

INTERNATIONAL COUNCIL AT THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART

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UNITED STATES ROOM OPENS AT UNESCO HEADQUARTERS, PARIS, NOVEMBER 3, 1958

The Executive Board and Committee Room designed by the leading American architect Philip C. Johnson as a United States contribution to the UNESCO Headquarters building in Paris will be inaugurated on November 3 when the building is dedicated. At the request of the United States Department of State the room was commissioned by the International Council at The Museum of Modern Art, a private organization of art patrons. It is one of eight rooms designed by member nations of UNESCO at the invitation of the Director-General. The other countries are Denmark, the Federal Republic of Germany, France, Italy, The Netherlands, Sweden and Switzerland.

The United States room at the UNESCO Headquarters is for meetings of the Executive Board and other important committees. The seating plan is flexible, with several possible arrangements for different kinds of programs, and provides for at least 190 persons. It is windowless, 45 by 75 feet, trapezoidal, with a sloping ceiling 14 feet high at the entrance and 20 feet high at the opposite end. Three walls are covered with a deep rich bronze-green velvet. The fourth is a sloping, undulating concrete wall, part of the exterior of the building and incorporated in the design of the room. These elements - velvet and concrete - receive further dramatic contrast from the white floor and white ceiling.

Outstanding decorative elements are 46 grill-work wood panels painted white, about 7 feet high, which are fastened to poles standing in front of the green velvet walls. An elliptical conference table with a white vellum leather top is in the center of the room. Eighty-one lighting fixtures suspend from the sloping ceiling following the elliptical line of the table. Translation booths are set into one of the green velvet walls enclosed behind glass panels.

When the invitation to decorate and furnish a room was tendered to the United States, the State Department consulted the United States National Committee for UNESCO, an organization whose members are appointed by the State Department. One of its members, also a Director of the International Council at The Museum of Modern Art Mrs. Henry Potter Russell of San Francisco, brought this to the attention of the International Council. This organization agreed to assume the responsibility of carrying out this project. The nineteen donors to the room include the Avalon Foundation, General Maurice Hirsch, Mrs. Frederick W. Hilles, Mr. William T. Kemper, Mrs. Phyllis Lambert, Mrs. John D. Rockefeller, 3rd, Mr. David Rockefeller, Mrs. Henry Potter Russell, Mrs. George Hamlin Shaw, Mrs. Warren Tremaine, The Sponsoring Committee for the United States Commission for UNESCO Conference and The International Council at the Museum of Modern Art.

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Members of the Council under whose sponsorship the United States Room at the Headquarters was furnished and decorated who will be present at the inauguration are: Mme. Philippe de Croisset, Mrs. H. Gates Lloyd, Mrs. Henry Potter Russell, Mrs. George Hamlin Shaw, Mrs. Louise Smith, ~~Mr. and Mrs. Arthur Sachs, Mr. and Mrs. George W. Staempfli,~~ M. Georges Salles, Dr. Will Grohmann, Mr. and Mrs. Burton Tremaine and Sir Herbert Read. Members of the staff of The Museum of Modern Art, New York who will be present are Mr. Porter A. McCray, Director of the International Program of the Museum and Mr. William S. Lieberman, Curator of Prints. Mr. Philip C. Johnson, designer of the room, will be present for its opening.

The International Council at The Museum of Modern Art, New York is a philanthropic, non-governmental organization whose purpose is to develop international understanding through interchange of the arts, especially the contemporary arts.

For additional information please contact Elizabeth Shaw, Publicity Director, --
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