

RAYMOND HOOD

and the American Skyscraper





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Curated by

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From Pawtucket to Paris: Raymond Hood's Education and Early Work

JONATHAN DUVAL

On December 3, 1922, a headline on the front page of the *Chicago Tribune* announced the winner of the newspaper's sensational international competition: "Howells Wins in Contest for Tribune Tower: Novelist's Son Gains Architect Prize." The credit due to Raymond Hood, the son of a box maker from Pawtucket, Rhode Island, was relegated to a passing mention. Attention was given instead to the slightly older and much better known John Mead Howells, son of the famous novelist and *Atlantic Monthly* editor William Dean Howells. Though Howells was then the more notable of the pair, Hood was quick to gain recognition in his own right and soon achieved worldwide fame. Scholars and critics agree that the Tribune Tower competition was the turning point that launched Hood's career.¹ As a consequence, though, his work before 1922 has not been adequately surveyed or scrutinized. On the surface, a description of Hood's career before the Tribune Tower competition might seem like an inventory of mediocrity—styling radiator covers, designing a pool house shaped like a boat, writing letters to editors arguing against prohibition—ending only with the "famed turn of fortune."² However, it is in these earlier years of study and work that the characteristics we associate with Raymond Hood's architecture were formed and solidified: a blend of tradition and innovation, a focus on plan, a facility with style and ornament, an understanding of architectural illumination, and a thoughtful, iterative approach to design. Hood's well-known buildings are indebted to his early work and cannot be fully appreciated without surveying his experiences in Pawtucket, Paris, Pittsburgh, and Providence.

Hood was born on March 29, 1881, in Pawtucket to John Parmenter Hood and Vella Mathewson. John Hood, a descendant of Pawtucket's first Baptist Sunday-school teacher, was the owner of J.N. Polsey & Co., a wooden crate- and box-manufacturing enterprise. The family lived in

a two-story timber-frame house at 107 Cottage Street, at the corner of Howard Avenue. In a 1931 profile on Raymond Hood in the *New Yorker*, the reporter Allene Talmey called the house “the ugliest place in town, sitting firmly on its base with a porch like an iron truss running clear around.”³ The house was designed by John Hood in collaboration with the Pawtucket architect Albert H. Humes.⁴ Raymond Hood later recalled that he had been “entranced by the plans” at age ten and knew from that moment that he wanted to become an architect.⁵

In 1893, the Hood family, including twelve-year-old Raymond, traveled to Chicago to see the World’s Columbian Exposition.⁶ This “White City,” devised by some of America’s leading architects, encompassed both historically minded and forward-looking tendencies. Architecturally, the buildings made use of classical ornament and popularized the aesthetic principles of the Parisian École des Beaux-Arts (School of Fine Arts) for an American audience. The fair was also a playground for new technologies, such as moving sidewalks, the world’s first Ferris wheel, and the debut of inventions by Nikola Tesla and Thomas Edison. With fifteen thousand incandescent lamps in the Electrical Building alone, the fair was at the time the most electrified and artificially illuminated place in history.⁷ Hood, one of the millions who witnessed this spectacle, would go on to pioneer the idea of an “Architecture of the Night.”

In the fall of 1898, after graduating from the public high school in Pawtucket, Hood enrolled at Brown University in the class of 1902. Within a month he had joined the Theta Delta Chi fraternity at 81 Waterman Street, Providence, where his older brother, J. Lawrence Hood, was also a member.⁸ At Brown, Raymond Hood took courses in mathematics, rhetoric, French, and drawing. But above all Hood wanted to become an architect, and his opportunities were limited at Brown. So, as it was noted in his fraternity’s national publication, Hood decided to “go to Boston ‘Tech.’ and ‘grind’ out an existence there.”⁹

Hood entered the Massachusetts Institute of Technology in the fall of 1899, after one year at Brown, and graduated four years later, in the spring of 1903. The program in architecture at MIT was the oldest of its kind in the United States. Since its founding in the 1860s, the department had come increasingly under the influence of the French École des Beaux-Arts’ method of instruction. In its American adaptation, Hood and his classmates took regular courses in algebra, analytic and descriptive geometry, French,



FIG.1
Raymond Hood
*A Design for a Parish Church
in the Gothic Style, 1903*



FIG.2
Constant-Désiré Despradelle
Beacon of Progress, 1900

modeling, and other fields, with a particular emphasis on architectural history and drawing.¹⁰

Design competitions judged by panels were key features of the teaching method at MIT. Design assignments were given in the form of programs, written by the faculty, which would designate the topic of the assignment, list particular requirements of the design, and indicate the expected format of the final submission. Regardless of the project, the first step was to produce an *esquisse*, a sketch that embodied the essence of the solution to the design problem and would serve as the basis for further development of the design into its final form. The essential elements were a good *parti*, or governing organizational idea, and impeccable rendering skills. Hood’s thesis, “A Design for a Parish Church in the Gothic Style” (FIG. 1), embodies both elements. It was a free interpretation of French gothic architecture with an oversized western tower. In Hood’s own words, “the general scheme has been to have the church flower out as it goes up.”¹¹

Hood prepared his thesis and took his fourth-year design courses under Professor Constant-Désiré Despradelle. Despradelle had been recruited from France in 1893 to teach design at MIT, in hopes of bringing the school more credibility and to further align its methods with the prestigious École. His most famous project, the “Beacon of Progress,” serves as an example of École teaching and design methods (FIG. 2). Despradelle first conceived of the Beacon after visiting the World’s Columbian Exposition in Chicago, an extraordinary event that he thought “should not pass without leaving some trace.”¹² Over the next several years he developed, elaborated, and refined his idea for a monumental fifteen-hundred-foot-tall obelisk, finally unveiling the project at the Paris Salon of 1900, where it was awarded a *première médaille* (first-prize medal). The steel-frame building would be covered in sculptures and inscriptions and would house a museum, offices, and several auditoria, one of which could seat twenty thousand people. The most dazzling feature of the design

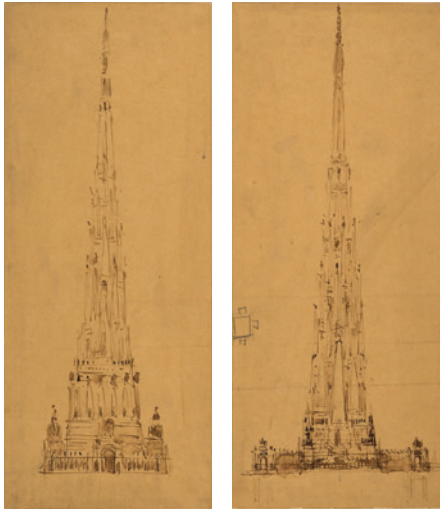


FIG. 3
Constant-Désiré Despradelle
 Beacon of Progress, preparatory sketches, c. 1903

was a “brilliant beacon of light” planned for the tower’s apex—a massive electric arc-light that could be seen up to two hundred miles away from the monument’s lakeside position in Chicago’s Jackson Park.¹³

Both the systematic evolution of the design over time and the adaptation of established historical architectural forms and details to accommodate innovative elements—such as the steel frame, elevators, and arc-lights—are suggestive of an École design method. Despradelle began by making dozens of quickly executed sketches to get his ideas on paper (FIG. 3). After this stage, he redrew many versions of the same elements of the design, making slight changes and subtle refinements. In June 1903, the month of Hood’s graduation from MIT, a *Washington Post* reporter noted of the Beacon drawings that “one can trace the growth of the idea in his [Despradelle’s] mind through a long line of designs that hangs on the walls of his office.”¹⁴ The *parti* remained the same from the original *esquisse*, and the final solution was worked out within this framework. More than simply a personal exercise in design, the Beacon of Progress served as a key teaching tool, modeling the process that MIT and the École championed. Following his mentors, Hood assimilated and used this method of working up a sketch and experimenting with various solutions, as in the preparatory sketches for the Tribune Tower competition (FIGS. 4, 5) and a proposal for an Electric Tower (FIG. 6), which bears a striking resemblance in form to his professor’s sketches for the Beacon.

After graduating from MIT, Hood went to work in the New York office of the firm Cram, Goodhue & Ferguson.¹⁵ Local lore suggests

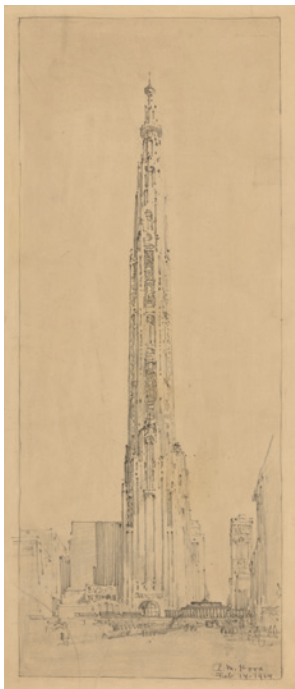


FIG. 6
Raymond Hood
 Proposal for Electric Tower, 1924

that he worked on the designs for the firm’s Deborah Cook Sayles Public Library in his hometown of Pawtucket, but it was finished in 1902, before Hood’s term at the office began. During Hood’s employment, the firm was designing new buildings for the U.S. Military Academy at West Point, fashioning them in their typical and famed neo-gothic style, which Hood had himself experimented with in his thesis and would later use in the Tribune Tower. In June 1904, Hood left his position as a draftsman there, obtained a passport, spent a few weeks in Pawtucket, and headed off to Europe.¹⁶

Hood’s hope was to study architecture at the École des Beaux-Arts, which at that time was considered the best architecture school in the world. As an American, he was hardly alone in this ambition—about four hundred Americans attended the École in the peak years between 1888 and 1914, making up more than 10 percent of all architecture students at the school.¹⁷ The entrance exam, the *concours d’admission*, was a grueling affair in which students were subjected to hours of written, graphic, and oral exams in subjects such as drawing, modeling, mathematics, and history. The exam culminated in a twelve-hour *esquisse* exercise. Hood failed the entrance

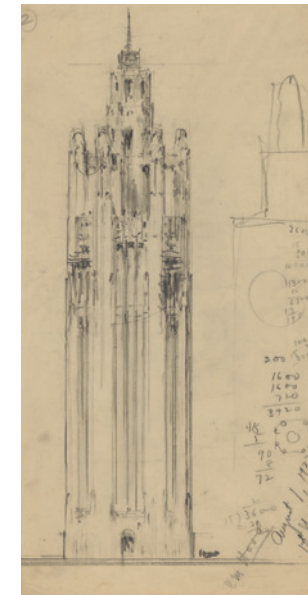


FIG. 4
Raymond Hood
 Tribune Tower, Chicago, sketch no. 2, 1922

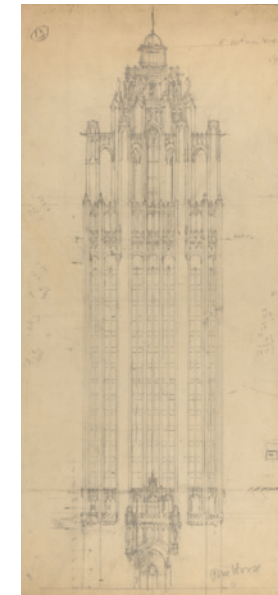


FIG. 5
Raymond Hood
 Tribune Tower, Chicago, sketch no. 13, 1922



FIG. 7
Raymond Hood
 Study drawing of a capital, 1905



FIG. 8
Jules-Léon Chiffot
Temple de Mars Vengeur, Rome, 1900

exam in October 1904, but after refining his drawing skills at the Académie Colarossi in Paris and the American Academy in Rome, he made a second attempt in April 1905, and was officially admitted to the École.¹⁸

Once admitted, students became members of the *seconde classe*. Progress at the École was made through earning *valeurs* (credits) by submitting completed work or successfully passing competitions, *concours d'émulation*. Perhaps the most significant difference from the American method of architectural instruction was the system of French *ateliers*, or workshops. Most of a student's work and learning took place in an *atelier* under the direction of a *patron*, typically a well-established architect. In the community of these workshops, students would not only develop their work under the supervision of the *patron*, but also with the guidance of their *atelier* peers. Hood joined the *ateliers* of Eugène Chiffot and Eugène Duquesne—perennially popular choices for American students.

