



THE QUEENS MUSEUM NEW YORK WORLD'S FAIR ASSOCIATION

SPRING / SUMMER 1990

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'39

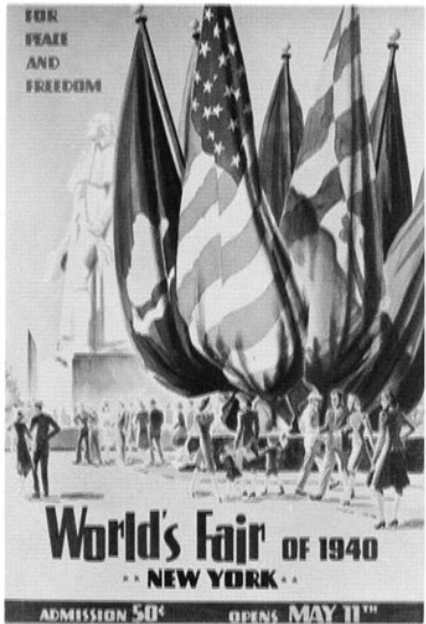
...CELEBRATIONS OF WORLD'S FAIR ANNIVERSARIES

continue as 1990 marks the 50th and 25th Anniversaries of the opening days for the second seasons of the New York World's Fairs in 1940 and 1965, respectively. CELEBRATE THE PANORAMA DAY on June 23 with a special 25th Anniversary Party for the world's largest scale model. Summer activities sizzle with a brand new series of lectures, walking tours and your favorite films. Hurry in before September 2 to see the smaller version of the Museum's blockbuster REMEMBERING THE FUTURE exhibition.

'64

How the 1940 New York World's Fair was Different

by Peter M. Warner



The 1939 New York World's Fair in Flushing Meadow was originally conceived to operate for only a single year. The Fair Corporation decided to re-open the Fair again in 1940 to help re-coup its heavy financial investment. With World War II beginning in Europe, the new Fair was very different from the old 1939 version. While the theme of the 1939 Fair was "Building the World of Tomorrow," the World's Fair of 1940 was dedicated to "Peace and Freedom."

On May 11, 1940 the Fair re-opened with 191,196 people in attendance. The following day *The New York Times* noted that a "carefree informal atmosphere dominated the scene despite the specter of the war." Changes in the world political situation meant changes at the Fair. The Soviet Union withdrew and shipped its building back to the U.S.S.R. That site became unknown as the American Common which included a bandstand and bazaar area. Because of the war, some foreign pavilions were operated by private local groups on behalf of those nations. Among the new attractions in the Amusement Zone was "The American Jubilee," a patriotic historical pageant about America. To increase attendance general admission to the Fair was reduced from 75 cents in 1939 to 50 cents in 1940. Additional low cost food facilities were built. The 1940 Fair, with an attendance of 19 million, operated as a beacon of peace and freedom in a world destined to experience soon the dark days of World War II.

Photo above: Poster heralding the opening of the World's Fair in 1940. E.P. Christie, "For Peace and Freedom," color off-set lithograph, 31 1/4" x 21" [framed], 1940. Collection of The Queens Museum.

World's Fair Activities Are Hot This Summer

Prepare to spend many an August weekend discussing hot World's Fair topics in the cool, air-conditioned comfort of The Queens Museum. We believe the New York City Building, home to the Museum, was the only air-conditioned building at the 1939/40 Fair. Does anyone know otherwise?

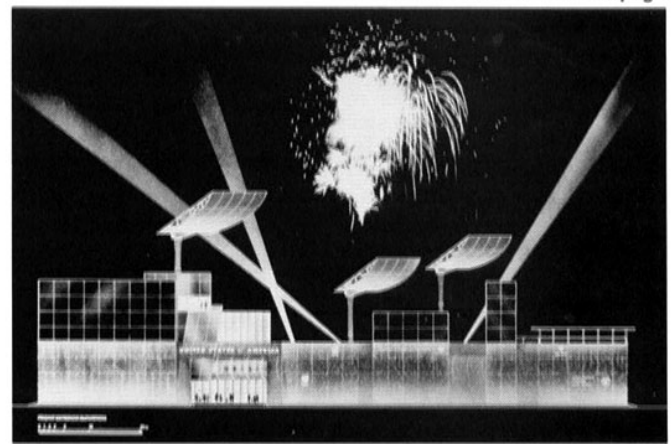
A Film Series of many favorite World's Fair films for Saturdays will be complemented with a brand new Lecture Series slated for Sundays. Also on Sundays, don your hat and sunglasses to join the Walking Tours of the World's Fair grounds.

