

UNITED NATIONS

Press Section
Office of Public Information
United Nations, N.Y.

REFERENCE

(FOR USE OF INFORMATION MEDIA -- NOT AN OFFICIAL RECORD)

Press Feature No. 214
July 1971

GIFTS PRESENTED TO THE UNITED NATIONS AT HEADQUARTERS

Over the years, contributions to the furnishing and decoration of United Nations Headquarters in New York have been made by many Governments, organizations and individuals, reflecting the varied cultures and art works of the world.

Following is a brief description of each of these gifts, and their location in the Headquarters buildings.

Afghanistan: Table

King Zaher and Queen Honaira of Afghanistan presented a table to the United Nations on the occasion of their visit on 11 September 1963. The table, which is 12 feet in diameter, is inlaid with lapis lazuli and features the United Nations emblem set in white marble in the centre. It is displayed in the reception room of the thirty-eighth floor of the Secretariat building.

Australia: Lacewood Panelling

The lacewood panelling in the General Assembly Executive Office, behind the podium, was donated by Australia "as an expression of the loyalty of Australia to the objectives of the United Nations".

The gift was presented on 27 March 1953 by W.D. Forsyth, Permanent Representative of Australia to the United Nations.

Belgium: Tapestry

A specially designed and woven tapestry was given by Belgium to the United Nations. The themes of the tapestry are peace, prosperity, and equality. In the centre of the design the Dove of Peace approaches the Fountain of Goodwill. Views of the chief cities of Member States line the borders. The predominant colour among the many hues of the tapestry is green, the universal symbol of life and living things, and the traditional colour of peace.

The tapestry, designed by an Antwerp artist, Peter Colfs, and executed under the direction of Gaspard de Wit, is the largest tapestry ever woven, measuring 43-1/2 by 28-1/2 feet. It is the work of 14 artist craftsmen operating a loom specially built for the manufacture of this tapestry. The wool and jute used in its composition could stretch nearly four times around the equator, the total length of the yarn being 94,000 miles.

The tapestry hangs in the General Assembly building on the north wall of the Delegates' Lobby. It was presented on 8 October 1954 by Fernand van Langenhove, Permanent Representative of Belgium to the United Nations.

Brazil: Murals on War and Peace

Two large murals -- one depicting war, the other peace -- executed by Candido Portinari, were a gift of the Brazilian Government to the United Nations.

Both murals were executed in oil on six-sheet plywood. The murals, measuring 34 by 46 feet, cover the east and west walls of the Delegates' Lobby on both sides of the great window opposite the Belgian tapestry.

In describing the mural "War", Mr. Portinari said that "War today is no longer a battlefield; it is human suffering, torn fields, ruined cities, women and children sacrificed, the world shaken by cataclysms; its desolation is swept by a wind of insanity, of madness ...". Mr. Portinari explained that the mural

"was inspired by the ideal atmosphere of serenity and peacefulness of the described in "The Eumenides", by Aeschylus. He sought "to make use of pure forms, bathed in a light capable of suggesting an atmosphere of mood and understanding among men".

The murals were donated to the United Nations on 6 September 1957 by Cyro de Freitas-Valle, Permanent Representative of Brazil to the United Nations.

Byelorussian SSR: Oil Painting

A landscape in oils, painted by Tzikanovich, the Byelorussian artist, hangs on the northwest wall in the Delegates' Dining-room. Titled "Vechar" (Evening), its dark green background shows a forest and a lake in the foreground. In a gilt frame, it measures two by three feet.

(more)

Canada: Nickel-Bronze Doors of General Assembly Building

Seven nickel-bronze doors in the north (public) entrance to the General Assembly building were contributed to the United Nations by Canada. The doors were presented on 27 March 1953 by Lester B. Pearson, Secretary of State for External Affairs of Canada and President of the seventh regular session of the General Assembly. On the exterior of each door are four panels in bas-relief symbolizing peace, justice, truth and fraternity.

Ceylon: Oil Painting

An oil painting by Senaka Senanayake, was presented to the United Nations by the Government of Ceylon on 14 December 1965. The 90- by 50-inch canvas, showing peasants at work in a rice field in Ceylon, hangs on the wall at the east entrance to the General Assembly Hall. The painting symbolizes the efforts of a developing country to raise standards of living. The artist -- who was 13 when the painting was presented -- is the youngest represented in the building.

Chile: Painting

An oil painting by Nemesio Antúnez was presented to the United Nations by the Government of Chile. Entitled "Corazón de los Andes" (The Heart of the Andes), the painting depicts South American mountain ranges and lakes in background tones, mainly brown with a large area of orange on the left, and small patches in greens and blues throughout the rest of the work. The 74- by 148-inch picture was unveiled on 4 October 1966 and hangs on the wall between Conference Rooms 6 and 7.

China: Two Paintings

Two Chinese paintings, hanging on opposite walls in the Delegates' Dining-room located on the fourth floor of the Conference Building, were donated by China.

One painting, done with brush and black ink, depicts a landscape. The painting is divided into 12 sections by Manilla mats. The artist's name is Shin-yu.

The other painting painting portrays a Chinese houseboat going around a sand-bar near a steep cliff. It is done in brush and water-colour by the artist Chen.

China: Marble Plaque

China presented a green marble plaque on 26 April 1968. Carved in gold lettering is a quotation from the Dialogue of Confucius in the calligraphy of Sun Yat-sen, founder of the Chinese Republic.

The quotation sets forth Confucius' concept of "Ta Tung" -- a world commonwealth in which mutual confidence and neighbourliness prevail and all men are assured an abundant life. The plaque measures approximately 3 by 6 feet and hangs on the second floor south wall of the passage between the General Assembly and Conference Buildings.

Cyprus: Amphora

The Government of Cyprus presented an ancient amphora to the United Nations in 1971. The beige-coloured vessel, with design in brown, is 3 feet 3 inches tall, and dates from 700 to 600 B.C. It has been placed in the second floor corridor of the Conference Building, opposite the Trusteeship Council Chamber.

Denmark: Trusteeship Council Chamber and Statue

This Chamber was designed by Finn Juhl, of Denmark, and his country contributed towards the cost of the furnishings. He combined colour and fine woods to achieve a light, clean, harmonious effect. In the delegates' portion the walls are lined with ashwood designed to act as acoustic baffles. The multicoloured striped carpet was made in Denmark, as were the curtains, railings, doors and latticed ceiling which repeats the fine woods and the light, clear colours used.

