

THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

RACE OF LILLIPUTIAN NEW YORKERS INVITED TO VIEW EXHIBITION OF
TOMORROW'S SMALL HOUSE, OPENING AT MUSEUM OF MODERN ART MAY 29

New Yorkers five to six inches tall are invited to attend an exhibition proportioned to their Lilliputian height which will open at the Museum of Modern Art Tuesday, May 29, and will remain on view through September 30. The exhibition is Tomorrow's Small House: Models and Plans. It is composed of eight exquisitely detailed models scaled one inch to the foot and completely furnished throughout, landscaped with miniature trees and flowers, and supplied with everything except connected plumbing and ringable doorbells.

The scale of one inch to the foot makes the houses suitable dwelling places for a race of imaginary residents five to six inches tall. To facilitate the illusion, the Museum has installed the models on high platforms which will bring the floor of each house to the current eye-level of adult New Yorkers so that they will not look down upon the houses from a Brobdingnagian height but will look into them as though entering on the floor level of the model itself. Thus, instead of being regarded as toys, the models can be judged as actual, habitable houses. The Museum has supplied everything possible to create the illusion. New Yorkers are asked to supply the imagination.

Visitors to the exhibition would, however, need to be very much smaller than five to six inches tall in order to fit into the very largest model in the exhibition, scaled one-sixteenth inch to the foot. This is the model of ^a typical section of a neighborhood planned as the ideal setting for a modern dwelling, whether private house or apartment. This large and complex model shows tomorrow's community as an extension of tomorrow's house: safe, quiet, pleasant streets; trees, grass, view, and a place to stretch out; convenient facilities for shopping and for education and recreation for all ages. It includes apartment houses, garages, parking space, a supermarket, shops, service station, library, auditorium, nursery,

school, workshop, restaurant and club, swimming pool for adults and one for children, bathing lockers, tennis courts, bowling green, pavilion, and footbridges.

The Museum's purpose in presenting at this time a major exhibition of modern designs for small houses is the nation's need for a million-and-a-quarter new dwellings annually after the war-- a challenge without precedent in American building history. The models for the small houses shown in the exhibition have been lent by the Ladies' Home Journal, for which they were originally made to enable color photographs to be taken for publication in that magazine. The neighborhood model is a collaboration between the Journal and the Museum.

Richard Pratt, architectural editor of the Ladies' Home Journal, has been the instigator of the project and has cooperated on the exhibition with its director, Elizabeth B. Mock, Curator of the Museum's Department of Architecture. Susanne Wasson-Tucker, Acting Curator of the Museum's Department of Industrial Design, has been assistant director of the exhibition. House models have been made by the Raymond Barger Studios and Devon Dennett, with model furniture by Betty DeMars and Raymond Barger. Landscaping of the Corbett model is by Garrett Eckbo.

Architects for the individual houses are:

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| Frank Lloyd Wright. | Near PHOENIX, ARIZONA |
| Vernon DeMars.
Mario Corbett. | SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA |
| George Fred Keck. | CHICAGO, ILLINOIS |
| Philip Johnson.
Hugh Stubbins, Jr. | CAMBRIDGE, MASS. |
| Carl Koch
Serge Chermayeff
Plan-Tech Associates | NEW YORK CITY, N. Y. |

The original site plan for the neighborhood-community model is by Vernon DeMars, developed by Serge Chermayeff and Susanne Wasson-Tucker, with community buildings by Chermayeff and DeMars, and apartments by Chermayeff. The single houses are small editions of the models shown in the rest of the exhibition. Two new models will be added to the exhibition during the summer: on July 11, a house by John Funk; on August 15, a house by Wurster and Bernardi in association with Ernest J. Kump.

Any of the houses shown in the exhibition could be built now

in conventional construction, but each is designed to exploit the potential economies of

Mass-production of walls and roof as standard factory-fabricated panels.

Mass-production of kitchens, bathrooms and fireplaces as prefabricated units.

Standardized parts need never result in standardized appearance. The cost of such houses would depend upon the extent to which we revitalize our home-building industry through the kind of research and coordination which is winning the war. Such houses will become available to the average American family when-- and only when--that family in considerable numbers demands them.

A special issue of the Museum Bulletin, published simultaneously with the opening of the exhibition, is devoted entirely to it and edited by Mrs. Mock. In it Mrs. Mock writes:

"There is nothing very revolutionary about these houses. The principles of design are many times tried and proved and the only faintly radical assumption is this: that the amenities which so far have been available only in relatively expensive tailor-made houses may now be offered to a wider public through mass-production. House and equipment would all be prefabricated--bathrooms, kitchen, fireplace, walls and roof.

"With the exception of the Wright house and the masonry walls which separate the DeMar's row houses, each house is designed for assembly from standard-sized, factory-fabricated panels, some solid, some set with fixed glass, some with doors or movable sash....

"Panel construction could properly have the great advantage of flexibility. The houses might easily be expanded, contracted or rearranged to conform to changing living requirements. Monotony need be no threat, as the innumerable possible combinations of panel types and surfaces would provide all the variety which could be desired, even in a large group of houses....

"The most remarkable thing about the group as a whole is the quantity of glass, and it's there for better reasons than the personal whimsy of the architects. In almost every case the major rooms face the south with great sheets of glass. The wide roof-overhangs shade the interior in summer, when the sun takes a high curve over the sky, but allow the sun to penetrate deep into the rooms in winter, when its warmth is welcome. Heat loss is minimized by using triple sheets of glass, separated by dehydrated air for insulation, and by drawing curtains at night....

"Such houses have proved to be extraordinarily comfortable and economical, even in the extreme climate of Chicago. On sunny winter days the heat can be turned off completely, and appreciable sun-heat radiates into the house even on cloudy days. People who haven't actually visited houses of this type usually have a premonition of glare, unfounded in fact. Glare is largely a matter of excessive contrast: a flash-light in a dark room, a small window in a dark wall. The ample, even light of well-designed modern interiors has just the opposite effect....

"The architects have all voluntarily rejected cellars and attics. Each house is designed for erection on a concrete floor slab, with provision for radiant heating incorporated in floor, walls or ceiling, and the compact, fully automatic heating plants are logically placed on the ground floor. Specialized storage is cared for by impressive arrays of closets and cupboards, and most of the houses have adequate provision for undesignated storage--trunks, bicycles, garden tools, prams and all the bulky odds and ends which every family accumulates.

"Despite marked differences in architectural expression, many of the houses are so similar in basic conception as to suggest that the long, single-story, precisely outlined rectangle, open to the south and closed to the north, will emerge as the dominant post-war plan type."

During the entire period of the exhibition of Tomorrow's Small House a special gallery lecturer will give talks on it from 4:30 to 5:30 P.M. weekdays and from 4:30 to 6 P.M. on Saturdays and Sundays.