Tylon and Perisphere for the New York World's Fair of 1939. In collaboration with others Fouilhoux designed the Fort Greene and Clinton Hill housing projects in Brooklyn. He fell to his death from one of their roofs in 1945. Fouilhoux was a fellow of the American Institute of Architects and served as treasurer of the Beaux-Arts Institute of Design.[12]

Reinhard & Hofmeister

I. Andrew Reinhard (1891-1964) was the son of a carpenter-cabinet maker who, at age 14, became an office boy for Benjamin Morris (the architect initially commissioned to design the new Opera). Reinhard then studied at the Mechanics Institute in New York and finished his formal education at the Beaux-Arts Society of Design. He then returned to Morris' firm as a junior designer and worked in other prominent offices, notably that of Raymond Hood (who would later make some of the greatest contributions to Rockefeller Center). Reinhard then spent eight years with Todd, Robertson & Todd during which time he and Hofmeister worked on rentals and interior layouts for the Graybar Building. In 1928 Reinhard & Hofmeister formed a partnership.[13]

Henry Hofmeister (1891-1962) was a self-trained architect who, after only two years of high school, joined the firm of Warren & Wetmore. He worked there for 17 years before joining Todd, Robertson & Todd. Hofmeister acquired a reputation for being methodical and having a good knowledge of such practical matters as plumbing, ventilation and efficient interior layouts. He organized the Rockefeller Center architectural office and supervised the preparation of the necessary architectural drawings. He was, according to Reinhard, "the man who got the work out." Following the completion of Rockefeller Center, the partners received gold medals for their work from the Architectural League of New York and the Fifth Avenue Association.[14]

Other works later executed by Reinhard & Hofmeister include the World's Fair Hall of Music of 1939 (which has many spatial similarities to Radio City Music Hall); the Federal Building at John F. Kennedy International Airport; the Chrysler Building East; buildings for the New York Medical College; Chase Manhattan Bank; the Italian, Swedish and Waterman steamship lines; the Dun and Bradstreet home office building in New York; the surgical building and research center of the New England Medical Center in Boston; the Deeds Carillon Tower in Dayton, Ohio; and the World War II American cemetery chapel at Neuville en Condroz in Belgium. In 1947 the firm expanded as Reinhard, Hofmeister & Walquist, but dissolved

upon Reinhard's retirement in 1956.

Reinhard was a member of the National Commission of Fine Arts in Washington in 1945-50, a fellow of the American Institute of Architects, and served as an officer of the New York Chapter of the AIA, the Architectural League and Municipal Art Society. Hofmeister served as a consultant during World War II to Nelson Rockefeller, then coordinator of Inter-American Affairs with the State Department. He was a member of the American Institute of Architects, the New York Building Congress and the Architectural League of New York, directing the League's program for aiding unemployed or needy architects for a number of years. Shortly before his death, Hofmeister served as a planning consultant on the Lincoln Center project.

Throughout the proceedings Rockefeller had intended to share costs with the Opera and to develop the site with buildings constructed by individual tenants. He never planned to carry the entire lease by himself, nor did he ever consider taking on full responsibility for its architectural development. But finding himself at an annual loss of more than \$3,000,000 for the lease of the 12 acres, he boldly proceeded --- in the teeth of the Depression --- to develop the largest private enterprise ever undertaken in America.

Within one month of the Opera's withdrawal from Rockefeller Center negotiations were underway with the Radio Corporation of America (RCA).[15] A suggestion from Raymond Hood brought the two concerns together. Having recently designed studios at 711 Fifth Avenue for the National Broadcasting Company (NBC), a subsidiary of RCA, Hood was intimately aware of the prodigious expansion of radio and emerging television technology. He correctly foresaw RCA's need for an enlarged center of operations. Architect Wallace Harrison followed up Hood's suggestion with a relative of the chairman of RCA's real estate committee. By February 1930, serious negotiations were underway with the Rockefeller developers. A contract was signed and announced to the press on June 4, 1930.[16]

In its early history the wireless was used almost exclusively for marine telegraphy, and was adopted in 1901 by the U.S. Navy as a substitute for homing pigeons. Its greater potential was not realized until April 12, 1912, when a young David Sarnoff, working in the British Marconi Company's New York branch above Wanamaker's Department Store, intercepted a Morse Code message: the Titanic was "sinking fast." Monitored for days as news-seeking crowds swelled the streets, the calamity served as a tremendous boost to both Marconi and Sarnoff. It also proved the reliability of the wireless and led to speculation about its potential to broadcast sound. Four years later and still employed by Marconi, Sarnoff suggested that radio be used to entertain the nation. Visionary at the time, his idea was not realized until the mid 1920s when post-war prosperity found a radio in nearly every American home.

The enormous growth of the radio industry and its increasing importance in American culture had led the far sighted Owen D. Young, chairman of General Electric (one of RCA's corporate parents), to inquire about the possibilities of consolidating RCA's operations in a complex at Rockefeller's development.[17] Corporate reorganization four months later gave RCA independence under its new president David Sarnoff.[18] In partial settlement RCA transferred to G.E. its new office building on 51st Street and Lexington Avenue (Cross & Cross, 1929-30).

