

175 WEST JACKSON

CHICAGO ILLINOIS

Designed by D. H. Burnham and Company, and constructed in two phases (1911-1912 and 1927-1928), the Insurance Exchange, with 1,320,000 square feet of floor area, was Chicago's largest office building, until the 1960s. The design challenge was to transform the building into a contemporary office property while retaining and enhancing the signature attributes of its highly articulated neo-classical elevations.

The building's interior was significantly transformed by two sets of elegantly proportioned skylights. The first pair, at roof level, enclose two central light courts originally open to the sky, thus greatly reducing the surface area of the exterior envelope—and associated heating and cooling costs. The second pair, above the third floor, serve to provide vertical definition to a dramatic three-story atrium, itself enlivened by a colorful mix of retail uses. All common areas were upgraded with a generous infusion of artistically composed wood, granite, marble and architectural metal finishes and fixtures.

The exterior of the building, a striking composition of enameled brick and terra cotta, was largely restored to its original appearance. Indeed, its overall visual impact (and energy efficiency) was enhanced by the decision to use tinted thermal plane replacement windows. A gesture to the contemporary was made with the installation of sophisticated glass and metal canopies above the main north and south entrances. All office floors were fully upgraded with state-of-the-art mechanical, electrical and communication equipment. Outmoded, outdated and inefficient building systems, formerly housed in the basement, were removed and replaced by an enclosed 250-car parking garage.

CLIENT 175 West Jackson, LLC

SIZE Total: 1.8 million square feet

Office: 1.4 million square feet

Retail: 50,000 square feet

Atrium: 5,600 square feet (75' x 75')

VALUE \$29 million

ROLE Architect, Public Interiors, Planning

COMPLETION October 2002

LUCIEN LAGRANGE
ARCHITECTS