

## New galleries

### Architects on display

*The AIC's new architecture and design galleries are as good as it gets*

CHICAGO. The Art Institute of Chicago is set to leave most other fine art institutions in the shade with its new Architecture and Design galleries in the AIC Modern Wing (see p23). "Along with the largest holdings of any institution, we now have one of the biggest public galleries in the country," says Joe Rosa, AIC architecture curator. The institution is one of only four museums nationwide with a curatorial architecture department. The A&D galleries house more than 250,000 drawings, models, archives and oral histories of important figures such as Daniel Burnham and Frank Lloyd Wright. Previously, only a fraction of their objects were on view in rotating displays in a mere 2,500 sq. ft of space. The new 8,000 sq. ft gallery is near the museum's classic contemporary art holdings, including Charles Ray's *Hinoki*, a 32ft-long tree trunk. This reflects the ascendancy of design, and stands as a sharp contrast to major institutions such as the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, which does not have a permanent design gallery.

The breadth and diversity of the exhibits at AIC demonstrates how the museum has taken the lead in its interweaving of architecture and design from local, national and international sources in a wide variety of mediums. Directly outside the AIC, the towering Adler & Sullivan Stock Exchange arch is testament to the city's architectural legacy. Chicago is the birthplace of modern architecture and such revolutionary practitioners as Henry Hobson Richardson,

Louis Sullivan, and Ludwig Mies van der Rohe will feature prominently at the museum.



Ron Arad's iconic Rover Chair, 1981

One-third of architects represented will be from Chicago and 25% of all design exhibited will be devoted to local designers. It is hoped that the A&D galleries' emphasis on the city's home-grown talent will bring them wider recognition.

The impact of the galleries on local culture is also expected to be considerable. "In effect, it [the Modern Wing and its A&D galleries] will put itself on a par with the architecture museums in Helsinki, Frankfurt and Rotterdam," said Kenneth Frampton, Columbia University Professor of Architecture.

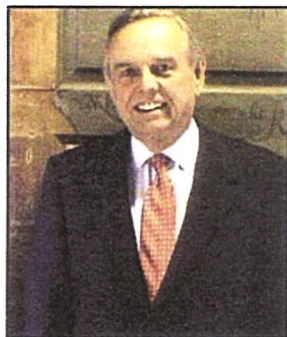
On show is an architectural model of New York's Lever House, and a digital model of Long Island City's PS1. Graphic design exhibits include Bruce Mau's posters of Guatemala, and Stefan Sagmeister's 2006 interactive installation, *Things I Have Learned In My Life So Far*. Design on view includes Ron Arad's iconic 1981 work *The Rover Chair* and Joris Laarman's 2008 Nebula chandelier.

Objects will be displayed in rotation, and different examples will be featured in February 2011. "They're really little folios of our holdings," said Mr Rosa. He is working with AIC design curator Zoe Ryan on a major exhibition, which will open in autumn 2010, featuring architects and designers who work in multiple disciplines to tackle social, political and environmental issues. Planned for October is a solo show dedicated to German industrial designer Konstantin Grcic, which the artist will design himself. "It's about rethinking how people present design," said Ms Ryan.

Ms Ryan and Mr Rosa have already introduced AIC board members to the Campana Brothers and Zaha Hadid, resulting in a personal commission for the Iraqi architect. "In some cities, there's very little audience for design," said Ms Ryan. "But here the taxi drivers know where the Mies buildings are." She added: "Hopefully this will inspire other museums." B.S.M.

## Profile

### John Bryan: maintaining the tradition



CHICAGO. The city is rich in philanthropists giving funds and art, but John Henry Bryan Jr is arguably on a level of his own. The former chief executive of the Sara Lee Corporation, Mr Bryan is campaign chair for two major projects: the Modern Wing of the Art Institute of Chicago and the 24.5-acre Millennium Park, with combined budgets of more than \$1bn. He is now extending his efforts with a project by London-based architect Zaha Hadid, while expanding his own private museum of English and American arts and crafts at Crab Tree Farm outside Chicago.

At Millennium Park, two pavilions—one by Ms Hadid and the other by the Dutch architect Ben Van Berkel—will open on 19 June. "It seemed appropriate to commemorate Daniel Burnham's 1909 plan of Chicago," says Mr Bryan. "He's dramatically changing Chicago's landscape," said Pauline Saliga, the Society of Architectural Historians' executive director. She believes he has elevated the city to a world-class destination.

Mr Bryan's art holdings are particularly rich in Gustav Stickley, an interest he attributes to the 1910 buildings at Crab Tree Farm, which he purchased in 1987. "I wanted to furnish them with examples that were contemporary to the buildings," said Mr Bryan. He purchased his first piece, a hexagonal library table, in 1987. "In my elderhood, I want to do something that doesn't involve patina and provenance," he added.

"In terms of importance, size, quality and geographic span, his collection is one of the great arts and crafts collections in the country," said Charles Miller, Indianapolis Museum of Art design art curator. Mr Bryan's own home is filled with 16th- to 18th-century English antiques, along with Dutch and English paintings. He intends to preserve Crab Tree Farm, where he lives in a David Adler-designed house. B.S.M.