The radio group then moved to Rockefeller's development, profoundly altering its character in the process. In replacing the Opera, RCA transformed the complex from an semi-cultural enterprise into a democratic focus for mass entertainment and the corporate headquarters for burgeoning technology. In the words of a contemporary, it substituted "a vision of the future [for] a vision of the past." [19] The impact was such that for years the entire development was popularly, but inaccurately, called "Radio City." [20] The name properly applies only to that part of Rockefeller Center which borders on Sixth Avenue, and which was dominated by RCA and its subsidiaries, the most notable being NBC, Radio-Keith-Orpheum ("RKO," a leading producer, distributor and exhibitor of motion pictures) and RCA Victor (one of the foremost manufacturers of phonographs and records in America). The Sixth Avenue position of the Radio Group was particularly appropriate as it complemented New York's theater district to its immediate southwest.

Although still somewhat speculative in its recent independence --- and weathering the Depression with reduced profits --- RCA's new president David Sarnoff made an enormous \$4.25 million annual rent commitment to

Rockefeller Center. In return RCA was allowed to name the entertainment section of the development as well as its two theaters ("Radio City Music Hall" and the "RKO Roxy (later Center) Theater." It also won exclusive broadcasting rights among the many tenants in the complex and most importantly, the right to display the RCA logo atop its own skyscraper in the heart of the Center (on the site originally intended for the Opera).[20 a]

Nearly 300 men began excavation of the RCA Building in July 1931.[21] Steelwork commenced early the next year and the building was completed thirteen months later.[22] Its architectural design was the result of several conditioning factors. On the most rudimentary level was the accommodation of varied tenant requirements and the maximum utilization of available land. The solution was the combination of three different buildings into a single structure (more than 1,000 feet long) which spans the full block between Rockefeller Plaza and Sixth Avenue. On the east, taking full advantage of light and air, are the 70-story corporate offices of RCA. Additional office space was provided along Sixth Avenue in the sixteen-story slab of the RCA Building West. The midblock section, much less desirable for office space, was allotted to NBC's broadcasting studios which needed no windows but only large amounts of layered horizontal space. The technical specifications of this unit were particularly exacting. In order to insure soundproofing all the studios were designed with "floating" walls, floors and ceilings, suspended and insulated from the building's structural frame.[23]

In keeping with his intention to build prime quality business space, developer John R. Todd insisted that no office be more than 27-1/2 feet from a window (the maximum at which natural light and air can be adequately provided). By contrast, many contemporaneous office structures were built to maximum girth leaving dark and unventilated spaces at their cores. The Associated Architects responded to Todd's requirement by grouping high speed elevators into central banks and surrounding them on each floor with a corridor and ring of offices of the required 27-1/2 foot depth. It totally outmoded the wedding cake arrangement where elevators were grouped on either side of a long central corridor, forced deep into the building by the zoning regulations which required towers (and therefore the elevators which serviced those towers) to be set back from the street. The arrangement at RCA provided more than two million square feet of prime office space, distinguishing it for years as the world's largest office building in floor area.

The plan of the lobby and corridors reflect this scheme, as well, leading from the Rockefeller Plaza entrance, past shops which have both exterior and interior shopfronts, and into the elevator banks.

The Artwork and the Artists

A series of murals, part of Professor Hartley Burr Alexander's overall thematic program for Rockefeller Center, appears to have been part of the interior scheme from the beginning.[24] As early as January 1932, contracts for murals in the RCA Building were rumored.[25] Hood publicly revealed the project in a speech at the Architectural League in February.[26] Despite pressures from groups of American artists, a decision was made to invite artists of international standing to decorate

the interior of the RCA Building. On September 2, 1932, John Todd and Raymond Hood set sail for Europe:

The painting of ten panels each of which will be at least 17 by 20 feet will be discussed with the foreign artists, whose names were not disclosed. . . .All the decorations. . . will fit in the inclusive ornamental theme and will tell in the symbolic language of the arts a connected story.[27]

After being turned down by Henri Matisse and not even making contact with Pablo Picasso, Hood and Todd met success with Jose Maria Sert, Diego Rivera, and Frank Brangwyn. Hood wrote to Rockefeller that Rivera's murals would face the main entrance, Sert's would be on the north wall, and Brangwyn's on the south.[28] The official press announcement described them:

Rivera's mural. . . will show "man at the crossroads looking with uncertainty but with hope and high vision to the choosing of a course leading to a new and better future." Sert's four panels will express man's new mastery over the material universe, through his power, will, imagination, and genius. Brangwyn's pieces will depict man's new relationship to society and his fellow-man--his family, his relationships as a worker, as a part of government, and his ethical or religious relationships.[29]

In addition to determining the themes of the murals, the architects had also decided on a color scheme: black, white, and gray on a light background.[30]

Frank Brangwyn (1867-1956) was born in Bruges, Belgium, where his Welch father practiced as a church architect and supplier of ecclesiastical furnishings. His family returned to London in 1875 where the boy was befriended by architect A. H. Mackmurdo. Subsequently Brangwyn worked for two years in the office of William Morris (1882-84), helping to design some of his wallpapers. He then worked independently and by the turn of the century had specialized in murals. Among his most celebrated works are his murals on the interior of the RCA Building at Rockefeller Center, those for the State Capitol at Jefferson City, Missouri, and the "People, Flora and Fauna of the British Empire" which covers 3000 square feet of the Civic Center in Swansea, Wales. A prolific and versatile artist, Brangwyn designed stained glass, furniture, and other applied arts as well as interiors and street pageants in addition to his work as a muralist, lithographer, etcher, and woodcutter. Brangwyn established a considerable international reputation and is represented in collections from New York to Prague. He was knighted in 1941, followed eleven years later by the unprecedented honor of a retrospective exhibition in his own lifetime at the Royal Academy, of which Brangwyn had been a member since 1919.

