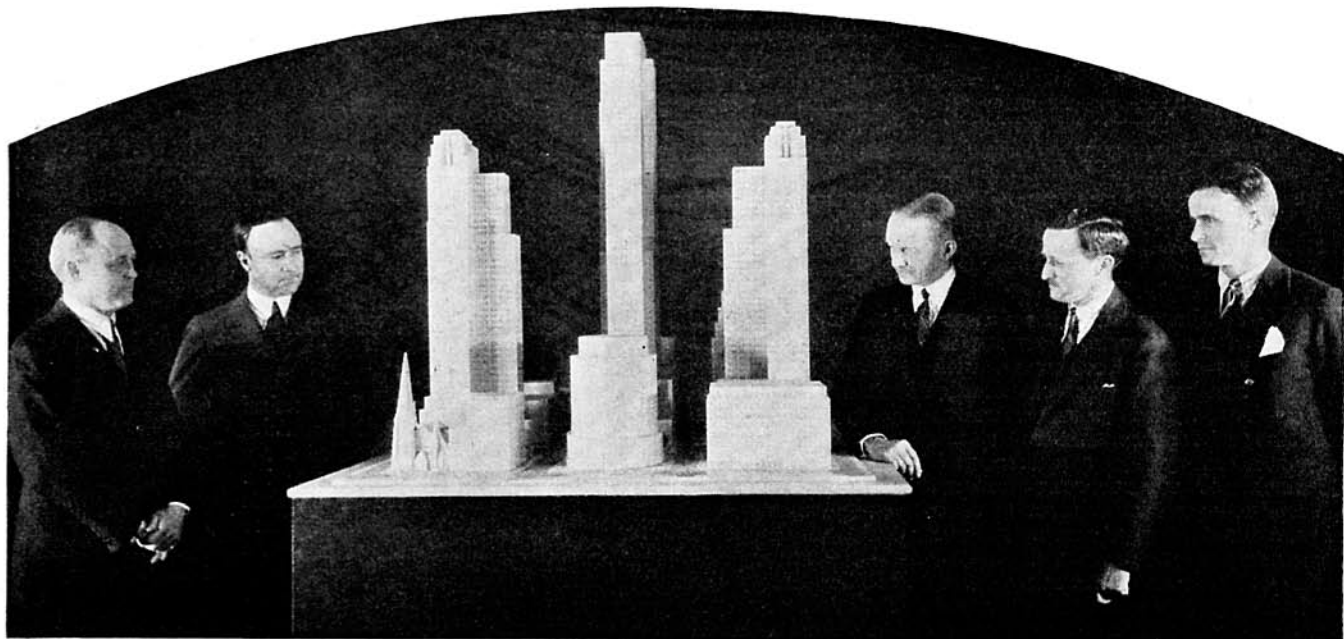


Hiram S. Brown, Merlin H. Aylesworth (at left) and Messrs. Todd, Robertson and Todd, architects, are shown examining the model of Radio City

Capital of the



COVERING almost three entire blocks in one of the most fashionable sections of New York, a magic city of odd-shaped, towering structures will be completed within the next three years and dedicated to radio, music and entertainment.

Best known as Radio City, but frequently designated as Rockefeller City and Metropolitan Square, the largest group construction undertaking ever dedicated to American industry will be realized at an expenditure of \$250,000,000. John D. Rockefeller, Jr., heads the financial backers of the project. Mr. Rockefeller will virtually be the landlord of the "Capital of the Radio World."

The eminent tenants of Radio City will include the Radio Corporation of America, the National Broadcasting Company, the Radio-Keith-Orpheum theatrical and motion picture interests, the RCA-Victor Company and RCA Photophone, Inc. At this writing, the inclusion of the new Metropolitan Opera House in the project was contemplated. Two huge R-K-O theatres with respective seating capacities of 4000 and 6000 will be located in Radio City.

The site of the project, with a frontage on Fifth Avenue from Forty-eighth to Fifty-first Streets, extends all the way back to Sixth Avenue.

Until a plastic model of Radio City was recently exhibited to the press in the offices of the architects, no hint of the design of the structures was given out. The exhibit disclosed a beautiful group of structures of varied and unusual design. John R. Todd, chief building engineer, termed the design as "modern New York style," when asked for a name to describe it.

