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Now Showing | Bertrand Goldberg

DESIGN | By PILAR VILADAS | SEPTEMBER 14, 2011, 8:02 AM



Bertrand Goldberg's iconic Marina City apartment towers, in Chicago, shown here around 1965, feature prominently in the exhibition "Bertrand Goldberg: Architecture of Invention" at the Art Institute of Chicago. *Hedrich Blessing Archive, courtesy of the eChicago History Museum*

“Bertrand Goldberg: Architecture of Invention,” at the [Art Institute of Chicago](#) from Sept. 17 through Jan. 15, 2012, is the first comprehensive retrospective of the architect’s work, and in addition to drawings, models and photographs, also includes examples of Goldberg’s seldom-seen graphic and furniture designs. Famous for his design of Marina City, the striking twin circular apartment towers that were completed in 1967 in downtown Chicago, Goldberg (1913-1997) — who took courses at the Bauhaus and briefly apprenticed to Mies van der Rohe in Berlin in the early 1930s — was also known for his innovative designs for low-cost housing, hospitals and prefabricated structures for everything from dwellings to mobile medical facilities during World War II. And his village-like spatial configurations for both education and medical facilities were well ahead of their time. The exhibition was curated by Zoe Ryan, the chair of the museum’s architecture and design department, and Alison Fisher, an assistant curator of architecture in the department, with Elizabeth Smith, the executive director of curatorial affairs at the Art Gallery of Ontario. The installation was designed by [John Ronan Architects](#) — who recently completed the elegant new headquarters of the [Poetry Foundation](#) in Chicago — with a graphic design by Studio Blue. Accompanying the Goldberg show is a photography exhibition called “[Inside Marina City: A Project by Iker Gil and Andreas E.G. Larsson](#),” which offers visitors a rare glimpse inside the iconic towers, with more than 30 images that explore the relationship between Goldberg’s modular framework for the buildings and the way that residents live in the spaces he designed.