Diego Rivera (1886-1957) was born in Mexico, attending the Academia de San Carlos in Mexico City. He studied and worked in Europe from 1907 to 1922, returning to Mexico in 1922 to become one of the founders of the Mexican mural movement. Between 1922 and 1930 he decorated the Anfiteatro Bolivar of the National Preparatory School, the Ministry of Education Building, both in Mexico City, the chapel of the National School of Agriculture at Chapingo, and began work in the Palacio de Cortes at Cuernavaca. Working in the United States between 1930 and 1934, Rivera created murals for the California School of Fine Arts, the Detroit Institute of Arts, and the RCA Building, the latter--ultimately destroyed--the subject of tremendous controversy. Other notable Mexican work includes murals representing various aspects of Mexican history in the Palacio Nacional (1929-35, 1944-50).

Jose Maria Sert (1876-1945) was born in Barcelona, Spain. Moving to Paris in his early twenties to study art, he spent most of his career there. He held his first American exhibition at the Wildenstein Galleries, New York, in the spring of 1924. Primarily known for his work as a muralist, Sert designed murals for the winter homes of Joshua S. Cosden, Edward T. Stotesbury, and Addison Mizner, adorned the north dining room of the Waldorf-Astoria Hotel with a series of murals depicting the marriage of Quiteria in Cervantes' *Don Quixote*, and decorated the council chambers in the League of Nations building in Geneva (1930). His murals for the RCA Building were carried out between 1933 and 1941, gaining a certain notoriety, because they, in part, replaced the destroyed Diego Rivera mural.

While the choice of foreign artists was controversial, even further controversy was to follow. The artists began working on the murals in late 1932. Rivera objected to the color scheme and the requirement to paint on canvas, and through the intervention of Nelson Rockefeller, John D. Rockefeller, Jr.'s son, was allowed to paint on the plaster in tempera and to use color.[31] Rivera began work in March 1933; his assistants had previously prepared the wall and paint and were transferring his sketches to the plaster. As the painting took form, its socialist inclinations became obvious. Prominently displayed in the composition were a head of Lenin and workers parading with red flags. Nelson Rockefeller requested the substitution of another face. Rivera suggested a partial change in composition, one which would leave Lenin in place but balanced by an American historical leader; failing that, he wrote "rather than mutilate the conception I should prefer the physical destruction of the conception in its entirety." [32] On May 9, the Center ordered Rivera to stop work and covered the fresco with canvas. Rivera was paid in full, and on February 9, 1934, the fresco was destroyed and removed, not to be replaced until 1937, by another Sert work.

Sert's initial work for the RCA Building was installed along the north corridor in May 1933. Painted in his Paris studio on canvas, each panel is 25 feet wide by 17 feet high and depicts one aspect of "man's new mastery of the problems of modern civilization." [33] Unlike Rivera, Sert had no intention of making a political statement. He considered mural painting "the complement of architecture. . . . On those walls the muralist puts what is called for. Nothing more, nothing less. . . . Mural painting is an extension of a building's function. It is a part of building, and no muralist must ever forget that." [34]

Brangwyn's work for the south corridor did not arrive until December 1933. Like Sert's work, these are four panels, 25 feet by 17 feet. Brangwyn had no problems with the theme--man's relationship to society--but chose in the final panel to depict the Sermon on the Mount. Doubts were raised by Rockefeller Center officials, perhaps made sensitive by the Lenin controversy, about the depiction of the figure of Christ, suggesting that a light shining down from heaven might suffice.[35] Brangwyn objected, and finally the problem was solved by showing Christ as a hooded figure, his back turned to the spectator, standing against a background of lighted clouds.[36]

Sert's 1937 mural on the west wall of the entrance lobby replaced the disgraced Rivera work, after negotiations with Picasso to fill the space collapsed.[37] Titled "American Progress, the Triumph of Man's Accomplishments Through Physical and Mental Labor," it completed "the pictorial epic of humanity's struggle begun in the other murals." [38]

Another Sert mural was installed in March 1941 on the ceiling above the Rockefeller Plaza entrance. Entitled "Time" it was put in place after the lobby lighting system was modified to allow for its illumination. Other Sert murals may be seen on the north and south walls of the first elevator bank, representing the spirit of dance and man's triumph in communication, on the north and south stairways to the mezzanine (these are titled "Contest-1940" and "Fraternity of Men") and on the north and south balustrades, representing "Fire" and "Light." These were installed in 1937.

Conception and Design

The design of the lobby of the RCA Building is a continuation of the exterior building design, with its emphasis on form and axis, as well as a major mural program which extends the overall art scheme of Rockefeller Center.

