UNESCO: The seeds of peace
UNESCO
The quest for peace has been UNESCO’s goal from the very beginning. The permanent home of UNESCO Headquarters serves as a focal point for the generation of ideas, initiatives and activities, and this influence extends worldwide, bearing a message of peace and prosperity to the furthest corners of the planet. The home of UNESCO also seeks to be a haven of peace, towards which all nations can converge, each with its own rich heritage of knowledge and culture. The Headquarters building and gardens, and the works of art that adorn them, reflect the Organization’s diversity; their forms and colours blend together in a unique, harmonious ensemble.

UNESCO’s home belongs to everyone: it is a place for human rights and humanity’s hopes for a better world. It nurtures the prospect of a world where education will be a right enjoyed by all and the environment will be treasured as an inheritance no less precious than the priceless cultural heritage handed down to us by our ancestors. UNESCO works tirelessly, with deep conviction, to remain true to its calling. The time for sowing the seeds of peace may seem long, but the harvest to be reaped will always be ample reward for the wait.

Koïchiro Matsuura
DIRECTOR-GENERAL OF UNESCO
Confronting the challenges of globalization

A need to be effective  |  17
Sharing knowledge  |  18

Place de Fontenoy, meeting place for the ‘global village’

A path of discovery  |  26
Gabriel's constraints  |  39

Artistic witnesses of their times

Karel Appel (Netherlands): What counts is life  |  42
Jean Arp (France): Creation should be like breathing  |  43
Afro Basaldella (Italy): I let myself forget about representation  |  44
Gyula Halász, known as Brassai (France): The longest branch of the river  |  44
Jean Bazaine (France): A gaze turned inwards  |  46
Alexander Calder (United States): Putting a little bit of the child into everything you do  |  46
Roberto Matta (Chile): The greatest openness to the cosmos  |  51
Joan Miró (Spain): A collective project  |  53
Henry Moore (United Kingdom): Love life  |  54
Pablo Picasso (Spain): It is meaningless to look for things in painting  |  54
Rufino Tamayo (Mexico): Art implies a message  |  56
Eduardo Chillida (Spain): My work begins in the heart  |  58
Alberto Giacometti (Switzerland): The more I build the more I compress  |  60
Charles-Édouard Jeanneret, known as Le Corbusier (France): UNESCO in brilliant colours  |  62
Jean Lurçat (France): A sun, the stars or a moon  |  62
Jesús Rafael Soto (Venezuela): Matter, space and time are one  |  65
Victor Vasarely (France) The spatial universe forms an indivisible whole  |  66

From the Second World War to the third millennium
ENCOUNTER IN SPRINGTIME. KAREL APPEL.
2.80 × 4.20 M
Peace: what an overworked, all-purpose word! Endlessly trotted out like some magic formula, it none the less remains the supreme goal of UNESCO, created in the aftermath of the atrocities of the Second World War. But this goal is not for peace of any kind: not the peace negotiated around a conference table, reduced to the mere absence of conflict, a fragile peace without a future, incapable of securing the support of the peoples of the world. Rather, as proclaimed in UNESCO’s Constitution, it is peace rooted ‘in the minds of men’ and founded on ‘the intellectual and moral solidarity of mankind’.

It is not UNESCO’s function to intervene in conflicts. Where it does occasionally participate in emergency action in order to stay close to events on the ground or play a role in transitions, as in Somalia, Palestine or Bosnia-Herzegovina, endeavours are made to ensure that assistance is closely linked to the goals of prevention, rehabilitation and long-term development. Peace is a matter of trust and perseverance, and the Organization’s task is to sow the seeds of peace one by one, with time as its ally, over wide areas of responsibility in education, the sciences, culture and communication. There is a time for everything: sowing the seeds comes before the harvest. UNESCO conducts actions over the time span of a generation, to say the very least.

For UNESCO, attacking the roots of evil and eradicating the causes of war means engaging the struggle with many other partners, using its own particular kind of weapons against economic misery, social injustice, political oppression, discrimination and exclusion in all their forms. It is
only in this manner that the basis for a new way of living together, as an expression of the common will, can be established. As an intellectual forum, as a laboratory of ideas, the Organization takes action without much publicity but not without results, even if achievements in intellectual life, ethics and morality are not easily reflected on balance sheets.

UNESCO thus played a part in the elimination of the iniquitous apartheid system in South Africa and in fostering the emergence of a ‘democratic, non-racial and unified’ state under the leadership of Nelson Mandela. In keeping with its ethical function, the Organization adopted the Universal Declaration on the Human Genome and Human Rights, which condemns practices that are ‘contrary to human dignity, such as reproductive cloning of human beings’. It has with equal determination endeavoured to protect not only the cultural and natural heritage of humanity, from the temples of Nubia to the monuments of Angkor, but also the intangible heritage of languages, music, rituals and customs that represent our cultural wealth.

The moral authority that UNESCO exercises in matters relating to the life of the mind, and which makes this Organization unique within the United Nations system, means that it sends ethical missions without fear or favour into the most varied fields of human endeavour, from the academic world to the media, from solar energy to water resources (a major potential source of serious world conflict in the years to come), and even to the most advanced sectors of scientific research. To give greater impact to its messages, the Organization channels them through the international non-governmental organizations with which it co-operates and broadcasts them through a wide range of satellite institutions, such as the networks of UNESCO schools, clubs and university chairs.

For over half a century, conferences, declarations and proclamations have punctuated the life of UNESCO – without, it would seem, having achieved the desired effect of bringing about change or altering mentalities and behaviour. Does this mean, as some say, that the Organization is ‘so much hot air’, a ‘voice crying in the wilderness’, a mere ‘talk shop’ where the wise men of the global village indulge their taste for holding forth endlessly on the issues of the day? This would be to overlook the fact that, in an age when the short term is sovereign, UNESCO works within a long time span, that the need for tolerance is not universally self-evident, that democracy requires a long and difficult learning process and, more prosaically, that the squandering of our precious energy will not end overnight.
THE ANGEL OF NAGASAKI.
H. 0.40 M
SYMBOLIC GLOBE. ERIK REITZEL
The Governments of the States Parties to this Constitution on behalf of their peoples declare: That since wars begin in the minds of men, it is in the minds of men that the defences of peace must be constructed; . . .

ABOVE, ELLEN WILKINSON, MINISTER OF EDUCATION OF GREAT BRITAIN, PRESIDING OVER THE LONDON CONFERENCE (11–16 NOVEMBER 1945) AT WHICH THE UNESCO CONSTITUTION WAS ADOPTED.
A need to be effective

The question may be asked whether UNESCO has not developed something of a middle-aged spread with the passing years, whether it has not settled back too comfortably in its role as the moral conscience of mankind, overdiversifying and imperceptibly frittering away its energies. Meanwhile, the mission laid down in the Constitution has not aged one bit. But the world that the Organization keeps trying to change, so that mutual solidarity and tolerance might come about, hardly resembles the one into which UNESCO was born and that it has the task of helping to shape.

