



Academy of Architecture and Arts SFU

Raymond Mathewson Hood
architect art deco

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Art Deco

A creative but short-lived movement, Art Deco not only influenced the architecture of most American cities but had an impact on fashion, art, and furniture, too. From 1925 to 1940, Americans embraced Art Deco as a refreshing change from the eclectic and revivalist sensibilities that preceded it. The style takes its name from the Exposition Internationale des Arts Decoratifs held in Paris in 1925 as a showcase for new inspiration. The style was essentially one of applied decoration. Buildings were richly embellished with hard-edged, low-relief designs: geometric shapes, including chevrons and ziggurats; and stylized floral and sunrise patterns. Shapes and decorations inspired by Native American artwork were among the archetypes of the Art Deco lexicon.



Biographical / Historical Note

One of the most important shapers of urban form in the United States during the early twentieth-century, Raymond Mathewson Hood (1881-1934) studied architecture at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and at the Ecole des Beaux-Arts in Paris.



the Ecole des Beaux-Arts in Paris



Raymond Mathewson Hood

His reputation was built by a succession of trend-setting skyscrapers. Among his best-known works are: his competition-winning entry for the *Chicago Tribune Tower* (completed 1925)



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the Daily News Building (completed 1930)



the the McGraw-Hill Building (completed 1931)



Knut Lonberg-Holm
Chicago Tribune Contest
1922

Mc-Graw- Hill Building

Raymond Hood,
Architect



Rockefeller Center (completed between 1931 and 1940) by Hood



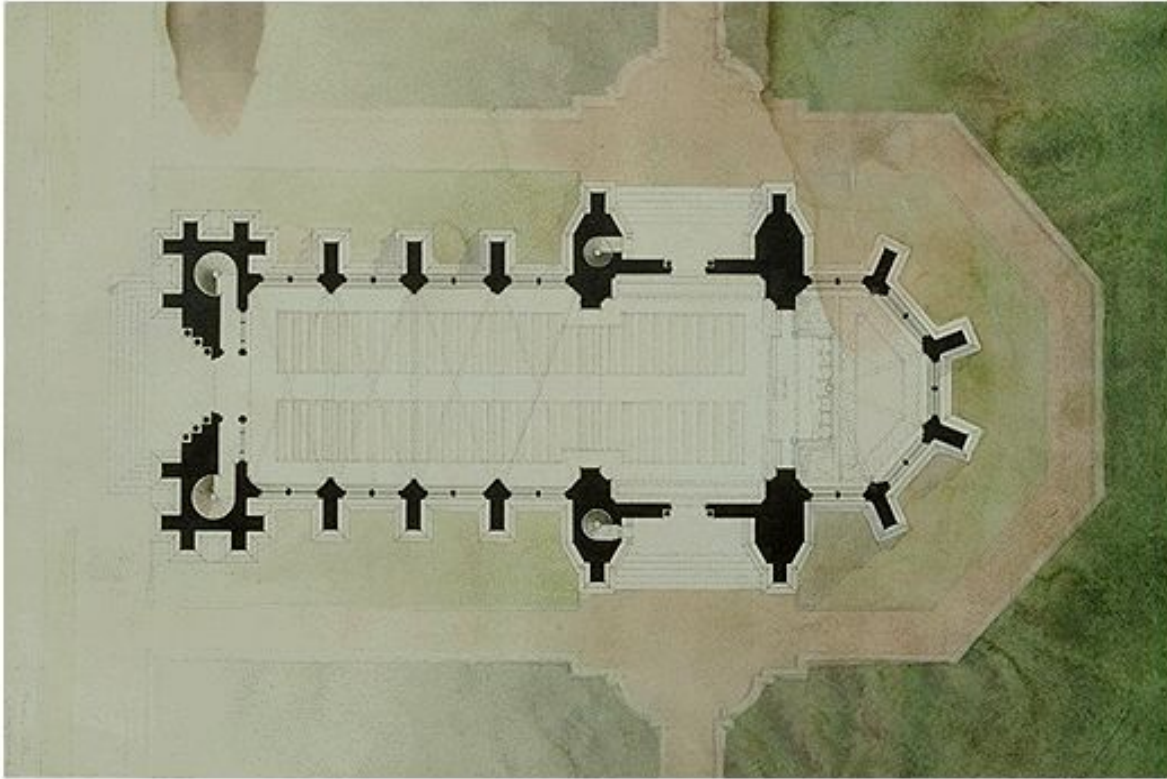
Both photographs, courtesy, Rockefeller Center, Inc., New York City



Scope & Content Note

The Raymond Hood Collection comprises one manuscript, eight drawings, and twenty-two photographs documenting two visionary designs, donated to the Architectural Archives by Mrs. J. André Fouilhoux, widow of Hood's professional collaborator Jacques André Fouilhoux.

