

THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART
11 WEST 53RD STREET, NEW YORK

TELEPHONE CIRCLE 7-7471

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The exhibition "Early Modern Architecture: Chicago 1870-1910" will open to the public on the fourth floor of The Museum of Modern Art, 11 W. 53d Street, on Wednesday, January 18. There will be a preview for members on Tuesday, January 17. The Exhibition of "American Painting and Sculpture" will continue on view to the end of January.

This architectural exhibition will present for the first time the most important creative period in American Architecture which saw the birth of the skyscraper and a new type of modern design suitable to it. At this time, accelerated by the Chicago fire of 1871, occurred the important and rapid shift from masonry to cast iron to steel construction without which the skyscraper of today could never have been conceived. Three models will show graphically this vital change in building methods which has moulded the skylines of our cities today. A feature of the exhibition will be the generous use of explanatory wall labels prepared by Philip Johnson, Chairman of the Museum's Department of Architecture, and Professor Henry Russell Hitchcock of Wesleyan University. "We don't want people merely to look at this show", states Mr. Johnson, "we want them to study it and carry away with them a conception of what went into the making of the greatest epoch in our American architecture."

The work of three architects will be emphasized: Henry Hobson Richardson who built in 1885 a wholesale store for the Marshall Field Company, considered one of the masterpieces in masonry construction; Louis Sullivan whose slogan "Form follows function" has been used as a battlecry of many modern architects, and Frank Lloyd Wright who alone still continues the line of the vital architectural innovations of the 1890's. Wright has influenced a whole generation of young architects in Europe.

That Chicago was the locale for this epoch of American Architecture is the

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TELEPHONE : A. R. BLACKBURN, JR. REGENT 4-5758 OR HELEN F. McMILLIN : CIRCLE 7-5434

result of two circumstances. Chicago, an inland and frontier city, was removed from the influence of traditional architecture active on the Atlantic Seaboard. The great Chicago fire of 1871 razed the city and this, with the business boom of the late 70's, caused architects to flock to the city to meet the demand of frenzied rebuilding and higher structures.