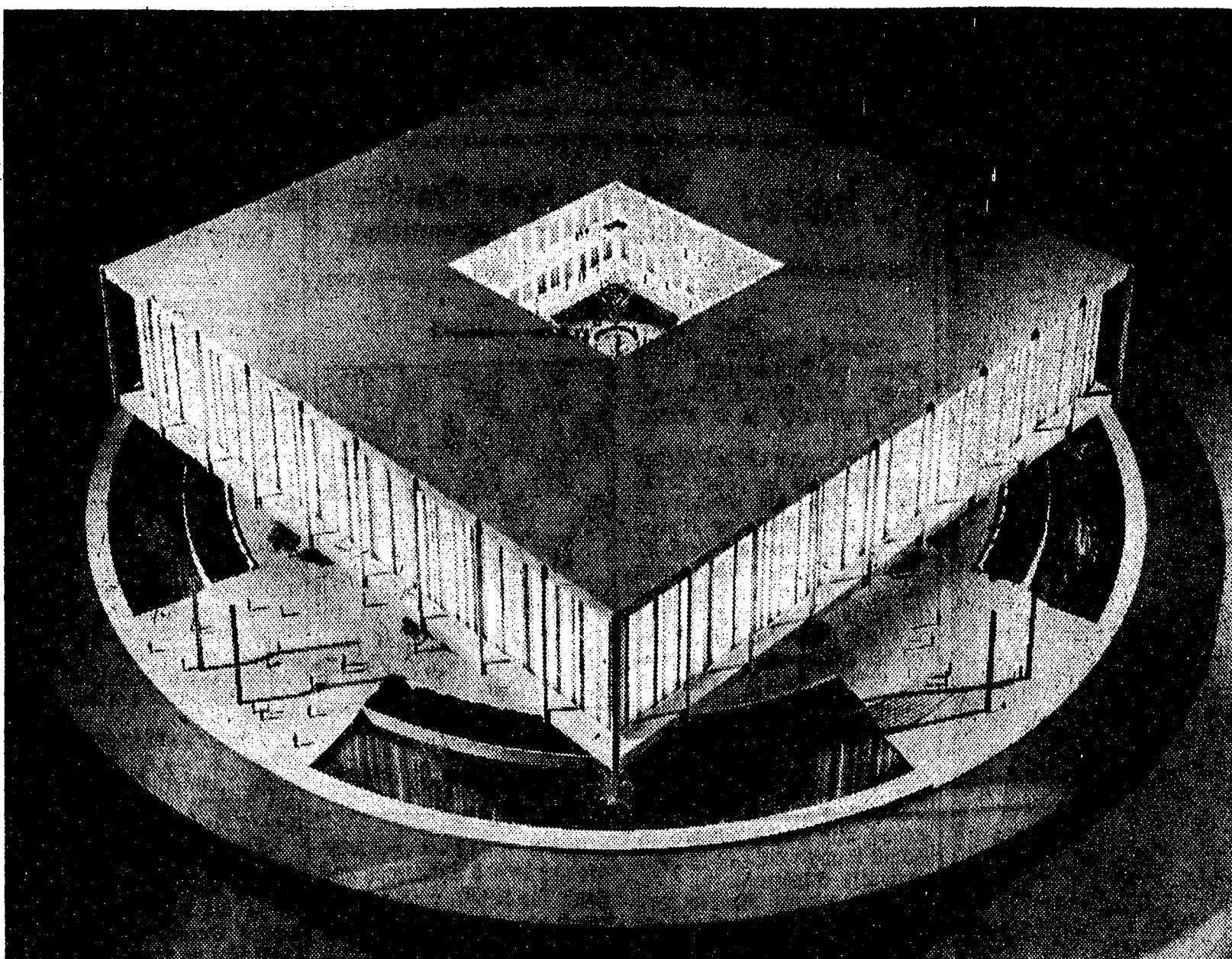


A Fair U.S. Pavilion: Controversy Over Exhibit Building Ends With ...

By ADA LOUISE HUXTABLE Special to The New York Times.

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MODEL OF U.S. PAVILION, designed by Charles Luckman Associates, for the 1964-65 New York World's Fair

A Fair U.S. Pavilion

Controversy Over Exhibit Building Ends With Selection of Happy Design

By ADA LOUISE HUXTABLE

Special to The New York Times.

NEW YORK. The stormy saga of the United States Pavilion for the 1964-65 New York World's Fair, which has had rough going through Government agencies, Presidential advisers and sharp professional criticism, reached a happy ending this week in New York. The model of the final, approved design was unveiled on Monday by the United States Commission to the Fair, and the story might be called "All's Well that Ends Well."

What has been shrouded in controversial secrecy can now be told: the building, by Charles Luckman Associates, will be a 300-foot long, 84-foot high hollow square, raised 18 feet above the ground on four concrete supports, with an open central court. It will glow gold and blue at night through striated colored glass walls, reflected in surrounding pools.

Ever since information leaks in August indicated that the Federal Government was planning to erect a science-fiction type of fair structure labeled "flying saucers" by those who saw it, a disapproving architectural profession and press have been involved in a battle of growing intensity, which finally reached the President last fall.

Matter Under Study

According to those outside the Government, critical concern led to enlistment of the aid of the Administration's able esthetic White Knight, William Walton, who brought the matter to President Kennedy's attention. Advisers were called in, meetings held and all earlier designs by the Luckman firm reviewed, with the present building substituted from them.

According to those inside the Government, this is not the story at all. The "flying saucers" were never a firm selection, but only one design of

four under consideration, including the present building, which became the final choice.

The choice is clear, whatever route was taken. The Federal image at the fair is meant to be one of simplicity, dignity and monumentality. The contrast with the first, or alternate design—depending on the version you choose—could not be more striking. The "flying saucer" pavilion, which was never released, consisted of three different levels, like clamshells or double mushrooms caps springing from a three-branched concrete stem. Problems of exhibition installation were formidable.

Objections might not have been so marked if the Federal Government had not recently erected a building at the Seattle Fair that was an extraordinarily appealing, serious work of architecture: Minoru Yamasaki's strangely neo-Gothic, but elegantly effective Science Pavilion. In comparison, this was an adolescent's dream of space-age design, evoking the most pejorative sense of the words "World's Fair."

Dignity Is Stressed

No trace of its remains. What one sees instead is a sedate echo of other Federal architecture on an even higher level—the modern, floating pavilions currently favored by the State Department overseas, like Edward D. Stone's immensely popular New Delhi Embassy. The effect is World's Fairish, however, in that the impression is partly illusion. This is a stage-set drama and dignity rather than the real thing.

The building is far from the "unesthetic sandwich" that it was termed at the presentation by one startled representative of the press. Professional reaction is a mixture of relief and optimism. And at Flushing Meadows, construction has begun.