A large wooden statue, carved from the trunk of a teakwood tree, also was donated by the Danish Government, and hangs on the wall of the Trusteeship Council Chamber. The statue was placed in the Chamber on 3 June 1953. Created by Henrik Starcke of Copenhagen, the statue, over 9 feet in height, shows a young woman dressed in a patterned robe with arms upraised towards a large blue bird with outstretched wings.

The artist carved the work especially for the Trusteeship Council Chamber. He explained his conception as follows:

"As the natural growth of the trunk of the tree, used in the statue, gives promise of a still greater life, so do I hope to inspire in those present the realization of the great human dream. The bird above the figure, with its wings spread, suggests unlimited flight upward to greater heights. The arms of the figure itself are spread out in the same spirit as the wings of the bird, and I hope this might convey the appeal for compassion for the weak, the unfortunate, the oppressed. More than that, I hope it might give unmistakable assurance of boundless flight to realms with blessings for all."

Ecuador: Rugs

A large handwoven rug, the gift of the Government of Ecuador to the United Nations for use in its Headquarters, was installed in the new General Assembly Building during the week of 9 October 1952. A second rug was received from Ecuador at the end of that month. Both rugs were placed just outside Conference Room 4, which is used by the First Committee (Political and Security) during the sessions of the General Assembly.

The intricate patterns of the carpets reproduce typical motifs, such as scorpions and the sun, used by Jivaro Indians, inhabitants of the tropical jungle east of the Andes. These tribes use vegetable dyes on bleached tree bark to portray their activities. One such tree bark was used as inspiration for the design.

The rugs are made from wool of Chimborazo sheep, and are in a brown and black design on a natural white background.

The rugs were presented on 9 April 1953 by José Vicente Trujillo, Permanent Representative of Ecuador to the United Nations.

Ethiopia: Ivory Obelisk Model

On 4 October 1963 His Imperial Majesty Haile Selassie I, Emperor of Ethiopia, presented a hand-carved ivory model of an ancient stele found in Aksum, the seat of Ethiopia's Government for the first nine centuries of the Christian era. The monument was constructed about the year 327 A.D.

The model, located in the Delegates' Lobby outside the General Assembly Hall, measures 5 1/2 feet tall, tapering from 8 inches wide at the base to 5 inches at the top. Carved to represent a building 9 stories high, it is crowned by a headpiece which is thought to represent the sun.

(more)

The ivory model rests on a wooden base which bears the inscription in both Amharic and English:

Presented by
His Imperial Majesty
Haile Selassie I
Emperor of Ethiopia
to
The United Nations Organization
Consecrated to the Service of the Brotherhood of Man
Dedicated to the Preservation of World Peace
Devoted to the Defence of Man's Basic Human Rights

France: Paintings and Tapestry

Two paintings and a tapestry on loan from the Museum of Modern Art in Paris, hang in the Secretary-General's office. The pictures are "Vue de St. Maximin", by Albert Marquet (painted in 1930) and "Bords de la Marne", by Albert Derain (1913). The tapestry is after Matisse and is called "Le Ciel".

The intention of the French Government to loan works of art of the Secretary-General's choice was communicated to U Thant in 1965 by André Malraux, Minister for Cultural Affairs of the French Government.

Ghana: Kente Wall Hanging

A kente, the traditional hand-woven cloth of Ghana, was presented to the United Nations by Ghana on 26 September 1960. It is made of silk and took 10 weavers three-and-a-half months to complete. The kente was made especially for the space it occupies on the west wall in the Delegates' Lobby outside the General Assembly Hall, complementing the Persian rug presented by Iran which hangs on the opposite wall.

Worn toga-fashion for ceremonial occasions, each kente has a different pattern and theme. The theme of this cloth is "One Head Cannot Go Into Council", recalling an Ashanti queen of the eighteenth century who was famed for her practice of seeking counsel before making decisions. It measures 12 by 18 feet and is woven in green, yellow and maroon silk on a sea-blue background.

(more)

Greece: Statue

The Greek Government in 1953 contributed a statue of Poseidon of Artemission, god of the sea and of the watery elements in Greek mythology. Poseidon was the son of Cronus and Rhea and the husband of Aphrodite.

The statue, 7 feet high, shows the head of an old man on the body of a youth. It is a replica of a classical sculpture (460 B.C.) in the Athens Museum. The statue is displayed in the Public Lobby of the General Assembly Building.

Greece (Rhodes): Black Pebbles

When United Nations architects were planning the fountain in the plaza in front of the Secretariat Building, they wanted a pattern of alternative black and white pebbles to decorate the floor of the fountain's concrete pool. While pebbles were easy to find, the problem was where to get the black pebbles.

The Governor-General of the Dodecanese Islands sent a sample of the black and white pebble mosaics used in Lindos, a small town on the Island of Rhodes, to the United Nations Headquarters Planning Office. He said that Rhodes would be "happy and proud" to supply the United Nations with all the pebbles it wanted.

When the United Nations accepted the Governor-General's offer, the wives of local fishermen were put to work to gather 760 sacks of the black pebbles from the shallow waters off the coast of Rhodes. They worked for a month and were paid by the Greek Government. The cost of shipping the pebbles to New York was also borne by Greece. The pebbles arrived at United Nations Headquarters in August 1952.

Holy See: Oil Painting

An oil painting by Georges Rouault, the French artist, was donated to the United Nations by the Holy See in 1965. It was presented by His Holiness Pope Paul VI at the time of the Pontiff's visit and is titled "Christ Crucified". The 18- by 24-inch painting hangs on the east wall of the Secretariat Lobby.

India: Rugs

On 9 April 1953 Rajeshwar Dayal, Permanent Representative of India to the United Nations, presented two Indian rugs to the United Nations. The identical rugs are copper colour monochromatic and measure approximately 13 by 24 feet. They are in the corridor outside Conference Room 1.

(more)

Indonesia: Statues

Two Balinese wooden statues are a gift from the Indonesian people to the United Nations. The one representing "Peace", carved in satinwood, depicts a Balinese priest in solemn meditation, with both hands folded in ritual praying. The headdress and robe are traditional costumes for priests of the highest order.

