

Museum of Modern Art
730 Fifth Avenue
New York City

For immediate release

Houses designed to fit today's needs of sunshine, fresh air, spaciousness, and plenty of playground space, are being shown in New York in the first international Exhibition of Modern Architecture which opened at the Museum of Modern Art recently. Often these houses are constructed in quantity, of factory-made materials, metals, aluminum and plenty of glass, but they are not expensive. They represent a distinctly new idea in what constitutes a good home. The Exhibition is to make a three years' tour of the United States.

The need for better living quarters for America's wide-spread population is emphasized in statements by housing experts that less than one-half the homes in the United States measure up to even minimum standards of health and sanitary decency. Such a statement should shake the complacency of Americans accustomed to think of the United States in terms of shining plumbing and central heating. Not only in the crowded slums of the country's largest cities, but in the out-of-date houses in small towns and in the old-fashioned farm dwellings are actual conditions which call for drastic improvements.

Houses of the Future

A tremendous wave of interest has followed the opening of this Exhibition of Modern Architecture. The homes it shows of the present and the future are utilitarian first of all. Unusual as they may look with their flat roofs, their lack of ornamentation, and their walls of glass, they are essentially practical. They are designed definitely for good living in an orderly society. They take into consideration the comfort and health of their occupants. They are as much a part of the present mechanical age as were the log cabins of pioneer days, the Roman baths and colliseums of ancient days and the small window-shuttered frame houses of Colonial times in New England.

Glass is used liberally both for outer walls and partitions. These partitions are movable so that the size of rooms can be changed

with the changing needs of a family. Sound proof walls are insisted upon. All living rooms face gardens, and kitchens are built to save labor. Roofs are used for recreation, sun baths and private playgrounds. Both individual houses to be built in quantity for about \$4,000^{or less,} and row houses to rent at not more than \$11 a room, are shown as suggested homes for factory and office workers and business men and women in cities, small towns and farming communities throughout the country.

Bad City Apartments

Charts in the Exhibition show that "the average city dwelling regardless of rent is below a decent housing standard." Air views, taken from a plane which flew over New York's fashionable Park Avenue district and then over the tenements of the lower East Side of New York City showed the astounding fact that there is not much difference in the light and air in the homes of the rich and the poor in crowded city areas. The following table shows these facts in concrete form.

SLUMS

New York -- Lower East Side

Old law tenements (Illegal to construct since 1901)

2,000,000 people still live in flats like these in New York

Each tenement is 7 or 8 rooms deep, of which 1 room faces on a narrow noisy street
1 room faces on a 12' x 18' interior "yard"

No bedroom has direct light or air

Less than 5% of slum rooms ever get direct sun

70% to 75% of rooms never get direct light or air

No family has private toilet

No baths

85% to 100% coverage of block by building

No play space

Inaccessible to parks and playgrounds

SUPER SLUMS

New York -- Park Avenue District

Expensive upper class dwellings

All rooms face either on narrow, sunless interior courts or noisy traffic streets; Windows on cross streets permanently darkened by high buildings

Not more than 20% of rooms ever get direct sunlight (estimated)

Many windowless interior rooms

No cross ventilation

Sunless nurseries

No balconies

70% to 80% coverage of block by building

No play space

Residents must cross busy traffic street to reach park, playground or school

"If properly planned, groups of apartment houses can be built for as many as ten thousand people who can live in comfort and healthful surroundings," Philip Johnson, director of this Architectural Exhibition, stated recently, "This seems to be the best solution for the great mass of workers who cannot afford to pay large rents and who must live in cities to be near their work." In this Exhibition the United States will have an opportunity of seeing just how comfortable and convenient a modern house can be and how much it can add to the health and happiness of a man's family.

Three Years' Tour

This first international Exhibition of Modern Architecture shows at least that many European homes are getting more sun, color, form and a real sense of living surrounded by gardens and playgrounds. How do Americans want to live?

The itinerary of the exhibition follows: Pennsylvania Art Museum, Philadelphia, March 30 to April 22; Wadsworth Atheneum, Hartford, May 2 to May 28; Gallery of Bullock's Wilshire, Los Angeles, July 23 to August 30; Buffalo Fine Arts Academy, September 15 to October 17; Cleveland Museum of Art, October 27 to December 4; Milwaukee Art Institute, February 10 to March 11, 1933; Cincinnati Art Museum, March 21 to April 19, 1933; Rochester Memorial Art Gallery, April 29 to May 25, 1933; Art Museum, Worcester, Mass., June 5 to July 8, 1933; Toledo Museum of Art, September 1 to September 30, 1933; Fogg Art Museum, Cambridge, Mass., October 11 to November 11, 1933. Other cities will be added to the itinerary later.

According to Alfred H. Barr, Jr., director of the Museum of Modern Art, these plans, photographs and well executed models which ~~the United States will soon have the opportunity of studying for the~~ first time, represent a new style which is rapidly spreading throughout the world. "Both in appearance and structure," says Mr. Barr, "this style is peculiar to the Twentieth Century and is as fundamentally original as ^{the} Greek, Byzantine or Gothic."

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The exhibition will be shown in Philadelphia, Hartford, Los Angeles, Buffalo, Cleveland, Milwaukee, Cincinnati, Toledo, Rochester, Worcester and Cambridge, Massachusetts, after it closes in New York City March 23rd.

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