The most significant holdings in the collection are five original ink sketches signed and annotated by Hood illustrating his "Tower City" proposal of 1927

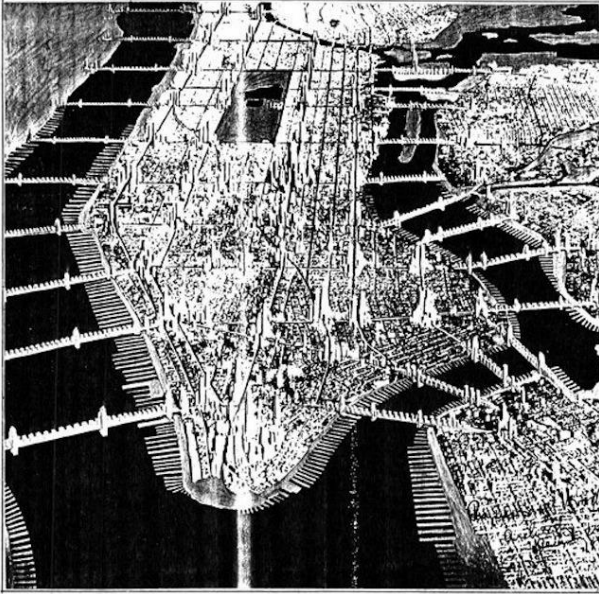


Raymond Hood
A Parish Church in the Gothic Style
elevation, 1903
watercolor and ink on paper



Skyscraper Bridges, Manhattan.

Raymond Hood and Hugh Ferriss, c. 1925



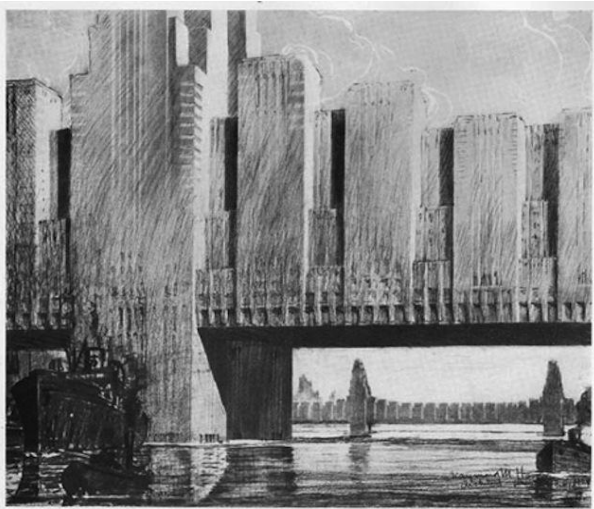
Hood was fascinated with the idea of residential skyscraper bridges, which he believed could both help solve the problems of traffic congestion and offer an ideal lifestyle on the waterfront. His first proposal appeared in an article in *The New York Times Magazine* in February 1925, illustrated with a drawing by Hugh Ferriss. Hood described a great bridge across the Hudson River ten thousand feet long, where the supporting pylons were apartment buildings of 50 or 60 stories. There would eventually be dozens of these luxury waterside communities for fifty thousand residents, he predicted. Hood reprised the proposal in a 1926 article in the magazine *Liberty*, describing the bridges as 20,000 feet long, with a center road beds as wide as Park Avenue and predicted that there would be twenty, forty, a hundred of them.

The new york times wrote:From the standpoint of sheer beauty, of startling picturesqueness, nobody can deny the fascination of these bridge communities.

