

THE ICAO ART COLLECTION

A GUIDED TOUR



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The ICAO Headquarters building, now located at 999 University Street, Montreal, and inaugurated in 1996, houses a remarkable collection of art and artifacts donated or loaned by the Organization's Contracting States, international organizations, companies or individuals. Fittingly, flight is the theme of many of the works of art that reflect a wide variety of media: ceramics, decorations, furnishings, medallions, mosaics, murals, paintings, sculptures, stamps, tapestries and vases.



*A guided tour of the ICAO art collection begins outside the building itself, whose unique architectural design admirably captures the dynamics of the Organization. Flanked by the flags of Canada, local governments and ICAO, the complex is located along a prestigious gateway into Montreal and contributes immeasurably towards unifying and structuring the city's downtown urban fabric. The building encompasses an area of 40 000 square metres. Severe challenges in terms of noise, vibration and security were presented to the engineers, as the building site is located directly over the westbound and eastbound tunnels of the Ville-Marie Expressway. Two separate steel and concrete structures, a 15-storey office tower and a 5-storey conference block, are joined by a dramatic glass-covered atrium, flying bridges and criss-crossing escalators. The result is a delicate balance of transparency and continuity in a classic, yet modern environment. Limestone and precast concrete represent the strength of the Organization, while back-painted textured glass permits natural lighting to wash the walls with a delicate filtering effect. Although rather discreet due to its position outside the building close to the entrance to the Atrium, the artwork *The Lark Mirror* by Canadian artist Marcelle Ferron and donated by the Government of Quebec, can be appreciated every time one passes it; it is a three-dimensional metal and coloured glass structure nicely reflected into two mirrors.*

Both the office tower and conference blocks can operate fully and independently. Several permutations and combinations of the sliding glass partitions can be programmed in the Conference Centre for different uses, without architecturally isolating any part of the building, aesthetically or visually.





ICAO Lobby



The main lobby is constructed primarily of limestone, aluminium and glass. The vast open space and 40-foot ceiling create an impression of grandiosity and tradition. On the main wall above the entrance to the office tower and the Library, a spectacular mural in anodized aluminium entitled *Man in Flight*, commissioned by Switzerland from the famous Swiss artist Hans Erni, consists of four stories depicting man's endeavours and excursions into space. The central figure of the mural is Daedalus flying towards the sun; to his left, the profile of a woman represents Ariadne, the beautiful daughter of King Minos of Crete, who provided Theseus with the thread which enabled him to find his way out of the Labyrinth. Looking to the right of Daedalus, we first see Pegasus, the winged horse; to the extreme right is a modern man in the classic pose of "Man the Thinker" with his tools and instruments of modern technology.

On the opposite side of the lobby is a large-scale fibreglass model of the *Concorde* aircraft, bearing the colours and markings of Air France and British Airways on opposite sides of the fuselage. In the spirit of the fundamental guiding principles of ICAO, this aircraft was the product of intensive international cooperation when, in November 1962, distinct British and French designs for a supersonic aircraft were merged into a single project and gave birth to the sleek and stylish Concorde, which opened a new era in easier and faster air travel. The graceful lines of the aircraft illustrated by the slender delta plan form offered the best possible combination of low drag, high lift and simplicity. The first prototype made its maiden flight on 2 March 1969. Both Air France and British Airways started passenger operations on the Concorde simultaneously on 21 January 1976, with services from Paris to Rio de Janeiro and London to Bahrain respectively.

Library

Open to the public, ICAO's Library exhibits two acrylic paintings donated by the Government of Canada in 1980. One entitled *Brown, Red and Orange, Ochre, Yellow and Green* is by Montreal artist Yves Gaucher. The other entitled *Limbo* is by David Bolduc, an artist born in Toronto.

One can also view two framed posters that were designed to commemorate the 40th and 50th Anniversaries of ICAO respectively. The 40th Anniversary poster depicts a slightly modified version of the Daedalus's design of Erni's mural, then featuring Icarus which was used on commemorative postage stamps for this Anniversary in 1984. A Terrestrial Globe, originally located in the centre of the Council Chamber when ICAO Headquarters was at 1010 University Street, is also on display in the Library.