The other statue of Bentawas wood represents "Prosperity", portrayed as a woman carrying a basket of rice on her head, on top of which is an image of Devi Sri, the Rice Goddess, also goddess of prosperity. Her right hand holds a rice-strainer while her left hand holds her sarong in graceful folds.

The donation was made on 15 December 1954 by Abu Hanifah, Vice-Chairman of the Indonesian delegation to the ninth session of the General Assembly.

The statues are in the southwest foyer of the General Assembly Hall, second floor.

Iran: Rug

The Persian rug hangs on the east wall of the main level of the General Assembly Building, just beyond the escalator at the Delegates' Entrance. Showing mainly reds and blues, traditional Persian small-figure designs surround a central, circular medallion. The rug measures about 12 by 18 feet and was accepted by the United Nations on 9 April 1953.

Israel: Jerusalem Stone

This stone, quarried in the Jerusalem area, consists of 880 slabs of marble 1 5/8 feet thick, 15 7/8 feet wide and is in various lengths. It is brown and polished on one side. It is installed in the grounds at the north end of the Secretariat Building and is the base for a large bronze bell (a gift from the United Nations Association of Japan). The base is constructed so there is a shelf to adorn it with flowers and shrubbery.

The 4,000 square feet of stone slabs quarried from the hills of Judea were received by the United Nations in January 1953.

Liberia: Inlaid Table

In November 1969 the United Nations received a gift of a mahogany table, about 4 feet in diameter, inlaid in ivory with maps of Africa and Liberia and the seal of the United Nations. The presentation was made by Miss Angie Brooks, President of the General Assembly that year. On top of the table are three elephant tusks.

(more)

Three ivory lions guard a central human figure symbolizing justice. The table base is in the form of three miniature black elephants.

The Liberian gift is displayed in the exhibit area, west corridor of the General Assembly Building near the Meditation Room.

Malta: Painting

Malta presented an abstract painting to the United Nations on 1 December 1969. Measuring 5 by 4 feet, it was conceived by the Maltese artist, Emanuel V. Cremona, as a tribute to the work being done by the United Nations. The composition's background represents the threat of war, hatred and darkness; from this emerges what the artist has conceived as the dove of peace, free and triumphant, breaking through to clear days ahead symbolized by the sun.

The painting hangs in the West Lounge of the General Assembly Building.

Mexico: Stone Head

Called "The Palenqué Head", a stone representation of a Mayan priest's head was donated by the Government of Mexico in 1959. It is approximately 14 inches high, including the headdress. The head is a copy of the original in the museum in Mexico City. The late Secretary-General Dag Hammarskjöld admired it when he was in the museum and the Government had a mould made of the head and presented the copy as a gift.

It is located in the Secretary-General's reception room on the thirty-eighth floor.

Morocco: Mosaic Panel

His Majesty Hassan II, King of Morocco, on 3 April 1963 presided at the official unveiling of a mosaic panel given to the United Nations earlier. Done in the Andalusian style of the twelfth century, the panel has been placed in the area connecting the General Assembly Building with the Conference Building at the head of the escalator on the second floor. The mosaic, about 16 by 8 feet, was composed entirely by hand by an artist in Fez. There are three inscriptions on the panel. The inscription on the woodwork is from the Koran; the one on the green portion of the mosaic is the Preamble of the United Nations Charter, in Arabic; the inscription in the red circle reads: "Charter of the United Nations", also in Arabic.

(more)

Netherlands: Foucault Pendulum

The Netherlands gift to the United Nations is a Foucault pendulum, a device offering visual proof of the rotation of the earth on its axis. The pendulum comprises a 200-pound gold-plated sphere suspended from the 75-foot ceiling by a stainless steel wire, which holds the sphere to allow the weighted ball to swing freely in any plane.

The pendulum, utilizing a principle first demonstrated in the Panthéon in Paris by Jean-Bernard-Léon Foucault, a French physicist, is in the Main Lobby of the General Assembly Building. Inscribed on the steel shaft supporting the dial under the pendulum is the following message from Queen Juliana: "It is a privilege to live today and tomorrow."

The gift was announced on 7 December 1955 by J.M.A.H. Luns, Netherlands Foreign Minister, as a reminder of the "ability of the human mind to penetrate into the secrets of the universe". It also demonstrates that "there are certain laws which are beyond human control and to which we have to submit".

New Zealand: Rimu Panelling

New Zealand furnished the rimu wall panelling on the first floor of the General Assembly Building. The gift was formally presented on 27 March 1953 by Leslie Knox Munro, Permanent Representative of New Zealand to the United Nations, who explained that his country's gift of rimu wood was associated with the native Maori religion in New Zealand. The trees from which the panelling was cut were from 200 to 300 years old.

Nigeria: Bronze Sculpture

A bronze sculpture by the Nigerian artist, Ben Enwonwu, was formally presented to the United Nations on 5 October 1966. The sculpture, entitled "Anyanwu" ("Sun"), stands 6 feet 10 inches high. It is a statue of a woman, clad in the regalia of Royal Benin, an ancient kingdom which is now part of Nigeria, and is symbolic of the rising sun of a new nation. It is mounted on a marble base. The work symbolizes the sun's various aspects -- the light of the day, dawn, rebirth, a new day, hope and awakening.

It is located on the second floor corridor of the Conference Building between the Security Council and Trusteeship Council Chambers.

(more)

Norway: Contribution for the design and furnishings of the Security Council Chamber and Mural by Per Krohg

The Security Council Chamber was designed by Arnstein Arneberg of Norway, whose Government contributed towards the cost of the decoration of the Chamber. It supplied the marble, the inlaid doors, the railings separating the Delegates' area from the press and public area, the blue and gold tapestry for the walls, the curtains, and the Delegates' and Secretariat chairs.

The main feature of the décor is a large mural painted by Norwegian artist Per Krohg. The mural was presented to the United Nations by the Prime Minister of Norway, Oscar Torp, on 22 September 1952, at an informal meeting of the Security Council.

Here is a description of the mural by the artist:

"The picture symbolizes what I hope and trust the world will be like some day, thanks to the United Nations but thanks more to our own efforts.

"In the foreground is the world we are forsaking, painted in sinister shades of verdigris, rust and steel-blue. The remainder is in light, bright colours and ascending lines. The soldier, having run the dragon of evil through his sword, lays down the weapon and enters the United Nations. The man and the woman on the left are emerging from the Slough of Despond, and on the right a white, a yellow, and a black captive are being released. Mankind is thronging into the new world to join the Phoenix; all meet open-handed and with outstretched arms. There are no clenched fists. Equality is symbolized by a group of persons weighing out grain so that all share alike.

