

The Museum of Modern Art

For Immediate Release
January 1996

THE PHILIP JOHNSON COLLOQUIUM HELD THIS FEBRUARY IN NEW YORK WITH PANEL OF LEADING SCHOLARS AND ARCHITECTS

On February 1-3, 1996, *The Origins of the Avant-garde in America, 1923-1949: The Philip Johnson Colloquium* will be presented by the Canadian Centre for Architecture, Montreal, with the collaboration of The Museum of Modern Art, New York, and the Graduate School of Architecture, Planning and Preservation, Columbia University, New York. It takes place at Columbia University and The Museum of Modern Art (see attached schedule).

This scholarly debate is organized by Phyllis Lambert, Director, Canadian Centre for Architecture; Peter Eisenman, Irwin S. Chanin Distinguished Professor of Architecture, The Cooper Union, and principal of Eisenman Architects; and Robert Somol, architecture critic, Los Angeles. It brings together a diverse group of international scholars and architects, including Colin Rowe, Francesco Dal Co, Rem Koolhaas, Michael Hays, Beatriz Colomina, and Philip Johnson. The meeting reopens the debate on the development of architectural discourse in America from 1923 to 1949, approximately the period from Le Corbusier's *Vers une Architecture*, Lewis Mumford's *Sticks and Stones*, and Ludwig Mies van der Rohe's project for a glass skyscraper, to Rudolf Wittkower's *Architectural Principles in the Age of Humanism*, Henry Russell Hitchcock's *Painting Toward Architecture*, and Philip Johnson's Glass House. It also presents an opportunity to explore new ways of working and thinking through the problem of modernity as it began to be experienced in the 1920s.

The colloquium is named for Philip Johnson, internationally renowned architectural curator, critic, historian, and practitioner whose multifaceted career has spanned nearly seven decades. Colloquium topics consider how a

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diversity of influences -- including such institutions as The Museum of Modern Art and The Graduate School of Design, Harvard University, and such periodicals as *Shelter*, *Hound and Horn*, and *Task* -- positioned for the first time a broad range of European polemical strategies in a North American context. Themes include the relationship between architecture as an autonomous discipline and as an aspect in broader ideological debates; the critical dynamics between museums as institutions and the material they represent; the issue of "high" and "low" in art and architecture; and the potential to expand the concept of the avant-garde within the borders of the discipline. The published conference proceedings and discussions will be available July 1996.

The colloquium is made possible by Peter B. Lewis, The American Friends of the Canadian Centre for Architecture, Lily Auchincloss, Mr. and Mrs. Gustavo Cisneros, Agnes Gund and Daniel Shapiro, Mr. and Mrs. Ronald S. Lauder, Marshall S. Cogan, the Leo and Julia Forchheimer Foundation, Joseph E. Seagram & Sons Ltd.

Admission for all sessions is free on a first-come, first-served basis. Tickets (free) are required only for the session at The Museum of Modern Art and are available at the Lobby Information Desk beginning January 16.

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Meeting schedule

Thursday, February 1, 5:30 - 8:00 p.m.

Friday, February 2, 9:00 a.m. - 12 noon, 2:00 - 7:00 p.m.

Wood Auditorium, Avery Hall, Columbia University

Saturday, February 3, 9:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.

The Roy and Niuta Titus Theater 1, The Museum of Modern Art

Telephone numbers for the public

Columbia University, 212/854-3414

The Museum of Modern Art, 212/708-9500

For further press information or press tickets

The Museum of Modern Art, Department of Communications, 212/708-9750