Elevator Foyer

From the lobby, a short stop in the elevator foyer of the office tower is definitely warranted. On the wall to the right is *The ICAO Emblem*, an oil painting by Exequiel Martínez, donated by Argentina, showing in allegorical scenes the eighteen technical Annexes to the Chicago Convention on a brilliant blue background. Below the painting, is a showcase containing the commemorative reprint of the original text of the Chicago Convention, surrounded by pictures taken on 7 December 1944 during the Final Plenary Session of the Conference on International Civil Aviation (also called the Chicago Conference), which established the Organization and was held at the Stevens Hotel in Chicago, Illinois. Originally, twelve draft Annexes formed part of the deliberations at the Chicago Conference and from those, eighteen Annexes, most of which are the responsibility of the Air Navigation Commission, are now maintained by ICAO to achieve the highest standardization through a uniform application of International Standards and Recommended Practices (SARPs).

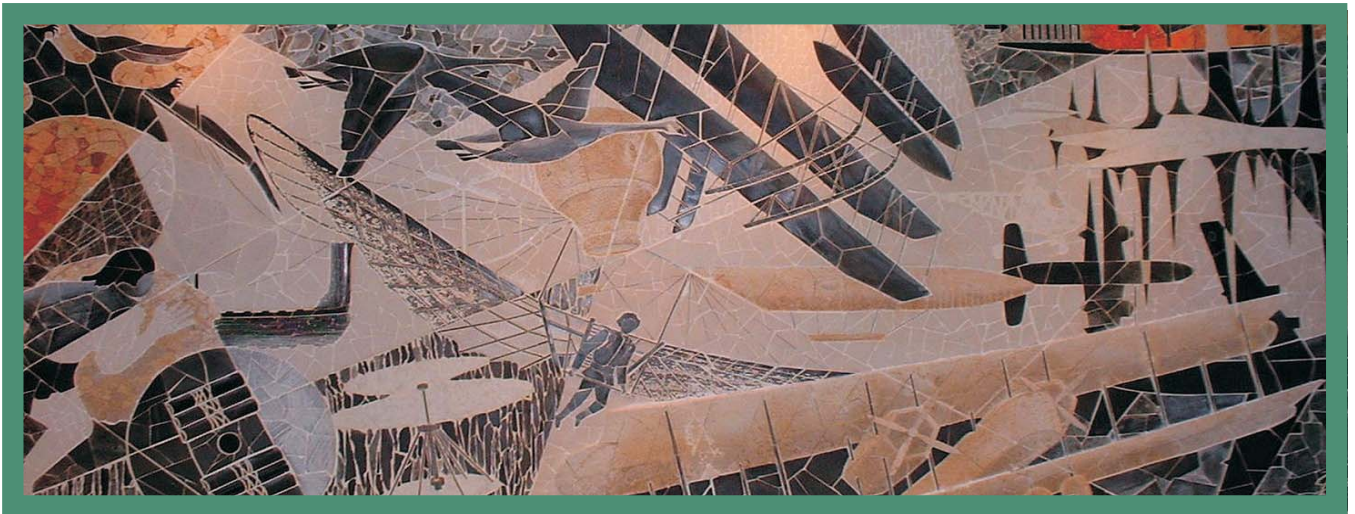
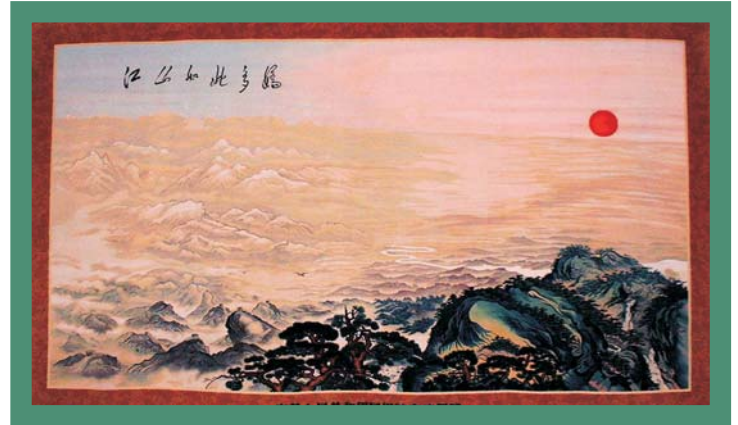


On the facing wall, flanked by the flags of Canada and ICAO, can be viewed the hand-made certificate prepared by calligrapher Luc Saucier which was donated by the Government of Canada in commemoration of the official inauguration of the new headquarters premises of ICAO. The certificate is signed by the various authorities present at the official inauguration on 5 December 1996.