Lobbies of office buildings of this period generally combined two functions: a grand entrance and public space, and a passageway to the elevator system. The Chrysler Building's lobby (1928-30) is a prime example: a highly ornamental triangular-shaped lobby, whose vertex is the entrance and whose base is a wall opening with two sets of elevator banks. The Empire State Building (1930-31) because of its size and layout required a separation of the two functions, with a chapel-like grand entrance space, and a series of corridors leading to the elevators. The RCA Building lobby employs a similar scheme.

The layout of the lobby floor was in large part dictated by that of the general office floor plans. Because of Todd's requirement that no office be more than 27-1/2 feet from a window, the elevators were placed in central banks and then surrounded with corridors and offices. In the lobby the central core of elevators is flanked by circulation corridors and then by shops opening onto the corridors. Access, too, had to be provided to the NBC Studios in the mid-section of the building. This is accomplished by means of a separate lobby with its own elevator bank. In addition, easy access was required to the underground concourse and the balconies at mezzanine level. Staircases flanking the entrance lobby and within the central core serve this purpose. The manifestation of the long corridors and elevator banks is that of a large public concourse.

An effect of grandeur was sought in the entrance lobby, but because of the service core this occupies a relatively confined area. The architects chose to maximize the effect by creating a double-height space which opens from the Rockefeller Plaza entrance and continues into the corridors through means of mezzanine balconies. These, in turn, allow access to second floor office space. The character of the double-height space is further enhanced by the mural program. The use of rich, elegant materials, such as veined marbles and bronze, and the attention to detail are characteristic of the quality displayed throughout the construction of Rockefeller Center. The details themselves, from shopfronts to indicator signs, from ventilation grilles to elevator doors, are modernistic in design, in keeping with the overall design of the Center.

Description

The interior of the RCA Building consists of two sections: the entrance lobby off Rockefeller Plaza, and the connecting corridors and elevator banks which, with the inner store windows and entrances, create the effect of a grand concourse.

The entrance lobby, opening off Rockefeller Plaza, is a relatively restricted space. On the eastern wall is the major entrance, and at the west is the information desk, behind which rises Sert's mural of "American Progress." The lower portion of the entrance wall contains six sets of revolving doors and two sets of double-leaf doors of bronze and glass set within a paneled bronze screen which projects slightly into the space. Rising above the doorways is a large screen of cast glass designed by Lee Lawrie. Fifty-five feet long and fifteen feet high, it is molded in high relief and constructed of uniform blocks, 19 by 29 by 3 inches, bonded by vinelite.[39] Flanking the entrance are stairways leading up to the mezzanine and staircases and escalators leading down to the underground concourse. The information desk opposite the doorway is of Champlain gray marble, which is almost black in color, adorned with incised moldings at top and bottom. Four large piers, faced with reeded ivory marble terminating in a bronze molding, channel traffic through the space. Light fixtures are incorporated into the piers so as to illuminate Sert's mural of "Time," which spreads out over the entire entrance lobby ceiling. Three figures, representing Past, Present, and Future, are shown with their feet resting on the tops of the piers. Hour glasses, held by the figures of Past and Future, are being placed on the scales held by the figure of Present. The airplanes in flight are to indicate man's partial conquest of time and space.

Sert's mural "American Progress" on the wall behind the information desk (which is also the eastern wall of the easternmost elevator bank) depicts America's development through the union of intelligence and strength. On the right are figures of Poetry, Music, and Dance looking upward for inspiration; on the left are men of action, represented by statues of labor. These two groups flank pictures of Ralph Waldo Emerson, the philosopher and thinker, and Abraham Lincoln, as the man of action. In the center background are the towers of Rockefeller Center. This device of depicting the building in lobby art was a favorite with designers of the period, being used in both the Chrysler Building and the Empire State Building.

The lobby opens into corridors flanking the elevator banks, and for the extent of the first five elevator banks and the elevator hallways, this is a double-height space dominated by rows of piers, carrying on the east-west axis, faced with the same ivory marble as that used on the piers in the entrance lobby. The walls are faced with Champlain marble up to the height of the shopfronts and elevator doors, terminating in bronze moldings. Beveled bronze service doors may be seen on the outer walls opposite the piers. Above the marble is a beige plaster surface on the outer walls, while the inner elevator bank walls are adorned with murals which wrap around the corners onto the elevator hallway walls.

The work of Sert is represented by figures hoisting a globe up over

scaffolding depicting man's triumph in communications--radio, telephone, and telegraph--on the south wall of the first elevator bank, and figures representing the spirit of the dance on the north wall of the first elevator bank. Sert's first four murals for the RCA Building may be seen on the next four elevator banks facing the north corridor. In order they are: "The abolition of pain and labor of former ages by the creative intelligence of the machine," with human figures and oxen pulling a heavy load with a railroad engine in the background; "The conquests of the pests and epidemics of yesteryear by scientific invention," with figures lined up waiting to receive inoculations; "The stamping out of tyranny and slavery," with figures of slaves pushing enormous blocks of stone; and "The suppression of war through the combined faculties of man applied to the quest of human happiness," dominated by figures grouped around and emerging from giant cannons.[40]

The four elevator banks on the south corridor display Frank Brangwyn's murals and are meant to be seen in sequence running west to east: "Man laboring painfully with his own hands; living precariously and adventurously with courage, fortitude, and the indomitable will to survive," depicting figures in the wilderness; "Man the creator and master of the tool. Strengthening the foundations and multiplying the comforts of his abiding place," with figures in an arbor cultivating vines; "Man the master and servant of the machine, harnessing to his will the forces of the material world, mechanizing labor and adding these to the promise of leisure," with figures working at a forge; and "Man's ultimate destiny depends not on whether he can learn new lessons or make new discoveries and conquest, but on his acceptance of the lesson taught him close upon two thousand years ago," with figures listening to Christ preaching the Sermon on the Mount.