"I have tried not to use the ordinary hackneyed symbols. Freedom is a man taking away a horse's bit and letting him run free in the green meadows. Brotherhood is shown by the union of nations and races in the central panels. The whole is lighted by the sun's rays. A small horizontal panel at the top, which I call the New Renaissance, contains all the arts happily united, the men who interpret events and develop them, those who write history.

"In the centre is an oval panel which I call Peace. Two persons are kneeling face to face, surrounded by children. War is over; a great calm enfolds them; they are at peace."

(more)

Pakistan: Three Paintings by Chughtai

Three paintings have been received by the United Nations as a gift from the Government of Pakistan. The paintings were done by Chughtai, a contemporary painter, who has adapted much of the technique and composition of the old masters of Moslem miniature painting. His paintings are characterized by a delicate and subtle flat wash technique and use of linear arabesque. His lines show a close relationship to the art of calligraphy which is so much a part of Islamic and Oriental tradition.

The titles of the paintings are "Two Women", "Jehangir and Nur Jehan", and "The Sultan and the Saint". They were presented to the United Nations on 7 June 1954 by Ahmed S. Bokhari, Permanent Representative of Pakistan to the United Nations.

Peru: Ceremonial Mantle

A rare ceremonial mantle found in the burial grounds of Paracas in southern Peru was presented to the United Nations by the Peruvian Government in 1959. It is said to be from 2,000 to 3,000 years old. Such robes were used by the Incas to bury their kings. The cloth has been sealed in a vacuum form for preservation, and hangs in the south-west foyer of the General Assembly Hall.

Poland: Granite Bust

As part of the world-wide 500th observance of the birth of Copernicus (1973), Poland presented a granite bust of the great mathematician, doctor of medicine, theologian, and astronomer, whose writings led to the rejection of the geocentric theory of the sun's movement and to an understanding of the motion of the planets around the sun. The presentation was made on 9 December 1970. The bust is displayed in the first floor passage between the Library and the Secretariat Building.

(more)

Poland: Bird Cut-outs

Poland has donated three cut-outs of ornamental, stylized birds, one each in gold, red and black. Shown on a white mat in a narrow strip frame, the birds are decorated with other paper cut-outs. The gold-coloured bird -- the largest, about 4 inches -- is decorated in paper cut-outs of blue representing a plant. The red bird is decorated in a gold tree design. The black one, smallest of the three, resembles a tiny peacock.

The gift hangs on the north wall of the foyer to the Delegates' Dining-room. It was received in 1958.

Romania: Mural Tapestry

A mural tapestry entitled "Ode to Man" was presented to the United Nations by the people and Government of Romania on 4 June 1968.

The 17- by 31-foot tapestry was designed by Ion Nicodim, a Romanian painter and tapestry designer. It was inspired by the poem of the same name by Tudor Arghezi, a Romanian poet. A few lines of the poem are woven into the tapestry as pages of an open book.

The major theme of the poem is the glorification of man's struggle and victory over the forces of nature. The central figure, Prometheus-like, holds a flame aloft in one hand and a bomb in the other to show the balance of the destructive and peaceful possibilities available to mankind. White birds circle the flame and the sun, shown above fields of wheat. Raised hands in the tapestry symbolize man struggling between the alternatives of abundant life and nuclear destruction.

The tapestry hangs in the North Delegates' Lounge.

Senegal: Mural Tapestry

A mural tapestry, donated on behalf of the Government and people of Senegal, was presented to the United Nations on 20 October 1970.

The 13-by 19-foot gift (weighing 42 pounds) hangs on the west wall of the West Foyer. It was created by Papa Ibra Tall. Its title, "Maaggala Tuubaa", means pilgrimage to Touba. The pilgrimage, an annual gathering to celebrate the return of the religious leader of the Fraternity (Confrérie) of the Maurides, brings together thousands of Moslems.

(more)

The gift conveys the importance the Senegalese people attach to spiritual values in the life of man.

Sweden: Economic and Social Council Chamber

The Swedish Government contributed towards the cost of decorating the Economic and Social Council Chamber, and Sven Markelius was the designer. His dramatic handling is seen in the sombre colours of the public gallery with its unique ceiling treatment. The pipes and ducts, which conventionally would be covered, are exposed and boldly treated in a pattern of black, grey and white, integrating the functional fixtures into the décor. By contrast, the Delegates' area is light -- from the lighting concealed under a unique suspended ceiling to the white marble floor, Sweden furnished the carpet, the pinewood panelling, the railings and the doors, as well as the white marble.

Outstanding in the Chamber is the large, hand-woven curtain also donated by the Government of Sweden. The curtain covers a 25 by 75-foot window and is woven of wool and linen in shades of red, orange, purple, beige, and blue with a variegated pattern of mussels. It is the largest curtain ever made in Sweden, weighing 770 pounds and covering an over-all area of approximately 200 square metres.

The marble of the Economic and Social Council Chamber floor, not covered by carpet, was donated to the United Nations by the Sverige's Stenindustri Forbund of Sweden.

In addition to the décor of the Economic and Social Council Chamber, Sweden donated the iron ore slab for the Meditation Room.

Switzerland: World Clock

A world clock was presented to the United Nations by the Government of Switzerland on 25 November 1969.

The clock, in the form of a map of the world, is installed on the east wall of the Secretary-General's office and shows the capitals of all States Members of the United Nations. The official time zones of the world are also displayed on the map and at the base is a moving tape which gives the time in each zone. The design incorporates two large clocks which show the time in New York and in Geneva.

(more)

Thailand: Furniture

Twenty-four pieces of teakwood and leather furniture were provided by Thailand. The furniture was designed by the Thai Department of Fine Arts and made in Bangkok. There are four large sofas, 14 armchairs covered in vermilion leather, and six coffee tables. Gilded lion heads -- a traditional Thai design -- have been hand-carved into each leg. All arm rests are of teakwood.

The gift was made on 7 December 1954, by Prince Wan Waithayakon, Minister for Foreign Affairs and Permanent Representative of Thailand to the United Nations.