While waiting for the elevators to go to the office tower, one can admire the reproduction in a reduced scale of *The Victory of Samothrace*, a sculpture presented to ICAO by Greece in 1978. There are many magnificent works of art displayed in the office tower which will have to be covered in another article as this particular tour does not take us in that direction.

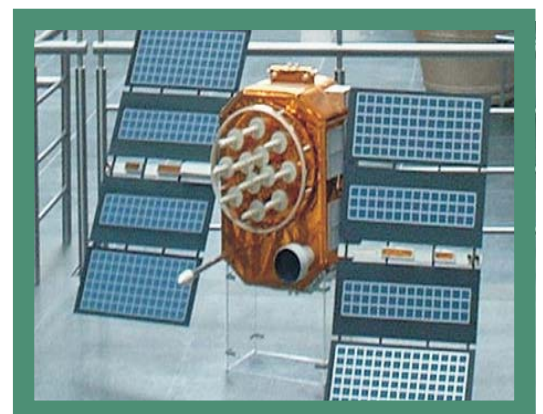
Atrium

Instead, from the elevator foyer we make our way to the conference facilities. Our first stop is the registration area and an imposing tapestry entitled *This Land So Rich In Beauty*. Offered by China, it is adapted from a painting in traditional Chinese style and uses nearly 100 different colours and shades; the theme is borrowed from a poem written by Mao Tse-Tung in 1936.



To the left in the registration area is a mural constructed from sedimental sandstone, with marine life fossils and soapstone, that traces the *Evolution of Flight* from the first life forms through to contemporary inventions; the mural is on loan from the International Air Transport Association (IATA). From primeval earth when the skies were dominated by flying reptiles representing early prehistoric flight, the artist Slavo Z. Alexander Susta depicts early man transporting objects manually, followed by man able to prove that he could fly with mechanical aid and drawings of flying machines until the supersonic jet.

Outside the registration area and perched atop a section of wall near the giant escalators is a full-scale replica of the aircraft *Vuia Nr. 1*, offered by Romania. On 18 March 1906, the Romanian, Traian Vuia, flew his *Vuia Nr. 1* over a distance of 12 metres at a height of 0.6 metres; it is claimed that he carried out the first flight on a self-propelled heavier-than-air aircraft.