One of Hood's earliest surviving drawings from France, made in Chiffot's *atelier*, is a perspectival view of a capital (FIG. 7). Coincidentally, Despradelle had caused quite a stir in Boston at the beginning of Hood's last year at MIT by acquiring six exquisite drawings by Jules-Léon Chiffot, Eugène Chiffot's older brother, of the Temple of Mars Ultor in Rome (FIG. 8). Despradelle obtained these Grand Prix de Rome *envoi* (dispatch) drawings

in an astounding move of diplomatic dexterity, for all drawings of this type were technically property of the French government and had never before been permanently transferred to a foreign country.¹⁹ As evidenced by these drawings by Hood and Chiffot, the history of architecture was given special weight at the École, as it was at MIT.

In 1906, Hood won his first architectural competition, organized by the popular periodical *Brickbuilder*, for a high-rise office building (FIG. 9). He placed first among about three hundred entries and earned a substantial prize of five hundred dollars. The design's chamfered corner and free mixing of rounded and pointed arches anticipate elements of the Chicago Tribune Tower. The competition jury thought Hood's design contained too much detail, but they unanimously placed it first, calling it a "*tour de force*."²⁰ The readers of *Brickbuilder* and Hood's own family learned of the award for his Florentine gothic skyscraper even before Hood did, as he was traveling in Italy at the time.²¹

Hood returned to the United States in June 1906 for reasons that remain unclear.²² The transition to Paris had been a shock to the young, Baptist-bred Hood. An often-repeated anecdote insists that "he objected to Notre-Dame, refusing to enter or admire it on the grounds that it was Catholic. He objected to the eternal hugging and kissing on the boulevards, and to the Continental Sunday with open theatres and open cafes."²³

He again spent some time with the firm Cram, Goodhue & Ferguson in New York and by October was in Pittsburgh assisting Henry Hornbostel, of the firm Palmer & Hornbostel, with designs for the newly founded Carnegie Institute of Technology. Hornbostel, who had studied architecture at the École and was the first professor of architecture at Carnegie, welcomed Hood into his office for several months.

Writing to his friend the architect Henry Boehm in 1907, Hood said that his reason for choosing to work with Hornbostel rather than return to the



FIG. 9
Raymond Hood
 First prize design
Brickbuilder office building competition, 1906

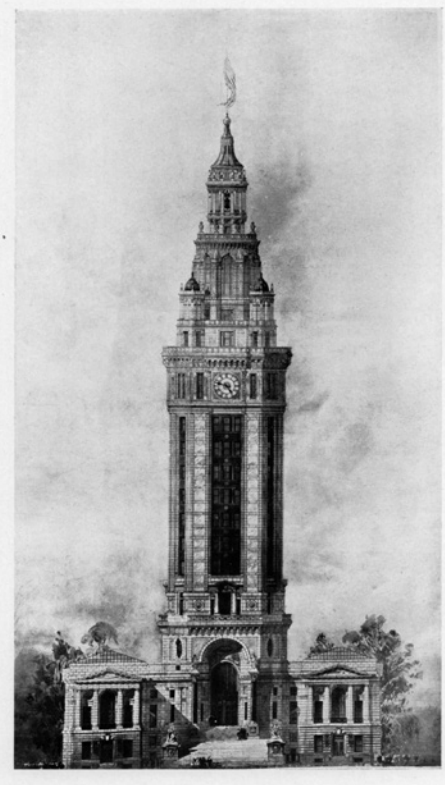


FIG. 10
Raymond Hood
 Proposed City Hall for Pawtucket, 1911

École was neither financial nor “a result of lack of nerve,” but rather that he was “being placed in charge of a big building (an invaluable experience) and working under a very strong man, who is disposed to teach me all he can, and who is now in the height of his enthusiasm.”²⁴ Other than assisting with competition drawings, Hood mainly worked on Hornbostel’s most prominent project at the time, the New York State Education Building in Albany.²⁵ Although the building’s exterior makes use of traditional ornament, the interior departs from the Beaux-Arts norm to suit contemporary needs—a pragmatic and flexible approach to design that Hood would also adopt.

In another letter to his friend Boehm, Hood describes the “long dull grind” of the Albany work, as well as his concern that his Hornbostel stay might prevent him from finishing his studies at the École.²⁶ His twenty-seventh birthday was approaching and he had so far earned only six *valeurs*. Matters were

becoming urgent: one of the school’s few enrollment requirements was that work be completed before a student’s thirtieth birthday. Just a few weeks later, Hood was on his way to Europe and, about one year after that, he passed the requirements for promotion to the *première classe*. He quickly acquired the necessary *valeurs* to progress from there by submitting five *projets rendus*—fleshed-out versions of *esquisses*. Perhaps the most distinguished of these was his design for “A Stock Exchange in a Maritime City,” which earned him the esteemed Prix Cavel in 1910. Hood described his design as “Normandy gothic”²⁷ and based on the buildings of Rouen, France—a style and city to which he would return for inspiration in the Chicago Tribune Tower competition.

Hood’s submission for his *diplôme* project is certainly the most striking of his undertakings at the École. Students were permitted to choose the subject of their *diplôme* project, and Hood decided to design a city hall for Pawtucket (FIG. 10). He had been considering this homage to his hometown

for some time, “the tower for which,” he wrote to Boehm in 1910, “I made sketches a long while ago.”²⁸ The fifteen-story skyscraper, topped by an elaborate series of diminishing tiers, is reminiscent of New York’s Singer Building, just finished in 1908 and briefly the tallest office building in the world. Skyscraper city halls were a relative rarity at the time. Hood’s project is a masterful exercise in Beaux-Arts design that places traditional ornament in a symmetrical composition on a steel frame. The main shaft rises from an oversized entrance archway, and is flanked on either side by wings housing municipal offices. The French newspaper *Construction Moderne* described Hood’s *diplôme* project as “a skyscraper campanile, worthy of Chicago.”²⁹ The project was accepted by the École on February 23, 1911, and, just one month shy of his thirtieth birthday, Hood was awarded a diploma—an honor conferred on only 144 Americans.³⁰ Hood was proud of the project, toting drawings of it to architecture exhibitions in Providence, Pittsburgh, and Chicago.³¹

Hood returned to the U.S. in April, diploma in hand, and went back to work for Hornbostel, splitting his time between New York and Pittsburgh. While Hood was in Paris, Palmer & Hornbostel had received a commission to expand the campus of the Carnegie Technical Schools into the Carnegie Institute of Technology. Hood became Hornbostel’s chief designer and supervisor of the Building Bureau, the office put in charge of all campus construction as well as other projects in Pittsburgh, such as the U.S. Bureau of Mines. Palmer & Hornbostel were concurrently finishing their Oakland City Hall—the tallest building in California at the time and brimming with exterior illumination.

Hood was active in the Pittsburgh architectural scene, and throughout his career he took seriously his role as mentor. In addition to supervising students in the Building Bureau, he maintained his own *atelier* with a small enrollment.³² He also wished to share his École experience beyond his immediate circle, publishing a seven-part “Vocabulary of Atelier French” in *Pencil Points* to help young students who aspired to study in Paris.³³

Hood moved to New York after the Building Bureau was disbanded in October 1914.³⁴ He set up an office at 7 West 42nd Street, in a space he shared with Rayne Adams, whom he knew from MIT and Paris. Hood’s work in this period consisted mostly of renovations and extensions with the occasional unsuccessful competition entry—thirteen of them, by Hood’s own count.³⁵

Although working on few commissions during his early independent years, he was still actively designing. The sensational skyscraper he proposed

Providence, R. I.
March 19, 1916

Special Features* The Providence Sunday Journal

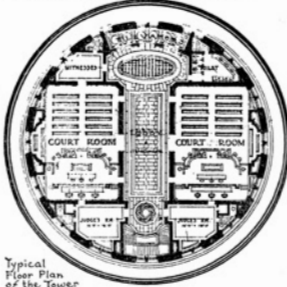
Fifth Section

A STRIKING PLAN FOR DIGNIFYING CIVIC CENTRE

Design Copyright,
1916, by
Raymond M. Hood.



The Main Entrance To The Court House.



Typical Floor Plan of the Tower

Former Rhode Islander Suggests Imposing State and Municipal Group. With Tower, to Occupy Entire Square South of Exchange Place

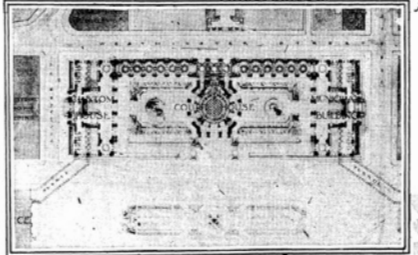
SERVING, architect and designer, has been drawn by Raymond M. Hood, a New York architect, as a suggestion for an improvement of Exchange place, with the intention of making the great square one of the most beautiful squares in Providence.

It is a matter of some interest in Providence, a city beautiful in its own way, to see a plan for the improvement of Exchange place, and the suggestion of a tower, which is not only a landmark, but a monument to the city's history, and a reminder of the city's past.

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View of the Monumental Group from the North



Plan Showing Relation of Suggested Buildings to the City Hall and Post Office



Raymond M. Hood.

with the area already owned by the city, it is possible to have a public building in the future, including the main entrance, which is the most beautiful square in an Exchange place.

In drawing his plan Mr. Hood has placed the main entrance to the tower at the southeast corner of the square, and the main entrance to the main building at the northwest corner. The tower is to be a landmark, and a monument to the city's history, and a reminder of the city's past.