Tunisia: Mosaic Mural

An ancient mosaic masterpiece was presented by Tunisia on 12 May 1961. The 1700-year-old floor-work, depicting the cycle of the year, was discovered in 1939 at Haidra, Tunisia. Mounted on a wall at the entrance to the North Delegates' Lounge, it is displayed as a mural, measuring 11 by 11 feet.

The Roman practice of personifying nature is abundantly clear in the design which shows in the centre a nude adolescent, representing the spirit of the year, standing in a circle of the zodiac with a sheaf of wheat in his right hand. Around him, arrayed in the four corners of the mosaic, are the four seasons, represented in each case by a winged cupid, a pair of birds, and a seasonal plant.

Turkey: Rugs

The Turkish rugs are located in the offices of the President of the General Assembly and of the Secretary-General, behind the podium in the General Assembly Hall.

The gift was accepted by the United Nations on 9 April 1953.

The two identical 9 by 12-foot rugs are monotone burgundy colour, bordered by a burnt orange strip about one foot wide.

(more)

Turkey: Peace Treaty Tablet

A replica of a treaty chiseled on a clay tablet -- the earliest peace treaty whose text is known to have survived -- was presented to the United Nations on 24 September 1970 by the Government of Turkey.

The original clay tablet treaty -- dated 1269 B.C. -- was signed by Hattusilli III, King of the Hittites, and Rameses II, King of the Egyptians. Found in 1906 in central Anatolia on the site of the old Hittite capital, Hattusas (present day Bogazkoy), it records the text in cuneiform script. The treaty pledges eternal friendship, lasting peace, territorial integrity, non-aggression, extradition and mutual help. The original is kept at the Archaeological Museum in Istanbul. An Egyptian copy of the treaty has been found, inscribed in hieroglyphics on the wall of the Karnak temple in Egypt, but it is the version in Akkadian, the official diplomatic language of the ancient period, which was found in Anatolia.

The copper bas-relief replica of the treaty was made by Sadi Calik, a sculptor and lecturer at the Istanbul College of Fine Arts. It measures 9 by 7 feet and is approximately one foot thick. It is affixed to the wall of the Conference Building corridor, facing the entrance to the Security Council Chamber.

Ukrainian SSR: Carpet and Vase

A wool carpet depicting a tree in bloom and a porcelain vase decorated with a flower motif were presented to the United Nations as gifts of the Ukrainian SSR on 3 December 1970.

The carpet, called a hylym in Ukrainian, was created by Mrs. Nadija Babenko following a folk tradition which uses the plant ornamentation typical of the central Ukraine, especially the Poltava region. Its motif is the tree of life, with branches never crossing and none of its many flowers exactly alike.

The pattern of the vase is a floral design in reds and blues. It preserves the ancient folk art of decorative painting used both within and on the outside of Ukrainian dwellings and was created by Mrs. Hanna Pavlenko-Chernichenko.

The 12 by 8 foot carpet hangs on the wall immediately outside the South Delegates' Lounge and the three-foot vase rests on a stool in front of it.

USSR: Sputnik Model

On 4 December 1959, the USSR presented a model of the first sputnik launched by the Soviet Union in October 1957, which completed 1,400 revolutions of the earth before disintegrating in the atmosphere on 4 January 1958. The stainless steel model suspended from the ceiling of the public lobby, is a symbol of the scientific and technical achievements of mankind in the exploration of outer space.

Statue

→ Another gift of the Soviet Union, presented on 4 December 1959, is a statue by the Soviet sculptor Evgeny Vuchetich, named "Let Us Beat Swords into Ploughshares". The sculpture is a bronze figure of a man holding a hammer in one hand and, in the other, a sword which he is making into a ploughshare. It symbolizes man's desire to put an end to war and convert the means of destruction into creative tools for the benefit of all mankind. The statue is in the North Garden.

United Kingdom: Painting

The United Kingdom presented a painting in oils by the English artist, Stewart Armfield. Named "vortex", it shows against a dark blue background the figures of two men, one black and one white, facing each other and floating in space, encircled by ravens and doves. The ravens' beaks spit fire and the white doves' wings and tails are aflame.

The painting hangs outside the South Delegates' Lounge. It was presented on 19 June 1961.

United Kingdom: Oak Panelling, Furniture and Carpet

The United Kingdom provided the décor of one of the small conference rooms in the General Assembly Building (Conference Room 8). It is panelled in English oak (natural colour and wax polished), designed with horizontal Bolection moulded panels -- alternating with square-fielded panels, the latter bearing 84 different motifs of British flora and fauna. The United Kingdom also gave the tables and chairs of English oak and the green super-saxony Wilton carpet.

(more)

United States: Moon Rock and Flag

A four-ounce rock from the moon, brought to earth by the Apollo 11 astronauts who landed on the moon on 20 July 1969, and a small United Nations flag carried to the moon by Apollo 11 are on display in the Public Lobby near the Meditation Room.

The moon rock, irregular in shape and about two inches in diameter, is enclosed in a plexiglass case within a glass case.

The moon rock and flag were presented to the Secretary-General, U Thant, on the first anniversary of the moon landing by Thomas O. Paine, Administrator of the United States National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) and the ceremony was attended by the three Apollo 11 astronauts -- Neil A. Armstrong, Edwin E. Aldrin, Jr., and Michael Collins.

The astronauts also gave the United Nations a replica of a plaque left by them on the moon, and an enlarged replica of the texts of goodwill messages from around the world which they left on the moon in a one-and-one-half-inch silicon disc. About 100 texts in as many languages are displayed in white ink on a blue surface on the 10-by-13-inch replica. The 7-by-9-inch copy of the plaque shows a map of the earth in two discs of black metal on stainless steel. The text beneath the discs reads "Here men from the planet earth first set foot upon the moon 20 July 1969 A.D.. We came in peace for all mankind".

Both gifts hang on a wall in the Secretary-General's office suite.

United States: Memorial Stairway and Flagpole

A memorial stairway and flagpole in honour of the late Secretary-General, Dag Hammarskjöld, was presented to the United Nations by the Governor of the State of New York, Nelson A. Rockefeller, on behalf of the people of New York State at a ceremony at United Nations Headquarters on 25 October 1965.

Dag Hammarskjöld often walked in the United Nations garden adjacent to the East River, and favoured construction of a stairway to open the garden to the public. He had approved design sketches in this regard.