The central block, between Forty-ninth and Fiftieth Streets, will be the site of a sixty-eight-story office building. In area of floor space, this structure will be the largest in the world. Only the Empire State and Chrysler buildings will surpass it in height. Tentatively designated as "Office Building No. 1," this central structure will be partially taken over by the Radio Corporation of America for general offices and by the National Broadcasting Company for executive offices and broad-

casting studios. Facilities for the broadcasting of sight as well as sound will be provided in this structure, according to Merlin H. Aylesworth, president of the NBC. Some twelve floors will be reserved by the NBC. These will contain twenty-seven to thirty broadcasting chambers.

With a frontage on Fifth Avenue between Forty-ninth and Fiftieth Streets and separated from "Office Building No. 1" by an attractive plaza of gardens and fountains will be an imposing oval-shaped building to contain shops, a bank, show-rooms and a roof restaurant. On the Sixth Avenue side of the central block will be a building that will house general offices and recording facilities of RCA-Victor and RCA Photophone.

A motion picture theatre with a seating capacity of 6000 persons is planned for the block between Fiftieth and Fifty-first Streets. The theatre will be set off from Sixth Avenue by an office building that will house the general offices of the Radio-Keith-Orpheum organization. On the opposite side of Radio City, between Forty-eighth and Forty-ninth Streets, a combination vaudeville and motion picture theatre of 4000 seats will be erected. There has been some talk of reversing the position of the two theatres and thus al-

lowing the larger to have a frontage on Sixth Avenue. Provisions are made for the opera house facing on Forty-eighth Street. A frontage of 350 feet and the width of an entire block will provide for a very large structure. There will also be storage space for costumes and scenery used in the opera company's repertoire.

The Collegiate Church of St. Nicholas and another realty enterprise will still maintain a small portion of the block between Forty-eighth and Forty-ninth Streets. In addition to the vaudeville and opera-house structures planned for this block, another Radio City office building will be erected. Two additional office buildings will be erected on the Fiftieth to Fifty-first Street block. A large site in the centre of this block is as yet unassigned for any specified type of building.

In all, 2,000,000 square feet of rentable space will be available to tenants other than those in the RCA group, Mr. Todd claimed.

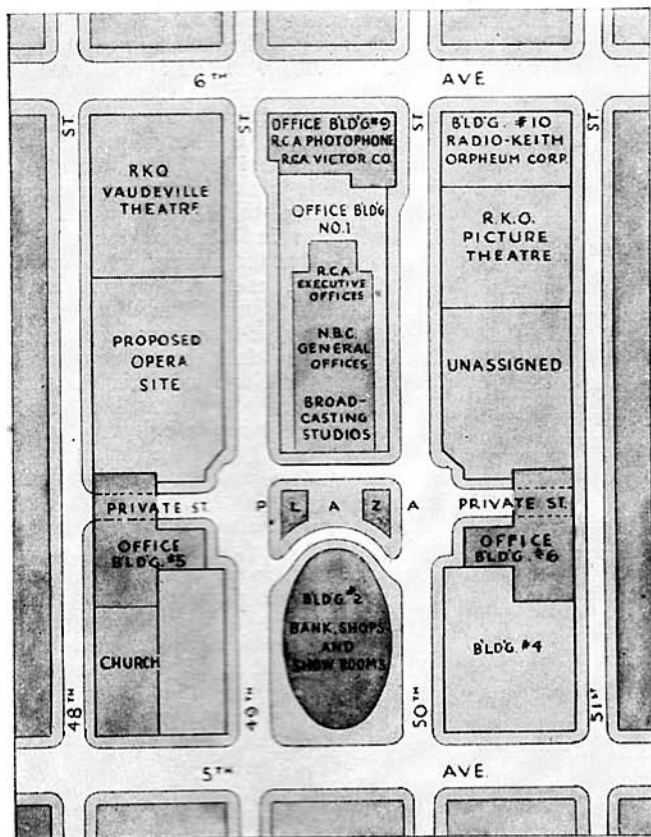
***A**CCORDING to the announcement now made public, S. L. Rothafel will direct the theatrical activities of the Radio City. Since television is expected to be a practical reality, it is believed that Mr. Rothafel's services, in addition to theatre management, will be employed in creating lighting and scenic effects for R-K-O and NBC television programs.*

—THE EDITORS.