Admission to all lectures and films is by free ticket plus Museum Admission. Tickets are distributed on a first-come, first-served basis and are available on the date of the event *only*. World's Fair Association Members are admitted free to the Museum.

LECTURE SERIES:

"The Pavilion" - Sunday, August 12, 2 PM Enjoy this slide lecture by Dr. Billy Klüver about the innovative Pepsi-Cola Pavilion, from EXPO '70 in Osaka, Japan. It was created by a team of artists and engineers, and brought the latest ideas in sound, sculpture and performance to a world's fair pavilion. The project was organized by the foundation, Experiments in Art and Technology (E.A.T.), and supervised by its President, Dr. Billy Klüver.

Activities continued on back page



At the August 26th Lecture, learn about the design for the U.S.A. Pavilion planned for EXPO '92 in Seville, Spain. The design builds on this World's Fair theme of "Discovery," alluding to Columbus' voyage to the New World. The architectural firm of Barton Myers Associates, Los Angeles, CA, is responsible for the design. Photo: Barton Myers Associates.

FAIR FEATURE

Panorama Precedents

by Dr. Marc H. Miller

This excerpt is from the recently published catalog, "The Panorama of New York City." The Panorama is the giant scale model of the five boroughs that is on permanent view at The Queens Museum. Conceived by Fair Corporation President Robert Moses and constructed by model-maker Raymond Lester, The Panorama was the main attraction at the New York City Pavilion at the 1964/65 World's Fair. This selection from the catalog looks at some precedents for The Panorama at earlier fairs. To order this catalog see the SOUVENIR SHOP column.



While The Panorama is a unique object which can be clearly linked to the ambitious construction career of Robert Moses, it also fits comfortably into a tradition of world's fair model-making. World's Fairs seek to illustrate the whole range of human achievement, and models have provided a convenient way to show projects that are too big to be transported to a fair site. The guidebook for the first world's fair, held in London, in 1851, lists numerous models of ships, bridges and

buildings as well as a large model of the proposed Suez Canal. One direct ancestor of The Panorama was to be found at the San Francisco World' Fair of 1915. Here New York City—the only city with its own pavilion—exhibited a 550-square-foot model showing New York City in complete detail and included a lighting system that illuminated harbor channels and prominent buildings.

Model displays reached particularly elaborate heights at the New York World's Fair of 1939/40. The most popular feature at the Fair was the giant Futurama model that Norman Bel Geddes designed for the General Motors Pavilion. Projecting 20 years into the future, the model illustrated how America would look in 1960. Larger than The Panorama, the Futurama incorporated 35,000 square feet; and its construction involved many of the same technical problems that

Lester would later face. Like the Panorama, the Futurama was constructed off-site in separate sections that were then assembled together. The model-makers for both used U.S. Geological Survey Maps for source material, and the same paper template technique to transfer information onto their models. In both instances, standardized units formed buildings and other structures. Another parallel between the Futurama and the Panorama was the spectator ride, in the earlier exhibition billed as an "airplane" trip and in the later as a "helicopter" tour. Instead of the Panorama's tracked cars, the Futurama used a row of moving chairs, each wired for sound, that traveled the model's edge. Bel Geddes achieved sophisticated effects using changes in the scale of the model (from 1:1200 to 1:600) to simulate an airplane flying high, and then descending for a close-up look.

Another huge model at the 1939 World's Fair presaging the Panorama was the City of Light, a huge diorama designed by Walter Dorwin Teague and built by the Diorama Corporation of America for the Consolidated Edison Pavilion. (A diorama is an exhibit with partially molded units silhouetted against a painted background. In

Panorama Precedents continued on back page.



Above: Visitors view the Futurama from moving seats in the General Motors Pavilion, at the 1939 World's Fair, c. 1938. Photo: General Motors.

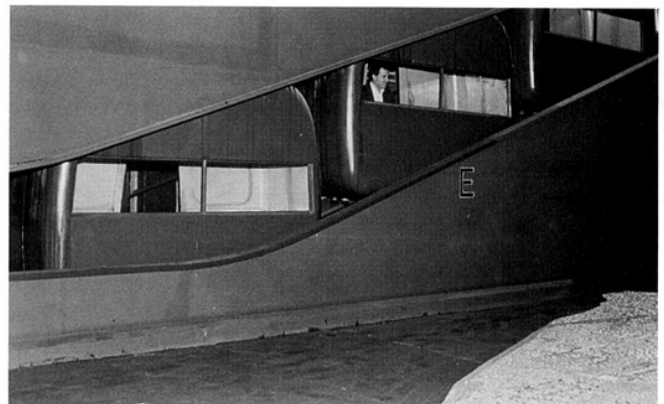
Above Left: Workers installing the Chrysler Building and the Empire State Building on the City of Light. Photo: Consolidated Edison.