These drawings are to show primarily the possibility of having the new group of buildings in the square, and the main entrance to the main building at the northwest corner. The tower is to be a landmark, and a monument to the city's history, and a reminder of the city's past.

The architect suggests that for this plan to be carried out, the city should purchase the land on Exchange place, and the site to be used for the tower and the main building. The tower is to be a landmark, and a monument to the city's history, and a reminder of the city's past.

The main entrance to the tower is to be at the southeast corner of the square, and the main entrance to the main building is to be at the northwest corner. The tower is to be a landmark, and a monument to the city's history, and a reminder of the city's past.

Castellon on West Pier.



Elevation of Court House, Federal and Municipal Buildings.

FIG. 11
"A Striking Plan for Dignifying Civic Centre"
Providence Sunday Journal, March 19, 1916

for downtown Providence in 1916 filled the front page of the Special Features section of the *Providence Sunday Journal* (FIG. 11).³⁶ His suggested group of buildings consisted of a six-hundred-foot central tower rising from a pedimented entrance, facing what was then called Exchange Place and flanked by two wings connected by a long loggia. The building would accommodate courtrooms, judges' chambers, a law library, a panoptic prison, a customs house, and municipal offices, and would include underground connections to the city hall and the post office. The shaft of the central tower resembles a fluted column, with strong, protruding vertical bands alternating with recessed areas for windows—a motif that he would repeat in nearly all of his later skyscrapers and which visibly announced the presence of the steel frame. In discussing the Tribune Tower and the American Radiator Building, the editor of *Architectural Forum* noted that Hood "has a deep appreciation of the importance of strongly marked vertical lines, emphasizing and indicating the steel frame which the exterior architecture protects and encloses."³⁷ This "deep appreciation," then, was already apparent in the 1910s.

The Providence project was proposed to fill the large block between Exchange Place and Westminster Street, then occupied by the Second Empire-style Butler Exchange Building and today the location of Rhode Island's tallest skyscraper—the 428-foot Industrial Trust Company Building. Hood did not conceive of the tower as a stand-alone monument. In style and siting it was meant to harmonize with the neighboring state house, city hall, and arcade, and the unbuilt post office. His proposed skyscraper borrowed a formal vocabulary from these other buildings, and its position would create orderly axes through downtown, thereby connecting the most important buildings of the city and the state around a public mall. This, Hood argued, would not result in a dull uniformity, but rather in a harmonized architectural group that would be "one of the most beautiful squares in America."³⁸ The uniformity, marked verticality, and provision for ample public space in the Providence proposal are features Hood would reuse in Rockefeller Center and in his plan for a "Tower City" (FIG. 12).

In many ways Hood's background is typical rather than exceptional. Howells had also gone to the École des Beaux-Arts, as had many other leading American skyscraper architects of the 1920s and 1930s, such as William Van Alen (Chrysler Building) and William F. Lamb (Empire State Building). The French system of architectural education and its American



FIG.12
Raymond Hood
Tower City, 1926

adaptation have been criticized frequently for an overemphasis on history, ornament, and drawing. And yet it was this very emphasis that helped to shape Hood's celebrated ability to clad a building in any style, from gothic to Greek to *moderne*. In his formative years at MIT and the École, Hood found his first chances to explore the possibilities of the skyscraper form. Subsequently, while working with Hornbostel and then on his own, Hood experimented with the skyscraper as a solution to a variety of architectural problems. It was this period of training and practice which molded Hood the architect well before he became Hood the Tribune Tower victor.

Hood once agreed to an interview with a reporter under one condition: "No sob stuff. . . None of this dope about starving to death in an attic, with only a crust of bread for my wife and my baby and myself, and all that sort of hooley."³⁹ Hood knew that there was more to his story than a tale of escape from "debt-ridden obscurity"⁴⁰ by way of a single event, and that his rapid rise to stardom after the Tribune Tower competition owed much to that which came before.



Endnotes

- ¹ Many of the basic facts of Hood's life and career, as well as a nearly complete catalog of designs, are laid out in Robert A. M. Stern with Thomas P. Catalano, *Raymond Hood*, Institute for Architecture and Urban Studies 15 (New York: Rizzoli, 1982). Walter H. Kilham Jr.'s book *Raymond Hood, Architect: Form Through Function in the American Skyscraper* (New York: Architectural Book Publishing Company, 1973) contains many valuable and entertaining, though sometimes dubious, anecdotes. For a detailed account of the competition, see Katherine Solomonson, *The Chicago Tribune Tower Competition: Skyscraper Design and Cultural Change in the 1920s* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001).
- ² "Raymond Mathewson Hood," *Architectural Forum* 62, no. 2 (February 1935): 130.
- ³ Allene Talmey, "Man Against the Sky," *New Yorker*, April 11, 1931, 25.
- ⁴ Robert Grieve, *An Illustrated History of Pawtucket, Central Falls, and Vicinity* (Pawtucket, RI: Pawtucket Gazette and Chronicle, 1897), 345–348.
- ⁵ Edwin Alger, "He Started Revolution in Architecture," *Boston Globe*, November 9, 1931.
- ⁶ "Chicago's Big Fair . . . Rhode Island People in the White City," *Providence Journal*, July 7, 1893.
- ⁷ John P. Barrett, *Electricity at the Columbian Exposition* (Chicago: R. R. Donnelley & Sons, 1894), 6.
- ⁸ "New Fraternity Men. A List of the Greek Letter Society Delegations," *Brown Daily Herald*, October 26, 1898.
- ⁹ J. Lawrence Hood, "ZETA.—Brown University," *Shield* 15, no. 4 (December 1899): 325.
- ¹⁰ Massachusetts Institute of Technology, *Annual Catalogue 1902–1903* (Boston: MIT, 1903), 35.
- ¹¹ Raymond M. Hood, "A Design for a Parish Church" (bachelor's thesis, MIT, 1903), 3.
- ¹² Désiré Despradelle, "The Beacon of Progress," *Technology Review* 11, no. 4 (October 1900): 306.
- ¹³ "The Beacon of Progress: A Monument to the Glory of the American People," *Architectural Review* 7, no. 2 (August 1900): 95.
- ¹⁴ "Greatest Monument in World's History," *Washington Post*, June 21, 1903.
- ¹⁵ "Brunonians Far and Near," *Brown Alumni Monthly* 4, no. 9 (April 1904): 206. Hood also spent time at the firm's home office in Boston.
- ¹⁶ National Archives and Records Administration, U.S. Passport Applications, 1795–1925, roll 655, 8 Jun 1904–14 Jun 1904, ancestry.com (accessed January 23, 2019); "Personal Mention," *Providence Journal*, June 12, 1904; and "Pawtucket," *Providence Journal*, June 20, 1904.
- ¹⁷ Isabelle Gournay and Elliott Pavlos, "Americans in Paris," *Journal of Architectural Education* 38, no. 4 (Summer 1985): 22. See also Gournay and Marie-Laure Crosnier Leconte, "American Architecture Students in Belle Epoque Paris: Scholastic Strategies and Achievements at the École des Beaux-Arts," *Journal of the Gilded Age and Progressive Era* 12, no. 2 (April 2013): 154–198; and Jean Paul Carlhian and Margot M. Ellis, *Americans in Paris: Foundations of America's Architectural Gilded Age, Architecture Students at the École des Beaux-Arts 1846–1946* (New York: Rizzoli, 2014).
- ¹⁸ Raymond Hood personal dossier, AJ/52/424, *Dictionnaire des élèves architectes de l'École des beaux-arts de Paris (1800–1968)*, Institut national d'histoire de l'art (INHA), <http://www.purl.org/inha/agorha/001/7> (accessed June 10, 2019).
- ¹⁹ "Diplomat Despradelle Gets Art Treasure for Tech. Professor of Architecture, While Abroad, Persuades French Authorities to Part with Prized Drawings," and "Tech Gets Prix de Rome Drawings," October 1902, Department of Architecture clippings scrapbook (1894–1928), Rotch Library, MIT.
- ²⁰ "Report of the Jury of Award," in "Office Building Competition Number," special issue, *Brickbuilder* 15, no. 1 (January 1906): 3.
- ²¹ "Pawtucket Young Man Successful Among Nearly 300 Contestants," *Providence Journal*, February 7, 1906.
- ²² "Returned from Abroad," *Providence Journal*, June 18, 1906.
- ²³ Talmey, "Man Against the Sky," 25.
- ²⁴ Raymond Hood to Henry Boehm, October 10, 1907, reel 64, Raymond Mathewson Hood papers, 1903–1931, Archives of American Art (AAA), Smithsonian Institution. See also "Alumni Notes," *Technology Architectural Record* 1, no. 3 (November 1907): 89.
- ²⁵ Hood to Boehm, March 1, 1908, AAA.
- ²⁶ Hood to Boehm, March 1, 1908, AAA.
- ²⁷ Hood to Boehm, August 21, 1910, AAA.
- ²⁸ Hood to Boehm, August 21, 1910, AAA.
- ²⁹ "Le Salon des artistes français," *Construction Moderne*, July 1, 1911, 472.
- ³⁰ Hood dossier, INHA; and Carlhian, *Americans in Paris*, 16.
- ³¹ See Pittsburgh Architectural Club, *Annual Exhibition* (Pittsburgh: 1912); Rhode Island Chapter of the American Institute of Architects, *Year Book* (Providence: 1911); and Chicago Architectural Club, *Book of the Twenty-Fifth Annual Exhibition* (Chicago: 1912).
- ³² *Report of the Commissioner of Education for the Year Ended June 30, 1914*, vol. 1 (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1915), 389, 395.
- ³³ Raymond M. Hood, "A Vocabulary of Atelier French," *Pencil Points* 3, nos. 4–10 (April–October 1922).
- ³⁴ "Minutes of Meeting of Sub-Committee of the Committee on the Institute of Technology," July 2, 1914, *Executive Committee Minutes*, vol. 4 (1910–1914), Carnegie Mellon University Libraries, Digital Collections (accessed January 16, 2020); and "Building Bureau Disbands," *Tartan* (Pittsburgh), October 22, 1914, 6.
- ³⁵ J. B. Griswold, "Nine Years Ago Raymond Hood Was Behind on His Rent . . . Today—He Holds the Spotlight as a Master Showman of Steel and Stone," *American Magazine*, October 1931, 147.
- ³⁶ "A Striking Plan for Dignifying Civic Centre," *Providence Sunday Journal*, March 19, 1916.
- ³⁷ "Exterior Architecture of Office Buildings," *Architectural Forum* 41, no. 9 (September 1924): 99.
- ³⁸ "Striking Plan," *Providence Journal*.
- ³⁹ Edwin Alger, "He Started a Revolution."
- ⁴⁰ Arthur Strawn, "A Skyscraper Leap to Fame: Only Nine Years Ago Raymond M. Hood, Now One of Our Greatest Skyscraper Builders, Was Disheartened and in Debt," *New York Herald Tribune*, November 30, 1930.



