

The Museum of Modern Art

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NOON FILMS FEATURE ARCHITECT PHILIP JOHNSON

An interview with architect Philip Johnson, filmed at his famous "glass house" in New Canaan, Connecticut for CBS Television's "Camera Three" program with Rosamond Bernier in 1976, will be screened as part of the continuing Shorts and Documentaries series programmed by Department of Film Associate Director Margareta Akermark at The Museum of Modern Art on August 7 and 8 at 12:00 noon in the Roy and Niuta Titus Auditorium.

"Camera Three Presents: Philip Johnson" is a 60-minute profile of the 70-year-old Johnson's widely acknowledged pre-eminence among American architects. For many years a teacher of the history of art and architecture, Johnson did not build his first building until he was 40, and his background is rich in understanding of cultural trends and the impact of history. The film highlights one of Johnson's most important contributions, the I.D.S. Center in Minneapolis, which applies the principles of Venice's Piazza San Marco in the context of an American office building.

"Architecture is still an art," he says, "it has always been an art. When architecture isn't an art, it shouldn't be used." The film includes Johnson's challenging, energetic commentary on major 20th century architects, the status of utility, the monuments of the past, and the lamentable necessity of distinguishing between practical construction and architecture proper.

Though inspired by Mies van der Rohe, Johnson's career has been marked by an absence of theoretical overlay. "Let's have fun," he says, "and let's be more up-to-date. Let's do whatever we want."