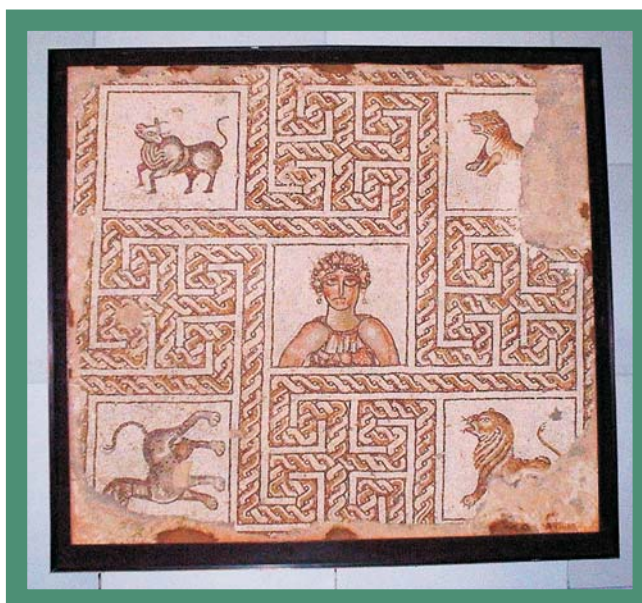
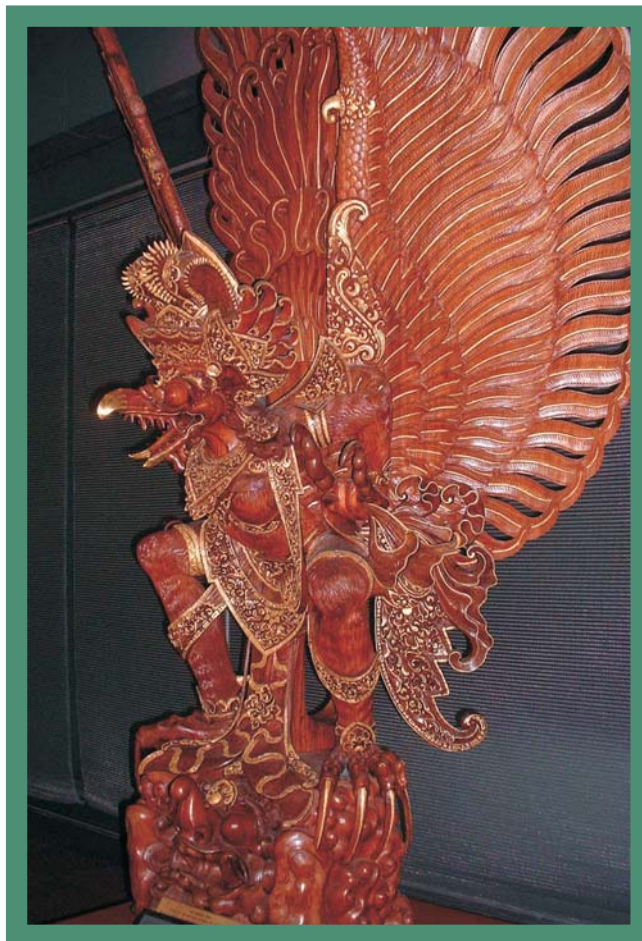


Manufactured by Rockwell Aerospace, a quarter scale model of a **GPS Block II Satellite**, donated by the United States, is exhibited in the Atrium.

Conference Block - First Floor

In the spacious lounge on Level 1 of the Conference Block, we can admire the **Garuda Bird** located in front of the second largest conference room of the building. This mythical Hindu deity, sculptured in Jack fruitwood and donated by Indonesia, represents that country's national symbol of peace and prosperity; its accessories have been hand-painted with Chinese gold paint. To its left, the **Solar Princess** tapestry, designed by Saliou Diouf, is a masterpiece of Senegalese art; the interlaced colours and curves of the tapestry are an expression of things that are born and transformed. This tapestry was the object of postage stamps for the 40th Anniversary of ICAO in 1984.

To the far left is one of the most unusual objects in the ICAO collection, a Byzantine mosaic of the fifth century A.D., **Mosaic of the Seasons**, found in a palace near Beirut and given by Lebanon. Its subjects and motifs are taken from the Greco-Roman mythology. In its centre is a pagan goddess, possibly Nemesis, crowned with a wreath of flowers and fruit. In each corner are animals representing the four seasons - a lion, a panther, a bull, and a griffin which is turned on its side for no known reason.



To the right of the lounge, a highly decorative urn donated by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea offers a glimpse of the Korean countryside overlaid on a terrestrial globe with an illustration of a passenger aircraft bearing the colours of Air Korea. A metal chest presented to ICAO by Morocco provides a good glance of an artifact in copper and wood. The oil on canvas painting *Flights of Freedom and Peace*, offered by Singapore, depicts various species of doves and a vegetation featuring orchids, the national flower of that country.



Delegates' Lounge - Third Floor

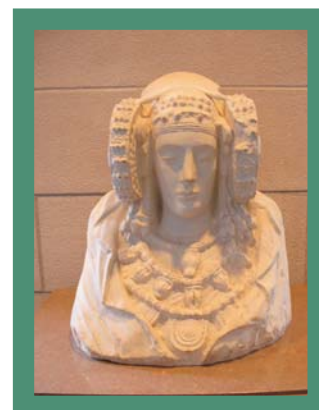
The number and distinctiveness of works of art on display elsewhere on the third floor of the Conference Block is an eloquent tribute to the diversity of cultures and historical traditions of the Contracting States of ICAO.