Donald Douglas
McGraw-Hill Building under construction, c.1930



Hassan Bagheri
American Radiator Building, detail, 2019



Pavel Bendov, American Radiator Building, detail, 2017



FIG. 1
Diego Rivera
Frozen Assets, 1931–1932

“Man Against the Sky”: Raymond Hood and the American Skyscraper

DIETRICH NEUMANN

In early January 1932, the Mexican painter Diego Rivera rushed a large fresco in a steel frame up to the twelfth floor of the Heckscher Building on Fifth Avenue and 57th Street in New York City. The Museum of Modern Art, just over two years old, occupied six rented rooms there, and an exhibition of Rivera’s work had opened on December 23. In addition to the 143 paintings and drawings shown, the museum had commissioned seven new murals, five of which were ready for the opening; Rivera delivered two more while the exhibition was ongoing.¹

The museum had been founded in 1929 by Abby Aldrich Rockefeller, the Rhode Island–born wife of John D. Rockefeller Jr. (Brown class of 1897), with her friends Lillie P. Bliss and Mary Quinn Sullivan. Abby Aldrich Rockefeller was a keen admirer of Rivera’s work and decided, only a month after the museum’s founding, to invite him for a solo exhibition. Rivera and his wife, Frida Kahlo, arrived by boat in November 1931.

The fresco Rivera delivered—named by a journalist *Frozen Assets*, a name so fitting that it stuck—became one of the best-known portraits of Depression-era New York (FIG. 1). It showed the cruel stratifications of capitalism, with skyscrapers looming above a trainline bringing workers into town, and the homeless shelter at the East 25th Street Pier looking eerily like a morgue, with countless sleeping men watched over by a guard—like the one guarding assets in a bank vault underneath. In the skyline at the top, the most recognizable recent landmarks, such as the Chrysler and Empire State buildings, are relegated to the back. Instead, pride of place is given to the Daily News and McGraw-Hill buildings, with Rockefeller Center between them. All three had been designed by Raymond Hood.

In reality, of course, these buildings were not next to each other and Rockefeller Center had not even been built, but the tableau suggested Hood’s commanding position in Manhattan’s skyline.

Having designed a series of skyscrapers in recent years (each unique in appearance) and now in charge of the architecture of the largest single building project in Manhattan's history, Hood was, indeed, at the top of his profession.

The second fresco Rivera delivered late to the show was called *Pneumatic Drill* and showed a worker on the building site of Rockefeller Center. We can safely assume that both *Pneumatic Drill* (executed in monochrome, the intended approach for murals at Rockefeller Center) and *Frozen Assets* (flattering Raymond Hood) were meant by Rivera to position himself for a mural commission at Rockefeller Center—which he would, indeed, receive a few months later.

How had Raymond Hood become the most powerful architect in New York City? Rarely has an architect traveled from relative obscurity to international fame in such a short time. It began with a chance encounter. Nine years earlier, Raymond Hood was forty-one years old, barely able to make ends meet, with a family but without a steady job, designing radiator covers for the American Radiator Company and helping out in offices. One day in June 1922, crossing through Grand Central Station, he ran into a friend from the *École des Beaux-Arts* in Paris, John Mead Howells.

Together with ten other American firms, Howells had been invited to submit an entry to the Chicago Tribune Competition. Howells, who suffered from chronic back pain and whose firm was very busy, felt he couldn't take this on. Well aware of Hood's talents, he asked him to design it in his office.²

Chicago Tribune Tower

The *Chicago Tribune*, the world's largest newspaper at the time, had announced an international competition for "the most beautiful and distinctive office building in the world"³ and offered substantial rewards totaling \$100,000. The competition generated extensive press coverage and attracted 263 entries from twenty-three countries. Hood's winning entry is best understood through its urban context. The new Tribune headquarters would be across the street from the most attention-grabbing building in Chicago,



FIG. 2
Chicago, Wrigley Building, 1921/1924
Graham, Anderson, Probst & White



FIG. 3
Tribune Tower, Chicago, 1922–1925

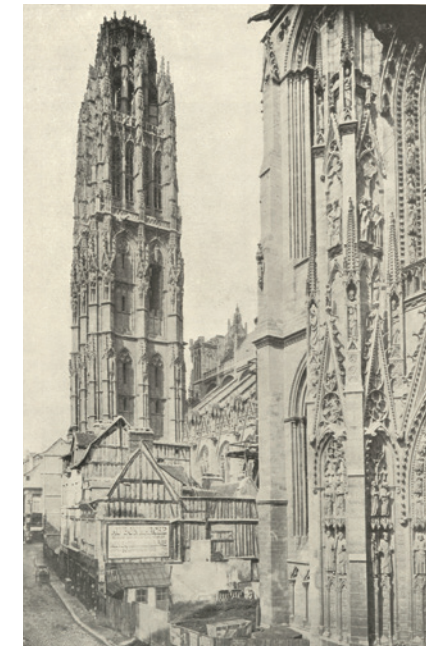


FIG. 4
Butter Tower, Rouen Cathedral, early 16th century

the Wrigley Chewing Gum Company, finished a year earlier, in 1921, and designed by Graham, Anderson, Probst & White (FIG. 2). Occupying the most prominent spot in the new business district north of downtown, on the Chicago River at the bend of Michigan Avenue, its prominent tower was visible for miles down the city's busiest street. Modeled on the famous Giralda Tower of Seville Cathedral in Spain, it reached the permitted tower limit of four hundred feet; the rest of the building obeyed the 260-foot cornice height. Clad in white terracotta, the building was, sensationally, lit in its entirety at night by batteries of floodlights—the brightest and most extensive architectural illumination in the world.⁴ No name or product was mentioned—the building itself served as advertising.

Raymond Hood responded with pragmatism, restraint, and sophistication. He had to adhere to the same cornice height, but managed to squeeze in two more floors than his counterpart. Instead of referring to popular Renaissance forms, Hood settled for gothic, still somewhat of a novelty in Chicago, but generally associated with honesty and simplicity. His reference point was the late-gothic Butter Tower of Rouen Cathedral (FIG. 3, 4), with its flying buttresses at the top, a detail that made the tower appear wider than the permitted one-fourth of the width of the façade.



FIG. 5
Raymond Hood
 Project for a pair of Tribune Towers, 1922

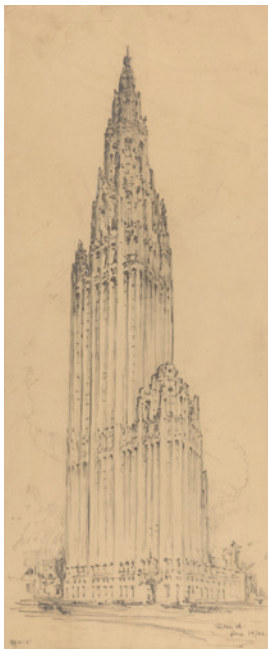


FIG. 6
Raymond Hood
 Project for an addition to Tribune Tower, 1922

A series of sketches shows how Hood arrived at his solution and the freedom his flexible mind enjoyed in the process (FIGS. 5, 6). He considered doubling the tower to provide more office space, or, in case height restrictions were lifted one day, suggested a much taller sibling next to it. Instead of white terracotta, Hood settled on a more dignified gray limestone (FIG. 7). Responding to the unsurpassable flood of light from across the street, Hood's text called "attention to the fact that the upper part of the building has been designed not only for its own outline and composition, but for the possibilities of illumination and reflected lighting at night."⁵

The Finnish architect Eliel Saarinen came in second with an elegant setback skyscraper of a restrained, vaguely gothic, vertical striation (FIG. 8). The most modern were among German and Dutch entries, such as the stern but elegant (and quite prescient) cubic massing by the Bauhaus director, Walter Gropius, and his chief designer, Adolf Meyer. Adolf Loos, from Vienna, sent a visual pun—an enormous column. Both were among seventy-four entries from abroad that arrived too late and could not be considered (FIGS. 9, 10).

The ensuing debate in the architecture journals missed most of Hood's sophisticated responses to the Wrigley tower, and pitted his historicist design against the rising gospel of a simple, functionalist modern architecture. The Chicago architect Louis Sullivan, for example, had in 1896 told his architect colleagues how to design tall office buildings "artistically considered," by not making them a display of architectural quotations "from some



FIG. 7
Raymond Hood
 Chicago Tribune Tower winning entry, 1922



FIG. 8
Eliel Saarinen
 Chicago Tribune Tower Competition 2nd prize, 1922



FIG. 9
Walter Gropius and Adolf Meyer
 Chicago Tribune Tower Competition entry, 1922



FIG. 10
Adolf Loos
 Chicago Tribune Tower Competition entry, 1922

other land and some other time.” Instead, they should, just like a plant in nature, calmly reflect their purpose, since “form ever follows function. . . . Where function does not change, form does not change.”⁶ While this quote had quickly become the battle cry of European modernists, Sullivan was disappointed to see how little his advice had been heeded otherwise. Saarinen’s design should have “placed first, where it belongs by virtue of its beautifully controlled and virile power. The first prize [Hood’s] is demoted to the level of those works evolved of dying ideas, even as it sends forth a frantic cry to escape from the common bondage of those governed by ideas.”⁷ Abroad, the building became the poster child for the retrograde American approach to modern architecture, and was considered “the Triumph of Kitsch.”⁸ Gothic stone cladding for a modern steel frame, fumed Richard Neutra, a recent immigrant from Austria, had “little to do with the structural honesty of the Gothic.” No modern building “would even consider such profligacy.”⁹

None of this seems to have fazed either client or architect. A new building code allowing greater building heights went into effect in April of 1923, and Hood added four floors to the design—lending the building an even more formidable presence (cf. FIGS. 3, 7). Construction began in 1923, and the building opened to the public in the summer of 1925.