Important Relics From the 1964/65 Fair For Sale

In preparation for the major renovation of the area around The Panorama, The Queens Museum is offering for sale some of the 54 cars that transported 1964/65 New York City Pavilion visitors around the edge of the giant 9,335 square foot model. This 8-minute simulated "helicopter ride" was accompanied by a narrative on New York City by famed news commentator Lowell Thomas and was one of the most popular Fair attractions.

For the last fifteen years the ride has not been available to the public and now in a move to improve viewer access to The Panorama, it is being removed. It will be replaced by an ascending ramp with glass platform overlooks that will give viewers close-up views of The Panorama for the first time since the Fair.

Each of the fiberglass cars measures 7' by 8.5' long by 3.3' deep. The purchase price and dates of removal have not been set but we are making a list of people interested in purchasing a car. Call Queens Museum Curator Marc Miller At [718] 592-2405 to reserve your car. Buyers will be responsible for pick-up and transportation. A copy of the Lowell Thomas audio tape that accompanied The Panorama ride will be included in the purchase price.



Marc H. Miller, Curator, sits above The Panorama in one of the helicopter cars that is for sale.

POSTMARKED: FLUSHING MEADOW

Letters to the Editors

I want World's Fair Association Members to know about my new book, *Hi, Ho, Come To The Fair; Tales of the New York World's Fair of 1964-1965*. The story is about how the members of the International Division of the Fair went about soliciting foreign governments to participate, and some of the adventures befalling them along the way. It speaks mainly about the Western Hemisphere countries, which were my responsibilities. The book relates never-before-told stories of Robert Moses including one about Moses' confrontation with Generalissimo Franco of Spain.

Moses, at the end of the first season of the Fair's operation in 1964, began searching for ways to rejuvenate the Fair for the following season. He felt this was necessary to attract the 1964 local attendees back again in 1965. He needed those New York visitors desperately since he felt that they represented the key to the economic success of the Fair:

How to do it? He thrashed around for an idea. He finally focused on one idea with tunnel-like intensity. He would have the famed El Greco painting, "The Burial of Count Orgaz," for display in his favorite international exhibit structure, the Pavilion of Spain. New Yorkers most assuredly would come again in droves to view such a dramatic acquisition.

After several applications to the Government of Spain for that masterpiece—which was on the wall of the St. Thomé Church in the town of Toledo outside Madrid — and after an equal number of refusals, Moses said, "Damn it, I'm going to obtain that work myself. Get me an audience with Franco."

The U.S. Government was not chummy with Franco and did not like the idea of Moses going to Spain. But Moses had a "to hell with them" attitude and charged ahead. He went to Spain bringing with him former short-time governor of New York, Charles Poletti, who was head of the International Division of the Fair, and myself, who was responsible for the Spain Pavilion for the Fair.

The book describes how these two giants met at the Prado Palace, faced-off and cautiously inspected each other: Moses then demanded the painting. Franco was unused to demands being made on him. The moment hung tense and fragile as the two dictators [so a New York newspaper called them] maneuvered around each other. Then . . . well . . . This is one of several untold stories about Moses found in *Hi, Ho, Come To The Fair*.

Bruce Nicholson of Huntington Beach, CA.

[Ed. Note: *Hi, Ho, Come To The Fair*, is available at the Museum Shop for \$13.95, or \$15.10 with NYS Sales Tax if mailed or purchased in New York State, and it really is good! Association Members take a 10% discount. Everyone add \$2.50 for mail orders.]



Gold medallion presentation to Generalissimo Francisco Franco (right); From right: Miguel Garcia de Saez, Commissioner General of the Pavilion of Spain; Commissioner Robert Moses; Charles Poletti, former short-term governor of New York, and Bruce Nicholson, at Prado Palace outside Madrid. Photo: Martin Santos Yubero, February 1965. Collection of: Nicholson.

I am writing to congratulate everyone involved in the exhibit, REMEMBERING THE FUTURE: THE NEW YORK WORLD'S FAIR FROM 1939 to 1964. My husband and I [both members of the World's Fair Association], along with our four-year-old son, attended the special opening for Association Members yesterday, and we had a wonderful time! To see the fountains in operation around the Unisphere really took us by surprise! We took our obligatory pictures in front of it [despite the cold and rain], then took refuge in the *New York Newsday* tent.