Since the fall of the Berlin Wall and the end of the cold war, the world has become much less homogeneous and thus much less governable. Not only do countries still wage war to settle conflicts of interest, but many societies find themselves confronted by problems of racial discrimination and religious fundamentalism. This situation has singularly complicated UNESCO’s task of finding a new way of living together. For this to happen, it is essential to guard against the dangers of a reductive universalism – in which the planet will be subjected to a form of political, economic and cultural ‘correctness’ – along with the temptations of a frenzied retreat into cultural ghettos where any prospect of solidarity will simply disappear.

As we enter a new millennium full of promises and threats, UNESCO needs to get itself back into shape so that it ‘can serve the international community with maximum competence, efficiency and transparency’, in the words of Director-General Koïchiro Matsuura. He has added that reforming UNESCO ‘is not a luxury. If we do not undertake it quickly and resolutely, the Organization will undergo a profound crisis.’

The need to be effective has led him to redeploy personnel – comprising some 2,000 permanent staff, including almost thirty per cent in the field – in order to work more closely with Member States. UNESCO must be in a position to identify, mobilize and make universally available the best expertise, knowledge and ideas produced throughout the world. This cannot be done exclusively from Headquarters, and the need for work at the grass roots has become increasingly obvious.

As a ‘specialized’ agency of the United Nations system, UNESCO must be able to manage and exploit its knowledge capital to maximum effect. Re-establishing a reputation for excellence in its fields of competence through reform and thus rebuilding credibility will be vital in order to restore and re-energize a public image that has become somewhat fuzzy in recent years.
If UNESCO wishes to remain in step with this century, it must correct certain excesses and address the important challenges of the times. It has played, and continues to play, a central role in the thinking that led to the concept of ‘sustainable development’ – ensuring that today’s needs are met without compromising the ability of tomorrow’s generations to meet theirs. Breaking with strategies too long governed by a narrowly economic approach, a new model of growth has now emerged. In developing this new model, the Organization has sought to put human beings at the centre of its concerns in what could be better termed a process of shared progress.

Sharing knowledge

The risk, of course, is that the search for equilibrium in development will be confronted with the forces that have been unleashed by globalization and are already at work, with a growing rift between a minority of ‘globalizers’, in possession of the assets required to move freely in this new domain, and a ‘globalized’ majority, powerless to shape their own destiny amid the upheavals.

How can the vicious circle that makes the poor even poorer and the rich even richer be broken? How can the widening divide between the North and the South be bridged? The Organization’s response to this key challenge is built on the notion of ‘globalization with a human face’. In the words of the Director-General, ‘it is UNESCO’s duty to sound the alarm on the dangers of globalization and to underline constantly the need for equal access for all to what some call the common good.’

To address the problem of ‘runaway globalization’, which may potentially lead to whole communities being excluded, then impoverished, efforts in the years ahead must be focused on three priority tasks. Firstly, UNESCO’s ethical responsibility is to safeguard the common good, which means working to promote the lengthy process of lifelong education for all so that culture, knowledge and learning are brought within reach of the most deprived. Placed on the agenda of the recent Dakar Action Plan, there is a price for this ambitious undertaking: the costs have been estimated at $8 billion dollars a year.

Secondly, the Organization must also encourage grass-roots initiatives that reflect the rich diversity of human aspirations, lifestyles, languages and cultural expressions so as to counter the dangers of ‘human homogenization’ inherent in globalization. And finally, in a worldwide context of uncontrolled growth of new technologies, UNESCO must
promote a better sharing of information and knowledge in general, particularly on behalf of the groups most at risk, namely women and young people.

The defence of universal values – peace, development and democracy – could, on the face of it, justify intervention by UNESCO over the whole range of its mandate and in a multitude of directions. This temptation has been ruled out of order. In order to achieve tangible results, UNESCO has chosen to concentrate programmes and target priorities.

UNESCO will obviously be more necessary than ever in the twenty-first century, even if it must continue to adapt, as in the past, to the requirements of a constantly changing world. The ‘assignment’ that it has been given – building the defences of peace in the minds of men – is not subject to the dictates of fashion. It commits the Organization to an adventure where effectiveness can and will be measured, but for which no culminating point will ever be set.
THE UNESCO BUILDINGS DURING CONSTRUCTION.
UNESCO’s message, and its mission to build peace on the foundation of ‘the intellectual and moral solidarity of mankind’ were felt to be so compelling, so unique and so new, that it seemed obvious that such lofty ambitions should find their embodiment in permanent headquarters of some architectural distinction. At the inauguration of the new building, Director-General Luther Evans considered the challenge to have been met when he spoke of UNESCO as an edifice ‘whose harmony attains the purity of a symbol’ and undertook on behalf of all concerned to make it ‘the living home of eternal culture’.

Some tough bargaining had preceded the choice of Paris as the seat of UNESCO’s permanent Headquarters. An equally hard struggle was necessary before UNESCO Headquarters was finally constructed on the site of what had been the barracks of a Louis XV cavalry regiment, in ‘a quintessentially French landscape’, in the words of Luther Evans. The Site Planning Commission of the French Ministry of Construction was unanimous in its rejection of the site first envisaged at the Porte Maillot. An application for permission to build on the Place de Fontenoy ran up against opposition from the same authorities. ‘Fierce campaigns were waged in the press and even in countries abroad against a project that was regarded as detracting from the splendid proportions of the École Militaire and the Champs de Mars,’ wrote Jean Thomas, who was Assistant Director-General of UNESCO at the time.

‘It was then that Claudius Petit was appointed acting head of the Ministry of Construction. He took advantage of this opportunity to grant planning permission, and his courageous initiative was crucial,’ notes the French
LEFT. MAIN FIRE ESCAPE.
BELOW. CEILING, ROOM IX.
RIGHT. EXECUTIVE BOARD ROOM.
architect Bernard Zehrfuss, who with his American and Italian colleagues Marcel Breuer and Pier Luigi Nervi drew up the plans for UNESCO Headquarters. The new construction, which came before the Georges Pompidou Centre in the old quarter of the Halles, was the first truly modern public building in the French capital.

This leap into the modern world inevitably caused a stir in official circles, some seeing in it the ‘epitome of the House of Babel’, while others hailed it as an ‘astonishing success’. ‘Nowadays,’ Jean Thomas was to declare, ‘nobody disputes that the Y-shaped building on the Place de Fontenoy is a success, and it is pictured in all architectural textbooks.’
Two years (1954–56) were spent designing the building, and extensive consultations were held with the leading lights of world architecture at the time, grouped together in a five-member international panel chaired by Walter Gropius (United States) and including Charles Le Corbusier (France), Ernesto Rogers (Italy), Sven Markelius (Sweden) and Lucio Costa (Brazil). The panel co-operated with another distinguished architect – Eero Saarinen (United States) – and naturally worked very closely with the three architects in charge of the project.

