

# THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## EVOLUTION OF THE SKYSCRAPER FROM CRUSTACEAN TO VERTEBRATE

The development of the skyscraper from a crustacean (a building supported by heavy outer walls of masonry) to a vertebrate (a building supported by an interior steel skeleton) is graphically and sometimes humorously illustrated in a motion picture, The Evolution of the Skyscraper, produced by the Architecture Department of the Museum of Modern Art, 11 West 53 Street. It will be shown for the first time at the Museum on Wednesday, November 1, and thereafter at 11:00 A.M. and 1:00 P.M. daily, and at 1:00 P.M. Sunday, through November 14.

The skyscraper, typical of the skyline of New York and other large American cities, is this country's most original contribution to world architecture. It has been the greatest revolution in architectural construction since the Gothic system of building 650 years ago. As the best method of showing the origin, construction, design and problems of this most modern form of building, John McAndrew, Curator of the Architecture Department, planned and directed the film and wrote the scenario for The Evolution of the Skyscraper. E. Francis Thompson was the photographer.

The film shows:

- (a) that business and real estate booms made tall buildings profitable;
- (b) that the passenger elevator made tall buildings practical;
- (c) that a new kind of construction made tall buildings possible; and that these three factors combined to create the skyscraper;
- (d) that the skyscraper has only rarely been given an appropriate architectural form;
- (e) that the unplanned, mushroom growth of skyscrapers brings serious problems to large cities, for which several solutions are suggested.

The film, which has a running time of 50 minutes, is silent and is on 16 mm. stock. After its showing at the Museum of Modern Art it will be circulated about the country to schools, colleges and other museums.