THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART
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THE WOODEN HOUSE IN AMERICA: AN EXHIBITION

OF DOMESTIC ARCHITECTURE OPENS AT MUSEUM OF MODERN ART

The use of wood as America's favorite and most characteristic
building material for four centuries is graphically illustrated in a
small exhibition The Wooden House in America which opens at the
Museum of Modern Art on Wednesday, September 10. Photographs of ten
recent wooden houses, with diagrams and text, place special emphasis
on modern construction. Prepared by the Museum's Department of
Circulating Exhibitions, the exhibition is being shown in New York
for the first time after an extensive tour of other museums and
galleries throughout the country. At the close of the exhibition on
September 30, it will again be circulated.

The exhibition briefly traces, through historical and explana-
tory material, the changes in wood construction and design as affected
by the development of building tools, by the country's growing pros-
perity, and by imported styles. Examples illustrated include the
massive early hand-hewn log house, the heavy frame construction of
New England Colonial homes, the refinements of the Georgian era, the
development of the light stud frame--an important American invention--
and finally modern experiments in construction. Samples of typical
American building woods as well as wood products such as plywood and
wood fibre panels are also shown.

Today wood is being utilized in increasingly interesting and
ingenious ways for modern houses, despite the variety of materials now
available to architects. This fresh approach to a traditional American
building material is shown in photographs of ten recently built houses.
Some are on the rocky New England coast, others along the Pacific
shore, another repeats the contour of a great mountain nearby, still
another juts out over a lake to derive full benefit from its location.
Each of these houses draws upon natural surroundings and indigenous
materials for inspiration; each reveals the adaptability of wood to
modern design. These wooden houses range from permanent year-round
homes to weekend bachelor quarters and summer houses and, in cost,

from five to fifteen thousand dollars each.

A major interest at present in the current housing expansion for fast-growing communities is the development of new methods and uses for prefabrication. This includes the prefabrication of small building elements to allow the utmost variety of architectural forms, and the manufacture of floors, roofs and walls in large, ready-made panels complete with doors and windows—thus eliminating to a great extent the necessity for skilled labor, and also reducing the time needed for building. Prominent among agencies experimenting with the possibilities of wood in prefabrication of houses is The Forest Laboratory of the U. S. Department of Agriculture, one of whose experimental houses is shown in the exhibition.

<u>Houses in the modern section include:</u>

Byler House, Mt. Washington, Los Angeles
by Gregory Ain, 1937

Christie House, Bernardsville, N. J.
by Frank Lloyd Wright, 1940

Hagerty House, Cohasset Beach, Mass.
by Walter Gropius and Marcel Breuer, 1939

Hawk House, Los Angeles, Calif.
by Harwall Hamilton Harris, 1940

Hackendorf House, Modesto, California
by John Funk, 1939

Koch and Cushman Houses, Belmont, Mass.
by Carl Koch, 1940

Sunstein House, Warrensburg, New York
by A. James Speyer, 1940

Thomas House, Somes Sound, Maine
by George Howe, 1939

Watzek House, Portland, Oregon
by John B. Yeon, 1937.

The exhibition will also show the modern wooden house as utilized in a cooperative housing project for the Yuba City Farm Workers' Community, built in 1940 by the Farm Security Administration for California agricultural workers. Burton D. Cairns and Vernon DeMars are the architects for this FSA housing project.

(NOTE: The Museum's Exhibition of <u>Britain At War</u>,
which has been on view all summer, is now
closed. It will be circulated in Canada,
where it will open in Ottawa October 3.)