The American Radiator Building and an “Architecture of the Night”

New commissions followed immediately, including an office tower for Hood’s former employer, the American Radiator Company at Bryant Park in New York. Here Hood, working with Jacques André Fouilhoux, came into his own as an innovator and moved away from neo-gothicism to a freer interpretation. The tower’s small footprint allowed for daylight at every desk and offered a flexible, open floor plan, thanks to a condensed utility core on the side. Hood made the unusual decision to clad the entire steel structure in black brick, creating coherence with the dark windows. He added golden ornaments (by sculptor René Chambellan), brick sections, and finials at the top’s setbacks. When finished in 1924, the building was an instant success. “What is that black building? . . . The American Radiator Building is the answer. . . . As an advertisement I consider the building a magnificent success” (FIG. 11).¹² The Tribune competition had alerted Hood to the importance of architectural illumination, and his new client realized that “for a company selling

furnaces and heaters, a building that glowed in the dark was not such a wild idea.”¹³ Hood hired a Broadway lighting designer, Bassett Jones, and they conducted experiments *in situ*—“multi-colored revolving lights” or “the effect of the building being on fire” thanks to “spots of light on jets of steam rising out of the smokestack.” They also tried moving lights and cross-lighting, but decided the public wasn’t ready for “extravagant and exotic effects.”¹⁴ Eventually they settled on fifty-six amber floodlighting units, from the twenty-first floor upwards. The public was mesmerized: “The appearance of the building at night is one of the sights of the city . . . vast throngs that crowd this district at night are blocking traffic.”¹⁵ “The gilded upper portion seems miraculously suspended one and two hundred feet in the air, the design has a dreamlike beauty.”¹⁶

The painter Georgia O’Keeffe noticed the lighting from her apartment on the top floor of the Shelton Hotel, where she lived with



FIG. 11
Berenice Abbott
Fortieth Street between Fifth and Sixth Avenue, 1938



FIG. 12
Georgia O'Keeffe
Radiator Building—Night, New York, 1927



FIG. 13
 Tribune Tower, Chicago, 1922–1925

her husband, the photographer Alfred Stieglitz, in 1927. In a painting she depicted the building's luminous crown, floodlights shooting up into the night sky, some catching a neighbor's heating fumes, and a red neon light advertising her publicity-shy husband (FIG. 12).

For the Tribune Tower, Hood and Jones had imagined similarly dramatic light installations with backlit windows, strip lighting, and colored floodlights, including steam, smoke, and fireworks for special occasions, like “Walhalla burning in the skies, bringing to mind, perhaps, the finale of the *Götterdämmerung*.”¹⁷ A more restrained lighting scheme was installed in 1929: 174 golden-colored floodlights set off the gothic tracery, a successful counterbalance to the bright reflection from the Wrigley Building (FIGS. 2, 13).

In the meantime, the public had taken note. Architects saw “bewildering possibilities as to the future use of surfaces with colors, glows, and lights in order to convert the high places of New York, as seen from distant streets, into a wonderland of elaborate, fanciful and vivid masses





FIG. 14
Electric Service Supplies Company
Golden Glow: Floodlight Projectors, brochure cover, 1932

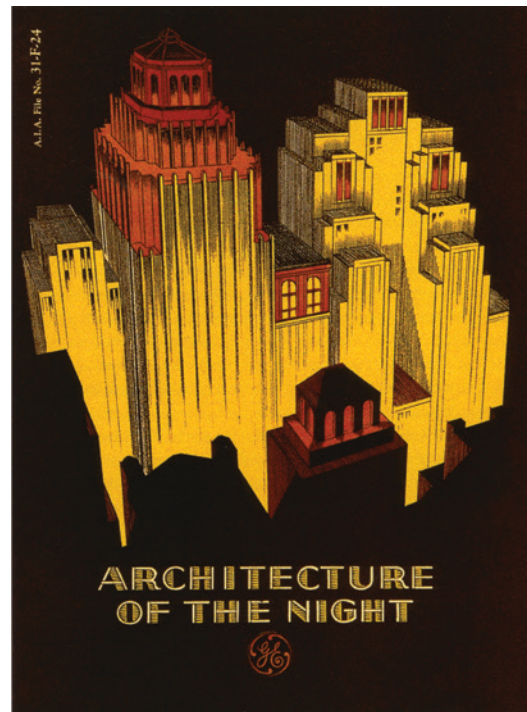


FIG. 15
General Electric Company
Architecture of the Night, brochure cover, 1930

and patterns.”¹⁸ Raymond Hood had helped to introduce a new age of color and light in American architecture, a development greatly welcomed by the electrical industry and lighting companies (FIG. 14). In 1930 he published a booklet called *Architecture of the Night* (FIG. 15) for General Electric: “The possibilities of night illumination have barely been touched,” he declared, as he predicted a new monumental art form. “There lies in the future a development even more fantastic than anything that has ever been accomplished on a stage.”¹⁹ The critic Douglas Haskell even diagnosed a nocturnal American modernity: “The Europeans get the day, we get the night. . . . Here is modernism indeed. Thousands of years went by with their changes of style, but not until this century was there electric light, which, far, far more than the triad of steel, glass and concrete, has changed the basis of all architecture.”²⁰

Urban Visions

Hood’s dreams of a colorful nocturnal modernity were accompanied by equally bold plans for urban change in Manhattan. Buoyed by his newfound fame, in 1925 Hood published his vision of “Bridge Cities” in the *New York Times*, dreamily rendered by Hugh Ferriss. Towering, continuous apartment houses on either side of a roadway crossing the Hudson or the East River were so “easily practicable,” he declared, that it was “strange that we have not always had them.” A densely packed bridge crossing the Hudson River could easily house fifty thousand people—a city in itself (FIG. 16).²¹ Two years later, Hood proposed something entirely different—a response to both Le Corbusier’s Plan Voisin, with its freestanding towers, and New York City’s setback law. Hood’s “Tower City” tied occupied floor area to public circulation space. Anyone wanting to build higher would have to broaden the street, and move his building back. Over time, there would be “hundreds of fifty and sixty story buildings and corresponding open street space” with “plenty of air, light and sunshine for all. . . . The city would be a park dotted with buildings.”²² Hood’s sketches showed the successive spread of the idea (FIG. 17). Two years later, he presented the opposite



FIG. 16
Tower Bridges, 1925
 rendering by Hugh Ferriss



FIG. 17
Raymond Hood
Tower City III, 1926

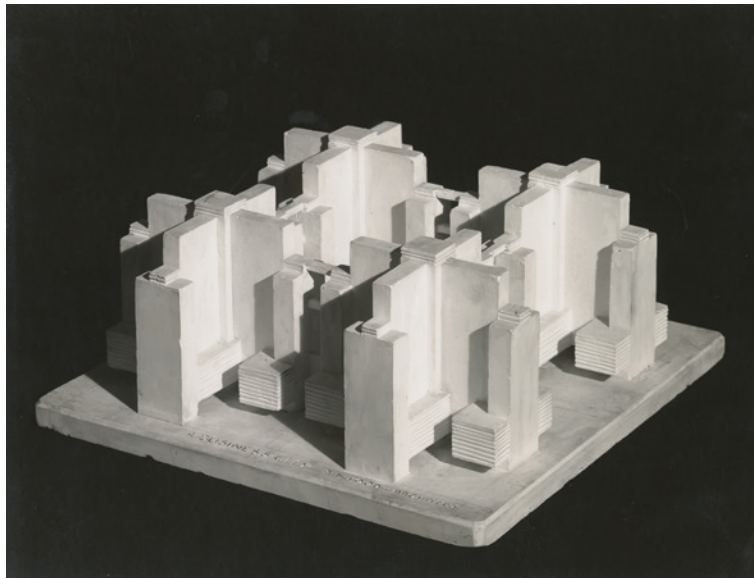


FIG. 18
City Under a Single Roof, 1922

vision—a “City Under a Single Roof”—embracing urban density and self-contained city quarters whose central buildings of unlimited height would allow traffic to flow right underneath (FIGS. 18, 24).²³ These designs would have an immediate impact on Hood’s first sketches for the layout of Rockefeller Center two years later (FIG. 21).

“Modern Architecture”: The Daily News and McGraw-Hill Buildings

The end of the decade brought more commissions for skyscrapers. Hood’s Daily News building for a tabloid publisher (he again worked with John Mead Howells) became the first modernist skyscraper in Manhattan, forgoing a crown at the top and sporting a relentless vertical striation of white enameled brick, with brown and black brick spandrels in between (FIG. 19). The stark exterior (with the exception of a vivid relief by René Chambellan above the entrance) (FIG. 27) belied the magic of its mysterious lobby with a huge revolving globe under a black glass dome in the center (FIGS. 25–27).

Hood’s next project (again with Jacques André Fouilhoux), on the western end of 42nd Street for McGraw-Hill, another publishing house, emphasized horizontality, with the building clad in the largest expanse



FIG. 19 Nyholm & Lincoln, Daily News Building, 1930



FIG. 20
Berenice Abbot
McGraw-Hill Building, 1936

of blue-green terracotta ever applied over a façade of this magnitude. At the same time, the building's wraparound broad ribbon windows provided unprecedented expanses of glass in the façade, while revealing the steel frame behind. Fashionable Streamline Moderne details left their traces in the horizontal lines at the entrances and in the oversize luminous advertising sign at the top (FIGS. 20, 23).

Both of these buildings were featured in the famous exhibition which immediately followed Diego Rivera's at the Museum of Modern Art. "Modern Architecture" was curated by Philip Johnson (who would go on to design Brown University's Computer Center and List Art Building) and the historian Henry-Russell Hitchcock. While focused on European architects such as Le Corbusier, Ludwig Mies van der Rohe, Walter Gropius, and J. J. P. Oud, it also featured four Americans, Frank Lloyd Wright, Howe and Lescaze, the Bowman Brothers, and Raymond Hood, who was introduced as "the American Skyscraper Architect." The praise offered to both Hood's Daily News Building ("the most effective skyscraper in New York") and McGraw-Hill tower ("a significant turning point in skyscraper design") was dampened by Hitchcock's criticism of the readability of the underlying structure of the former and the size of the advertising feature on the top of the latter.²⁴

Rockefeller Center

In 1930, John D. Rockefeller Jr. found himself responsible for a vast urban renewal project between New York's Fifth and Sixth Avenues when the intended anchor, the Metropolitan Opera, dropped out at the onset of the Depression. Together with the development agents Todd, Robertson & Todd, Rockefeller turned the project into a mixed-use conglomerate of office, retail, and entertainment spaces. Raymond Hood became the lead architect of a group of Associated Architects,²⁵ suggesting General Electric and RCA as new partners,²⁶ and steering the design of fourteen buildings around a central sunken plaza and pedestrian street. Construction began in 1931, the first buildings opened in 1933, and the core of the complex was completed by 1939. The centerpiece was Hood's slender, superbly elegant sixty-six-story RCA Building, the synopsis of his previous skyscraper designs: he used the gray limestone cladding of the Chicago Tribune, the strong verticalism and staggered setbacks of the Daily News, with the load-bearing steel posts underneath readable, as they had been at McGraw-Hill. The RCA tower, first to be finished, was immediately lit at night (at first only on the eastern