When we first reach the third floor by way of the stairs or escalators, we come to *Aerial Symphony*, a mural comprised of forty panels of anodized aluminium, designed by Montreal artist Michel Guilbeault and donated by the International Federation of Air Line Pilots' Associations (IFALPA). The mural emphasizes the subtle interface between art and science in civil aviation. Like the IATA mural, it also traces the evolution of flight, this time through a variety of aircraft types, alternating with depictions of eastern and western hemispheres of the earth and brilliantly iridescent hand-coloured butterfly wings. Close by are a replica of the famous bust *La Dama de Elche*, a chalk stone sculpture offered by Spain, and a precious vase made of the finest onyx marble from Pakistan.



The third floor is the best vantage point from which to contemplate one of the oldest objects in aviation history. Hanging between floors in the atrium, is a superb full-scale replica of the *Storm Wing* glider, built in 1894 by Otto Lilienthal, the German aeronautical pioneer who laid the foundation for the design of the first flying machines.

The Air Navigation Commission (ANC) is often referred to as the technical arm of the ICAO Council. The first official meeting of the ANC took



place on 7 February 1949. Framed photographs of all of the past Presidents of the ANC can be viewed when entering the ANC Chamber. The Commissioners and the Observers from the International Air Transport Association (IATA) and from the International Federation of Air Line Pilots' Association (IFALPA) sit in the first circle of chairs in the ANC Chamber; the second circle of chairs is reserved for Observers from various States, other international organizations and other participants at various meetings of the Commission. The room hosts two remarkable works. On the wall behind the chair of the ANC President, the pure wool tapestry *Man in Space*, donated by Romania, represents the winged mythological figure Icarus with the symbols of ICAO and the United Nations in a background of concentric curves that suggest the propagation of waves into space.

Displayed in the centre of the chamber, the bronze sculpture *Vuelo (Flight)*, designed by Leonardo Nierman and donated by Mexico, represents the flight of birds, a picture of absolute freedom, wind and poetry.



The Council is the governing body of ICAO, providing continuing direction to the work of the Organization; it holds three 12-week sessions a year. One of the major duties of the Council is to adopt International Standards and Recommended Practices and to incorporate these as Annexes to the Convention on International Civil Aviation or the Chicago Convention.

In the entrance to the Council Chamber, the *Edward Warner Award mural*, with its dominant blue colour, suggests the idea of infinite space. ICAO commissioned artist Titu Aron to make this mural in 1996. It consists of three square-shaped sections: the left section represents flight, symbolized by a bird in full flight; the right section comprises at its base a block of buildings in downtown Montreal, the silhouette of an aircraft, and a communication satellite; the central part depicts a large replication of the golden medal bestowed on laureates of the Edward Warner Award over a set of rectangular volumes representing the Headquarters of ICAO. The names of the recipients of the award are engraved on plaques mounted below the mural.