The construction work, under the technical direction of an American engineer, Eugene Callisson, lasted for another two years. UNESCO had foreseen a total budget of $9 million, made available by the French Government as an interest-free loan repayable over twenty-one years. Invitations to tender for the supply of materials, fixtures and furnishings were issued in all Member States. Ten countries – Belgium, Czechoslovakia, France, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, Norway, Switzerland, the United Kingdom and the United States – were awarded contracts.
FOYER OF THE CONFERENCE HALLS, WITH PICASSO’S FALL OF ICARUS.
On 3 November 1958, in the presence of the President of the French Republic, the national flags of the 78 Member States at the time (in January 2001 the Organization’s membership stood at 188) were ceremonially hoisted on the masts flanking the new building. UNESCO was finally moving into its new home. Permanent headquarters were thus established in central Paris on a three-hectare site that had been donated by the French government at the junction of the Avenues Saxe, Suffren and Lowendal, facing the École Militaire, with the main entrance on the Place de Fontenoy.

A path of discovery

At first, UNESCO Headquarters consisted of three buildings. The tallest – a curved eight-storey building (seven storeys plus the ground floor) in the form of a Y, or ‘three-pointed star’, resting on seventy-two ribbed rough-concrete pillars – houses the Organization’s Secretariat. ‘The curved facade and the height leave intact the eighteenth-century plan designed by Jacques-Ange Gabriel [for the École Militaire and the Place de Fontenoy], and they complete the hemicycle,’ observed Bernard Zehrfuss. A second building, flanked by the Avenue Suffren, houses the Plenary Room and committee rooms. It has fluted concrete walls and an undulating roof covered with patinated copper. Finally, alongside the Avenue Ségur, a four-storey cube-shaped building was reserved for the Permanent Delegations to UNESCO and for non-governmental organizations.

Harmonious working relations prevailed among the three architects in charge of the project. Marcel Breuer designed the Y-shaped building, and decided to build the conference hall in the shape of an egg. The concrete pillars were the work of Pier Luigi Nervi, the ‘concrete wizard’, who was in charge of structures. Bernard Zehrfuss recalls: ‘I was responsible for the overall plan, [in particular for completing the hemicycle of] the Place de Fontenoy and leaving the interior spaces open.’ It was necessary, day in and day out, to attend to the minutest details of the vast construction site, and make constant decisions about the various options. The French architect recalls, for example, ‘Firms were reluctant to construct the famous portico over the ceremonial entrance to UNESCO, because the outcome could not be calculated with any certainty, the process being technically tricky. Nervi got everyone to agree by saying that no mathematician had ever been able to demonstrate that the construction of the dome of Saint Peter was possible, but the masons had gone ahead and built it.’
THE GARDEN OF PEACE.
Fourteen countries volunteered to fit out the interior of the building. Among others, France provided one of the committee rooms, Sweden donated the library, Switzerland bore the cost of the delegates’ lounge, and the Netherlands fitted out the pressroom. The interior decoration per se was entrusted to a committee of artistic advisers chaired by C. Para-Perez (Venezuela) and assisted by Georges Salle (France), Shahid Subrawardy (Pakistan) and Herbert Read (United Kingdom); they advised the Director-General of UNESCO on the choice of artwork. A Calder mobile greets visitors on the esplanade or ‘piazza’, a Henry Moore sculpture is silhouetted against the façade of the Secretariat building, ceramics by Miró and Artigas adorn two walls close to the Salle des Pas Perdus, a mosaic by Bazaine overlooks the Japanese garden, a painting on wood panels by Picasso and a tapestry by Le Corbusier are displayed in the foyer of the conference halls, a photomontage by Brassai decorates the cafeteria and a painting by Appel hangs on the wall of the seventh-floor restaurant.

The exterior setting was treated with the same care and intelligence as the interior of the building, and it can be said that it somewhat resembles a path of discovery, in order to signify that UNESCO is at one and the same time a place of work, relaxation and meditation, with peace as its dominant theme. So it was that, from the very start, Isamu Noguchi was entrusted with designing the Garden of Peace. To decorate this maze-garden in the Japanese style, the artist selected some 80 tons of stones – chosen for the beauty of their forms – from a Japanese island. Trees (cherry, plum, magnolia and bamboo), flowers, a stream, a small lake and a bridge add to the harmony of this magical place, designed to purify the mind and spirit of those who enter it.

**ISAMU NOGUCHI, DESIGNER OF THE GARDEN OF PEACE.**
VARIOUS ASPECTS OF THE GARDEN OF PEACE.
On the highest stone in the garden, the *Fountain of Peace*, the word ‘peace’ is engraved backwards in Japanese characters, which can be read in the mirror image of the water below. Facing the garden stands the *Angel of Nagasaki*: this sculpture, which once decorated the Church of Urakami, miraculously survived the building’s destruction on 9 August 1945 by the atomic bomb dropped on Nagasaki. Nearby are the more recently installed *Aeolian Signals* by Vassilakis Takis, a group of five sculptures resembling windmills of varying size and colour; and *Meditation Space*, a single-storey cylindrical structure paved with granite slabs irradiated in the destruction of Hiroshima and subsequently decontaminated, commissioned from Tadao Ando to commemorate the fiftieth anniversary of the adoption of UNESCO’s Constitution.
AEOLIAN SIGNALS. VASSILAKIS TAKIS.
MEDITATION SPACE.
ABOVE, TADAO ANDO, THE DESIGNER.
The opening lines of UNESCO’s Constitution are engraved in ten languages on a stone wall in front of which is planted a very old olive tree. Designed by Dani Karavan, this place of remembrance, called the Square of Tolerance, was inaugurated on 1 May 1996 in tribute to Yitzhak Rabin, the former Israeli Prime Minister assassinated a few months earlier. 

*Symbolic Globe*, the work of the Danish engineer Erik Reitzel, recalls the logo of the United Nations, of which UNESCO is an essential part. This four-ton sphere, with a smaller golden sphere hanging in the centre, is composed of 10,000 ultra-resistant aluminium rods and connections.
That ignorance of each other’s ways and lives has been a common cause, throughout the history of mankind, of that suspicion and mistrust between the peoples of the world through which their differences have all too often broken into war;
UNESCO’s permanent headquarters quickly proved to be too small. One of the members of the Executive Board, Henri Laugier, had already foreseen as much. At a time when quarrels between the ‘Ancients’ and the ‘Moderns’ were still lingering in France, particularly concerning Parisian architecture, he had expressed his thoughts on this problem: ‘French conservatism has placed unacceptable restrictions and limitations on the daring of the builders. . . . It forced them to stay close to the ground and not build higher than the seventh floor. They had to conform to “Gabriel’s constraints”,¹ although I wonder whether Gabriel himself had paid much attention to the constraints of a Clovis or a Charlemagne.’

Breuer and Nervi, obliged to return to projects in their own countries, thus left Bernard Zehrfuss in sole charge of the necessary extension work, carried out with some of the leading architects of the time. He made the decision to create a fourth ‘building’ by literally sinking it into the piazza: it consists of two underground levels lit by six interior patios decorated with trees, flowers and fountains. This operation, completed in 1965, was followed five years later by the construction of a glass and aluminium building on another site near Headquarters in the Rue Miollis. A sixth building, consisting of eight towers in the Rue François-Bonvin, was inaugurated in 1977. The highest tower measures over 50 m and 15 storeys. A seventh building (but without the involvement of the French architect this time), comprising three underground and six above-ground floors, was finished in 1984.