Being only seven years old during the 1964/65 NY Fair, I don't really remember how good the Belgian waffles were then, but yesterday they were delicious, with *real* whipped cream and fresh strawberries! I can see that hard-work and care went into transforming the Museum for this exhibit. It was almost magical, to walk through the galleries and see yet another reminder of that wonderful 1964/65 Fair: I have just begun reading the REMEMBERING THE FUTURE catalog and know already that I will be reading and re-reading this encapsulated cornucopia of rich memories and dreams of the 1964/65 Fair. This glorious book was a long time coming, but the effort and thought put into it is most deserving of great praise.

Susan Morgan, Hackensack, NJ

THE QUEENS MUSEUM

New York City Building
Flushing Meadows-Corona Park,
Flushing, New York 11368-3398

Museum Hours: Tues- Fri. 10 - 5, Sat. & Sun. 12 - 5:30, Closed Monday

Recorded Information: (718) 592-5555 • Administrative Offices: (718) 592-2405

Free Parking

Letters to the Editors are welcome. We reserve the right to edit all submissions.

Editors: Connie M. Cullen, Marc Miller

Photos: Phyllis Bilick (unless otherwise credited)

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION The Queens Museum New York World's Fair Association

Name _____ Phone _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

My check for \$25 is enclosed

Please make your check payable to:

The Queens Museum, N.Y.C. Building, Flushing
Meadows-Corona Park, Flushing, NY 11368-3398.

MORE POSTMARKED: FLUSHING MEADOW

HELP! - Reader's Inquiries

Please send information answering Reader's Inquiries to the Museum and we will forward to the appropriate writer:



When in NYC last week, I was reminded by your exhibit that it is 50 years since the World's Fair I attended as a very excited 4 year-old. The family went especially to see the Voder in the Bell Telephone exhibit as my father, Stanley S. A. Watkins, had worked out how to use "Pedro" and trained the 24 voderettes who operated the machine at the New York and San Francisco World's Fairs. I am attempting to trace more information about my father during this time and I would be extremely grateful for anything you or other members of the Queens Museum New York World's Fair Association could tell me.

Mrs. Barbara Witemeyer of Albuquerque, NM

Above photo: Voderette operating the Voder, a synthetic voice machine, at the '39 Fair. Photo: New York Telephone. Collection of: The Queens Museum.

I recently read your publication "Remembering the Future" hoping to find a picture of a battery-operated electric car that was owned by the American Express Co. and whose name appeared on the side of the car. This 3-wheel car was used during the 1939 World's Fair and accommodated up to three people. The car was built by the Custer Mfg. Co. of Dayton, Ohio. This electric car was originally belt-driven, but this design did not hold up. Consequently, my father, Alan V. Rochford, was commissioned to redesign the drive mechanism, which he did by changing it to a chain drive. The car was driven all over the Fair grounds. My father showed me pictures of this car when I was a youngster but unfortunately the pictures have disappeared. I am hoping that your Museum can help me find some new pictures.

Alan M. Rochford of Huston, TX



Do you have information about this painting? Annette Bartle, "Bridge," oil painting. Photo and Collection of: Childs Gallery.

Here is a photo of the Annette Bartle painting of the *Bridge* that was exhibited at the 1964 World's Fair: I am looking for any information about the painting: i.e. where was it exhibited at the Fair, who are the people in the photograph and most importantly, is there a straight forward view of the painting without people in front of it? I would be pleased to purchase two copies.

Angela M. Noel of Childs Gallery, New York, NY

Maybe members of World's Fair Association can help me find a book that I have been seeking for over ten years. The book is entitled *Food At The Fair* and it is edited by Crosby Gaige with illustrations by Peter Arno. It was an official 1939 World's Fair publication and it is advertised in the '39 guide book. It describes the "75" restaurants at the Fair.

Bob Harman, Ovid, NY

The Panorama Celebrates Its 25th Anniversary

The contribution of over 125 building models by over 45 prestigious architectural, real estate development and model-making companies, to The Panorama of New York City, highlights the 25th Anniversary year for this beloved permanent exhibition at The Queens Museum.

Five lead corporate sponsors, Emery Roth & Sons, P.C. Architects; Kohn Pederson Fox Associates, P.C.; Rafael Vinoly Architects P.C.; Skidmore, Owings & Merrill, and Swanke Hayden Connell Ltd. plus the Staff at The Queens Museum have solicited these contributions as part of the new program, "The Panorama Campaign" designed to maintain and update the model.

