

The Museum of Modern Art

For Immediate Release
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MIES VAN DER ROHE CENTENNIAL EXHIBITION

February 10 - April 15, 1986

In this centennial year of the architect's birth, The Museum of Modern Art presents the most comprehensive exhibition ever devoted to Mies van der Rohe, one of the great pioneers of modern architecture. Opening on February 10, 1986, the MIES VAN DER ROHE CENTENNIAL EXHIBITION will include both completed and unrealized projects, as well as preliminary studies and furniture, all drawn from the Museum's Mies van der Rohe Archive. Organized by Arthur Drexler, director of the Department of Architecture and Design, the exhibition documents the evolution of the architect's ideas, which continue to influence students and architects working today.

The exhibition, remaining on view through April 15, has received support from GFI/Knoll International; Joseph E. Seagram & Sons, Inc. Fund; the National Endowment for the Arts; and the National Endowment for the Humanities.

Ludwig Mies van der Rohe (1886-1969) was an architect of extraordinary vision and originality, whose work remains unparalleled for its daring and refinement as well as pervasive influence. According to Arthur Drexler, "There is no country in the world in which architecture does not somehow bear his mark; in the United States there is no city that does not have some evidence of his American presence; in New York his influence was apparent (Lever House) even before he designed the Seagram tower, which of all his tall buildings is the acknowledged masterpiece."

Despite the critical reactions to modern architecture that emerged as Post-Modernism during the sixties, Mies's reputation has endured. Drexler

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continues, "It is in this context that the exhibition explores the range, variety, and unfulfilled possibilities of Mies's work; and it is in this context that genuine critical evaluations must be made. Some Mies buildings are better than other Mies buildings; the exhibition deals with the failures as well as the successes."

The CENTENNIAL EXHIBITION presents 450 drawings, complemented by photographs, some of which are mural-size, of ninety-two buildings and projects that comprise the greater part of Mies's life work. Preliminary studies for famous buildings will be presented along with unbuilt and previously unpublished work. In addition, the exhibition includes ten architectural models, including a very large study model for the column and roof detail of the New National Gallery in Berlin. Highlights of the installation are full-scale replicas of the cruciform chrome-plated steel columns that Mies designed for the Tugendhat House in Brno, Czechoslovakia, and the German Pavilion at the 1929 Barcelona Exposition, which was recently reconstructed in Barcelona. Although the Pavilion existed in its original form for only one season, it was celebrated as a major achievement in the architect's career when it was first presented. Examples of all his furniture will also be shown, along with numerous important and rarely seen furniture drawings.

All of the materials in the exhibition have been selected from the Mies van der Rohe Archive, which was established in 1968 as a division of the Museum's Department of Architecture and Design. The works are installed in two areas of the Museum. On the lower level, in the René d'Harnoncourt Galleries, the entire floor is devoted to the drawings, photographs, and architectural models. On the fourth level, the Architecture and Design collection galleries are completely reinstalled for the furniture and related drawings.

After its New York showing, the exhibition will travel to The Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago (May 8 - August 10, 1986), and the New National Gallery, Berlin (November 13, 1986 - January 15, 1987). A final showing will be held in Barcelona under the sponsorship of the Foundation of the German Pavilion of Barcelona by Mies van der Rohe.

Two Museum publications on Mies are planned for the centennial year. The first, by Arthur Drexler, will be the most comprehensive publication to date, covering every project and building ever executed by the architect. It will be illustrated with familiar and rare photographs and many drawings from the Mies van der Rohe Archives. The second will include essays by five Mies scholars that examine all aspects of the architect's work, as well as its philosophical and political significance.

In conjunction with the exhibition, the Museum is presenting a series of events. On Tuesday, February 25, at 8:00 p.m., a symposium, entitled Mies at 100, is moderated by Franz Schulze, Hollender Professor of Art, Lake Forest College. Panelists include Mr. Drexler and architects Thomas Beeby, James Ingo Freed, Dirk Lohan, and Philip Johnson. (Roy and Niuta Titus Theater 1)

Three lectures by Mies scholars will be presented on Wednesday evenings in March at 6:30 p.m., in the Roy and Niuta Titus Theater 1, as follows:

March 5
The Legacy of German Neo-Classicism and Biedermeier: Loos, Mies, and Tessenow
Stanford Anderson, professor, History of Architecture, Massachusetts Institute of Technology

March 12
Mies, Architecture, and the Modern Landscape
Kurt Forster, director, J. Paul Getty Center for the History of Art and the Humanities

March 19
Mies and the Politics of the Modern Movement in Architecture
Richard Pommer, professor, History of Architecture, Vassar College

Admission to each event is \$7.00, Museum Members \$6.00, and students with validated ID \$5.00. For advance tickets, send a stamped, self-addressed envelope with payment and coupon to the Department of Education, The Museum of Modern Art, 11 West 53 Street, New York, NY 10019. Tickets are available at the door on a first-come, first-served basis.

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For further information or photographic materials, contact Jeanne Collins or Jessica Schwartz, Department of Public Information 212/708-9750.