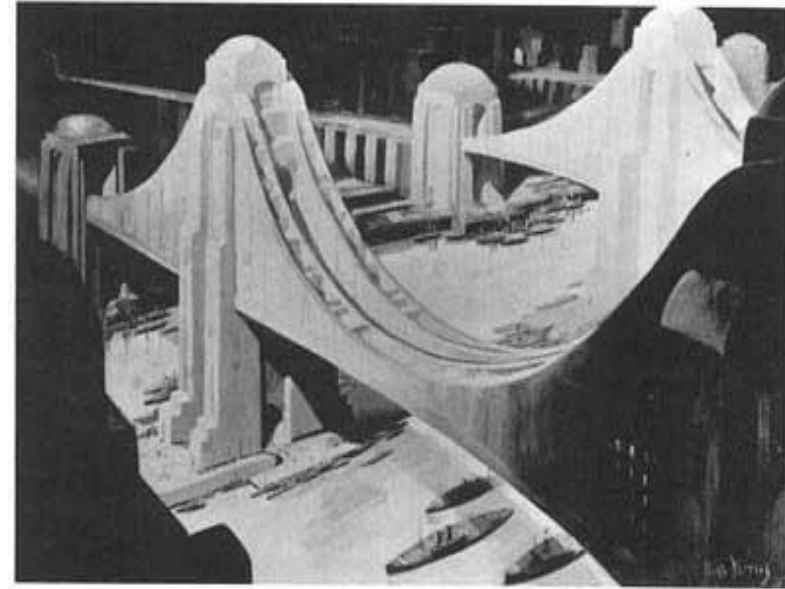
...

One can anticipate a new neighborliness entering into city life, a sense of solidarity and common interests, something even of the comradeship of life on shipboard. But, of course, this spirit of local pride and inter-bridge rivalry need not prevent the Smiths of Bridge No. 2 from taking out the motor boat and dropping in on the O'Briens of Bridge No. 6 for a pleasant evening of mah jongg, nor the exchange of visits to rival theatres, concerts and cabarets. Nor is there any reason why young Mr. O'Brien should not fall in love with Miss Smith, and after the wedding start his live with her in an apartment on Bridge No. 16.

As to the attitude of people on the bridges toward mere landlubbers, of whom there will continue to be some few millions, it is dangerous to speculate. We should hate to believe that any feeling of condescension might grow up. But that is a bridge that need not be crossed until we come to it. Altogether the prospect of bridge-dwelling offers so many new thrills that it is hard to be pessimistic over details.

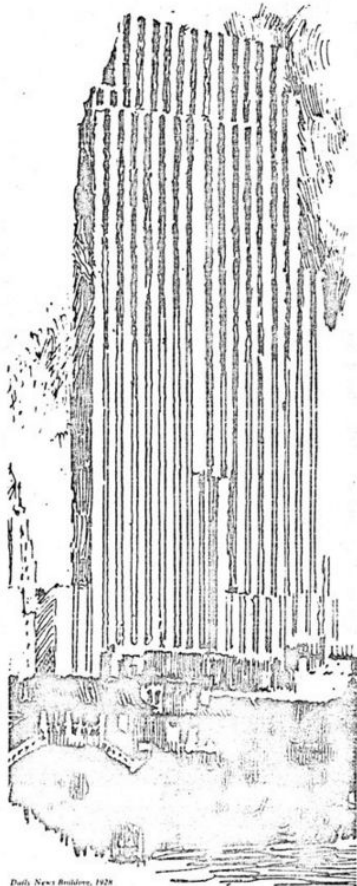


Apartments on Bridge

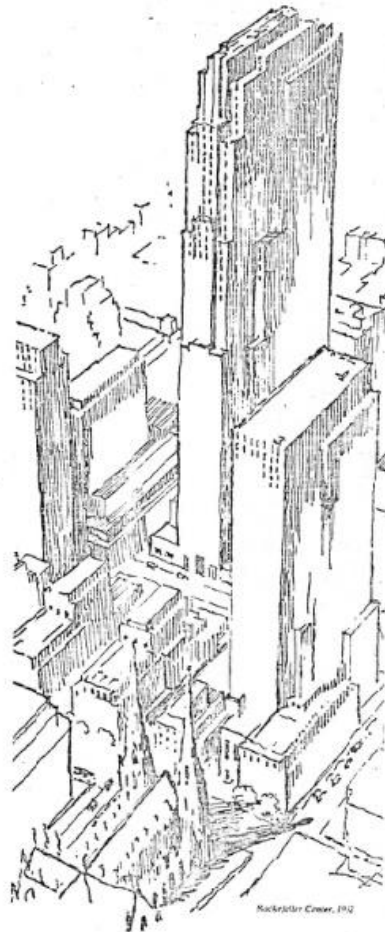


Proposal by Raymond Hood: Apartments on Bridge. (1929) Hugh Ferriss. Charcoal pencil; courtesy of A very Architectural and Fine Arts Library, Columbia University in the City of New York. The bridge has always been an enduring image for builders and dreamers such as Hood and Ferriss, who devised a plan to utilize the suspension cables of bridges, new and existing, as structural frame works for housing or office space. For these men of vision, the skyscraper was but one image of the future of the American city.