On the outer walls are a series of shopfronts with doors and windows framed in bronze. In the elevator hallways, the elevator doors are of beveled bronze and are set in bronze reveals. Ventilator grilles, directory boards, indicator signs, elevator indicator signs, and elevator indicator lights in this section are framed in bronze, employing curved, streamlined motifs.

The outer walls rise to mezzanine balconies with handsome streamlined bronze railings on both the north and south. The stairways leading to the mezzanine flanking the entrance have Champlain marble wainscoting and bronze railings. Adorning the staircases are additional Sert murals: "Contest-1940" with figures of the five races of mankind using the world as a football to compete for global supremacy, at the north, and "Fraternity of Men" with the figures of the five races clasping their hands in brotherhood, at the south. Terminating the double-height corridors, the balconies extend across the ground floor corridors at mezzanine level, and the balcony fronts display Sert murals: "Fire" representing the sun at the north; and "Light" depicting the supreme ruler of the world at the south. Throughout the murals adopt a monochromatic color scheme of beige, gray, and black which harmonizes with the other interior finishes.

At the mezzanine level the inside of the balcony is faced with Champlain marble. The outer walls are ivory marble above a Champlain marble wainscoting terminating in a bronze molding at the height of the doorways. The walls above are plain beige plaster, as are the ceilings.

Offices with bronze doors and bronze window surrounds open onto the balconies. The mezzanine continues as corridors westward beyond the balconies; both inner and outer walls have finishes similar to the outer walls of the balconies, and the office door and window configurations and finishes as they open onto the corridors are also similar. In the area adjacent to the western elevator bank are four piers, faced in ivory marble above a Champlain marble base and terminating in bronze molding strips. The floors throughout the mezzanine are of black terrazzo executed in rectangular patterns outlined with bronze strips.

At ground floor level, the corridors continue westward along the east-west axis beyond the fifth elevator bank. The ceiling level drops and this difference in height is marked by a change in materials. The corridor walls are faced in Champlain marble terminating in bronze moldings, and piers, continuing in the line of those in the double-height corridors, are also faced in Champlain marble terminating in bronze molding strips. Bronze waste receptacles are placed at the bases of several. The ceilings are white plaster. The treatment of the shopfronts on the outer walls is like that of the shopfronts in the double-height corridors. The floor surface is uniform throughout the ground floor, with black terrazzo set in panels with a green-gray center section, outlined with bronze strips.

Hallways extend from the corridors leading to the entrances from 49th Street and 50th Street. Each has two sets of revolving doors, framed in bronze. Bronze letters with the street names are placed above the doors. The walls continue the Champlain marble facing and bronze moldings of the corridor walls and are accented by bronze ventilation grilles, taking streamlined forms, display windows framed in bronze, and beveled bronze service doors. Directory boards and indicator signs throughout the corridors and hallways are outlined with bronze in streamlined motifs.

West of the elevator banks is a stairway leading down to the underground concourse; this is lined with Champlain marble and has bronze moldings, and handsome bronze railings. Similarly a stairway lined with Champlain marble and ivory marble in the same location leads up to the mezzanine. An enclosed stairway leads up to the mezzanine at the juncture of the RCA Building with the RCA Building West, while an open stairway leads down to the underground concourse. Both stairways are lined with Champlain marble and have bronze railings and bronze moldings.

The NBC lobby is faced with Champlain marble terminating in bronze moldings in the deep reveals opening from the corridors, and light green marble on the walls, terminating in nickel bronze moldings.

Report prepared by Janet Adams,
Landmarks Preservationist, and by
Marjorie Pearson,
Director of Research

FOOTNOTES

1. Fosdick, John D. Rockefeller: A Portrait, (New York: Harper & H.Row), 1956 and National Cyclopedia of American Biography, 44, pp.1-7.
2. Ivy Lee to JDR, Jr., May 25, 1928, quoted in Carol Krinsky, Rockefeller Center (New York: Oxford University Press, 1977), p. 31 n3.
3. Charles Heydt to JDR, Jr., August 19, 1929, quoted in Alan Balfour, Rockefeller Center: Architecture as Theater (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1978), p. 13 n16.
4. John R. Todd and William C. Vogel, Living A Life, New York, 1947, p. 83-84. See also, Krinsky, p. 42.
5. Ibid., p. 88-89; Krinsky, p. 45.
6. Ibid.
7. Carol Willis, "Harvey Wiley Corbett," MEA, I, p. 451; Krinsky, p. 37-39; The Builder, obit. (April 30, 1954) 186, p. 756; Architectural Forum, 100 (May 1954), 45-46; RIBA Journal, (July 1954) 391.
8. New York Times obit., 2/21/41, p.19:4.
9. Victoria Newhouse, "Harrison & Abramowitz," MEA, II, p. 324-26; Krinsky, p. 38-39; Architectural Record obit. (Jan. 1982), p. 34; AIA Journal (Jan. 1982) p. 99 and Samuel E. Bleeker, The Politics of Architecture: A Perspective on Nelson A. Rockefeller, (New York: Rutledge Press), 1981.
10. Walter H. Kilham, Jr., "Raymond M. Hood," MEA, II, p. 414-16 and Kilham, Raymond Hood, Architect: Form Through Function in the American Skyscraper, (New York: Architectural Book Publishing Co.) 1973; Krinsky, p. 45-47; National Cyclopedia of American Biography, 28, p. 389-390.
11. "Frederick A. Godley Dies...", NYT obit., 2/22/61, p.25:2.
12. Carol Krinsky, "Jacques Andre Fouilhoux," MEA, II, p. 106; Architectural Forum obit., 83 (Aug. 1945), 86; John La Farge, S.J., "J. Andre Fouilhoux: 1879-1945," Liturgical Arts, 13 (Aug. 1945), 73.
13. Krinsky, p. 35; Krinsky, MEA, III, p. 359; "I. Andrew Reinhard, 72, Dies," NYT obit., 8/3/64, p. 25:5; Architectural Record, (Sept. 1964) p. 26.