Radio World

Known as the Radio City, the quarter-billion-dollar home of broadcasting and entertainment will cover three square blocks in the heart of New York City. When completed, in 1934, it is expected that the gigantic undertaking sponsored by NBC, R.C.A., R-K-O, RCA-Victor, and RCA Photophone, Inc., will include a new Metropolitan Opera House, two large motion picture and vaudeville theatres and a television station

By Samuel Kaufman



A diagrammatic layout of the plan for the Radio City, showing the location of the proposed opera site, the two theatres and the broadcasting studios

Hiram S. Brown, president of Radio-Keith-Orpheum Corporation, and Mr. Aylesworth remarked, during the model exhibition, that both theatres will be wired for the transmission of television programs. They indicated that the opera house will also be so provided if it is definitely included in the Radio City group.

Mr. Aylesworth said, considering rapid laboratory advances of television, that it can be expected that the practical transmission of sight and sound programs will be possible by the time Radio City is entirely completed in 1934. He considered it likely that the television station will be situated directly atop the central structure. He expressed the belief that broadcasting of sound alone will never be supplanted by television but will rather be supplemented by it.

In addition to two city streets, Forty-ninth and Fiftieth, running directly through the site, two private streets will run under arches from Forty-eighth and Fifty-first Street to reach the central plaza.

Shops throughout the area have posted removal

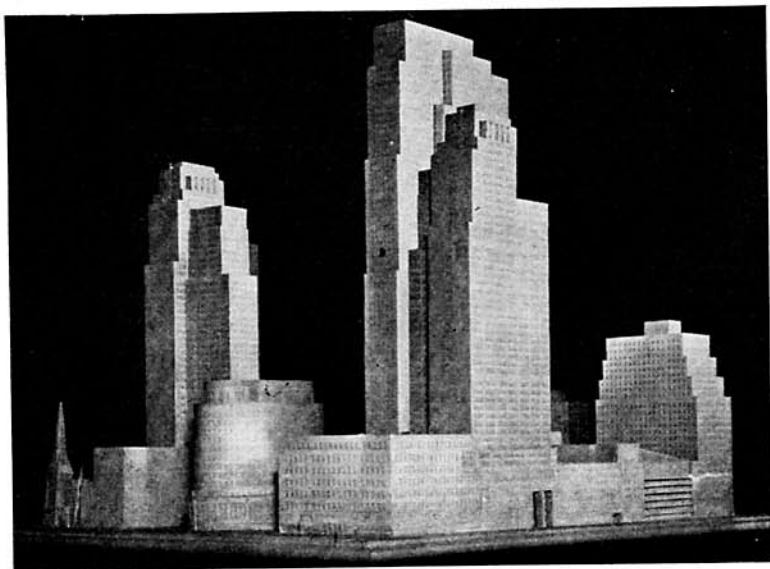
notices and house wreckers are busily engaged in the clearance work preliminary to the excavating which will start in June. The entire development will not be completed until 1934, but the central structure is expected to be ready for occupancy in 1932. Space will be gradually claimed by the various firms as their respective units are completed.

A novel feature of the project will be the provision of underground parking space for motor vehicles. Provision is also made for all trucking and shipping to be done on a subterranean level. These facilities will considerably eliminate any traffic congestion on the narrow streets above. A rampway to the parking and shipping levels will be situated on Forty-eighth Street, while an exit will be provided on the Fifty-first Street side.

At the model exhibition, Mr. Brown and Mr. Aylesworth jointly announced the acquisition of S. L. Rothafel (Roxy), former impresario of the Roxy Theatre, as director of the Radio City theatrical undertakings. He has officially been associated with the R-K-O since April 1. Although his detailed duties for the Radio group before the theatres are completed were not revealed at this writing, it was the general impression that he will be identified with the broadcasting periods sponsored by the R-K-O organization.

The large amount of rentable space will undoubtedly attract other radio, music and entertainment groups to Radio City.

A representative of the Columbia Broadcasting System, rival network of the NBC, emphatically stated that the CBS will not under any circumstances rent any space within Radio City. He claimed that the present Columbia building at 485 Madison Avenue—just two blocks from the Radio City site—are ample for the chain's needs in (Continued on page 1114)



Another view of the recently completed model of the Radio City. Work on the giant enterprise will begin this month and is expected to be completed some time in 1934

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Capital of the Radio World

(Continued from page 1069)

the present and for the near future. The representative stated that the chain's seven studios were ample for present broadcasting needs and can be adapted to television when the occasion arises. The C. B. S. also plans to erect its television transmitter atop its building, it was said.