Soon after Mr. Hammarskjöld's death, Governor Rockefeller announced that he would ask the New York State Legislature to provide funds for a memorial at the United Nations, as a means by which the people of New York could show their respect and appreciation for a man who symbolized the United Nations efforts towards building a lasting peace with justice. Legislation authorizing the memorial was approved on 4 April 1962.

(more)

The 44-foot stairway is constructed as a single concrete arch paved with granite and flanked with Portland stone balustrades -- the same type of stone used in the General Assembly Building.

The 90-foot-long stainless steel flagpole, located at the head of the stairway, is set in a granite base, which bears the inscription: "Dag Hammarskjöld Staircase and Flagpole, Gift of the State of New York, Fulfilling a wish of Dag Hammarskjöld, 1965, Nelson A. Rockefeller, Governor."

United States: Ornamental Fence

The ornamental iron fence surrounding the grounds of the United Nations Buildings was the gift of the City of New York.

United States: Digital Electronic Clock

A digital electronic clock, which at the touch of a button displays the time of day to the second in any of the world's 24 time zones, was presented to the United Nations by the United States on 3 June 1971 by George Bush, Permanent Representative of the United States to the United Nations.

The clock was built and donated by the Bulova Watch Company.

Housed in a wooden cabinet 7 inches high by 14 inches wide and 6 inches deep, the clock is located on the information desk in the North Delegates' Lounge. Known as a Computron, it gives the time in numbers rather than on a conventional clock face. A row of 24 buttons beneath a map of the world makes it possible to set the clock to local time at any place on earth.

Yugoslavia: Bronze Statue

An equestrian statue symbolizing Peace was presented to the United Nations by the Government of Yugoslavia.

It is a 16-foot-high bronze statue of a woman on horseback, which stands on a 26-foot-high pedestal faced with blocks of rose-coloured marble quarried in Yugoslavia. In the woman's outstretched left hand is held an olive branch, and in her right hand is a symbol of the world. This statue, the work of Antun Augustincic, faces north in the gardens of the General Assembly area.

(more)

The presentation to the United Nations was made on 15 December 1954, by Joza Brilej, Permanent Representative of Yugoslavia to the United Nations.

Universal Postal Union: Sculpture

The Universal Postal Union presented a bronze sculpture to the United Nations. It is a two-part group resting on a plinth 14 inches wide and about two inches high. The grouping on the left side consists of a globe showing maps of the earth's surface, encircled by six human figures in space, representing, by facial features and costumes, different parts of the world. On the right side is a seated female figure with a tablet in hand. Located in the display area on the west side of the first floor of the General Assembly Building, the gift is dated 12 July 1962.

Non-Governmental Gifts

Africa Bureau: Bronze Bust

A life-size bust of the late Chief Hosea Kutako of Namibia, done by F.E. McWilliam, was presented to the United Nations on 22 November 1962 as a gift from the Africa Bureau. It is displayed in the Exhibit Area, first floor.

All America Rose Selections, Inc.: 1500 Rose-bushes

The symbolic presentation of a formal rose garden to the United Nations by the All America Rose Selections, Inc. (an association of nurserymen), took place on 28 May 1953.

The Association contributed 1500 rose-bushes which are planted in the formal gardens east of the General Assembly Building. In addition to the roses, the Association donated \$2,000 to the United Nations as a contribution towards construction of the garden.

American Association for the United Nations: Fountain

The fountain in the plaza in front of the Secretariat Building was paid for by the donations of school children throughout the United States in a campaign sponsored by the American Association for the United Nations and started by its Seattle office. Children in all 48 States as well as the District of Columbia, Alaska, Hawaii, Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands contributed their small savings (a total of \$50,000) to help decorate the home for peace.
(more)

The fountain is set in a circular pool, approximately 100 feet in diameter. The bottom of the pool is covered with a wave of patterns of symmetrical black and white bands of pebbles, each band separated by a four-inch-high curb. At night the fountain is illuminated by specially designed lights placed beneath the sprays.

The fountain was accepted on 26 June 1952, anniversary of the signing of the United Nations Charter at the San Francisco Conference of 1945. A high-school girl from Seattle, representing the children of the United States, unveiled a bronze plaque which states that the fountain was given to the United Nations by the American children as a "gesture of friendship to the children of the world and a constant reminder of our hope for a peaceful world through the United Nations".

Anonymous Donor: Leger Murals

Two abstract murals on either side of the press area of the General Assembly Hall are anonymous gifts to the United Nations through the American Association for the United Nations. They were designed by Fernand Leger, the late French painter, and executed by one of his pupils, Bruce Gregory, an American artist.

The mural on the right side of the Hall is a free-form creation in blues, whites and burnt orange on a charcoal grey wall. The other mural shows red, white and black on charcoal.

Leger wrote: "Colour has a reality in itself, a life of its own; a geometric form also has a reality in itself ... there was never any question in plastic art, in poetry, in music of representing anything. It is a matter of creating something beautiful, moving or handsome -- this is by no means the same thing."

Association for the Help of Retarded Children: Bronze Head

A bronze, life-size head of Mrs. Eleanor Roosevelt was presented to the United Nations by the New York Chapter of the Association for the Help of Retarded Children on 6 March 1964. It is displayed in the Exhibition Area, first floor, west corridor of the General Assembly Building (near the Meditation Room).

(more)

Jacob Blaustein Foundation: Bronze Sculpture

The gift of a free-form bronze abstraction, "Single Form", by the British sculptor Barbara Hepworth, was made possible through a grant of Jacob Blaustein, a former member of the United States delegation to the United Nations. It stands 21 feet high on a granite plinth in the pool in front of the Secretariat Building. The sculpture, unveiled on 11 June 1964, weighs some five-and-a-half tons and represents 20 months work by Miss Hepworth.

Each of its six sections is as large as can be cast in one piece of bronze. The lines of these sections have been maintained on one side of the sculpture to indicate its powerful interior structure. The interior is so large that, at the foundry, several men could work inside the sculpture at the same time.

Camp Fire Girls Council of Greater New York: Pin-Oak Tree

A pin-oak tree (Quercus palustris) for the landscaped area of the United Nations Headquarters was received by the United Nations on 17 October 1953, from the Camp Fire Girls Council of Greater New York, as a symbol of friendship towards children throughout the world.