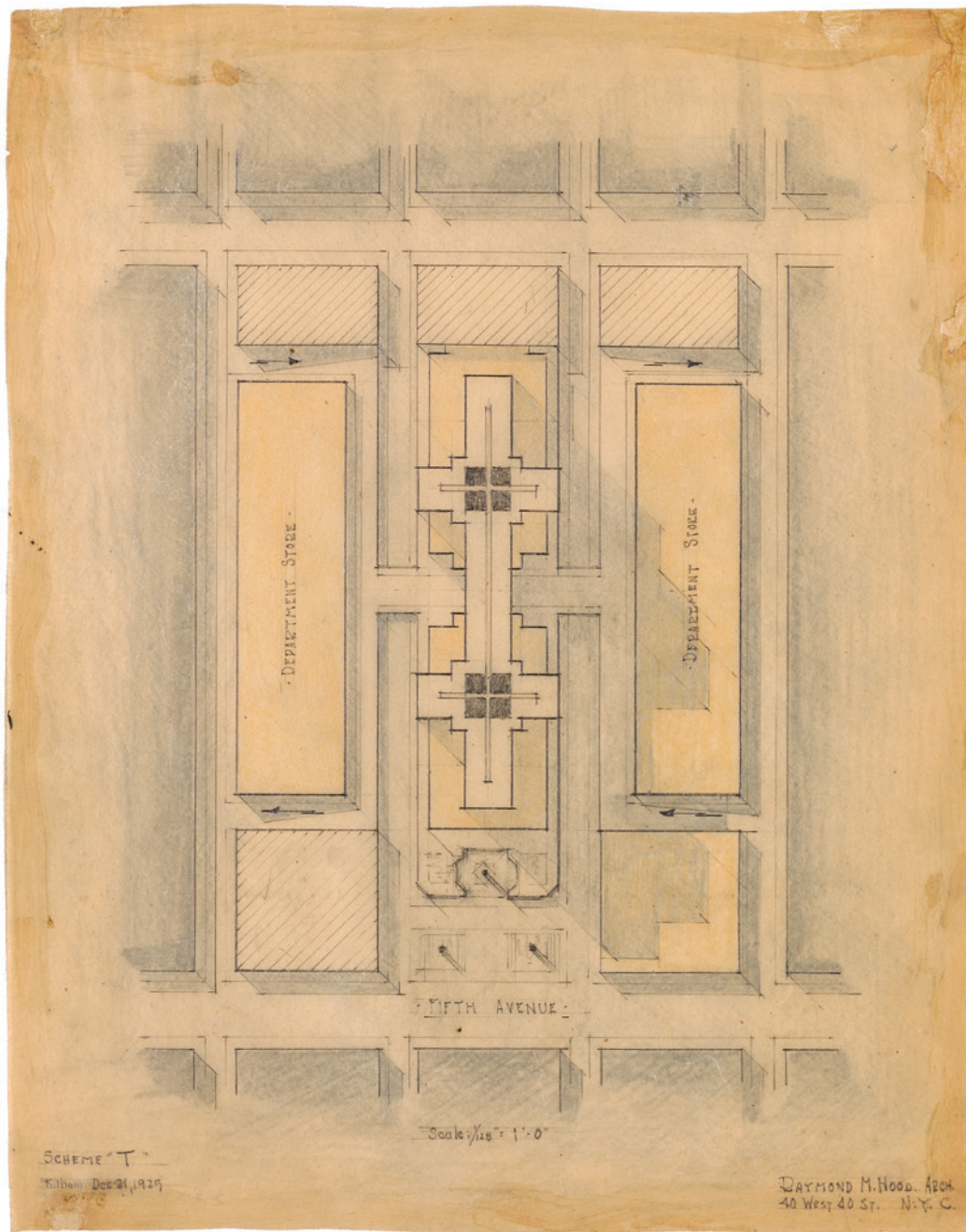


FIG. 21
 Rockefeller Center, Scheme "T," 1929
 drawing by Walter H. Kilham Jr.



FIG. 22
 Hassan Bagheri
 Rockefeller Center, 2019



FIG. 23
Hassan Bagheri
McGraw-Hill Building, 2019

façade), to create interest in the project and attract investors (FIG. 22). As a result, the building was 80 percent rented by 1934, while the Empire State Building down the street had a similar vacancy rate. It was “large, exciting, romantic,” according to the prominent critic Lewis Mumford, especially at night: “Under artificial lighting, in a slight haze,” it looked like the “City of the Future.”²⁷

When Diego Rivera’s *Frozen Assets* showed the construction of skyscrapers above the bodies of impoverished, homeless men, it made an important connection. The building boom in the early 1930s, of which Rockefeller Center was the pinnacle, was made possible because construction and labor costs fell so drastically during the Depression that skyscrapers were built at half their budgeted cost. And, for Rockefeller Center, 228 buildings on the site were razed, and some four thousand mostly low-income tenants had to relocate.

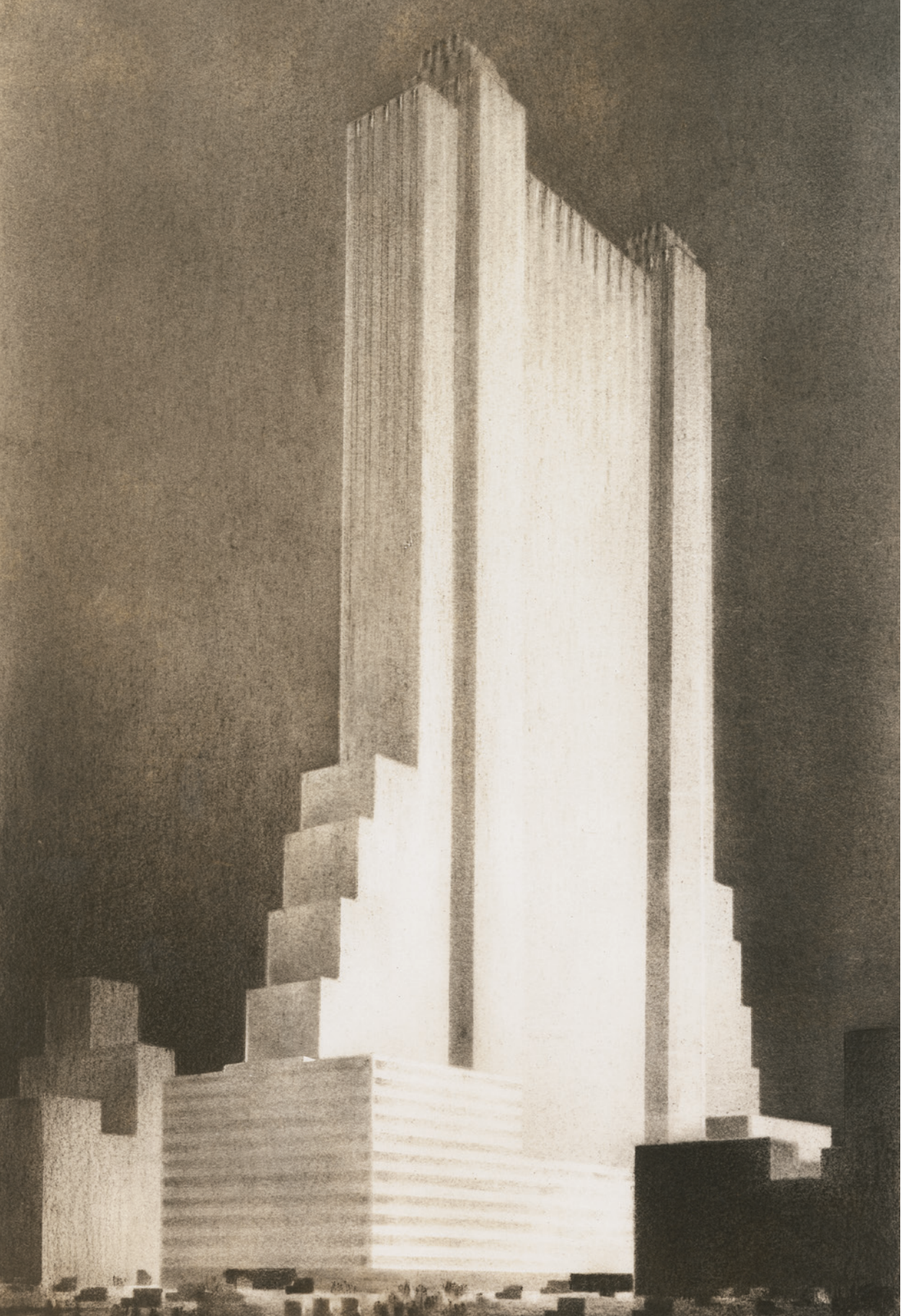
Raymond Hood imagined any art at Rockefeller Center to be subservient to his architecture—monochrome and on movable canvas. With Rivera already agreed upon, in September 1932 Hood travelled to Europe to interview additional artists. Henri Matisse turned him down, and Picasso never responded (the telegram had addressed him as “Pierre

Picasso”),²⁸ but the popular Anglo-Welsh muralist Frank Brangwyn and the Catalan Josep Maria Sert accepted the invitation. When Rivera heard that he would not work alongside Picasso or Matisse, he withdrew. To win him back, concessions had to be made: Rivera could use bright colors and was given the most prominent location, a sixty-three-foot-wide area above the elevator banks in the entrance hall. His theme was to be “Man at the Crossroads.” Famously, the project didn’t end well. In May 1933, Rivera was almost finished with his expansive tableau of scenes of workers’ demonstrations and police brutality, chemical and aerial warfare, scientific discoveries, healthy plant growth and peaceful family life. One day, Raymond Hood was examining potential damage from a spill of ceiling paint and discovered a recently added portrait of the Russian revolutionary leader Vladimir Ilyich Lenin.²⁹ Rivera was asked to remove it and refused. He was promptly relieved of his commission. The mural was plastered over and eventually destroyed, but Rivera had it photographed and recreated it in Mexico City’s Palacio des Bellas Artes later that year.