It has been asked whether all these extensions have enabled UNESCO to carry out its mission any more effectively. In a splendid burst of enthusiasm, Henri Laugier declared: ‘The future of the world and the passionate desire of all peoples require that UNESCO should become a monumental Parthenon of universal thought.’ But he had gone on to say: ‘It is my hope that UNESCO will escape the very real danger that threatens it – that of becoming an academy of international bureaucracy.’

¹ ‘Gabriel’s constraints’ refer to regulatory practices in French town planning carried out to achieve or maintain a certain classical homogeneity in the urban landscape. They concern a limitation on the height of buildings, and have been imposed in certain areas of Paris that were laid out in the eighteenth century by the architect Ange Jacques Gabriel (1698–1792), Louis XV’s head architect. These include the area surrounding the Place de la Concorde (formerly called Place Louis XV) and the neighbourhood around the École Militaire. They naturally applied to the UNESCO building since the site forms part of an architectural hemicycle, and they explain why UNESCO has a curved façade and could not be built higher than seven storeys. The constraints did not apply in the fifteenth arrondissement, which is why one of the annex buildings has fifteen storeys.
THE FALL OF ICARUS. PABLO PICASSO. 9.10 × 10.60 M.
Artists as witnesses of their times

It was never the designers’ intention that UNESCO Headquarters should be just a splendid contemporary building proclaiming a message of peace to the generations of the present and future. Their goal was to conceive a ‘total work’, in which the architecture would be closely allied with other artistic forms – paintings, drawings, sculptures, frescoes, tapestries and photographs, expressed in media as varied as stone, ceramic, mosaic, steel, wood and canvas. The result is a unique kind of museum, part closed and part open-air, in which minerals and plants, water and wind are there to continually remind us of the intimate links between man and nature.

Eleven works of art deriving from commissions or donations – most notably the Wall of the Moon and the Wall of the Sun by Miró and Artigas, Calder’s Spiral and Picasso’s Fall of Icarus – were included from the start in the construction plans for the Headquarters building. Over more than half a century, this core collection has been enriched by hundreds of other works, which it would be impossible to reproduce within the limited scope of this volume. Countries, regions, cities, associations and artists have, on various occasions, made donations to UNESCO, as in the case of Zurab Tsereteli’s sculpture Birth of a New Man, donated by the Russian Federation to mark the 500th anniversary of Columbus’s discovery of America, or Antoni Tapiès’s painting Totes les Coses (All Things), presented by the artist to UNESCO on the occasion of its fiftieth anniversary.
Has UNESCO Headquarters come to resemble a huge caravanserai over the years, where works of art and objects of all description have been jumbled together in no particular order? Everyone is free to reach his or her own conclusions about the matter, and be moved by a particular work or left indifferent by another. The many ways in which the artists have expressed their hopes or their anguish, as reflections of their own genius or of their environment, testify to the lively cultural pluralism that the Organization so passionately advocates. Each of these witnesses to their times, moreover, drew inspiration from a common source, a common utopia: namely, the vision of a world finally reconciled with itself.

As UNESCO settled into its new home on the Place de Fontenoy in 1958, eleven very different artists were asked to help breathe life into the headquarters building.

**Karel Appel (Netherlands): What counts is life**

Shapes that emerge from the chaos, like an energy explosion, and then recompose into plants and flowers: *Encounter in Springtime* clearly reflects the style of Karel Appel, situated on the confines of the non-figurative. ‘What counts is life,’ said this artist, one of the most remarkable of the Cobra group, which rejected dogmatism in reaction to intellectual puritanism, figuration, abstraction and the surrealism fashionable at the time. A proponent of determined expressionism, particularly attached to joyful colours and surprising materials, this artist sought to free the act of painting from premeditation and thus liberate the creative power of the imagination.
Jean Arp (France): Creation should be like breathing

Jean Arp, who considered himself a creator of concrete art, refused to make distinctions among the various artistic genres: for him, poetry, sculpture, painting and engraving were all one. In his view, ‘all are the fruit of the same tree. Creation should be like breathing.’ His sensual, rounded forms, buoyant with life, created with carefully studied restraint, convey the tremendous forces that underlie nature and that spring forth in feelings and dreams. Paper, stone, metal and canvas were the tools he used to combine unconventionality with extreme precision. The photograph that shows him touching his bronze relief seems to reveal ‘the importance of the invisible, intangible life that our deficient eyesight never seizes.’
Afro Basaldella (Italy): I let myself forget about representation

Produced during a visit to the United States, *Garden of Hope* is the last major large-scale work of Afro Basaldella. The artist opted for a free and most intensely painterly solution, completely liberated from the influence of neo-cubism, and in keeping with the commission he had received from UNESCO. There is not one line or form in this work that represents the lines or forms of architecture. His concern was that this fresco, where colour – mostly shades of brown – imposes a pattern, could be seen without being looked at. ‘In creating it, I let myself forget about representation,’ he declared. ‘I was guided exclusively by the quality and necessity of my work.’

Gyula Halász, known as Brassai (France): The longest branch of the river

The creator of the photomontage called *The Reeds* was comfortable with many roles: he was a writer and poet, sculptor and engraver, as well as – and perhaps most of all – a photographer. ‘The seeming incoherence of my work was its coherence,’ he declared. In his view, only through plurality of expression could a relatively accurate vision of the world be achieved. He was fascinated by light, and made much use of water and its reflections in his compositions. ‘Couldn’t it be said that human life resembles the delta of a great river, and that the branches represent the possible courses of our lives?’ he asked. ‘All things considered, I see no reason to regret that the longest branch in my own life was photography.’
THE GARDEN OF HOPE. AFRO BASALDELLA, KNOWN AS AFRO. 2.80 × 6 M.
TOP LEFT. AFRO BASALDELLA IN HIS STUDIO.
Jean Bazaine (France): A gaze turned inwards

Considered as the most humanistic of the abstract painters, Jean Bazaine, in his monumental mosaic *Water Rhythm* tried to capture ‘the essential signs concerning the truth of mankind and the universe’. His strongly emotional approach touches on the religious. For this contemplative artist, what is essential is ‘daily illumination, a gaze open to the world, which as we progress increasingly resembles a gaze turned inwards, an act of soul-searching.’ Following the example of his master Matisse, who opened up a ‘lucid and uplifting world’, he sought to discover ‘new plenitude, new purity’.