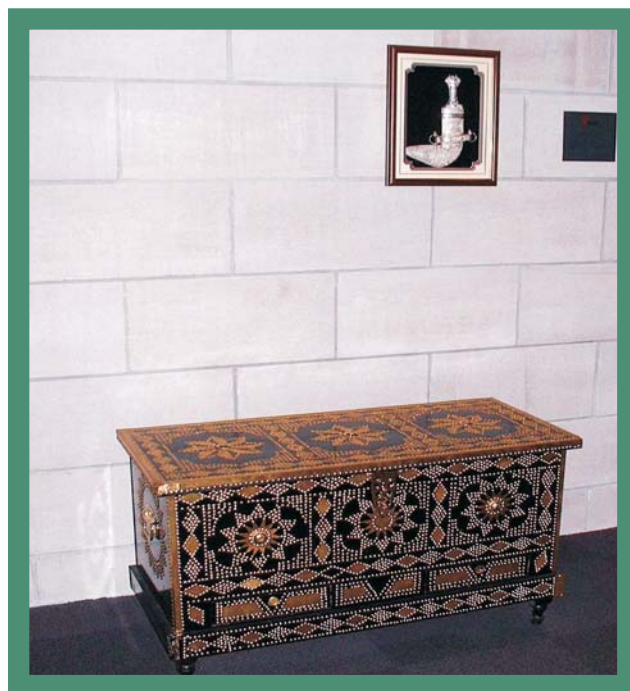




The first session of the Interim Council of the Provisional International Organization (PICAO) met on 15 August 1945 (the same day that the end of WWII was proclaimed) in the Rose Room of the Windsor Hotel in Montreal, and began PICAO's activities. Dr. Edward Warner was elected the President of the Council on that day; he served as President of the Council of PICAO and then ICAO until 18 April 1957. Mr. Walter Binaghi succeeded him as President of the Council and served for nearly 29 years when he retired on 31 July 1976. The photographs of the two past Presidents of the PICAO Interim Council and the ICAO Council are displayed to the left of the Edward Warner Award mural in the lobby of the Council Chamber.

In the centre of the circle of desks where the 33 Council Representatives sit, a freestone globe, offered by the Netherlands, features five birds symbolizing the continents whose flight brings people together; behind the President's chair hangs a bronze crest of ICAO, donated by the former Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR). Flags of the 33 Council Member States are gathered in four groups. The Secretary General and other Secretariat Officers directly involved in Council meetings sit in the chairs beside the President.





The largest single grouping of the ICAO art collection is located in the Delegates' Lounge, a relaxing open area flanked on both sides with the colourful flags of the 187 Contracting States. Listed in alphabetical order by donor country, they include: Australia (hand-painted porcelain vase entitled *Australian Wildflowers*); Canada (soapstone sculpture *Polar Bear*); Chile (mural entitled *Bird Towards the Sun*); Colombia [Replica in gold of the Muisca raft "*El Dorado*" (The Golden One)], Cyprus (two statues: *Aphrodite*, body of the goddess of love reproduced from an antique sculpture, 1st century B.C.; *Hygeia*, reproduction of a statue personifying health, from 4th century B.C.); Egypt (*Winged Isis*, papyrus scroll); France (mural composed of 12 ceramic tiles representing a Montgolfier balloon entitled *Aerostatic Globe*); India (bronze idol of *Ganesh*); Kuwait (sculpture of *Kuwait Towers*); Oman (Chest in teak wood decorated with copper nails, knobs and hinges, and traditional Omani Dagger); Peru (bronze sculpture entitled *Peru through Time*); Qatar (Coffee pot in brass); Saudi Arabia (*Arabic Censer**); and Uruguay (bronze statue of *Icarus*).



Still in the Delegates' Lounge, the fine sculpture in terracotta *Winged Horses of Tarquinia*, donated by the Government of Italy can be seen. It is a rare replica of an Etruscan bas-relief found in 1938 and, by the allegory of two horses, depicts the relationship between Heaven and Earth, between gods and humanity. The Universal Postal Union (UPU) donated the complete collection of commemorative stamps issued by the various postal administrations for the 50th Anniversary of the United Nations in 1995.

Another document related to historical events of PICAO is the framed photograph of the last meeting of its 21-member Council on 7 May 1947. PICAO functioned as an interim Organization from 6 June 1945 until 7 April 1947, thirty days after the ratification of the Chicago Convention by the twenty-sixth State (according to Article 91 of this Convention).

* Note: Presently not on display.



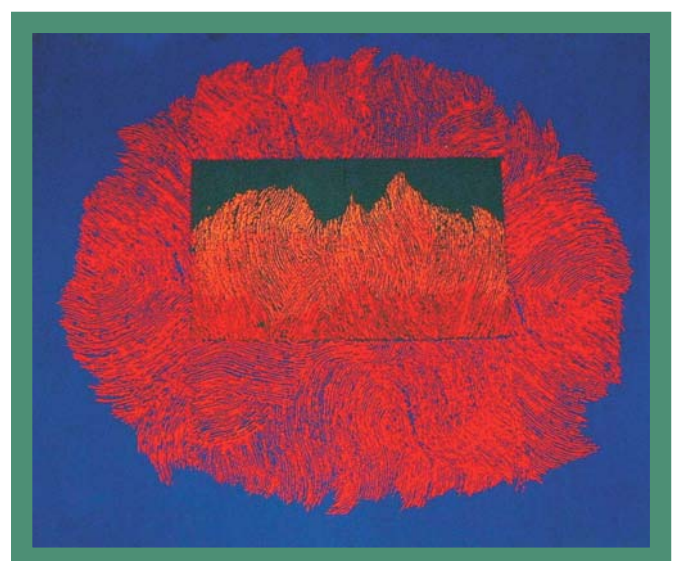
Conference Room 6 is a real showcase. Shortly after the inauguration of the building, craftsmen flew in from Morocco to literally transform the meeting room in genuine style of Moroccan architecture. On the walls, thousands of small ceramic tiles form a beautiful and colourful mosaic. The Zeligeur Cooperative of Fez manufactured them according to processes inherited from eleventh-century traditional art forms. Craftsmen from the Ennasr Cooperative created the plaster design on the walls. The three-dimensional ceiling, richly decorated with typical, intricate designs, is the creation of the well-known Bellamine Traditional Carpentering Cooperative of Casablanca. The furniture of this room was donated by the Civil Aviation Council of Arab States.