The “Brilliant Bad Boy” of Architecture

Hood’s skyscrapers and unexecuted visions arose just as the gospel of modern architecture began to spread from central Europe, bringing with it a defined and limited formal vocabulary and a strong sense of moral superiority. Hood, in contrast, stood for a joyful, irreverent, undogmatic modernity that embraced ornament, color and light, variety and contrast, and occasional historical references, while being structurally sound and savvy about the interior layout. Repeatedly he emphasized how little he felt bound by stylistic or other conventions, which earned him the epithet of “brilliant bad boy” from the *New Yorker* magazine.³⁰ “I wish we could all work with our own sense of discipline and be free as the devil. For the moment we put a cast-iron frame on this International Style, that we’re all working at, this fine, marvelous movement will turn into a tight, hard unimaginative formula, just as with colonial architecture. We should keep away from ‘style’ and for once we will make of this style a freedom of the spirit.”³¹

Frank Lloyd Wright, who felt himself similarly sidelined by the most ardent promoters of the International Style, agreed with Hood. When Hood died of rheumatoid arthritis at age fifty-three in 1934, Wright wrote to his former student Paul Frank: “Ray Hood was a good egg. Architecture needs about ten first-class funerals of the higher-ups more than it needed his.”³²



Endnotes

- ¹ Allene Talmey, "Man Against the Sky," *New Yorker*, April 11, 1931, 24–27. *Diego Rivera*, Introduction by Frances Flynn Paine (New York: Museum of Modern Art, Norton, 1931).
- ² Howells and Hood also shared a RI connection. Howells and Stokes, his earlier firm, had designed the Turk's Head Building in downtown Providence in 1913, then the tallest tower in the city.
- ³ *The International Competition for a New Administration Building for the Chicago Tribune* (Chicago: Chicago Tribune Company, 1923), 17.
- ⁴ "Architecture and Illumination: A Notable Example in the Wrigley Building, Chicago," *Architectural Forum* 35 (October 1921): 135; and "The Wrigley Building at Night," *Architecture and Building* 53, no. 12 (December 1921): 95–97.
- ⁵ *International Competition for a New Administration Building*, 109.
- ⁶ Louis Sullivan, "The Tall Office Building Artistically Considered," *Lippincott's Magazine*, March 1896, 403–409.
- ⁷ Louis Sullivan, "The Chicago Tribune Competition," *Architectural Record* 53, 2 (February 1923): 151–157.
- ⁸ Adolf Behne, "Amerikanische Architektur," *Sozialistische Monatshefte*, March 23, 1923, 198–199.
- ⁹ Richard Neutra, "Die ältesten Hochhäuser und der jüngste Turm," *Baugilde* 6, no. 21 (1924): 495.
- ¹⁰ Arthur Tappan North, ed., *Raymond Hood* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1931), 10.
- ¹¹ Raymond M. Hood, "Attempting to Build with Black Brick," *Architecture* 56, no. 7 (July 1927): 59.
- ¹² Harvey Wiley Corbett, "The American Radiator Building, New York City," *Architectural Record* 55, no. 5 (May 1924): 476.
- ¹³ Walter H. Kilham Jr., *Raymond Hood, Architect: Form Through Function in the American Skyscraper* (New York: Architectural Book Publishing Company, 1973), 70.
- ¹⁴ "Raymond Hood predicts 'Architecture of the Night,'" *Magazine of Light*, May 1930, 39. See also Dietrich Neumann, *Architecture of the Night* (Munich, New York: Prestel, 2002).
- ¹⁵ "Editorial Comment," *American Architect* 126 (November 19, 1924), 487.
- ¹⁶ G. H. Edgell, *The American Architecture of Today* (New York: Charles Scribner & Sons, 1928), 363.
- ¹⁷ Bassett Jones, "Structures in Light," *Light*, April 1924, 7.
- ¹⁸ Herbert Kroly, "New Dimensions in Architectural Effects," *Architectural Review* 57 (January 1925): 94.
- ¹⁹ "Raymond M. Hood predicts 'Architecture of the Night,'" in *Architecture of the Night* (Schenectady, NY: General Electric Company, 1930): 3–4.
- ²⁰ Douglas Haskell, "Architecture: The Bright Lights," *The Nation* 132, no. 3419 (January 14, 1931): 55–56.
- ²¹ Orrick Johns, "Bridge Homes—A New Vision of the City," *New York Times*, February 22, 1925.
- ²² "A 'Tower City' Plan to Relieve Traffic," *New York Times*, February 13, 1927.
- ²³ Raymond M. Hood, "City Under a Single Roof," *Nation's Business* 17, no. 12 (November 1929): 19–29, quoted in Robert A. M. Stern with Thomas P. Catalano, *Raymond Hood* (New York: Rizzoli, 1982), 16.
- ²⁴ *Modern Architecture* (New York: Museum of Modern Art, 1932), 130, 131.
- ²⁵ Three firms were part of this group: Corbett, Harrison & MacMurray; Hood, Godley & Foulhoux; and Reinhard & Hofmeister.
- ²⁶ Carol Krinsky, *Rockefeller Center* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1978), 78.
- ²⁷ Lewis Mumford, "The Skyline: Mr. Rockefeller's Center," *New Yorker*, December 23, 1933, 29–30.
- ²⁸ Daniel Okrent, *Great Fortune: The Epic of Rockefeller Center* (New York: Penguin, 2003), 297.
- ²⁹ Okrent, *Great Fortune*, 310.
- ³⁰ Talmey, "Man Against the Sky," 24–27.
- ³¹ "Symposium: The International Architectural Exhibition," *Shelter* 2, no. 4 (April 1932): 7.
- ³² Frank Lloyd Wright, letter to Paul Frankl, in Bruce Brooks Pfeiffer, ed., *Letters to Apprentices* (Fresno, CA: California State University Press, 1982), 86.

FIG. 24 City Under a Single Roof, 1929, rendering by Carl E. Landefeld

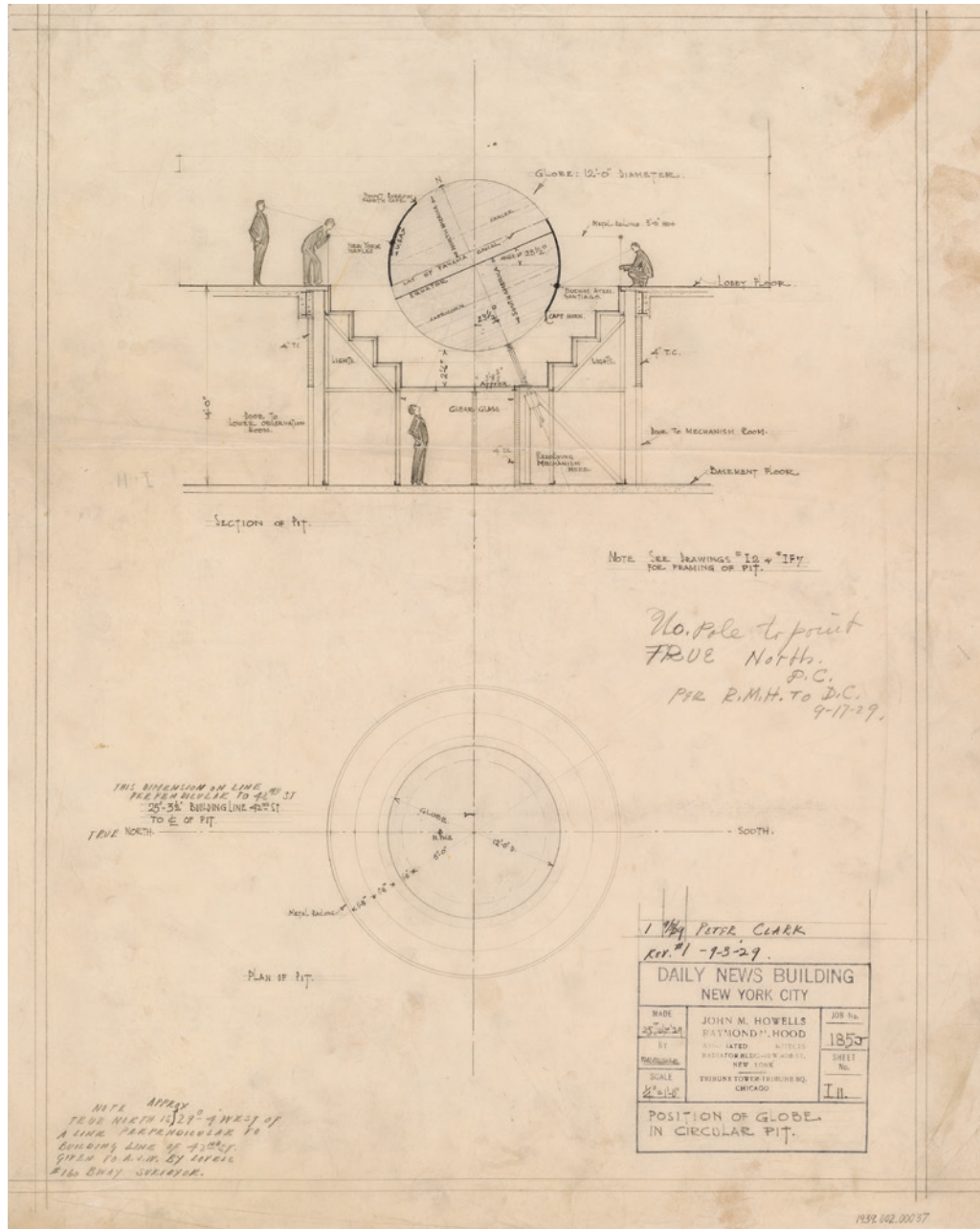


FIG. 25
Daily News Building, "Position of Globe in Circular Pit," 1929
drawing by Ludovic Gordon Farquhar



FIG. 26 Hassan Bagheri, Daily News Lobby, detail, 2019

Works in the Exhibition

All dimensions are given in inches, height followed by width. All works are by Raymond Mathewson Hood (1881–1934) unless otherwise noted.

Education and Biography

p. 6 Constant-Désiré Despradelle, 1862–1912
Beacon of Progress, preparatory sketches, c. 1898
 Ink on trace paper mounted on paper
 13 x 11¼
 MIT Museum

p. 5 Constant-Désiré Despradelle
Beacon of Progress, perspective, 1900
 Ink wash and graphite on trace paper
 39 x 25¼
 MIT Museum

Constant-Désiré Despradelle
Beacon of Progress, “Section Showing the Disposition of the Various Stories,” c. 1900
 Ink and graphite on linen
 30½ x 18
 MIT Museum

p. 5 A Design for a Parish Church in the Gothic Style, elevation, 1903
 Ink and watercolor on paper
 64½ x 23½
 MIT Museum

p. 8 Jules-Léon Chiffot, 1868–1925
Temple de Mars Vengeur, Rome, May 1900
 Digital inkjet print after ink and crayon drawing
 29½ x 21
 MIT Museum

p. 8 Study drawing of a capital, April 1905
 Charcoal on paper
 24½ x 18½
 Raymond Mathewson Hood papers, 1903–1931, Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution

p. 10 Proposed City Hall for Pawtucket, elevation
Year-Book of the Rhode Island Chapter, American Institute of Architects
 RI Chapter, AIA, Providence, 1911
 Enlarged digital inkjet print after halftone original
 14 x 7¾
 Private collection

p. 12 “A Striking Plan for Dignifying Civic Centre”
Providence Sunday Journal, March 19, 1916
 Digital inkjet print after original
 20½ x 16

Lucas Gelfond, born 2001
Providence City Center, model after Raymond Hood, 2019–2020
 Binder jet 3D print, gypsum powder
 24 x 8 x 24

p. 6 Proposal for Electric Tower, February 14, 1924
 Charcoal on board
 18½ x 7½
 Raymond Mathewson Hood papers, 1903–1931, Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution

frontispiece Samuel H. Gottscho, 1875–1971
Raymond Hood at his home in Stamford, CT, July 11, 1931
 Enlarged digital inkjet print after gelatin silver print
 20 x 16
 Raymond M. Hood architectural drawings and papers, 1890–1944, Avery Architectural & Fine Arts Library, Columbia University

