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February 2010

**WORLD MONUMENTS FUND EXHIBITION ON PRESERVING MODERN ARCHITECTURE
ON VIEW AT THE CENTER FOR ARCHITECTURE IN NEW YORK
FEBRUARY 17 – MAY 1, 2010**

**MEDIA PREVIEW
WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 17
10 A.M. – 12 NOON
RSVP enemens@aiany.org**

*Cities and towns across America routinely demolish their modern architecture,
without giving the buildings a chance to be preserved and adaptively restored.*

Why this happens, and what we can do to save 50 years of modernist architecture, is addressed in *Modernism at Risk: Modern Solutions for Saving Modern Landmarks*, a traveling exhibition organized by the World Monuments Fund (WMF) and sponsored by Knoll, Inc. Opening on February 17 at the Center for Architecture, 536 LaGuardia Place, the exhibition will be on view there through May 1, 2010.

A project of WMF's Modernism at Risk program (<http://www.wmf.org/advocacy/modernism>), the exhibition features large-scale photographs by noted photographer Andrew Moore and interpretative panels on five case studies that explore the role designers and other advocacy groups play in preserving modern landmarks.

“For decades the World Monuments Fund has worked to save heritage sites around the globe, from early settlements to 20th-century architecture,” said **Bonnie Burnham, WMF President**. “While modern buildings face the same physical threats as ancient structures, they are too often overlooked as insignificant, not important enough to preserve. We launched our Modernism at Risk initiative to advocate for these often ignored buildings and to address their special needs. And, through this traveling exhibition, we hope to draw many more advocates to our cause. We are especially pleased that it is now here in New York, at the Center for Architecture, where we hope hundreds of people will see the show and add their voices to ours on the importance of preserving our modern heritage.”

The five buildings highlighted in the traveling exhibition are:

- **ADGB Trade Union School** in Bernau, Germany, a Bauhaus design by Hannes Meyer and Hans Wittwer
- **Conger Goodyear House** in Old Westbury, New York, designed by Edward Durell Stone and saved from demolition by WMF in 2001
- **Riverview High School** in Sarasota, Florida, designed by Paul Rudolph and demolished in 2009

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- **Grosse Pointe Public Library** in Grosse Pointe Farms, Michigan, designed by Marcel Breuer
- **Kent Memorial Library** in Suffield, Connecticut, designed by Warren Platner.

Each of these buildings was threatened, and each received the attention of architects and designers intent on preventing its destruction. These case studies reveal the many ways the design community is working to sustain the legacy of modern architecture — one building at a time.

Riverview High School and the Grosse Pointe Library were specifically cited in WMF's 2008 Watch listing "Main Street Modern" as examples of modern buildings at risk and needing attention. A model of Riverview prepared by the Paul Rudolph Foundation will also be on display. Riverview was razed in June 2009, but the Sarasota County School District has agreed to sensitively rehabilitate Rudolph's Sarasota High School addition (built one year after the original high school) and support the nomination of the site to the National Register of Historic Places.

These case studies, which comprise the traveling exhibition, (*Modernism at Risk* has visited three venues in Florida) explore the potential outcomes—restoration, demolition, adaptive reuse—for modernist landmarks. In addition, the Center for Architecture installation includes five projects whose fates have not yet been sealed, highlighting modernist buildings that are currently "at risk" of being demolished. The Center exhibition invites the participation of the preservation groups who are trying to save these buildings, engaging the community in a dialogue about the preservation of modernist icons.

Modernism at Risk's "Main Street Modern" theme carries over to the five "at risk" buildings added by the Center for Architecture to the exhibition—two schools, a hospital, a library, and a laboratory. The New York venue features the ongoing demolition of Michael Reese Hospital in Chicago—buildings that Bauhaus School founder Walter Gropius largely designed and planned. It also describes the imminent threats to the Bell Labs complex in Holmdel, New Jersey, designed by Eero Saarinen, and to Paul Rudolph's Chorley Elementary School in upstate New York, recently added to the Preservation League of New York State 2010 "Seven to Save" program and fighting for survival. Atlanta's Central Branch Library, designed by Marcel Breuer, was recently placed on the 2010 World Monuments Watch (www.wmf.org/watch), as was the Faculty of Architecture and Urbanism building of the Central University of Venezuela in Caracas. The organizations trying to save these buildings alongside WMF's efforts include the Gropius in Chicago Coalition, DOCOMOMO New York/Tri-State, the Paul Rudolph Foundation, DOCOMOMO GA, and Facultad de Arquitectura y Urbanismo, Universidad Central de Venezuela, respectively.

"Architecture isn't just about building new buildings," said **AIANY President Anthony Schirripa, FAIA**, "It's also about celebrating our architectural history. Preserving modernist landmarks should be a goal not only for the design community, but for all communities that want to celebrate the diversity and richness of modern architecture in their midst. I hope this exhibition will begin a dialogue amongst New Yorkers about how, and why, modernism matters, and that it inspires us to each contribute in our own way to the World Monuments Fund's valuable mission of saving these extraordinary buildings."

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PRESS PREVIEW: 10 a.m. -12 noon on Wednesday, February 17

PUBLIC OPENING: Wednesday, February 17, at 6 .p.m.

*This opening will coincide with the opening of the Helfand Spotlight exhibition, **Back on the Map: Revisiting the New York State Pavilion at the 1964/65 World's Fair**, on view at the Center for Architecture from February 17– March 31, 2010. This exhibition features the recently restored Texaco Road Map, the iconic centerpiece of the modernist pavilion built by Philip Johnson in the Flushing Meadows Corona Park fairground. Additional Modernism at Risk public programs are currently being planned. Please visit aiany.org/exhibitions for more information.*

World Monuments Fund

World Monuments Fund is the leading independent organization devoted to saving the world's most treasured places. For over 45 years, working in more than 90 countries, our highly skilled experts have applied proven and effective techniques to preserve important architectural and cultural heritage sites around the globe. Through partnerships with local communities, funders, and governments, we inspire an enduring commitment to stewardship for future generations. Headquartered in New York, WMF has offices and affiliates worldwide.

www.wmf.org

Modernism at Risk

In 2006, with founding support from Knoll, WMF launched Modernism at Risk, a program focused on bringing international attention and resources to address the key threats and challenges facing many modern buildings, including inappropriate alteration, perceived obsolescence, public apathy, and technical problems associated with conserving innovative designs and materials.

A key component of the program is the World Monuments Fund/Knoll Modernism Prize, established in 2008 and awarded biennially to an individual or firm in recognition of a completed project or a body of work that enhances the public's awareness of the significant role that modernism plays in our architectural heritage. The inaugural prize was awarded to Brenne Gesellschaft von Architekten mbH, headed by Winfried Brenne and Franz Jaschke, for their restoration of the Bauhaus ADGB Trade Union School in Bernau, Germany, one of the five case studies in *Modernism at Risk: Modern Solutions for Saving Modern Landmarks*. The deadline [for 2010 Modernism Prize nominations](#) is March 31.

The Center for Architecture

The Center for Architecture is a destination for all interested in the built environment. It is home to the American Institute of Architects New York Chapter and the Center for Architecture Foundation, vibrant nonprofit organizations that provide resources to both the public and building industry professionals. Through exhibitions, programs, and special events, the Center aims to improve the quality and sustainability of the built environment, foster exchange between the design, construction, and real estate communities, and encourage collaborations across the city and globe. The Center also celebrates New York's vibrant architecture, explores its urban fabric, shares community resources, and provides opportunities for scholarship. As the city's leading cultural institution focusing on architecture, the Center drives positive change through the power of design.

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