Television Advances

Mr. Aylesworth, when queried as to whether his plans for television broadcasting were based on any advances in the design of television receivers, said that the R. C. A. and other companies were making sufficient strides in that field to warrant his plans for sight transmission.

The annual report of the R. C. A. on March 10 stated that highly scientific and research development in television had been made in 1930 but that no attempt will be made to market such equipment commercially in 1931. The laboratories will pursue this phase of radio aggressively this year, however.

Before the first plans for Radio City were formulated, the R. C. A. made plans for the construction of its own forty-eight story building on the corner of Lexington Avenue and Fifty-first Street—three blocks east of the present Radio City site. The subsequent crystallization of plans for the construction of Radio City made it apparent that the opportunity for occupancy of the Lexington Avenue structure should not be sacrificed. The R. C. A., therefore, planned to move last month from its offices in the Woolworth Building to its own structure known as the R. C. A. Building.

Work on the R. C. A. Building was carried forward with the original intention and the building will be partially occupied by the R. C. A. until the completion of its still newer quarters in Radio City. The building is owned by a realty subsidiary of the R. C. A. and will be maintained as an investment through the leasing of office space.

Studio Design

Many new ideas in studio design and construction are planned by NBC engineers. Some broadcasting chambers will be more than three stories in height and will virtually be radio auditoriums rather than radio studios. Elaborate facilities for visitors' galleries from which program presentations may be observed through soundproof plate glass will also be provided. Pending advances in television, final and definite studio details were not announced. Progress in this field will be closely observed by NBC engineers and studios will be equipped accordingly.

All of the studios will be constructed with special emphasis on perfect acoustics. Many advances in the field of sound insulation are expected to be introduced in the Radio City development.

Radio City, already termed a "community of sound and vision," will be a memorable tribute to the industry which, in little more than a decade, established itself in a commanding position of entertainment and utility.

The stage, the screen, the concert hall and the microphone will be grouped into closer proximity than ever before and a constantly growing interchange of talent is anticipated.

Radio, the industry that greatly abetted the screen by making talking pictures practical, the industry that aided the stage by creating new standards in auditorium acoustics and sound amplification, the industry that aided the concert hall by creating widespread interest in good music, will now join forces with all of its contemporary fields to establish television presentations from Radio City.

Radio City is ideally situated for the interests of its tenants. It borders on the established theatrical, music, art and shopping centres of New York.

It is but four blocks from the present NBC building at 711 Fifth Avenue. St. Patrick's Cathedral, famous Catholic edifice, is directly opposite. Prominent churches of other denominations are also in the immediate vicinity. Numerous theatres, concert halls, hotels and night clubs are in close proximity. Many neighboring points are remote control pick-up locations.

Broadcast-Theatre Alliance

One interesting phase of the R-K-O tenancy of Radio City is the fact that the old Keith-Albee theatrical interests, now absorbed by R-K-O, were strongly opposed to radio broadcasting and for a long period refrained from permitting its contracted performers to approach a radio microphone. The R-K-O now, without doubt, heads the list of amusement enterprises advocating broadcasting affiliations. Mr. Brown stated that he did not fear any box-office losses through the broadcasting of both sound and vision from R-K-O stage presentations.

It is believed that Roxy's services, in addition to theatre management, will be employed in creating lighting and scenic effects for R-K-O and NBC television programs.

The opinion exists in radio circles that the erection of Radio City will draw many other radio firms to the vicinity, if not directly within the development. The neighborhood is expected to become a center of radio retail shops as well as music stores. The music publishing industry, now dependent on radio and the talking screen as the most powerful exploitation mediums for song hits, is also expected to be represented within the boundaries of Radio City. The possibility also exists that some of New York's smaller broadcasting stations will move close to the development.

Largest Industrial Undertaking

Never before has any American industry, no less a single group of firms, entered a project of such magnitude. It is a gigantic undertaking and has aroused world-wide interest and comment.

Broadcasting, not yet eleven years old, is moving into a quarter-billion dollar home. We wonder what it will demand when it becomes of age!