On the outside wall of what is affectionately called "The Moroccan Room" hangs *Manned Flight and the Cosmos*, a tapestry donated by the former Czechoslovak Socialist Republic in 1975 and made by the artist-weaver Maria Helena Stecherova of Prague. Made of wool and synthetic fibres, it is a mixture of traditional and long loops and is based on the theme of harmony between all nations in space.

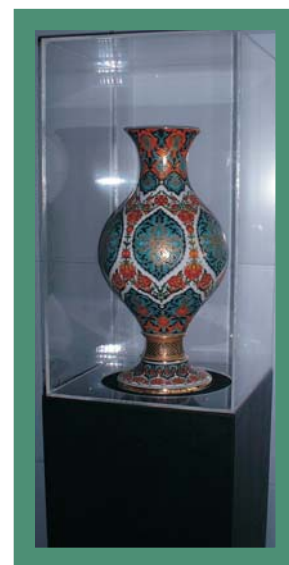
A visit to Conference Room 7 allows one to admire *Nova*, a hand-woven tapestry produced by Aubusson from a cartoon by Patrick Scott of Ireland. The use of blue and red, and green and orange in such close juxtaposition causes the tapestry to "leap out" three-dimensionally towards the viewer. The tapestry was donated by the Civil Aviation Division of the Ministry for Transport and Power of Ireland in 1976.

Near the entrance to the office tower is the imposing mural *Agglomération*, made in terracotta by the famous artist Jordi Bonet and presented by the Government of Quebec on the occasion of the inauguration of the new premises. Several showcases on the third floor exhibit awards, medals and medallions, commemorative plaques and postage stamps.



Level of the Assembly Hall - Fourth Floor

Another escalator takes the visitor to the fourth floor, where one faces the twenty-one foot Gobelins tapestry by A. Porter, *History of Flight*, donated by France. It is based on a cartoon by artist Jacques Villon, who derived his composition from four paintings by Albert Gleizes. Portrayed are four historical or legendary figures associated with the sky: Leonardo da Vinci (Italian artist and scientist and the most versatile genius of the Renaissance), Aladdin and Sinbad (both heroes of the famous tales *Arabian Nights*, also known as *One Thousand and one Nights*), and Icarus (tragic son of the supreme inventor and craftsman Daedalus). The resulting tapestry is a fanciful and colourful mixture of fact and fiction, revolving around the theme of how art and aviation have evolved together. To its left is the diptych *Evolution of Navigation over Time* offered by the then ABS Group, i.e. Austria, Belgium, Luxembourg, Netherlands and Switzerland.



The Assembly of all Members States is the sovereign body at ICAO and is convened by the Council. Originally, the Assembly met yearly (Article 44 of the Convention), until the 14th Assembly Session in Roma in 1962 decided that one Assembly every three years would be the normal practice. Intervening extraordinary sessions may be convened. At these sessions, the complete work of the Organization is reviewed in detail and guidance to its future work is provided.