Tribune Tower, 1922–1925
John Mead Howells and Raymond Hood
 435 North Michigan Avenue, Chicago, IL

p. 7 Tribune Tower, Chicago, sketch no. 2, August 1, 1922
 Charcoal on trace paper mounted on board
 22¾ x 12
 Raymond Mathewson Hood papers, 1903–1931, Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution

p. 7 Tribune Tower, Chicago, sketch no. 13, 1922
 Charcoal and graphite on trace paper mounted on board
 28¼ x 12¾
 Raymond Mathewson Hood papers, 1903–1931, Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution

p. 24 Project for a pair of Tribune Towers, December 13, 1922
 Charcoal and watercolor on board
 12½ x 8¼
 Raymond Mathewson Hood papers, 1903–1931, Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution

p. 24 Project for an addition to Tribune Tower, December 19, 1922
 Charcoal on trace paper mounted on board
 24½ x 10¼
 Raymond Mathewson Hood papers, 1903–1931, Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution

Hugh Ferriss, 1889–1962
Tribune Tower, 1927
 Charcoal and ink on board
 26 x 16
 Hugh Ferriss architectural drawings and papers, 1906–1980, Avery Architectural & Fine Arts Library, Columbia University

p. 25 The International Competition for a New Administration Building for the Chicago Tribune, MCMXXII; Containing All the Designs Submitted in Response to the Chicago Tribune’s \$100,000 Offer Commemorating its Seventy Fifth Anniversary, June 10, 1922
 Tribune Company, Chicago, 1923
 12¾ x 8
 John Hay Library, Brown University, gift of Raymond Hood

Edward Warren Hoak and Willis Humphrey Church
Masterpieces of Architecture in the United States
 C. Scribner’s Sons, New York, 1930
 17¼ x 13¼
 Private Collection

Glimpses of Tribune Tower: Presented as a souvenir of your visit to the home of the World’s Greatest Newspaper, pamphlet, c. 1930
Glimpses of Tribune Tower: Presented as a souvenir of your visit to the home of the World’s Greatest Newspaper, pamphlet, 1947
 Tribune Company, Chicago
 6½ x 3¾ each
 Private collection

“A Visit to Tribune Tower,” admission ticket for observation deck
 Tribune Company, Chicago, c. 1930
 2½ x 4¼
 Private collection

p. 23 Photographer unknown
Tribune Tower Building, c. 1931
 50 x 37
 Digital inkjet print after photographic print
 Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division

p. 2 Hassan Bagheri, born 1983
Tribune Tower, 2019
 50 x 34
 Digital inkjet print

p. 28 Vintage postcards of the Tribune Tower
 Private collection

American Radiator Building, 1922–1924
Raymond Hood and Jacques André Fouilhoux
 40 West 40th Street, New York, NY

“American Radiator Company Building, New York,” Plate 15, detail photographs
 “American Radiator Company Building, New York,” Plate 17, detail of lower stories
 Oliver Reagan, ed., *American Architecture of the Twentieth Century*, volume 1
 Architectural Book Publishing Company, New York, 1927
 20 x 14 each
 Private collection

Richard Haas, born 1936
American Radiator Building, 2005
 Etching
 20 x 16
 Private collection

Wolfgang Knoll, born 1937
American Radiator Building, model, 2006
 Extruded plastic, paint, LED lights
 9¼ x 9½ x 41½
 Private collection

p. 18 Hassan Bagheri
American Radiator Building, 2019
 Digital inkjet print
 32 x 41

p. 19 Pavel Bendov, born 1988
American Radiator Building, 2017
 Digital inkjet print
 38½ x 30½

Architecture of the Night

p. 30 Architecture of the Night, brochure
 General Electric Company, Schenectady, 1930
 Digital inkjet print after original
 11 x 8¼
 Centre Canadien d’Architecture, Montréal

p. 30 Golden Glow: Floodlight Projectors, brochure, 1932
 Electric Service Supplies Company, Philadelphia, 1932
 Digital inkjet print after original
 11 x 8½
 Centre Canadien d’Architecture, Montréal

Martin Lewis, 1881–1962

Manhattan Lights, 1931

Drypoint

16 x 9½

Private collection

p.22 Vintage postcards of electric architectural illumination

Private collection

Tower City and City Under a Single Roof, 1924–1929

Raymond Hood

Unbuilt

Tower City I, aerial perspective, 1926

Ink and gouache on paper

9¾ x 7¼

Raymond Hood Collection, The Architectural Archives, University of Pennsylvania, by the gift of Mrs. Jacques André Fouilhoux

Tower City II, aerial perspective, 1926

Ink and gouache on paper

11¾ x 7¾

Raymond Hood Collection, The Architectural Archives, University of Pennsylvania, by the gift of Mrs. Jacques André Fouilhoux

Tower City III, aerial perspective, 1926

Ink and gouache on paper

10¾ x 8½

Raymond Hood Collection, The Architectural Archives, University of Pennsylvania, by the gift of Mrs. Jacques André Fouilhoux

Tower City IV, aerial perspective, 1926

Ink and gouache on paper

9½ x 14¾

Raymond Hood Collection, The Architectural Archives, University of Pennsylvania, by the gift of Mrs. Jacques André Fouilhoux

p.14 Tower City, aerial perspective, 1926

Ink and gouache on paper

11½ x 8¾

Raymond Hood Collection, The Architectural Archives, University of Pennsylvania, by the gift of Mrs. Jacques André Fouilhoux

Tower City I, detail, 1926

Gouache on photographic enlargement of original

16¾ x 9¾

Raymond Hood Collection, The Architectural Archives, University of Pennsylvania, by the gift of Mrs. Jacques André Fouilhoux

p.31 Tower City III, detail, 1926

Gouache on photographic enlargement of original

16¾ x 11

Raymond Hood Collection, The Architectural Archives, University of Pennsylvania, by the gift of Mrs. Jacques André Fouilhoux

Photographer unknown

p.32 City Under a Single Roof, model variant I

City Under a Single Roof, model variant II

City Under a Single Roof, model variant III

1929

Digital inkjet print after gelatin silver print

7¼ x 9½ each

Raymond Hood Collection, The Architectural Archives, University of Pennsylvania, by the gift of Mrs. Jacques André Fouilhoux

p.40 Carl E. Landefeld, 1900–1969 (Office of Raymond Hood)

City Under a Single Roof, perspective, 1929

Digital inkjet print from gelatin silver original

9¼ x 6¼

Raymond Hood Collection, The Architectural Archives, University of Pennsylvania, by the gift of Mrs. Jacques André Fouilhoux

Mara Jovanovic, born 1999

City Under a Single Roof,

model after Raymond Hood, 2019–2020

Plaster

22 x 22 x 11.5

Kenney Nguyen, born 2000

City Under a Single Roof,

model after Raymond Hood, 2019–2020

Plaster

22 x 12 x 11

McGraw-Hill Building, 1930–1931

Hood, Godley & Fouilhoux

330 West 42nd Street, New York, NY

p.17 Donald Douglas, 1899–1971

McGraw-Hill Building under construction, c. 1930

Etching and aquatint

11 x 11

Raymond Mathewson Hood papers, 1903–1931, Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution

McGraw-Hill Building, “Longitudinal Section,”

November 5, 1930

Digital inkjet print after ink on linen construction drawing

40¾ x 31¾

Raymond M. Hood architectural drawings and papers, 1890–1944, Avery Architectural & Fine Arts Library, Columbia University

McGraw-Hill Building, “Detail of Sign,”

January 3, [1931], revised February 3, 1931

Digital inkjet print after graphite on trace paper drawing

14 x 53

Raymond M. Hood architectural drawings and papers, 1890–1944, Avery Architectural & Fine Arts Library, Columbia University

Hassan Bagheri

McGraw-Hill Building, 2019

Digital inkjet print

50 x 34

p.38 Hassan Bagheri

McGraw-Hill Building, 2019

Digital inkjet print

38 x 50

Rockefeller Center, 1929–1939

Associated Architects (Corbett, Harrison & MacMurray;

Hood, Godley & Fouilhoux; and Reinhard & Hofmeister)

Between 5th and 6th Avenues and 48th and 51st Streets,

New York, NY

Walter H. Kilham Jr., 1904–1997 (Office of Raymond Hood)

Rockefeller Center, Scheme “P,” aerial perspective,

December 23, 1929

Rockefeller Center, Scheme “P,” site plan,

December 19, 1929

Rockefeller Center, Scheme “T,” aerial perspective,

December 21, 1929

p.36 Rockefeller Center, Scheme “T,” site plan,

December 21, 1929

Graphite and colored pencil on trace paper

13½ x 10½ each

Raymond M. Hood architectural drawings and papers, 1890–1944, Avery Architectural & Fine Arts Library, Columbia University

Berenice Abbott, 1898–1991

Foundations of Rockefeller Center, New York, 1932,

printed 1982

Gelatin silver print

23 x 18¼

RISD Museum, Gift of Paula and Leonard Granoff

Rockefeller Center

Rockefeller Center, Inc., New York, 1932

13¾ x 10½

Private collection

Rockefeller Center, leaflet, 1940

8¾ x 4

Private collection

Guide Book of Rockefeller Center: The largest building

project ever undertaken by private capital, booklet

Rockefeller Center, Inc., New York, 1938

8 x 5½

Private collection

p.37 Hassan Bagheri

Rockefeller Center, 2019

Digital inkjet print

50 x 31

Hassan Bagheri

Rockefeller Center, 2019

Digital inkjet print

50 x 32

Vintage postcards of Rockefeller Center

Private collection

Daily News Building, 1929–1930

John Mead Howells and Raymond Hood

220 East 42nd Street, New York, NY

Daily News Building, “South & East Elevations,”

March 1, 1929

Digital inkjet print after ink and graphite on linen construction drawing

38½ x 50

Raymond M. Hood architectural drawings and papers, 1890–1944, Avery Architectural & Fine Arts Library, Columbia University

p.42 Ludovic G. Farquhar, 1899–1945 (Office of John M. Howells

and Raymond Hood), revised by Peter Clark

(Peter Clark, Inc., set designers)

Daily News Building, “Position of Globe in Circular Pit,”

section, July 25, 1929, revised September 3, 1929

Graphite on trace paper

21½ x 17¼

Raymond M. Hood architectural drawings and papers, 1890–1944, Avery Architectural & Fine Arts Library, Columbia University

Photographer unknown

Daily News Building, after 1930

9¼ x 7

Gelatin silver print mounted on board

Private collection

p.49 Hassan Bagheri

Daily News Building, 2019

Digital inkjet print

50 x 38

Published on the occasion of the exhibition of the same name
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Hassan Bagheri, *Rockefeller Center*, 2019

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Samuel H. Gottscho, Raymond Hood at his home
in Stamford, CT, July 11, 1931

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FIG. 27 Hassan Bagheri, *Daily News Building*, detail, 2019

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BROWN ARTS INITIATIVE, BROWN UNIVERSITY