The general public can view these dramatic and sophisticated models, and participate in a wide variety of activities on Saturday, June 23, 1990 from 1-5 PM at the Museum. Pick up a copy of the new brochure on The Panorama of New York City. Of course, World's Fair Association Members are admitted free to the day's events.

SLIDE LECTURE: At 1 PM, Dr. Marc H. Miller, Curator, will give a slide lecture in the Museum Theater on everything you've always wanted to know about The Panorama. Dr. Miller is the author of the recently published catalog, "The Panorama of New York City."

GALLERY TALK: From 2-3 PM, Dr. Miller will take you on a Gallery Talk and point out the unique features of THE MAKING OF THE PANORAMA exhibition.

SHOW: At 3 PM, gather around The Panorama for a free audio-visual tour called *City Safari*, geared for both children and adults, that rivals any sound & light show you've ever seen.

GAME ROOM: Bring you children to the Game Room where from 1-5 PM a Museum Educator will be available to teach you how to play the new *City Safari Board Game* that was designed just for The Panorama.

FAIR PROFILES

Many of the World's Fair donations received by The Queens Museum come from artists and photographers who were actively involved with the fairs. We would like to spotlight two such donors, Alex Siodmak and Whitney Darrow Jr. Siodmak, a photo-journalist, recently donated 58 vintage photographs of the 1939 Fair. Darrow, an illustrator, has donated seven original watercolor drawings used to illustrate a magazine article on the 1964 Fair.

Alex Siodmak



Alex Siodmak's long professional photography career as a photo-journalist began with the 1939 New York World's Fair when a Paris-based picture magazine hired him as their official fair photographer. With unlimited free entry, office space in the press building and a reserved parking space, the young Queens photographer returned many times during both the 1939 and 1940 seasons taking numerous color and black & white pictures.

Siodmak recalls, "the fair was a photographer's paradise" and especially enjoyed photographing in the Amusement Zone because "beautiful girls are always great subjects, and there were so many of them who were most accomodating by posing tirelessly." In addition to the 58 vintage black & white prints that Siodmak has recently donated, he has also in the past donated a large collection of color slides.



Color film had been introduced just prior to the 1939 Fair. "I tried all of the color films then available, but most of the images have long since faded, except for Kodachrome." So well preserved are Siodmak's Kodachromes of the Fair that many are still being reproduced today in books and magazines.

Upper photo: Self-portrait by photographer Alex Siodmak in front of the Trylon and Perisphere at the '39 World's Fair. Photo: Siodmak. Collection of The Queens Museum; Gift of Alex Siodmak.

Lower photo: Fair Corporation President Grover Whalen, left, with Mayor Fiorella La Guardia at the Dedication of the French Pavilion at the '39 Fair. Photo: Siodmak. Collection of The Queens Museum; Gift of Alex Siodmak.

Whitney Darrow Jr.



Whitney Darrow Jr. has had a long career as a free-lance illustrator for books, magazines and advertisements, and for over 50 years his cartoons have appeared in *The New Yorker*. Having enjoyed the 1939/40 World's Fair when he was young, Darrow was particularly happy when in 1963 he was hired by Time Life Books to provide illustrations for their *Official Preview New York World's Fair 1964/65*.

His drawings were such a success that the Fair Corporation used one of his images for a fair poster and also on the cover of the Opening Day Press Kit. Another set of Darrow's 1964 Fair drawings appeared in the July issue of *Woman's Day* magazine. These are the drawings that were featured in The Queens Museum's recent exhibit, REMEMBERING THE FUTURE, and which the artist has so generously donated to us. Today Darrow lives with his wife in Wilton, CT and continues to draw.



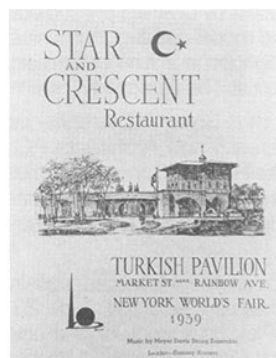
Upper sketch: Self-portrait by illustrator Whitney Darrow, Jr. at his drawing board. Collection of: Whitney Darrow, Jr.

Lower photo: Whitney Darrow, Jr., "See Your Voice Translated Electronically," from the Bell System Pavilion, oil on board, 15" x 18", 1964. Collection of The Queens Museum; Gift of Whitney Darrow, Jr.