14. "Henry Hofmeister, 71, is Dead," NYT obit., 1/9/62, p. 47:2
Krinsky, "Reinhard & Hofmeister," MEA, III, p. 539; "Henry
Hofmeister," Architectural Forum, 116 (Feb. 1962) p. 14;
NCAB, 48, p. 524.
15. "Rockefeller Site for Opera Dropped," New York Times, 12/6/
1929, p. 1:3.
16. Walter Karp and Brendan Gill, The Center: A History and
Guide to Rockefeller Center (New York: American Heritage
Publishing Co., Inc., 1982), p. 25.
17. Letters from JDR, Jr. to John R. Todd (12/27/1929) and
Edward Harden to John R. Todd (1/17/1930), cited in Balfour
pp. 20-21, notes 25 and 26.
18. Eugene Lyons, David Sarnoff (New York: Harper & Row, 1966),
especially 345ff.
19. "Problems Confronting the Designers of Radio City," New York
Times, 4/5/1931, Sect. 9, p. 4.
20. "Radio City to Bear the Name of Rockefeller," New York
Times, 12/21/1931, p. 1. New York City Guide (New York:
Random House, 1939), p. 333.
- 20a. Karp, p. 25, and Balfour, p. 21-22.
21. New York City, Dept. of Buildings, Manhattan, New Building
77-1931.
22. "First Steel Column Erected," New York Times, 3/8/1932, p.
43:2; and "Ready for Opening," New York Times, 4/30/1933,
Sect. 10 & 11, p. 1:4.
23. "Guide to Rockefeller Center," Rockefeller Center Weekly,
2 (5/23/1935), insert, p. 8. See also "Plan and Construc-
tion of the National Broadcasting Company's Studios,"
Architectural Forum, 57 (August 1932), 153-160.
24. Raymond Hood discussed this with Merle Crowell, director of
public relations in August 1931, Krinsky, p. 77.
25. "Murals for Radio City," New York Times, 1/24/32, sect.
8, p. 12:2.
26. "Huge Mural Likely in Radio City Tower," New York Times,
2/16/1932, p. 23:7.
27. "Rockefeller Center Seeks Artists Abroad," New York Times,
8/29/1932, p. 15:5.
28. Balfour, pp. 150-151.

29. "Rockefeller City Gets Alien Artists," New York Times, 10/10/1932, p. 17:5.
30. Hood in a letter to JDR, Jr., 10/7/1932; quoted in Balfour, p. 151.
31. Balfour, p. 181.
32. Quoted in Balfour, p. 185.
33. "Senor Sert Arrives to Install His Murals in Rockefeller Center," Art Digest, 7 (May 1, 1933), 5.
34. Ibid.
35. "RCA Building Bars Jesus from Mural," New York Times, 9/15/1933, p. 21:5.
36. "Mural of Christ Hung in Radio City," New York Times, 12/5/1933.
37. Balfour, p. 190.
38. "Sert Mural Placed in the RCA Building," New York Times, 12/21/1937, p. 18:5.
39. "The RCA Building, Rockefeller Center," Architectural Forum, 59 (October 1933), 275. For further description see Rockefeller Center Designation Report (IP-1446).
40. Captions are quoted in Balfour, p. 178.

FINDINGS AND DESIGNATION

On the basis of a careful consideration of the history, the architecture and other features of this interior, the Landmarks Preservation Commission finds that the RCA Building, ground floor interior consisting of the Rockefeller Plaza entrance lobby, the corridors extending westward from the entrance lobby on either side of the elevator hallways to the western wall of the westernmost double staircase, the elevator hallways, the stairways adjacent to the entrance lobby leading up to the mezzanine, and the stairways adjacent to the elevator hallways leading up to the mezzanine and down to the concourse; mezzanine interior consisting of the upper part of the Rockefeller Plaza entrance lobby, the upper part of the corridors extending westward from the entrance lobby on either side of the elevator hallways to the western wall of the westernmost double staircase, the upper part of the elevator hallways, and the mezzanine corridors; and the fixtures and interior components of these spaces, including but not limited to, wall surfaces, ceiling surfaces, floor surfaces, wall and ceiling murals, marble piers, metal waste receptacles attached to the piers, metal trim, lobby shop window enframements, lobby shop doorways, service doors, vent grilles, railings, decorative glass panels, revolving doors, light fixtures, information desk, directory boards, indicator signs, elevator doors, elevator indicator lights, and elevator bank indicators; has a special character, special historical and aesthetic interest and value as part of the development, heritage and cultural characteristics of New York City, and that the interior or parts thereof are thirty years old or more, and that the interior is one which is customarily open and accessible to the public and to which the public is customarily invited.