Salvador Dali: Painting

Salvador Dali donated the original artwork for a special cachet in 1966. It shows, on a white background, three entwined hands emerging from the surface of the earth and supporting an arm which grows a rose from its elbow and a hand at each end. The five-hand motif is meant to illustrate the five continents and the rose growing out of the arm denotes the "flower" of achievement through international co-operation. Seeds which drop from the hands demonstrate further growth as they germinate around the base of the arms where olive branches have sprung. In the distance, an adult and child look towards this symbol of man's hopes and aspirations.

The painting, measuring about 18 by 20 inches, hangs in the postal sales area in the lower public lobby of the General Assembly Building.

(more)

Marshall Field Family: Fresco

A fresco done by the Swedish artist, Bo Beskow, and donated by the Marshall Field family, decorates the narrow end of the V-shaped Meditation Room on the main floor of the General Assembly Building in the public entrance area.

It is nine feet high and six-and-one-half feet wide. Painted in blue, white, grey and yellow, its hard-edge geometric forms are bisected lengthwise by a straight black line to which additional geometric forms are joined. The Meditation Room was opened in 1952.

Ford Foundation: Dag Hammarskjöld Library

Construction and furnishing of the Dag Hammarskjöld Library, at the southern (42nd Street) edge of the Headquarters site, were made possible by a \$6.6 million gift from the Ford Foundation in 1959. At the Foundation's request, it was named by the General Assembly for the late Secretary-General, who met his death just before the Library's dedication in 1961.

The Library, specializing in international law and political, economic and social affairs, was designed to accommodate 400,000 volumes and 175 readers in the main reading-rooms.

The Library was designed by the firm of Harrison, Abramowitz and Harris -- architectural consultants to the United Nations. It is constructed of white marble, glass and aluminum. The building has six stories and a penthouse, three of the floors above ground and three below. In addition to the reading rooms and stacks, the Library has a 200-seat auditorium, shaped like a small Greek amphitheatre and equipped with a cinemascope screen, footlights and simultaneous interpretation equipment.

Ford Foundation: Two Murals

A large mural by the Swedish artist, Bo Beskow, made possible by a grant of the Ford Foundation, forms the sole wall decoration in the penthouse on the top floor of the Dag Hammarskjöld Library. Painted in oils on canvas and mounted on a concave wall of the penthouse lounge, the mural is an abstract composition, 26 feet wide by 14 feet high. The artist called it "Composition

(more)

on a Concave Wall" and said he hoped that everyone would interpret it according to his own ideas. Mr. Beskow was motivated by a wish to protest man's excursions into the cosmos and to bring him back to "the small microscopic organisms which are the foundation of all life".

A second mural, by the American artist Fritz Glarner, occupies a wall in the Library facing the ornamental terrazzo marble staircase which leads from the lobby of the building to the auditorium level -- one floor below. On a white background it shows vertical and horizontal stripes in yellows, reds and blacks and is titled "Rational Painting No. 90". It is about 6 by 9 feet in size.

Both works were unveiled on 16 November 1961.

Ford Foundation and Bonniers Swedish Publishing House: Portrait of Hammarskjöld

A portrait of the late Secretary-General Dag Hammarskjöld, painted by Bo Beskow and given by the Ford Foundation and the Swedish publishing house of Bonniers, hangs on the north wall in the Secretariat Building.

The painting was unveiled on 5 April 1966.

Guggenheim Foundation: Mural

An offer of José Vela Zanetti of the Dominican Republic to paint a mural in the Conference Building was accepted on 6 June 1952, and the mural was officially unveiled on 19 March 1953. The mural covers a curved wall over 60 feet long and 10-and-one-half feet high, on the third floor corridor of the Conference Building.

The artist, who was in the United States on a Guggenheim Memorial Foundation Fellowship, dedicated part of his fellowship time to the mural. The Foundation later granted Mr. Vela Zanetti a renewal of his fellowship for an additional year to enable him to complete his undertaking.

In the artist's words, the mural "symbolizes the essential purposes of the United Nations. They are inspired also in the pressing and distressing reality of our times. These symbols cry out, pray, praise, and condemn, but altogether they represent the hope of man for achieving peace".

(more)

The mural is in tempera and begins at the left with a scene of the destruction of a family. Concentration camps and all the agony of modern warfare are shown. In the centre of the mural a gigantic four-armed figure (to represent the four corners of the world) is holding the blue emblem of the United Nations. This also resembles the dome of the General Assembly Building, to symbolize reconstruction after the war. From this point the mural moves towards justice and at the far right the family looks hopefully towards the future.

Japan Buddhist Federation: Silk Brocade Tapestry

This Federation presented the United Nations with a silk brocade tapestry. It is embroidered in orange, gold, and various shades of beige. In the foreground is a figure of a Buddha sitting on a lotus against a background depicting the heavens and symbolizing peace.

The tapestry is located in the office of the Under-Secretary-General for Trusteeship and Non-Self-Governing Territories.

Japan: United Nations Association: Bronze Bell and Housing

A peace bell was donated by the United Nations Association of Japan in the name of the people of Japan. The bell was cast from coins donated by delegates of 60 nations at the thirteenth general conference of United Nations Associations held in Paris in 1951, and from individual contributions of various kinds of metal. The bell is three-feet-three-inches high, two feet in diameter at its base, and weighs 256 pounds. It is housed in a typically Japanese structure like a Shinto shrine, made of cypress wood.

The Tada factory in Japan completed the bell on United Nations Day, 24 October 1952; it was presented to the United Nations on 8 June 1954, by Renzo Sawada, Japanese observer to the United Nations. The bell, he stated, "embodies the aspiration for peace not only of the Japanese but of the peoples of the entire world. Thus it symbolizes the universality of the United Nations".

(more)

Mrs. Albert D. Lasker and Family: Cherry Trees, Flowers, Tapestry

Mrs. Lasker and her family contributed \$25,000 for the express purpose of purchasing and planting 178 cherry trees. The trees are planted in the landscaped area north of the Secretariat Building. Mrs. Lasker formally presented the trees to the United Nations in July 1954.

Between October 1955 and late 1957, Mrs. Lasker and her family donated a total of 23,000 narcissus bulbs for planting in the landscaped area of United Nations Headquarters. These bulbs are of the Mount Hood, Mrs. Krelage and Magnet varieties.

Azalea plants given by the Lasker family have been placed in the northernmost part of the garden. Presented in 1969 and 1970, they bloom in shades of white, pink and orange.

