HIGH MUSEUM OF ART ATLANTA

1280 PEACHTREE STREET, N.E. • ATLANTA, GEORGIA 30309

NEWS RELEASE

Press Office
TEL 404-733-4437
FAX 404-733-4529
prinfo@woodruffcenter.org

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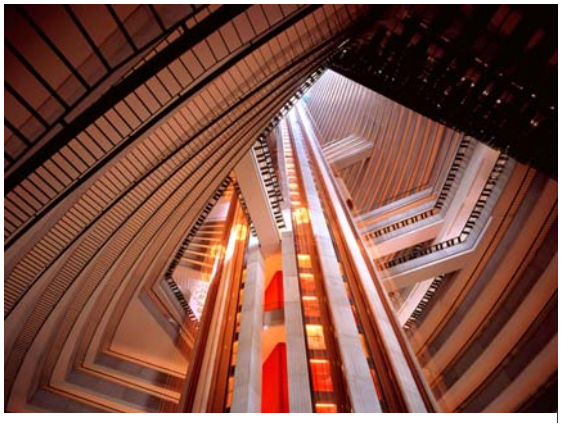
HIGH TO PRESENT EXHIBITION ON WORK AND DESIGN PROCESS OF ATLANTA ARCHITECT JOHN PORTMAN

"John Portman: Art & Architecture"
October 17, 2009 through April 18, 2010

ATLANTA, September 3, 2009—The High Museum of Art will be the sole venue for "John Portman: Art & Architecture," an exhibition featuring architectural projects, furniture, paintings, and sculpture by Atlanta-based architect and artist John Portman. The fifteen completed and current architectural projects that will be featured span five decades of national and international developments, including the Hyatt Regency Atlanta (1967) that is globally renowned as the first modern atrium hotel. The projects will be presented with large-scale photographs, design plans, elevations, text, articles, and in some cases, architectural models. The exhibition will also feature furniture, paintings and sculpture by Portman—most never before publicly exhibited**.**



Atlanta Marriott Marquis Hotel, 1985. Atlanta, Georgia. *View of the atrium.* Photo by Jaime Ardiles-Arce

"John Portman: Art & Architecture" is organized by the High Museum of Art and will be accompanied by a full-color catalogue with a major essay by Paul Goldberger, noted historian and Architecture Critic for *The New Yorker* since 1997. The catalogue will be distributed by the University of Georgia Press. "John Portman: Art & Architecture" will be on view in the Anne Cox Chambers Wing of the High from October 17, 2009 through April 18, 2010.

"John Portman has not only radically altered the skyline of his home city, Atlanta, but cities throughout the world," stated Jeffrey Grove, who curated the exhibition. "His reconsideration of how architecture should function and the experience it should offer visitors completely changed the industry. Early in his career, Portman understood that to realize his vision completely, he must add "Developer" to his role as Architect. All these themes will be addressed in the exhibition."

"Art and Architecture" will highlight fifteen of John Portman & Associates projects. Atlanta and other U.S.-based projects include: Entelechy I, his Atlanta home, 1964; Atlanta Hyatt Regency Hotel, 1967; Peachtree Center, Atlanta, 1976; The Westin Peachtree Plaza Hotel, Atlanta, 1976; Atlanta Marriott Marquis Hotel, Atlanta, 1985; SunTrust Plaza, Atlanta, 1993; Entelechy II, his Sea Island, Georgia home, 1986; The Embarcadero Center and Hyatt Regency, San Francisco, CA, 1971-1988; Renaissance Center, Detroit, Michigan, 1976; and The Westin Bonaventure Hotel, Los Angeles, California, 1977.

International projects will include: Marina Square, Singapore, 1987; a proposal for Il Porto Vecchio, Genoa, Italy, 1988; Tomorrow Square, Shanghai, China, 2003; Beijing Yintai Centre, Beijing, China, 2008; and current projects including Jin Hongqiao International Center, Shanghai, China; Zhe Jiang Fortune

Finance Center, Hangzhou, China; Wenzhou Zhixin Plaza, Wenzhou, China; Songdo Landmark City Master Plan, Incheon, Korea; and the Incheon 151 Tower at Songdo Landmark City, Incheon, Korea.

