

The Museum of Modern Art

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ARTHUR DREXLER RETIRES AS DIRECTOR OF DEPARTMENT OF ARCHITECTURE AND DESIGN AT THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART

Arthur Drexler, Director of the Department of Architecture and Design at The Museum of Modern Art for thirty years, has retired from this position, and Stuart Wrede, Curator of Architecture and Design, has been appointed Acting Director of the Department.

In making this announcement, Richard E. Oldenburg, Director of the Museum, stated: "We are deeply saddened that pancreatic cancer has necessitated Arthur Drexler's decision to retire from the post he has held with such distinction for so many years. Along with our affection, he has our profound gratitude and admiration for his lasting contributions to this Museum and to the history and practice of architecture and design.

"His exhibitions, publications, and acquisitions for the collection over a span of three decades have greatly furthered the recognition of architecture and design as modern arts which significantly shape as well as reflect contemporary society. To all these activities he has brought an expert eye, a dedication to the highest standards of quality, and a courageous independence of judgment which have earned him international respect as a particularly perceptive interpreter and critic of our environment."

Mr. Drexler joined the staff of the Museum as Curator of Architecture and Design in 1951 and was appointed Director of the Department in 1956. During a distinguished thirty-five year career with the Museum, Mr. Drexler organized numerous exhibitions, many of which elucidated important issues in architecture and design or anticipated major stylistic developments in the field. Among his

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exhibitions have been: EIGHT AUTOMOBILES (1951), JAPANESE HOUSE IN THE GARDEN (1954 and 1955), 20TH CENTURY DESIGN FROM THE MUSEUM COLLECTION (1958-59), VISIONARY ARCHITECTURE (1960), THE DRAWINGS OF FRANK LLOYD WRIGHT (1962), LE CORBUSIER: BUILDINGS IN EUROPE AND INDIA (1963), THE ARCHITECTURE OF LOUIS I. KAHN (1966), THE NEW CITY: ARCHITECTURE AND URBAN RENEWAL (1967), THE ARCHITECTURE OF THE ECOLE DES BEAUX ARTS (1975), LE CORBUSIER: ARCHITECTURE DRAWINGS (1978), TRANSFORMATIONS IN MODERN ARCHITECTURE (1979), THE ARCHITECTURE OF RICHARD NEUTRA: FROM INTERNATIONAL STYLE TO CALIFORNIA MODERN (1982), and most recently the critically acclaimed MIES VAN DER ROHE CENTENNIAL EXHIBITION held earlier this year.

Mr. Drexler is the author of many books on twentieth-century architecture and design. Publications prepared in conjunction with Museum exhibitions include: Built in U.S.A: Postwar Architecture (with Henry-Russell Hitchcock, 1952); The Architecture of Japan (1955); Introduction to 20th Century Design (with Greta Daniel, 1959); The Architecture of the Ecole des Beaux-Arts (1977), for which he received the Académie des Beaux Arts Prix Bernier; and Transformations in Modern Architecture (1979), for which he received the International Committee of Architectural Critics's International Prize for a Prologue to an Architecture Exhibition. Mr. Drexler has also written Mies van der Rohe, published by George Braziller in 1960, and The Drawings of Frank Lloyd Wright, published by Horizon Press in 1962. His most recent publication is The Mies van der Rohe Archive of The Museum of Modern Art (1986), a four-volume illustrated catalogue of the Mies van der Rohe drawings of 1907-38 in the Museum, which he edited for Garland Publishing. In 1977, he received the American Institute of Architects Medal for "vast contributions in documenting the art of architecture."

Under Mr. Drexler's direction, the Museum's architecture and design collection has grown to include more than 3,000 design objects, 4,000 examples of graphic design, sixty architectural models, and numerous architectural drawings, including the gift of the Mies van der Rohe Archive, one of the most important holdings of material on a twentieth-century master architect. At the time of the 1984 expansion, he oversaw the growth of the architecture and design gallery space from 1,700 sq. ft. to 6,500 sq. ft., which occupies the entire fourth floor. He was responsible for the first chronological installation of the Museum's design collection, in the Philip L. Goodwin Gallery. He also dedicated the Philip Johnson Gallery, the first museum space permanently allocated for drawings and models of modern architecture.

Before joining the Museum, Mr. Drexler was associated with the office of George Nelson and was Architecture Editor of Interiors magazine. Born in New York City in 1925, he attended the High School of Music and Art and The Cooper Union and served with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers during World War II. In addition to his duties at the Museum, Mr. Drexler has lectured at New York University, Yale University, Harvard University, Pratt Institute, the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, and other universities and institutions in the United States and Canada.

Stuart Wrede, the newly appointed Acting Director of the Department, joined the staff of the Museum in September 1985 as Curator of Architecture and Design. In 1978 he served as guest director of the exhibition THE ARCHITECTURE OF ERIK GUNNAR ASPLUND. Most recently, he organized MARIO BOTTA, the current exhibition of works by the Swiss architect.

Author of The Architecture of Erik Gunnar Asplund (MIT Press, 1980), Mr. Wrede has translated the writings of Alvar Aalto and published numerous

scholarly articles. A registered architect, he has taught at several universities since 1977, including the graduate schools of architecture at Columbia University, Yale University, and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and served as Director of the Oregon School of Design in Portland. Born in 1944 in Helsinki, Finland, Mr. Wrede received a bachelor of arts degree in 1965 and a masters of architecture in 1970, both from Yale University.

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For further information contact Jeanne Collins or Jessica Schwartz, Department of Public Information, 212/708-9750.