



Con Edison Installs First Special Manhole Cover In Times Square To Celebrate Energy & Ideas For The Millennium

October 27, 1999

NEW YORK, October 27 -- Consolidated Edison Company of New York Inc. President J. Michael Evans and a crew of Con Edison workers today installed in Times Square the first commemorative Millennium Manhole Cover in support of the company's participation in Times Square 2000, the New Year's Eve celebration that will mark the world's entry into the new millennium. The specially designed 314-pound functional cast iron work of art commemorates the utility's theme of "Energy and Ideas for the Millennium."

Joining in the installation next to the Recruiting Station at 43rd Street and Broadway, were Karim Rashid, an internationally acclaimed artist who submitted the winning entry in a competition to design the Manhole Cover, Times Square Business Improvement District President Brendan Sexton and Countdown Entertainment President Jeffrey A. Straus.

Also today, the Municipal Art Society opened "Art Underfoot: Manhole Covers in New York City," a special exhibit featuring the Millennium Manhole Cover and other designs entered in the Con Edison competition. The exhibit, at the Municipal Art Society headquarters at 457 Madison Ave., is open daily, except Thursdays and Sundays, from noon to 5 p.m., through December 1. Admission is free.

The design, called "Global Energy," has a futuristic grid on a standard 32-inch diameter manhole cover. Curving grid lines in the center of the pattern create a three-dimensional global effect -- the illusion that the design actually rises up from the cover.

"Today, we're placing this special Manhole Cover at the 'Crossroads of the World' so that millions of people from all over the world will have an opportunity to enjoy this unique piece of public art for many years to come," said Mr. Evans.

Con Edison will install the Millennium Manhole Covers throughout New York City and Westchester. A key requirement for the winning design was that it meet all appropriate safety standards.

"This is the perfect medium to express the message that energy and information, flowing in a super-highway beneath our feet, are making the world a smaller place," Rashid said of his Manhole Cover design. "The morphing of the grid shows how the potential and importance of this vital link is growing."

"It's fitting and fun that Con Edison's Millennium Manhole Cover series debut here in Times Square, the world's New Year's Eve headquarters. We're excited to welcome this creative new piece of public art to our neighborhood," said Mr. Sexton.

"From their Millennium Manhole Covers on the street, to the lighting of the New Year's Eve Ball atop One Times Square, Con Edison's powerful presence is an essential element of the Times Square 2000 Celebration," said Mr. Straus.

Con Edison sponsored a design competition, where a panel of distinguished judges invited eight designers to submit proposed designs.

The panel of judges included:

- Ms. Lowery Sims, Curator of 20th Century Art at the Metropolitan Museum of Art;
- Ms. Susan Freedman, President of the Public Art Fund;
- Ms. Susana Leval, Executive Director of El Museo del Barrio;
- Ms. Paola Antonelli, Curator of Architecture and Design, Museum of Modern Art;
- Ms. Jenny Dixon, Professor of Public Art at Cooper Union and Parsons School of Design and Executive Director of the Bronx Museum of the Art.

The Manhole Cover was cast at East Jordan Iron Works in East Jordan, Michigan.

An exhibit, featuring the proposed manhole covers submitted in the Con Edison design competition, opens October 27, 1999, at the Municipal Art Society headquarters, 457 Madison Avenue.

Con Edison is the energy sponsor for Times Square 2000, lighting the new crystal New Year's Eve ball and using advanced technology to create dramatic special effects for the premier event that will usher in the year 2000.

Consolidated Edison Inc. is one of the nation's largest investor-owned energy companies, with more than \$7 billion in annual revenues and more than \$15 billion in assets. The company provides a wide range of energy-related products and services to its customers through two regulated utility subsidiaries and four unregulated energy and telecommunications businesses. For additional financial, operations and customer service information, visit the Consolidated Edison Inc. web site at www.conedison.com.

Times Square 2000, The Global Celebration at the Crossroads of the World, will be the largest New Year's Eve celebration ever held in Times Square's 95 year history. Times Square 2000 will be a 24-hour event beginning at 5:30 AM Eastern Standard Time, December 31, 1999, when the New Year arrives in the South Pacific.

For 24 hours, the people and cultures of each of the world's time zones will be celebrated using sight, sound, pageantry and special effects. Live video images will be received from the time zones and broadcast to the crowds gathered in Times Square via giant Panasonic Astrovision screens. At

midnight EST, the traditional Ball lowering celebration will be held atop One Times Square.