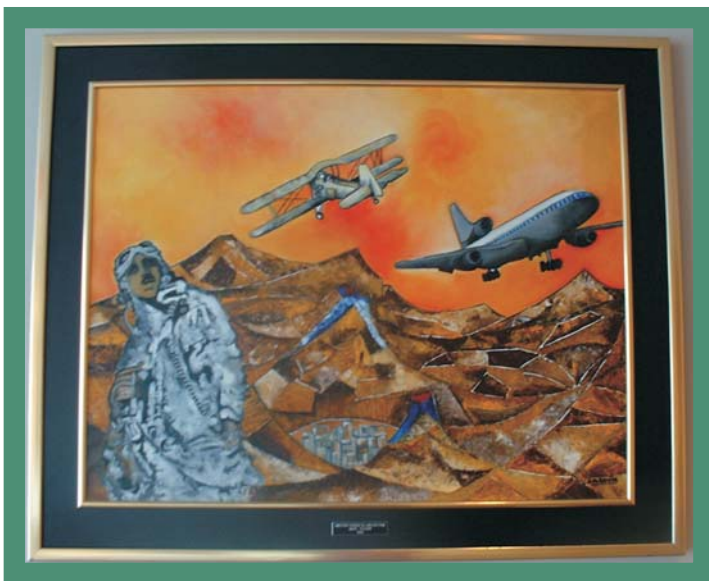
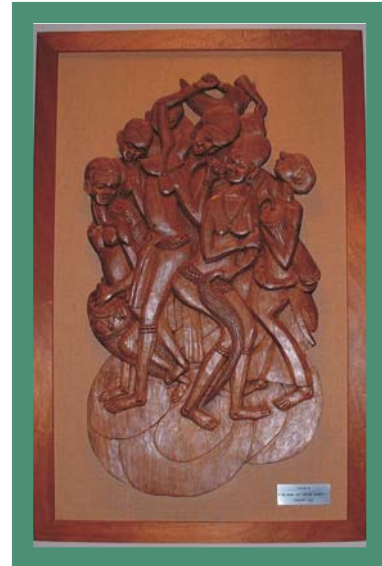
Fully equipped with state-of-the-art facilities (with projection equipment and simultaneous interpretation facilities in six languages), the 900-seat Assembly Hall is beautifully decorated with rare natural cherry wood panelling and aluminium acoustic ceiling panels. It offers from any seat an impressive view of the large bronze crest of ICAO, donated by the former USSR and mounted on the wall behind the raised podium.

In the lobby of the Assembly Hall, two enamelled vases, decorated with stylized flowers and leaf motifs and donated by Turkey, illustrate the art of tile making which flourished in the Ottoman Empire several centuries ago. Displayed on two walls near the elevators are an oil painting called *Constitution Square* donated by Uruguay and a wooden inlaid picture given by Belarus.

Press Gallery - Fifth Floor

The fifth floor of the Conference Block leads to the public gallery of the Assembly Hall. Presented by Brazil, a cedar wood carving depicts the famous performance by Santos-Dumont when he flew his 14-bis aeroplane over the Champs de Bagatelle in Paris, France, in 1906. A cedar wood mural, donated by Ghana, depicts a traditional rural scene of dancers and musicians. Carved in ebony, two statues offered by the United Republic of Tanzania and entitled *Family Tree* and *Motherhood*, symbolize cooperation in the family and among all nations of the world, and closeness of mankind to Mother Earth.

An oil painting by Patricio Dragón offered by Ecuador represents the evolution of flight and its relation to mankind. Resulting from an international art contest organized in 1979, seven drawings made by children show their spontaneity and freshness of expression reflecting continuing excitement about flying. Offered by Sudan, the mixed-material art piece framed in mahogany shows a map of that country carved in ebony; the emblem of the Civil Aviation Administration of Sudan is surrounded by the emblems in ceramic of its 26 states; the colourful background from palm trees is the replica of a traditional wedding carpet.



Our Tour Ends

Although it is impossible to describe all the works of art and artifacts contained in the ICAO art collection in this tour, (some are located in the office tower), the Organization is immensely appreciative of the generosity of donors and highly conscious of its responsibility as the custodian of this world art heritage. Global peace is the mission of the United Nations and of its Agencies. Through the respective art collections, communication among people is promoted, as well as understanding of other cultures and perspectives. The artworks are a window on the central role played by ICAO in helping nations of the world create and preserve friendship; they also remind us about how far dreams and hopes of human beings can go.