John Portman

John Portman, a native of Atlanta, received a Bachelor of Science in Architecture from the Georgia Institute of Technology in 1950, and after a three-year apprenticeship opened his own firm in 1953. In 1956, he teamed up with H. Griffith Edwards to form Edwards & Portman Architects. When Edwards retired in 1968, the firm became John Portman & Associates.

In Atlanta, Portman is best known for the 14-block Peachtree Center complex that attests to his commitment to the downtown business district and includes many of his landmark projects. Peachtree Center began in 1960 with the opening of the Atlanta Merchandise Mart, now known as AmericasMart, the world's largest wholesale marketplace, fully interconnected by aerial pedestrian bridges. His three major downtown hotels, the Hyatt Regency Atlanta, The Westin Peachtree Plaza, and the Atlanta Marriott Marquis, anchor the convention district. From the opening of the Hyatt Regency Atlanta in 1967, with its 22-story atrium, Portman made architectural history and won international acclaim.

Portman's international work began with the design and development of the Brussels Trade Mart in 1975, then shifted to the Far East. The Regent Singapore was Portman's first international hotel, followed by Marina Square, a major complex that includes three hotels, a major retail mall and an office building. Portman entered China in 1980. Portman's pioneer project, Shanghai Centre, a large, mixed-use complex, has been described as "one of the five architectural stars in mainland China." Today, much of the firm's work continues to be in Asia with ongoing projects throughout China, Korea, as well as in India.

Portman began creating paintings and sculptures in the early 1980's, after years of integrating art into the architectural environment, including designing lighting fixtures, hardware and furniture. His architectural awards include the 1976 Elsie de Wolf award from the American Society of Interior Designers, New York Chapter, the 1978 AIA Medal from the American Institute of Architects, the 1981 Silver Medal Award from the Atlanta Chapter of AIA and the 1984 Urban Land Institute's Award of Excellence for Embarcadero Center. In 1986, Georgia Institute of Technology presented him with the Exceptional Achievement Award. In 1992, the Atlanta College of Art awarded Portman an Honorary Doctorate of Fine Arts. In 1994, he was elected National Academician at the National Academy Museum and School of Fine Arts, N.Y. Portman is a Fellow of the American Institute of Architects, has served as a board member of the Atlanta College of Art, and is Trustee Emeritus of the Atlanta Arts Alliance.

John Portman & Associates/Portman Holdings

John Portman & Associates, Inc. is an internationally recognized architectural and engineering firm with offices in Atlanta, Georgia and Shanghai, China. Established in 1953, the firm has 55 years of expertise in designing hotels, offices, trade marts, universities and mixed-use urban complexes. Also Portman Holdings, Portman's Development Company, is internationally recognized for its domestic and international projects.

High Museum of Art

The High Museum of Art, founded in 1905 as the Atlanta Art Association, is the leading art museum in the southeastern United States. With more than 11,000 works of art in its permanent collection, the High Museum of Art has an extensive anthology of 19th- and 20th-century American and decorative art; significant holdings of European paintings; a growing collection of African American art; and burgeoning collections of modern and contemporary art, photography and African art. The High is also dedicated to supporting and collecting works by Southern artists and is distinguished as the only major museum in North America to have a curatorial department specifically devoted to the field of folk and self-taught art. The High's Media Arts department produces acclaimed annual film series and festivals of foreign, independent and classic cinema. In November 2005 the High opened three new buildings by architect Renzo Piano that more than doubled the Museum's size, creating a vibrant "village for the arts" at the Woodruff Arts Center in midtown Atlanta. *For more information about the High, please visit www.High.org*.

The Woodruff Arts Center

The Woodruff Arts Center is ranked among the top four arts centers in the nation. The Woodruff is unique in that it combines four visual and performing arts divisions on one campus as one not-for-profit organization. Opening in 1968, the Woodruff Arts Center is home to the Alliance Theatre, the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra, the High Museum of Art and Young Audiences. *To learn more about the Woodruff Arts Center, please visit www.woodruffcenter.org.*

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Media contacts:

Cassandra Streich Senior Manager of Public Relations,
Tel: 404-733-4436/Fax: 404-733-4529
E-mail: cassandra.streich@woodruffcenter.org

Media outside the Southeastern United States please contact:

Ilana B. Simon/Sarah Goulet Resnicow Schroeder Associates
Tel: 212-671-5176/5179 Fax: 212-671-5179
E-mail: isimon@resnicowschroeder.com/ sgoulet@resnicowschroeder.com