The Commission further finds that, among its important qualities, the ground floor interior and mezzanine floor interior of the RCA Building are major components of what is the largest and most important building constructed at Rockefeller Center; that these interiors are an important continuation of the major east-west axis running through the Center from Fifth to Sixth Avenue; that the double-height entrance lobby symbolically welcomes visitors, drawing them from the Rockefeller Plaza entrance, past the information desk, into corridors flanked by shops, which create the sense of a grand concourse; that the mezzanine balconies and corridors further add to the drama of the space and contribute to the axiality; that the experience of the visitor to these interiors is enhanced by the extensive program of murals, executed by Jose Maria Sert and Frank Brangwyn, which were conceived as an intrinsic part of the building and are a continuation of the overall art scheme used on the exteriors of the Rockefeller Center buildings; and the rich materials and attention to detail are characteristic of the quality displayed throughout the construction of Rockefeller Center.

Accordingly, pursuant to the provisions of Chapter 21, Section 534, of the Charter of the City of New York and Chapter 8-A of the Administrative Code of the City of New York, the Landmarks Preservation Commission designates as an Interior Landmark, the RCA Building, ground floor interior consisting of the Rockefeller Plaza entrance lobby, the corridors extending westward from the entrance lobby on either side of the elevator hallways to the western wall of the westernmost double staircase, the

elevator hallways, the stairways adjacent to the entrance lobby leading up to the mezzanine, and the stairways adjacent to the elevator hallways leading up to the mezzanine and down to the concourse; mezzanine interior consisting of the upper part of the Rockefeller Plaza entrance lobby, the upper part of the corridors extending westward from the entrance lobby on either side of the elevator hallways to the western wall of the westernmost double staircase, the upper part of the elevator hallways, and the mezzanine corridors; and the fixtures and interior components of these spaces, including but not limited to, wall surfaces, ceiling surfaces, floor surfaces, wall and ceiling murals, marble piers, metal waste receptacles attached to the piers, metal trim, lobby shop window enframements, lobby shop doorways, service doors, vent grilles, railings, decorative glass panels, revolving doors, light fixtures, information desk, directory boards, indicator signs, elevator doors, elevator indicator lights, and elevator bank indicators; 30 Rockefeller Plaza, Borough of Manhattan, and designates Tax Map Block 1265, Lot 1 in part consisting of the land on which the described building is situated, Borough of Manhattan, as its Landmark Site.