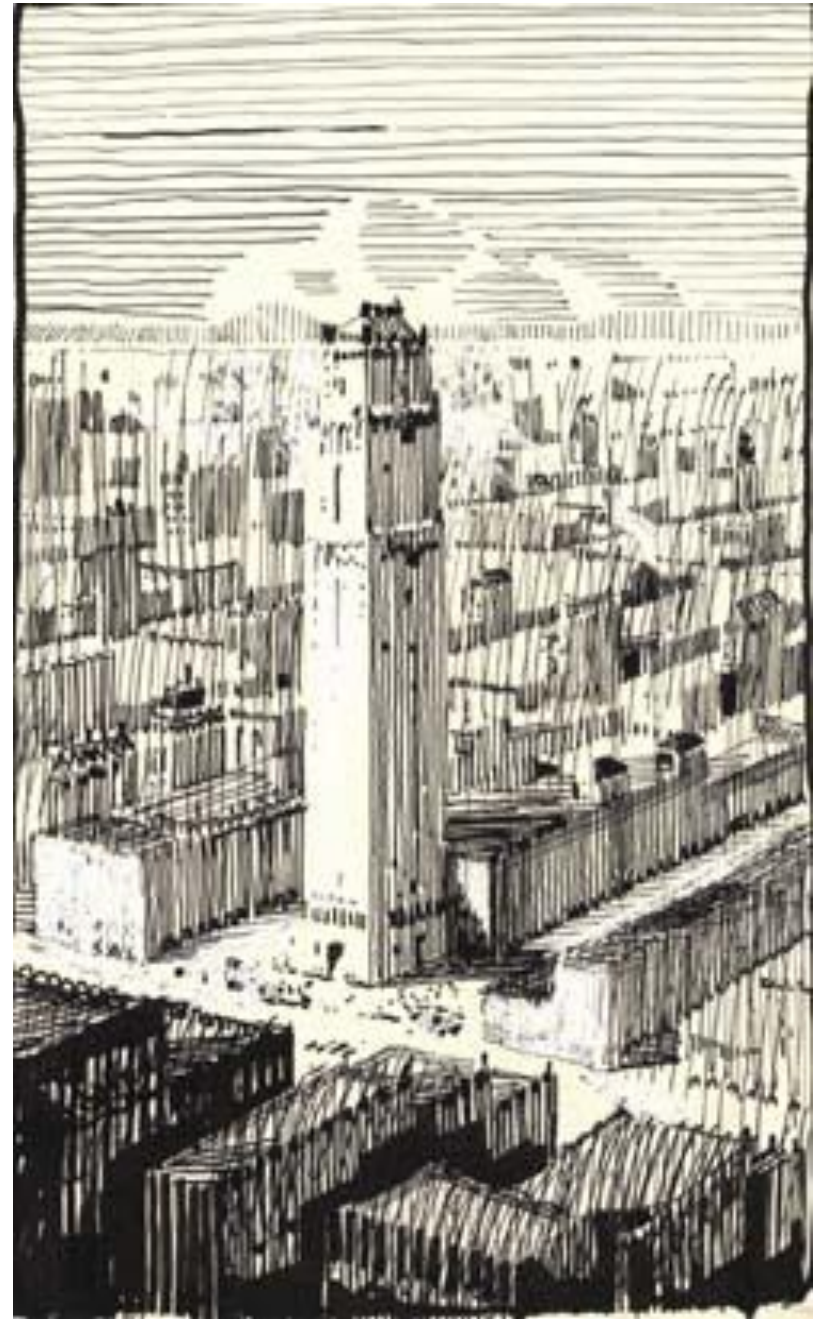
Three photomechanical enlargements of these sketches are preserved in the collection, two of which were rendered in ink and gouache by Hood and were among a selection of his drawings exhibited in the 1984 exhibition *Raymond Hood: City of Towers*, presented by the Whitney Museum of American Art in New York. Also very important is an extraordinary six page typescript account of the project written by Hamilton M. Wright, with extensive annotations in Hood's handwriting. Photography related to the "Tower City" proposal includes: 18 photoprints of graphics, a model (location of the original is unknown) and views of New York City.



Daily News Bulletin, 1928



Sackler for Crowe, 1922





Hood's "City Under a Single Roof" proposal of 1929 is documented by four photoprints in the collection: one of an "atmospheric" perspective of a single tower attributed to Carl Landefeld and photographs of three models. The locations of the drawing and models are unknown. Photographers of materials in this collection include W. H. Kelham, Jr., Samuel H. Gottscho and Louis H. Dreyer.

