



CITATION

for Design Preservation

The Grill at the Seagram Building

New York, NY

L'Observatoire International

Hervé Descottes, Wei Jien, and Jenny Ivansson



“It was important for us to honor and respect Richard Kelly’s original lighting.”

— Hervé Descottes

The iconic Seagram Building is a mid-century landmark designed by renowned architects Mies van der Rohe and Philip Johnson. It was often called “The Tower of Light,” acknowledging the groundbreaking work of Richard Kelly, the pioneering architectural lighting designer. L’Observatoire was engaged by owner Aby Rosen of RFR Realty in collaboration with leaseholder Major Food Group and designer William T. Georgis to develop a respectful lighting scheme for The Grill and The Pool, formerly The Four Seasons.

Kelly’s original concept and mood are preserved and simultaneously refreshed with improved lighting technology, including the use of LEDs and a new, modern controls system. Added layers of light accent the space’s historic architectural features. More control and precision are provided for settings between day and evening. Dynamic lighting for events and special occasions modernize Kelly’s lighting design intent.

The lighting design enhances the intimacy of the dining experience by creating resonance between darker and brighter areas, highlighting tabletops, and playing with layers of light and shadow, all while keeping the original lighting theme. The lighting celebrates the dining experience of today while preserving the beauty of the space’s legendary past.

INTERIOR DESIGN

Georgis & Mirgorodsky

William T. Georgis

ARCHITECT OF RECORD

Richard H. Lewis Architect

OWNERS

Major Food Group

RFR Realty LLC

PHOTOGRAPHY

Scott Frances

courtesy of Major Food

“Renovating this celebrated restaurant in a landmark interior was undoubtedly a daunting challenge, and the lighting design rose to the occasion. The subtle, almost invisible upgrade to Richard Kelly’s design with new energy-efficient technology was beautifully accomplished.”

— Lumen Judges