

Modernism in New England

Saturday, March 5th, 2016

9:00 – 4:30

Collins Cinema, Wellesley College, Wellesley, Massachusetts

A symposium funded by the Barra Foundation and co-sponsored by the Grace Slack McNeil Program for Studies in American Art at Wellesley College and Historic Deerfield, Inc.

The Wellesley-Deerfield Symposium will explore the impact of Modernism on New England's art and architecture. Though long stereotyped as a bastion of conservative culture and overshadowed by milestone events such as New York City's 1913 Armory Show, twentieth-century New England was home to a vibrant group of visual artists, architects, curators, collectors, and educators who embraced Modernism and looked for ways to develop its tenets and new media as a regional expression. Illustrated presentations by scholars from across the country will address the influence of Modernism on New England architecture, city planning, interior design, and the visual arts during the twentieth century.

9:00 Welcome and Introduction

9:15 – 10:30 Panel 1: Defining a Regional Modernism

Rebecca Migdal, Independent Museum and Collections Consultant
Middlesex County Modern Then & Now

Timothy Rohan, University of Massachusetts, Amherst
The New England Episode of Modern Architecture's 1940s Regionalism Debate

Andrew Eschelbacher, Portland Museum of Art
Intimate and Grand, Popular and Mythic: Maine Modernism and American Sculpture

10:30 – 10:45 Break

10:45 – 12:00 Panel 2: Designing Modern Neighborhoods and Landscapes

Amy D. Finstein, Massachusetts College of Art
Imitation, Collaboration and Architectural Consumerism: Gropius, Breuer and Midcentury Modernism in Metro-Boston

Lucretia Giese, Rhode Island School of Design & Gary Wolf, Wolf Architects
Speculations About the Origin of an Iconic Modernist Landscape: Design and Collaboration at the Blue Steps of Naumkeag (Fletcher Steele with Henry B. Hoover)

Scott Fulford, Gregory Lombardi Design, Inc. and Scott Fulford Landscape Design
Negotiating Postwar Landscape Architecture: The Practice of Sydney Nichols Shurcliff

12:00 – 1:15 Lunch (on your own)

1:15 – 2:30 Panel 3: Modernism and the Problem of Representation

Daniel Abramson, Tufts University

Problems of Representation: Rudolph's State Service Center

Timothy Parker, Norwich University

A Modest Modernism: Abstraction, Ornament, and Art in Two Vermont Churches

Milda Richardson, Northeastern University

Chester F. Wright (1899-1969) and Modern Sacred Space

2:30 – 2:45 Break

2:45 – 4:00 Panel 4: People and Places of Modernism

Martin Eidelberg, Rutgers University

The Crimson Tide and Lavender Circles: Harvard's Men of Modern Design

Melissa Renn, Harvard Business School

Beyond New York: The Avant-Garde in Provincetown, 1913-1966

Mary Anne Hunting, Independent Architectural Historian

Adherents of Modernism: The Women Architects in New England between the Wars

4:00 Closing Remarks – Kevin Murphy, Vanderbilt University

The symposium is free and open to the public but seating is limited. To register in advance please visit the Wellesley College Art Department website:

<http://www.wellesley.edu/art/events>