COLLECTOR'S CORNER

Other recent acquisitions include:

- Department of Sanitation Uniform Jacket with 1939 New York World's Fair patch. [Donated by Mr. & Mrs. Melvin Berkowitz for the Horowitz Family in memory of the late Max Horowitz.
- By the creators of "The Aprinette," a "Sew and Save 1939 New York World's Fair Apron." [Purchased through the George and Mollie Wolfe World's Fair.
- Kodak Baby Brownie and Camera with Trylon and Perisphere logo. [Donated by Vincent Giananti]
- "Mother and Child" painted plaster statue by Zygmund Olbrys originally exhibited as part of the "American Art Today" exhibition in the Contemporary Arts Building at the 1939 World's Fair. [Donated by Harold Mandelbaum]



Menu cover from the Turkish Pavilion at the '39 Fair. [Donated in memory of Anna and William MacKind]

- Scrapebooks of the 1939 World's Fair and 1940 World's Fair by Anna Mackind which include photographs, written text and over 30 menus from different pavilion restaurants. [Donated in memory of Anna and William MacKind]
- Silk tie from the Du Pont Pavilion and over 100 other souvenirs, photographs, and brochures from the 1964/65 World's Fair. [Donated by Fred Tannery]

SPECIAL DATE: Saturday, December 1, 10 AM - 5 PM. Attend the WORLD'S FAIR BOURSE co-sponsored with the World's Fair Collectors Society at The Queens Museum. Special preview for Association Members from 9 - 10 AM.

Buy a World's Fair Miniature Travel Bag at the upcoming Bourse and fill it with your purchases. Bags made by Bearse Manufacturing Co., New Windsor, NY. Vinyl. 1964-65. Photo: Bearse



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Flushing, NY 11368-3398

**THE QUEENS MUSEUM NEW YORK
WORLD'S FAIR ASSOCIATION**

SOUVENIR SHOP

NEW-Bring home The Panorama with the City Safari Board Game



City Safari Board Game

Two to four players, ages 7 & up, can play this new game. You start at The Queens Museum and are dealt several site-seeing passes. You plan a strategy and a route to visit all your sites, and the winner is the first one to return to The Queens Museum. You'll learn about New York City history, geography and trivia. To order, send check or money order to The Queens Museum for \$22.25 non-members and \$20.30 members [includes NYS tax and shipping].

NEW-First catalog about The Panorama



Panorama Catalog Cover

"The Panorama of New York City by Dr. Marc H. Miller, Curator at The Queens Museum, tells you the history and answers your questions about the world's largest architectural scale model. This 48-page catalog is richly illustrated with vintage photos and has a color centerfold. To order, send check or money order to The Queens Museum, for \$12.50 non-members and \$11.50 members [includes NYS tax and shipping].

Activities cont'd from front page.

Collecting World's Fair Memorabilia Sunday, August 19, 2 PM

Peter M. Warner, co-founder and former President of the World's Fair Collectors Society, will discuss memorabilia from all fairs. Audience members are encouraged to bring World's Fair items they want to know more about.

U.S. Pavilion Plans for the 1992 Seville World's Fair Sunday, August 26, 2 PM

As this newsletter goes to press the debate still rages in Congress over whether or not the government will sponsor an official pavilion for the upcoming EXPO '92 in Seville, Spain. From the United States Information Agency, Jim Ogul, Project Director for the U.S. Pavilion, will tell us about the design and update the situation.

WALKING TOURS:

At 3:30 PM after each Lecture, take a Walking Tour of the World's Fair grounds guided by Pierre Montiel.

FILM SERIES:

Saturday, August 11, 2 PM

"The World of Tomorrow."

Saturday, August 18, 2 PM

"To The Fair," "Unisphere" & "Great Fair, Great Fun."

Saturday, August 25, 2 PM

"Beauty for Ashes," "1939 World's Fair Newsclips" & "RCA at the 1939 Fair."

Panorama Precedents cont'd.

contrast a panorama is usually totally three dimensional with unobstructed views in all directions.] The City of Light was a block-long contraction of New York with over 4,000 recognizable buildings from Brooklyn to Westchester. While the foreground buildings were done fully in the round, low relief was used for the background structures in front of the painted backdrop. The tallest building, the Empire State Building, measured 29 feet. The display was sponsored by Consolidated Edison Company of New York, Inc., the city's principal electric utility. It featured a moving version of the electrically powered subway and elaborate lighting effects, which, like the Panorama, included a day-to-night cycle.