

ELMHURST ART MUSEUM

For Fall 2019 Consideration
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Elmhurst Art Museum highlights its Mies van der Rohe McCormick House this Fall with *McCormick House – Past, Present, Future* exhibition, house tours and related architecture-themed programming

For first time ever, McCormick House features a full 1950s domestic presentation; on view September 14, 2019 – January 12, 2020, with weekly tours starting Sept. 15

(July 2, 2019) For the first time ever, the **Elmhurst Art Museum** (150 South Cottage Hill Avenue) will exhibit a full 1950s domestic representation of its Mies van der Rohe McCormick House (1952), highlighting this rare single-family home in the Museum’s collection. *McCormick House – Past, Present, Future* will present visitors with classic mid-Century furniture of the time period as well as historic images showing how residents lived in the home and explanations about the preservation and restoration process currently underway. Further, the walls will highlight a timeline of events and photos dating back to the building’s conception, including anecdotes and stories about the home’s residents. *McCormick House – Past, Present, Future* will be on view September 14, 2019 – January 12, 2020 and is organized in conjunction with the **Chicago Architecture Biennial**.

As curated by veteran Chicago interior architect **Robert Kleinschmidt**, the exhibition will prove how livable, inviting, and human a Mies-designed home can be with period décor. This work continues Kleinschmidt’s relationship with the house; last Fall, commemorating the separation of the House from the main museum building, he introduced a partial period installation in the home’s ‘children’s wing,’ captivating visitors.

“After walking under the restored carport and crossing a new threshold, visitors have better appreciated Mies van der Rohe’s designs for the McCormick House,” says Elmhurst Art Museum Executive Director **John McKinnon**. “We are excited to further educate and inspire our public by addressing the house’s interior. Rob’s exhibition will help our guests understand its domestic scale through period furniture and illustrate its history as a residence.”

RELATED PUBLIC PROGRAMS

All are free with museum admission unless noted.

- Weekly house tours
Sunday afternoons, starting Sept. 15, 1pm and 3pm
New weekly house tours will invite visitors to explore the McCormick House history with Museum docents and special guides, including a former resident.
- Curator Tour: Robert Kleinschmidt
Saturday, September 21, 1:30pm
Chicago interior architect Robert Kleinschmidt will guide a tour, sharing his designs for the domestic interior and his history with other projects by Mies van der Rohe.
- Lecture: Preserving the Modern Home
Saturday, October 5, 1:30pm
Architectural historian Susan Benjamin utilizes stunning historic images to highlight notable modern houses in and around Chicago and the efforts of their passionate owners to preserve them. Benjamin is head of Benjamin Historic Certifications and co-author of *Great Houses of Chicago: 1871-1921* (Acanthus Press, 2008) and *Modern in the Middle: Chicago Houses, 1929-1975* (Monacelli Press, early 2020).
- Panel Discussion: Preserving Chicago's Glass Houses
Saturday, October 26, 1:30pm
Dennis Rodkin, *Crain's Chicago Business* columnist and "What's that Building?" contributor to *WBEZ Radio*, leads a panel discussion about Chicago's progressive architectural developments, including numerous steel and glass houses in the greater metro area such as Farnsworth House, McCormick House, Ben Rose House, Rockwell House, and others. Co-organized with The Farnsworth House, attendees will learn more about these unique residential designs, the visionary architects, and the preservation challenges the homes present.
- Family Day
Saturday, November 16, 1-4pm
Families are invited to participate in an afternoon of art activities inspired by the museum's current exhibition in Mies van der Rohe's McCormick House.
- Holiday Designer Pop-Up Shop
Friday, December 6, 4-8pm
In tandem with special holiday décor in the McCormick House, celebrate the time of year at this new pop-up shop featuring designer goods by local businesses and artisans.

About the McCormick House

In 1952, the renowned modern architect Mies van der Rohe (1886-1969) designed a home for Robert Hall McCormick III, a member of Chicago's most prominent families, and his wife, the poet Isabella Gardner. The house was later lived in by families of Arthur and Marilyn Sladek, Ray and Mary Ann Fick, and then purchased by the Elmhurst Art Museum for a new arts complex. The house is a rare and important example of Mies van der Rohe's mature style, incorporating elements of his celebrated designs for the Farnsworth House (1951) and 860-880 Lake Shore Drive (1951). The McCormick House—one of only three single-family homes designed by Mies in the United States—originally served two purposes: it was a home for the McCormick family and a prototype for a proposed group of smaller, affordable mass-produced modular homes in the western Chicago suburbs that McCormick and co-developer Herbert S. Greenwald were hoping to build. However, the cutting-edge, high-end buildings

were not met with enough buyers to begin construction. The house became part of the Elmhurst Art Museum's campus in 1994, and important restoration efforts have been recently undertaken. In 2018, the McCormick House's façade and Mies van der Rohe's original carport design were revealed for the first time in nearly twenty-five years.

Simultaneous with the *McCormick House – Past, Present, Future*, Elmhurst Art Museum will be mounting *What Came After: Figurative Painting in Chicago 1978-98*—also September 14, 2019 - January 12, 2020—a survey of diverse interests in the figure as a subject, the human condition, and an interest in personal iconography.

About Elmhurst Art Museum

Elmhurst Art Museum is located at 150 South Cottage Hill Avenue in Elmhurst (IL), 25 minutes from downtown Chicago by car or public transportation (Metra). The Museum is both an international destination for Mies van der Rohe scholars and fans and a regional center where people from Chicago and the western suburbs learn to see and think differently through the study of the art, architecture and design of our time.

The Museum is one block from the Elmhurst Metra station and open Tuesday-Sunday from 11am -5pm. Admission is \$15 (\$12 for seniors) and free for students and children under 18. For more information, please call 630.834.0202 or visit elmhurstmuseum.org.

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Header photos (from left):

LUDWIG MIES VAN DER ROHE, MCCORMICK HOUSE, LIVING ROOM, 1950S, HEDRICH BLESSING ARCHIVE, HB17555A, CHICAGO HISTORICAL SOCIETY

INSTALLATION VIEW OF MCCORMICK HOUSE: 1952 – 1959 CURATED BY ROBERT KLEINSCHMIDT AND RYAN MONTELEAGRE. PHOTO BY JIM PRINZ