A tapestry patterned after the Picasso painting "Femme sur l'échelle" (Woman on a Ladder) also was donated by Mrs. Lasker. Woven by Marie Cuttoli and signed by Picasso, the tapestry is in bright tones of green, red, yellow and blue and measures 71 by 78 inches.

It hangs in the quiet room at the entrance to the Security Council Chamber.

National Council for United States Art: Sculpture

A sculpture by the American artist, Ezio Martinelli, was presented to the United Nations by the National Council for United States Art at a ceremony on 30 October 1961. The sculpture, a 30-by-17 foot abstract in gold-and-bronze-coloured anodized aluminum, is affixed to the east exterior wall of the General Assembly Building. The sculpture is one of a series of three donated by the Council.

The other two pieces are a bronze work by Robert Cronbach, which stands opposite the entrance to the Meditation Room in the public lobby of the General Assembly Building, and a polished bronze bas-relief by José de Rivera, which is in the Secretary-General's office. The latter two gifts were donated in 1960.

John D. Rockefeller, Jr. and City of New York: Headquarters Site

The purchase of the 18-acre Headquarters site on the East River between 42nd and 48th Streets was made possible by a gift of \$8.5 million from John D. Rockefeller, Jr. in 1946. The City of New York completed the site parcel by

(more)

additional gifts of contiguous property. To finance construction, the United States Government made an interest-free loan of \$65 million to the United Nations.

Plans for the Headquarters were prepared by an international board of consultants headed by architect Wallace K. Harrison of the United States. The cornerstone was laid on 24 October 1949 and the buildings were completed between 1950 and 1952.

Eleanor Roosevelt Memorial Foundation: Monument in Garden

A private philanthropic organization, the Eleanor Roosevelt Memorial Foundation, donated a monument to Mrs. Roosevelt. It was constructed at the north-east corner of the United Nations garden. The monument consists of a semicircular granite bench with the inscription: "1884 -- Anna Eleanor Roosevelt -- 1962"; and a tall slab facing the bench showing a bas-relief of a flame and bearing the inscription: "She would rather light a candle than curse the darkness, and her glow has warmed the world". The monument was installed on 23 April 1966.

United Nations Staff and Marc Chagall: Stained Glass Window

The staff of the United Nations and Marc Chagall donated a stained glass panel designed by the French artist as a memorial to Dag Hammarskjöld, and 15 others who also died in a plane crash in Africa, 17 September 1961, while on a peace mission.

The panel is about 15 feet wide and 12 feet high. It is predominantly blue in colour. In it Chagall sought to express the simplicity and beauty of the ideals of peace and brotherhood for which the United Nations was founded. Symbols of peace and love can be found throughout the panel. In the centre is the figure of a young child being kissed on the cheek by an angelic face which emerges from a mass of flowers; the right hand side suggests mankind's yearning for peace, its prophets and its victims, and symbols of law. On the left are depicted motherhood and people struggling for peace. Musical symbols in the panel evoke thoughts of Beethoven's Ninth Symphony which was a favourite of Dag Hammarskjöld.

(more)

A plaque placed near the stained glass memorial contains the names of those who died in the plane crash: Mr. Hammarskjöld, seven United Nations staff members, two Swedish soldiers serving with the United Nations Force in the Congo and the six Swedish crew members of the aircraft. They were: H.A. Wieschoff, Vladimir Fabry, William Ranallo, Alice Lalande, Harold M. Julien, Serge L. Barrau, Francis Eivers, Per Hallonquist, Nils-Eric Aahreus, Lars Litton, Harald Noork, Nils G. Wilhelmsson, Karl Erik Rosen, S.O. Hjelte and P.E. Persson.

The panel is located in the Lobby of the Secretariat Building, on the side facing the East River. The unveiling ceremony took place on 17 September 1964. Of his work Chagall said: "With all my soul I wanted to convey the extent of my inspiration and the inspiration of Dag Hammarskjöld and of all those who died for peace. For that was the very purpose for which the United Nations was founded. In doing this work I was far from any current theories. I should like people to be as moved as I was when I was engaged in this work which was done for people of all countries, in the name of peace and love. The main thing is not to see it but to feel it."

Chagall began working on the sketch in 1963, and the final "maquette" -- the painting on which the stained glass is based -- was ready late that year. The task of translating the "maquette" on glass was carried out by Charles Marq at Reims, France. The panel was transported in five sections from France to New York, and was assembled at United Nations Headquarters.

The United Nations Postal Administration issued a commemorative stamp and miniature art sheet reproducing the panel on 17 November 1967, as the first in its series on United Nations art.

Thomas J. Watson: Demountable Stage for General Assembly Hall

Thomas J. Watson, Chairman of the International Business Machines Corporation, gave the United Nations the funds for a semicircular, demountable stage for use in the General Assembly Hall.

This stage, having an area of 1,000 square feet, was designed by the R.D. Werner Company of New York. It is usable either as a whole or in sections appropriate for more limited types of entertainment. An aluminum scaffolding supports a wooden deck which is smooth enough for dancing and strong enough to

(more)

take the weight of a grand piano and a full complement of musicians, actors or singers. When the entire unit is used, the scaffolding completely covers the speaker's rostrum and the first two rows of chairs usually assigned to delegates.

The inaugural performance on this stage was given on 11 October 1954, by the Amsterdam Concertgebouw Orchestra conducted by Edouard van Beinum and Rafael Kubelik. The occasion was a reception for delegates to the ninth session of the General Assembly given by its President, Eelco van Kleffens, and the Secretary-General.

Women's Club of Osaka, Japan: Three Rosashi Embroideries

The Women's Club of Osaka presented three Rosashi Japanese embroideries. In each of the three examples the background is sewn in metallic thread. The designs are a floral pattern, a landscape and a rabbit. Each is matted on bark and framed in black thin strip.

The embroideries hang on the south wall at the entrance to the Delegates' Dining Room.

Women's Organization of the Presbyterian Church in the United States:

Ecuadorian Rugs

The women of the Presbyterian Church in the United States on 13 September 1955 gave the United Nations three large handwoven rugs. The rugs, 29 by 25 feet, are laid in the first basement corridor connecting the General Assembly Building and the Conference Area.

The rugs were designed by Olga Anhalzer Fisch, Hungarian-born artist, and woven under her supervision in Ecuador. The rugs are similar to two rugs presented earlier to the United Nations by the Government of Ecuador (see above).