Alexander Calder (United States): Putting a little bit of the child into everything you do

Alexander Calder’s 10 m.-high mobile in black-coloured steel, *Spiral*, expresses the artist’s desire to capture the wind. Its five arms are set harmoniously in motion by the slightest breeze. Calder was an engineer concerned about getting things moving, literally, in the aesthetic domain. ‘It is the arrangement of forms, colours, dimensions, points and movements that makes a composition,’ he claimed. Calder’s work was much influenced by popular forms of culture. ‘The circus inspired me all my life, [and] having fun means working every day at putting a little bit of the child into everything you do.’
WATER RHYTHM. JEAN BAZAINE. 2.40 × 9.60 M.
SPIRAL MOBILE BY ALEXANDER CALDER. H. 10 M.
That the great and terrible war which has now ended was a war made possible by the denial of the democratic principles of the dignity, equality and mutual respect of men, and by the propagation, in their place, through ignorance and prejudice, of the doctrine of the inequality of men and races;
Roberto Matta (Chile): The greatest openness to the cosmos

The untitled mural by Roberto Matta, in an original architectural setting, reveals a ‘utopian spirit’ characterized, in his own words, by ‘the greatest openness to the cosmos’. This artist was closely associated with the surrealist movement, seen by him as ‘the only discipline that makes permanent change possible’. Eros and desire are dominant themes in his cybernetic compositions, in which insects, larvae, totems and strange machines come together in a monumental but perfectly controlled delirium. His works form a revolutionary saga that traces the worldwide struggle against imperialist regimes and affronts to human freedom.
WALL OF THE MOON (ABOVE) AND WALL OF THE SUN.
JOAN MIRÓ AND JOSEP LLORENS ARTIGAS. ENAMELLED CERAMIC. 2.20 × 7.50 M.

RIGHT. MIRÓ AT UNESCO.
P. 53. MIRÓ AND ARTIGAS IN FRONT OF THE MODEL FOR THE WALL OF THE MOON.
Joan Miró (Spain): A collective project

‘Painting a mural is the opposite of creating in isolation,’ declared Joan Miró, who with ceramist Josep Artigas composed the Wall of the Moon and the Wall of the Sun, featuring respectively the blue crescent of the moon and the red disc of the sun. This collective project was carried out, not in the solitude of the artist’s studio, but on the UNESCO construction site itself, in contact with the architects, engineers and workmen and with the plans and building materials. ‘The design and colouring for my walls were suggested by the shapes of the buildings themselves, their spatial structure and the play of light,’ Miró explained. ‘I wished to integrate my work into its setting by placing it in contrast with the building’s architecture.’
Henry Moore (United Kingdom): Love Life

Like all of Henry Moore’s works, *Reclining Figure* is designed to sit outdoors and breathe. The gnarled and twisted form of this 39-ton sculpture in Italian travertine, which seems to speak the language of a root or tree-trunk, is intended to express the essential energy stored up in the mineral as well as the plant world. The impetus for Moore’s work comes from a confrontation between the design created by the artist and the stone to be sculpted. ‘I work from a small model that I hold in my hand and rotate so as to view it from each side.’ In his view, the role of the artist is to ‘love life, contemplate nature and express pleasure’.

Pablo Picasso (Spain): It is meaningless to look for things in painting

What was Pablo Picasso trying to ‘say’ with these forty wooden panels mounted on an 80-m’ wall in the form of a trapezium? Any number of interpretations are possible. Does it represent the work that was commissioned, the *Fall of Icarus*? In that case, a message of pathos would derive from the depiction of the winged figure, scorched by the sun and plummeting into the abyss. Or is this, as Picasso himself maintained, ‘just people bathing’? This artist of extremes, about whom we really know very little, exploited every kind of artistic process, borrowing and pastiche as means of self-expression. ‘It is meaningless to look for things in paintings,’ he observed, ‘what counts is finding things.’

PICASSO’S ACCEPTANCE OF THE COMMISSION FROM UNESCO FOR THE FALL OF ICARUS: ‘OKAY’.
RECLINING FIGURE. HENRY MOORE. SCULPTURE IN TRAVERTINE LIMESTONE.

OPPOSITE PAGE. HENRY MOORE WITH RECLINING FIGURE.
Rufino Tamayo (Mexico):
Art implies a message

Rufino Tamayo holds that ‘art must be contemporary; it must not deal with memories, but with what is happening; it implies a message.’ This is reflected in his painting *Prometheus Bringing Fire to Mankind*. He expressed the hope that ‘the light that supposedly radiates from the fire of my faintly luminous Prometheus will illuminate the minds of those who have undertaken the huge task of uniting the world through culture!’ For the creator of this brazier of glowing embers, who drew inspiration from the realms of both the fantastic and the natural, ‘the secret of colour lies not in the use of every colour that exists, but rather in the manipulation of just a few of them, from which one extracts all the tonal possibilities.’
Down the years, over the course of almost a half a century, numerous donations have enriched the collection of works that adorn the interior and grounds of UNESCO Headquarters.

**Eduardo Chillida (Spain): My work begins in the heart**

While visiting the Louvre, Eduardo Chillida chanced upon a badly broken but magnificent marble hand lying in a showcase, and this gave him sudden insight into ‘the primordial role of light in Greek art’. Afterwards ‘came the modulations, the subtle forms, but always expressed in true light’. The pure creative energy that enables him to achieve the exact proportions, perfect volumes and most authentic forms in his sculptures, whether in wood, iron or stone, is like a telluric force obeying biological laws, bestowing life on the inanimate. ‘My work begins in the heart,’ he declared.
Alberto Giacometti (Switzerland): The more I build, the more I compress

Obsessed by the impossibility of rendering ‘the extreme complexity of sensations’, since all forms disintegrate into ‘particles that move over a deep dark void’, Alberto Giacometti portrays thin, rigid figures petrified above the abyss, like Walking Man I, in an attempt to reach ‘the bare bones of the model, the permanent in the void’. He said of his art that it ‘is the necessary means to become more aware of what I see’. ‘The more I build, the more I compress. A man walking in the street weighs nothing, much less in any case than the same man dead or unconscious. It is precisely this lightness that, unconsciously, I wish to suggest.’
Charles-Édouard Jeanneret, known as Le Corbusier (France): UNESCO in brilliant colours

Not only was Le Corbusier associated with the design of UNESCO’s Headquarters as a member of the ad hoc international panel, he also signed a sketch for a tapestry that evokes, in brilliant colours, the plan of the building. This large-scale work (3.50 m × 6.80 m), donated to the Organization by Switzerland, his country of origin, was made in the former royal factory of Aubusson in central France. Architect, painter, designer and writer, this multi-faceted artist, who also created the Cité Radieuse in Marseille, produced twenty-seven sketches for tapestries, based mostly on themes inspired by his paintings.

