



## NEW YORK CITY LANDMARKS PRESERVATION COMMISSION

Robert B. Tierney  
Chairman

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
**Tuesday, October 16, 2012**  
**No. 12-10**

### ROCKEFELLER CENTER'S RAINBOW ROOM NAMED A LANDMARK

*Famed 1930s Supper Club Becomes New York City's 115<sup>th</sup> Landmark Interior*



The Landmarks Preservation Commission today voted unanimously to give landmark status to the Rainbow Room, the renowned supper club atop 30 Rockefeller Plaza that for decades offered dining and dancing against a backdrop of spectacular views.

An example of Streamlined Modern design, the Rainbow Room located at the east end of the 65<sup>th</sup> floor of 30 Rockefeller Plaza, which was completed in 1932 and originally known as the RCA (Radio Corporation of America) Building. The slender, 70-story skyscraper fills

an entire block bordered by Rockefeller Plaza, Sixth Avenue, 49<sup>th</sup> and 50<sup>th</sup> streets, and is the tallest in Rockefeller Center, also a landmark.

"The Rainbow Room came to epitomize New York City glamour," said Commission Chairman Robert B. Tierney. "It retains not only many of its original characteristics, but also several generations' worth of memories. I'd also like to thank the owners for their support of this important designation, and for their many years of fine stewardship of Rockefeller Center."

Construction of the Rainbow Room, whose name was inspired by an RCA organ that converted music into changing colors, began shortly after the repeal of Prohibition in early 1934 and was completed by September of that year. It was designed by the architects of Rockefeller Center, Associated Architects, with Wallace K. Harrison as the lead designer, and decorated by Elena Bachman Schmidt. Vincent Minnelli, then a celebrated set designer at Radio City Music Hall and later a Hollywood film director, also had a role in the room's design.

The double-height space was conceived as a single volume, with no piers or columns, providing panoramic views of Manhattan through 24, 24-foot-high, floor-to-ceiling windows. Measuring 72 by 62 feet, the nearly square-shaped room features a domed ceiling and circular dance floor surrounded by tiered platforms. Crystal chandeliers and wall sconces by Edward F. Caldwell & Co. and spindles threaded with clear, glass globes support the nickel bronze railings installed along the edge of seating tiers.



The Rainbow Room opened Oct. 3, 1934. Formal attire was required, and dinner, served from 6:30 p.m. until 2 a.m., cost \$3.50 per person. The space also functioned as the Rockefeller

Center Luncheon Club during the day, and was the site of numerous charity balls, musical performances, award ceremonies and other private events.

Over its history, the Rainbow Room and adjoining dining and bar areas were leased to a succession of operators.

To qualify for interior landmark status, a space must be at least 30 years old, architecturally, historically or architecturally significant and be customarily accessible by the public. The Rainbow Room is the City's 115<sup>th</sup> interior landmark, joining other renowned spaces such as the lobbies of the Woolworth and Chrysler buildings.

\*\*\*

The Landmarks Preservation Commission is the mayoral agency responsible for protecting and preserving New York City's architecturally, historically and culturally significant buildings and sites. Since its creation in 1965, LPC has granted landmark status to more than 30,000 buildings and sites, including 1,318 individual landmarks, 115 interior landmarks, 10 scenic landmarks, 109 historic districts and 18 historic district extensions in all five boroughs. Under the City's landmarks law, considered among the most powerful in the nation, the Commission must be comprised of at least three architects, a historian, a realtor, a planner or landscape architect, as well as a representative of each borough.

Contact: Elisabeth de Bourbon/ 212-669-7938