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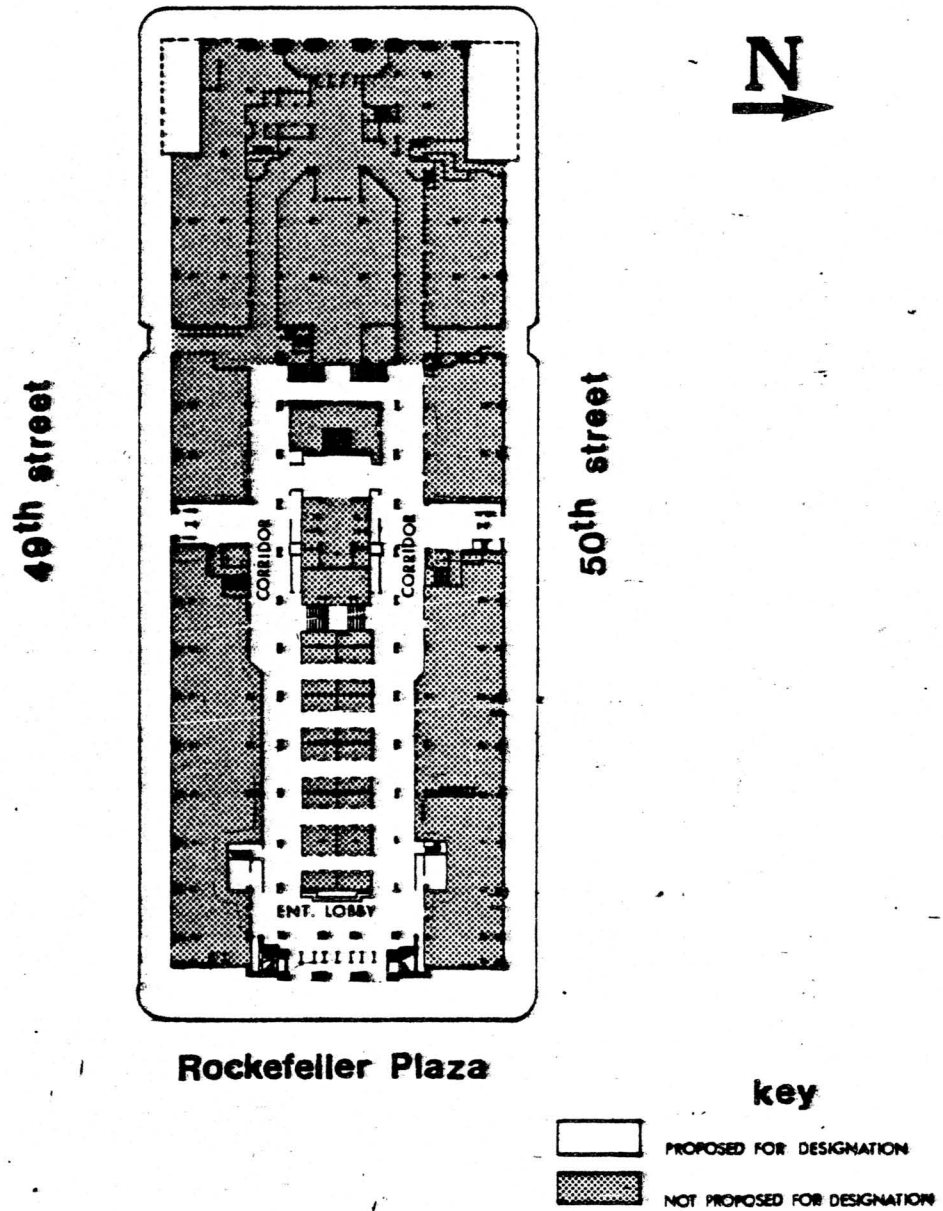
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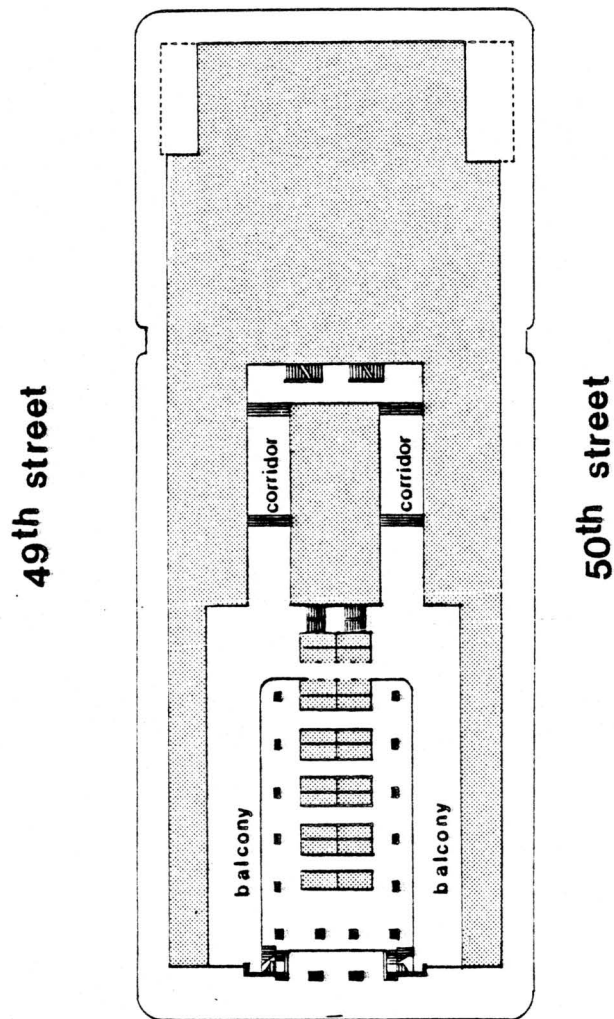
For additional references, see notes.

For additional bibliographic references, see Balfour, p. 243, and Krinsky, pp. 214-217.

RCA BUILDING
ground floor interior
30 Rockefeller Plaza



**RCA BUILDING
mezzanine
30 Rockefeller Plaza**



Rockefeller Plaza



key



proposed for designation



not proposed for designation



RCA BUILDING INTERIOR
30 Rockefeller Plaza
Manhattan

Photo: Carl Forster
Landmarks Preservation Commission

Entrance lobby



RCA BUILDING INTERIOR
30 Rockefeller Plaza
Manhattan

Entrance lobby

Built: 1931-33
Architects: The Associated Architects

Photo: Carl Forster
Landmarks Preservation Commission



RCA BUILDING INTERIOR
30 Rockefeller Plaza
Manhattan

Staircase to mezzanine

Photo: Carl Forster
Landmarks Preservation
Commission



RCA BUILDING INTERIOR
30 Rockefeller Plaza
Manhattan

Photo: Carl Forster
Landmarks Preservation
Commission

Detail of "Time"
J.M. Sert, artist



RCA BUILDING INTERIOR
30 Rockefeller Plaza
Manhattan

Staircase to concourse

Photo: Carl Forster
Landmarks Preservation Commission



RCA BUILDING INTERIOR
30 Rockefeller Plaza
Manhattan

Corridor

Photo: Carl Forster
Landmarks Preservation Commission



RCA BUILDING INTERIOR
30 Rockefeller Plaza
Manhattan

Shopfront detail

Photo: Carl Forster
Landmarks Preservation Commission



RCA BUILDING INTERIOR
30 Rockefeller Plaza
Manhattan

Photo: Carl Forster
Landmarks Preservation
Commission

Staircase to mezzanine