Jean Lurçat (France): A sun, the stars or a moon

The creator of over a thousand sketches for tapestries woven in Aubusson from 1933 onwards (later at the Gobelins factory), Jean Lurçat produced monumental works, often militant in nature, for churches and public buildings. His work was essentially based on the repetitive use of symbols, set off by stylized, light-toned and compact designs, in which plants often served to fill out the motifs, as exemplified in The Tower and the Sun. As he explained it, ‘I feel that a tapestry, a wall or even a piece of jewellery remains exclusively decorative, and will always be a little lacking in substance, if I have not included in it a sun, the stars or a moon.’
UNESCO. BASED ON A SKETCH BY LE CORBUSIER. TAPESTRY. 3.50 × 6.80 M.
Jesus Rafael Soto (Venezuela): Matter, space and time are one

Jesus Rafael Soto believes that ‘art is the tangible knowledge of what is immaterial.’ He sought to awaken in the spectator a profound sense of the situation of the human being in the world, ‘in order to make it obvious, through a continuum of vibrations, that matter, space and time are one’. To achieve this, he set out to depersonalize the work of art in order to universalize it. He created ‘ambiguous spaces’, ‘metamorphoses’, ‘intangible curves’ by means of parallel rods hanging from nylon threads, which ‘as the vantage point shifts, disappear to become no more than vibrations’. His quest for a universal language led him, quite naturally, into pure abstraction.
Victor Vasarely (France): The spatial universe forms an indivisible whole

‘Small, seemingly insignificant facts’ influenced the development of Victor Vasarely. First they enabled him to grasp the ‘unitary constant of the universe’, whose structures he wished to understand in their true depth. Then they revealed to him the powerful geometry of nature: ‘I now know that the outside and the inside communicate by osmosis, or, to put it more precisely, that the spatial universe forms an indivisible whole’. In City-Neu [New-City], he created alternations between substance and form, making it possible to ‘read’ the composition either in concave or in relief – somewhat like an optical illusion. As the founder of kinetism, he incorporated movement into the work along with an element of play.
LITHOGRAPHS BY VICTOR VASARELY.

CITY-NEW (NEW-CITY), VICTOR VASARELY. PAINTING. 2.20 × 8 M.
That the wide diffusion of culture, and the education of humanity for justice and liberty and peace are indispensable to the dignity of man and constitute a sacred duty which all the nations must fulfil in a spirit of mutual assistance and concern;
MADRES Y NIÑOS [MOTHERS AND CHILDREN]. OSWALDO GUAYASAMIN. 4.72 × 6 M.
TOWARDS FREEDOM. LAZARE VUJAKLIJA. TAPESTRY. 1.94 × 4.00 M.

EXPLODING SUN. ROSA MARÍA PUJOL AVELLANA. 1.75 × 1.95 M.

LA PAZ Y EL SOL. XAVIER CARBONELL. 1.12 × 1.61 M.

RIGHT. N’DAANAAN. MODU NIANG. TAPESTRY. 3 × 2.28 M.
DOOR IN OKUME WOOD. MOHAMED GHANI. IRAQ. 1.96 × 2.35 M.

SAHARA MEMORY. AÏCHA HADDAD. 1.10 × 1.60 M.
UNESCO: ROBERT JACOBSEN. H. 5.50 M.
PYROGRAPHIC DESIGN ON STRETCHED COWHIDE.
BURKINA FASO. 1.56 × 1.72 M.

FRAGMENT OF A MUMMY SHROUD. PERU
WOOL AND COTTON FABRIC. 1.36 × 2.17 M.
ANNA MAGDALENA ABAKANOWICZ. WOOLEN TAPESTRY. 2.73 × 3.35 M.
JESUS AMONG THE DOCTORS. COPY OF A FIFTH-CENTURY MOSAIC. DATED 1727.
DIANA THE HUNTRESS. ROMANIAN MOSAIC. THIRD CENTURY AD. 1.64 × 2.48 M.
That a peace based exclusively upon the political and economic arrangements of governments would not be a peace which could secure the unanimous, lasting and sincere support of the peoples of the world, and that the peace must therefore be founded, if it is not to fail, upon the intellectual and moral solidarity of mankind.
BUDDHIST DIVINITY FROM CAMBODIA.
TWELFTH–THIRTEENTH CENTURY. H. 0.86 M.
PTY MHY POLYCHROME TERRACOTTA
EGYPTIAN STATUE. 2400 BC.
THRACIAN HERO ON HORSEBACK. VOTIVE STONE BAS-RELIEF. SECOND CENTURY AD.
THE CONTRIBUTION OF THE PEOPLES OF THE USSR TO WORLD CULTURE AND CIVILIZATION.

SERGEIVITCH GLAZUNOV. PAINTING. 2.12 × 6.48 M.

THE EARTH SENDS THE FLUIDS OF LIFE AND EFFLORESCENCE TO THE WORLDS OF THE UNIVERSE (DETAIL). LUDMILA MASHKOVA. CERAMIC. 2.99 × 14 M.
HOLGRAMS DEPICTING ANTIQUE JEWELRY AND A CRUCIFIXION SCENE. 0.28 × 0.40 M.
THE GOBLIN. COPY OF A MAYA STELE. 1.31 × 3.74 M.

ENYAMUCHERA. EL KANA O’ONGESSA. H. 1.60 M.
For these reasons, the States Parties to this Constitution, believing in full and equal opportunities for education for all, in the unrestricted pursuit of objective truth, and in the free exchange of ideas and knowledge, are agreed and determined to develop and to increase the means of communication between their peoples and to employ these means for the purposes of mutual understanding and a truer and more perfect knowledge of each other’s lives;

ALL THINGS. ANTONI TAPIÉS. 2.25 × 4.45 M.
Chinese paintings on rice paper. Scenes from everyday life. Musical scenes. 0.19 x 0.32 m.
PASTORAL SCENE WITH MONGOLIAN NOMADS. 1.30 × 1.80 M.
CULTURA PETRIFICADA. RAMON OVIEDO. 1.56 × 4.66 M.
COMPOSITION. ELLSWORTH KELLY. 4.40 × 4.50 M.
MOTHER AND CHILDREN.
NINETEENTH CENTURY. 1.00 × 1.24 M.

MAN AND WOMAN CONVERSING. FLEMISH SCHOOL.
EIGHTEENTH CENTURY. 0.91 × 1.13 M.

THE CARD GAME (OR, THE CARD SHARKS).
FRENCH SCHOOL. NINETEENTH-CENTURY IMITATION
OF EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY STYLE.
HORSES TOWING A BARGE. 1883. EDMOND DEHODENCO. $1 \times 1.64$ M.

PORTAIT OF STANDING WOMAN, FULL-FACE. ADLER. $0.55 \times 0.65$ M.
WOMAN. KIYOKATA KABURAGI. 0.85 × 1.20 M.

O QUAN CHUONG. NGUYỄN HOÀNG HUNG. 1.10 × 1.50 M.

WILD GRASSES AND THE WIND. PARK KWANG-JIN. 0.60 × 0.90 M.
PEOPLE SCAPE. ABLADE GLOVER. 1 × 1.52 M.
The purpose of the Organization is to contribute to peace and security by promoting collaboration among the nations through education, science and culture in order to further universal respect for justice, for the rule of law and for the human rights and fundamental freedoms which are affirmed for the peoples of the world, without distinction of race, sex, language or religion, by the Charter of the United Nations.

Article I, paragraph 1. Constitution of UNESCO (1945)
THE DANCE OF THE AMAZONS. SINZOGAN. 0.62 × 0.96 M.
SPACE FLIGHT. INGA SAVRANSKAIA. H. 0.59 M.

THE BIRTH OF A NEW MAN.
ZURAB Tsereteli. H. 1.55 M.

BIRD COMPOSITION. ELIA AJOLFI. H. 1.80 M.
YOUNG GIRL. CHURYO SATO. H. 1.78 M.

CHINESE JUGGLER OF THE EASTERN HAN DYNASTY (REPRODUCTION). H. 0.45 M.
TORANATHAM-SHIVA. VISHNU. NEPALESE CARVED WOOD. H. 0.42 M.

