

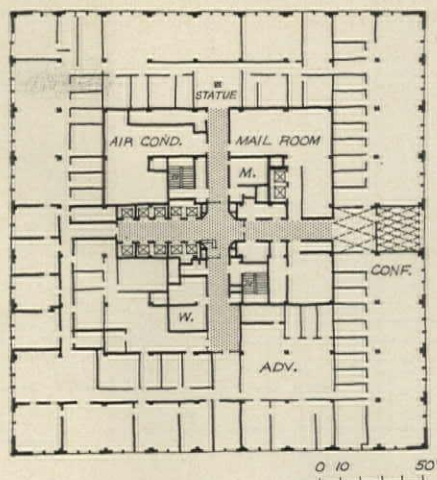
MAX FRIEDMANN



Old offices (above) were cluttered, poorly lighted. New conference room (below) has folded ceiling, graffiti by Nivola.

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CHANGING OLD OFFICES INTO NEW

Like many a company whose offices become inadequate with the passing of years, the recently merged Underwood-Olivetti Corp. was reluctant to give up an old, established stand, in this case the address of One Park Avenue, New York, which Underwood had occupied since 1936. The decision to remodel rather than move to a new building made economic sense as well. Comparable new space was renting at about \$7 per square foot. But even after the landlord increased the rent in exchange for installing air conditioning, Underwood-Olivetti is still paying so much less that the saving will offset its remodeling investment in a matter of a few years.

Particular attention was paid to the executive floor, shown on these pages, although one other floor was also remodeled. In plan, the executive floor was almost square, with elevators, stair wells, and toilets grouped tightly near the center. To organize the space forcefully, Architect Giorgio Cavaglieri established a reception area at the center, with four corridors radiating out.

Good use of art, in keeping with the Olivetti tradition, distinguishes these offices generally, but it is first apparent in the deliberate effort to give each of the four radiating corridors a different character. One corridor, leading to executive offices, is lined with reproductions of frescoes by Piero della Francesca and terminates in a vestibule containing a Roman statue 2,000 years old; another, leading to the presidential suite, ends at a stunning sand sculpture by Costantino Nivola (photos, right). On other walls are original works by Schavinsky, Le Corbusier, Steinberg, Kiesler, and Agostini.

A new acoustical ceiling was installed 2 feet below the structural slab to house recessed lights and wiring, sprinkler mains, and air-conditioning ducts. In the executive conference room (photo, opposite) and in the vestibule adjoining it, ductwork was stopped at the perimeter of the rooms so that a higher ceiling of sculptural plaster folds could be used for dramatic effect. Partitions throughout have aluminum rails and posts, walnut panels, and transoms of plate glass.

FACTS AND FIGURES

Underwood-Olivetti headquarters, One Park Avenue, New York City. Architect: Giorgio Cavaglieri. Mechanical consultant: Nicola Ginzburg. General contractor: Christen-

sen Construction Corp. Total cost for two floors excludes air conditioning paid for by building owner. Cost per square foot: \$11 (\$8 for nonexecutive floor).



Roman statue, 2,000 years old, stands in vestibule (above). Nivola sand sculpture (left) ends corridor to presidential suite. General office space (below) is lighted by continuous fixtures, has partitions of aluminum, walnut, and glass.



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