KHATCHKAR. ARMENIAN STONE CROSS. 0.80 M × 3 M.

TORANATHAM-SHIVA. VISHNU. NEPALESE CARVED WOOD. H. 0.42 M.
SEATED COUPLE. ELENA LAVERÓN. BRONZE SCULPTURE. H. 1.75 M.

LOVE AND PEACE. TRIPTYCH. 2.25 × 6.84 M.
PATINATED TERRACOTTA VASE. IN THE ANTIQUE STYLE. H. 38 CM.

MARBLE FUNERARY LECYTHUS. FOURTH CENTURY BC. H. 1.20 M.
TERRACOTTA AMPHORA FROM CUCUTENI SITE IN ROMANIA (5000–3000 BC). H. 0.50 M.

TRADITIONAL MOROCCAN EARTHENWARE. LATE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY.
THREE-MASTED WOODEN SHIP. MAURITIUS. 0.60 × 0.80 M.

SILVER SAILBOAT. BANGLADESH.

THE SOHAR. SAILBOAT. SCALE MODEL. 0.80 × 0.98 M.
BUDDHA MEDITATING
XAVIER DAMBRINE. H. 1.60 M.
THE LAMB. MASHI SHUSOH. 0.80 × 1 M.
1945
Signing of Draft Constitution of UNESCO by 37 States in London.

1946
Entry into force of UNESCO’s Constitution with ratification by twentieth signatory State, Greece. Julian Huxley (United Kingdom) Director-General of UNESCO. First National Commission for UNESCO in Brazil.

1947
Adoption of a programme focused on reconstruction and rehabilitation of educational, scientific and cultural life in war-devastated countries. First UNESCO Associations in Japan and the United States. Opening of UNESCO Library.

1948
Jaime Torres Bodet (Mexico) Director-General of UNESCO. Inauguration of fellowship and study grant programme. Creation of International Union for the Protection of Nature (IUPN).

1949
First International Conference on Adult Education in Elsinore (Denmark). Information campaign to expose the fallacies of racism. Creation of International Music Council (IMC).

1950
First conference of representatives of international non-governmental organizations (NGOs) co-operating with UNESCO.

1951
Japan 60th Member State of UNESCO.

1952
Director-General of UNESCO resigns. Adoption of Universal Copyright Convention.

1953
Luther Evans (United States) Director-General of UNESCO. Establishment of Associated Schools System.
1954
USSR 70th Member State of UNESCO.
Adoption of image of the Parthenon as UNESCO’s emblem.
Adoption of Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict.

1955
Creation of Youth Section within Department of Education.

1956
South Africa withdraws from UNESCO.

1957
Launching of Major Project on Arid Lands.
UNESCO co-operates in establishing first International Centre for Higher Education in Journalism in Strasbourg.

1958
Vittorino Veronese (Italy) Director-General of UNESCO.
Inauguration of UNESCO’s new permanent Headquarters building, Place de Fontenoy, Paris.

1959
Meeting in Paris of International Conference on Information Processing.

1960
Seventeen African states join UNESCO.
Establishment of Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission (IOC).
Launching of Nubia campaign with dismantling of Great Temple of Abu Simbel.

1961
Director-General of UNESCO resigns.
Launching of UNESCO Collection of Traditional Music.

1962
Rene Maheu (France) Director-General of UNESCO.

1963
First edition of UNESCO’s Statistical Yearbook.
Publication of survey of the natural resources of the African continent.

1964
Creation of Department of Advancement of Science.

1965
Launching of International Hydrological Decade.

1966
UNESCO contributes to first World Festival of Negro Arts.

1967
First International Literacy Day.
Publication of report on the effects of apartheid.

1968
Re-election of René Maheu for new six-year term.
First Intergovernmental Conference on the Biosphere.

1969
International symposium on the origins of modern man.

1970
Inauguration of UNESCO’s fifth building, Rue Miollis, Paris.
Adoption of Convention on the Means of Prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit Import, Export and Transfer of Ownership of Cultural Property.

1971
Recognition of People’s Republic of China as only legitimate representative of China.
Establishment of Man and the Biosphere (MAB) Programme.

1972
Adoption of Convention concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage.
Launching of Campaign for the Safeguarding of the Temple of Borobudur in Indonesia.

1973
International congress on the Sun in the Service of Mankind.

1974
Amadou-Mahtar M’Bow (Senegal) Director-General of UNESCO.
John XXIII Peace Prize awarded to UNESCO.

1975
Establishment of UN University in Tokyo under joint auspices of United Nations and UNESCO.

1976
Creation of General Information Programme.

1977
First meeting of World Heritage Committee.
Appeal by Director-General for the Safeguarding of the Acropolis of Athens.

1978
Inauguration of sixth Headquarters building, Rue François-Bonvin, Paris.
Publication of Soil Map of the World, in collaboration with FAO.
1979
Publication of two reports concerning tropical ecosystems, in collaboration with UNEP and FAO.
First meeting of editorial committee for publication of The Different Aspects of Islamic Culture.

1980
Creation of International Programme for the Development of Communication (IPDC).
Initiation of study on New World Information and Communication Order (NWICO).
Publication in French of first two volumes of General History of Africa.

1981
Pluridisciplinary scientific conference on ecology in action.

1982
World Conference on Cultural Policies (Mondiacult), Mexico City.

1983
First International Congress on Biosphere Reserves, Minsk (Belarus).

1984
United States of America withdraws from UNESCO.
Adoption of Action Plan for Biosphere Reserves.
Inauguration of seventh Headquarters building, Rue François-Bonvin, Paris.

1985
United Kingdom withdraws from UNESCO.
Launching of Intergovernmental Informatics Programme.

1986
International meeting on sustainable development of small islands.

1987
Federico Mayor Zaragoza (Spain)
Director-General of UNESCO.
UNESCO participates in International Conference on Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking.

1988
Laying of foundation stone of new Library of Alexandria.

1989
International Congress on Peace in the Minds of Men, Yamousoukro (Côte d’Ivoire).
Adoption of new communication strategy after abandonment of NWICO.
Launching of Priority Africa programme.

1990
World Conference on Education for All, Jomtien, Thailand.
World Summit for Children in New York.

1991
Windhoek Declaration on Promoting an Independent and Pluralistic African Press.
Inscription of monuments of Angkor on World Heritage List.
Former USSR replaced at UNESCO by Russian Federation.
Reform of Executive Board, to be composed of representatives of Member States rather than distinguished individuals.

1992
Creation of World Commission on Culture and Development.

1993
World Conference on Human Rights in Vienna.
Establishment within UNESCO of International Bioethics Committee.

1994
World Conference on Natural Disaster Reduction in Yokohama.
Creation of Management of Social Transformations (MOST) Programme.
Creation of Analysis and Forecasting Unit (AFU).
International Conference on Population and Development in Cairo.
South Africa returns to UNESCO.

1995
Audience Africa convened at UNESCO Headquarters, Paris.
World Summit for Social Development in Copenhagen.
Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing.
Fiftieth anniversary of UNESCO.
Adoption of Declaration of Principles on Tolerance.

1996
World Solar Summit, Harare.
World Food Summit, Rome.

1997
United Kingdom returns to UNESCO.
International Conference on Adult Education in Hamburg.
Adoption of Universal Declaration on the Human Genome and Human Rights.
1998

Establishment of World Commission on the Ethics of Scientific Knowledge and Technology (COMEST).
World Conference on Higher Education in Paris.

1999

Second International Congress on Technical and Vocational Education in Seoul.
World Conference on Science in Budapest.
Koïchiro Matsuura (Japan) Director-General of UNESCO.
Establishment of UNESCO Institute for Statistics

2000

World Education Forum on Education for All, Dakar (Senegal).
United Nations Millennium Summit and United Nations Millennium Development Goals

2001

Convention on the Protection of the Underwater Cultural Heritage
UNESCO Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity
International Conference on Freshwater, Bonn
World Conference against Racism, Durban

2002

World Summit on Sustainable Development, Johannesburg
Inauguration of new Library of Alexandria, Egypt
United Nations Year for Cultural Heritage
First Education for All Global Monitoring Report
Reconstruction of Mostar bridge, symbol of intercommunity dialogue in Bosnia and Herzegovina
International Year of Mountains

2003

Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage 2003-2012, United Nations Literacy Decade
World Summit on Information Society – First phase, Geneva
International Declaration on Human Genetic Data
International Year of Freshwater
UN First World Water Development Report
Establishment of UNESCO-IHE Institute for Water Education in Delft
United States returns to UNESCO

2004

International Year to commemorate the Struggle against Slavery and its Abolition 2004-2005. After massive tsunami in Indian Ocean, UNESCO proposes warning system similar to that already existing in the Pacific
Universal Forum of Cultures, Barcelona.
UNESCO: Forum’s main partner
Launch UNESCO Creative Cities Network

2005

Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions
2005-2014, United Nations Decade of Education for Sustainable Development
World Summit on the Information Society – Second phase, Tunis
Universal Declaration on Bioethics and Human Rights
Mauritius Strategy for Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States
Brunei Darussalam 191st Member State of UNESCO
2005 World Summit, New York
International Conference for Development of Tsunami and Coastal Hazards Warning System for the Caribbean Sea and Adjacent Regions, Mexico City
International Year of Microcredit
Second International Decade of World’s Indigenous People

2006

International Year of Deserts and Desertification
World Conference on Arts Education, Lisbon
Global Campaign for Disaster Reduction Education
Creation of UNESCO-Vocations Patrimoine fellowships to help prepare site managers to meet heritage challenges

2007

Montenegro 192nd Member State of UNESCO
Singapore 193rd Member State of UNESCO
Opening of International Slavery Museum in Liverpool, with the support of UNESCO’s Slave Route Project
Afghanistan’s cultural treasures, housed for seven years in the Museum-in-Exile in Switzerland, return to Kabul

2008

International Year of Languages
3rd World Congress of Biosphere Reserves, Madrid
Inauguration of Aksum Obelisk in Ethiopia, reinstalled on its original site after 70 years of exile
International Year of Planet Earth

2009

International Year of Astronomy
UNESCO World Conference on Education for Sustainable Development, Bonn
UNESCO World Report on Cultural Diversity
The following countries have presented gifts of art work to UNESCO over the years:

Afghanistan
Albania
Algeria
Argentina
Armenia
Azerbaijan
Bangladesh
Bahrain
Barbados
Belarus
Belgium
Benin
Bosnia and Herzegovina
Bulgaria
Burkina Faso
Brazil
Brunei Darussalam
Cambodia
Cameroon
Canada
Chili
China
Congo
Costa Rica
Côte d’Ivoire
Croatia
Cuba
Cyprus
Czech Republic
Democratic People’s Republic of Korea
Democratic Republic of the Congo
Denmark
Dominican Republic
Ecuador
Egypt
El Salvador
Equatorial Guinea
Ethiopia
Finland
France
Gabon
Georgia
Germany
Ghana
Greece
Guatemala
Haiti
Honduras
Hungary
Iceland
India
Indonesia
Iraq
Islamic Republic of Iran
Israel
Italy
Japan
Jordan
Kazakhstan
Kuwait
Kyrgyzstan
Latvia
Lebanon
Libyan Arab Jamahiriya
Lithuania
Madagascar
Mauritania
Mauritius
Mexico
Monaco
Mongolia
Morocco
 Mozambique
Nepal
Netherlands
New Zealand
Nicaragua
Niger
Nigeria
Oman
Pakistan
Peru
Philippines
Poland
Portugal
Qatar
Republic of Korea
Romania
Russian Federation
Samoa
São Tomé and Príncipe
Saudi Arabia
Senegal
Seychelles
Slovakia
Spain
Sri Lanka
Sudan
Switzerland
Syrian Arab Republic
Tajikistan
Thailand
Timor-Leste
Tunisia
Turkey
Uganda
Ukraine
United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland
United Republic of Tanzania
United States of America
URSS (former)
Uzbekistan
Vatican
Venezuela
Viet Nam
Yemen
Zaire (former)
Zambia

Credits

Archivio Afro: 44 above
Y. Arthus-Bertrand: 19
UNESCO: 24, 25, 26, 34, 39, 46 below, 52, 54, 56, 62, 72 above, 74, 76, 82, 87, 88, 89, 91, 98, 99, 101 below, 104
UNESCO/C. Bablin: 43 above
UNESCO/L. de Béa: 20
UNESCO/J.-C. Bernath: 40, 42, 43 below, 47, 63, 64-65, 81, 91
UNESCO/N. Burke: 14, 15, 32, 34 right, 36, 39, 45, 57, 58, 59, 69, 70, 71, 72 below, 75, 79, 80, 83, 84, 90, 92, 93, 94, 95, 97, 100, 101 above, 102, 103, 105, 106
UNESCO/F. Català Roca: 53 below
UNESCO/Central Office of Information: 16
UNESCO/M. Claude: 13, 33, 35, 37, 48, 55
UNESCO/F. Dunouau: 61, 71
UNESCO/P. Guignard: 18
UNESCO/B. Hannon: 44
UNESCO/Kitrosser: 22
UNESCO/M. Laloux: 46
UNESCO/N. Levinthal: 27–31, 60
UNESCO/G. Nicolas: 51
UNESCO/D. Roger: 23, 28 below, 66, 67, 77, 88
UNESCO/P. Volta: 10, 51 above
The Headquarters of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization is housed in a large Y-shaped construction that has today become a landmark in the Paris urban landscape, and where numerous programmes take shape in a veritable intellectual forum and laboratory of ideas. UNESCO’s mission is to inscribe peace ‘in the minds of men’ by founding it ‘upon the intellectual and moral solidarity of mankind’.

The architecture of Headquarters is a museum in itself. Paintings, sculptures, drawings and mineral and floral creations were integrated into the building plans from the very beginning, and gifts over the years have enriched the art collection, thus making it a symbol of the cultural diversity and utopian aspirations incarnated by UNESCO.