

PALM SPRINGS
ART MUSEUM



CONTACT:

Chris Clemens at FG Creative, Inc.
chris@fgcreative.com (760) 773-1707

For Immediate Release

**Sidney Williams, Curator of Architecture and Design at
Palm Springs Art Museum, To Retire**



PALM SPRINGS, Calif. (March 30, 2016) - Palm Springs Art Museum announced today that Sidney Williams, Curator of Architecture and Design, will be retiring after twenty-two years of service. Williams has been part of the core team shepherding the museum's expansion, starting as Director of Education and Public Programs, on to Community Access Coordinator, Associate Director of Architecture, and finally Curator of Architecture and Design. In 2003 Williams launched the Architecture and Design Council and has been its liaison ever since, growing it to more than 800 members, the largest of the museum's nine councils.

Williams' achievements have included curating the inaugural exhibition at the Architecture and Design Center, *An Eloquent Modernist: E. Stewart Williams, Architect*, and the 2015 exhibition, *Seeing the Light: Illuminating Objects*, both at the Architecture and Design Center. She was also curator for the 2013 exhibition *Insights into Architecture* at Palm Springs Art Museum and installation curator for *Antibodies: The Works of Fernando and Humberto Campana 1989-2009*. In

2011, Williams served as co-curator for the exhibition *Steel and Shade: Architecture of Donald Wexler*, and was the principal installation curator for *Between Earth and Heaven: The Architecture of John Lautner*. As Associate Curator of Architecture, her projects included *Julius Shulman: Palm Springs* in 2008, *Russel Wright: Living With Good Design* in 2007, and in 2006 both *Multicultural Modernism: The Work of Steven Ehrlich* and *A Point of Convergence: Architectural Drawings and Photographs for the L.J. Cella Collection*.

Williams has been responsible for the development of the museum's widely respected architecture and design collection, including the acquisition of archives of drawings, renderings, models, and photographs from such noted architects and designers as Arthur Elrod, E. Stewart Williams, and most recently Hugh Kaptur. She has also been instrumental in programming the museum's annual architecture symposia, which now draw audiences from all over the world during Modernism Week. She was a member of the original committee that helped start Modernism Week, which has grown to become a cultural and economic success for the City of Palm Springs and the museum.

In 2015, Sidney received the distinguished American Institute of Architects (AIA) honorary membership, one of the highest honors that the organization bestows upon a person outside the profession of architecture.

Of Williams's many contributions to the museum and the community of Palm Springs, there is one thing that stands out above all others is the realization of her dream, the museum's Architecture and Design Center, Edwards Harris Pavilion. In 2006 Williams brought forth the idea of repurposing and restoring the architecturally significant, E. Stewart Williams designed, Santa Fe Savings & Loan building to become a center for architecture and design. Between her curatorial position at the museum and as chair of the Palm Springs Historic Site Preservation Board, combined with her elegant persistence, Williams was instrumental in the building's Class 1 Historic designation, intensive fundraising, the rehabilitation by preeminent Los Angeles architecture firm Marmol Radziner, and ultimately, exhibition programming for the internationally respected center it is today.

"Sidney has been a key player in building the international reputation of Palm Springs as a unique center for midcentury modernist architecture," said museum executive director Elizabeth Armstrong. "She leaves an indelible mark on the museum and the community with her role in the creation of the A+D Center and as a passionate advocate for architecture, design, and education."

As a respected expert on modern architecture, Williams has been a guest lecturer and panel participant in "The Nature of Modernism" at the Denver Art Museum, "Midcentury Architecture in Palm Springs" at the Nasher Sculpture Center in Dallas, and the DOCOMOMO National Symposium, among others. Her

work on the E. Stewart Williams and Donald Wexler exhibition catalogues has received national acclaim. This year Williams was a “UCLA Architecture and Urban Design Modern Architecture Design Advocates,” honoree.

“In this time of extraordinary growth and change at the museum it seems an appropriate moment for me to move into a more limited role. I have decided to retire from my current position as curator of architecture and design and focus on special museum and independent projects,” said Williams.

About Palm Springs Art Museum

Palm Springs Art Museum is the largest cultural institution in the Coachella Valley and includes three locations in Palm Springs and Palm Desert. The flagship building is located in downtown Palm Springs and features compelling art exhibitions, a vast permanent collection, and the 433-seat Annenberg Theater, all in a 150,000 square foot, architecturally-significant building. Palm Springs Art Museum Architecture and Design Center, Edwards Harris Pavilion, features exhibitions and programming that explore the rich topics of architecture and design. Admission to the A+D Center is free for the next two years thanks to an anonymous donor. Palm Springs Art Museum in Palm Desert is an 8,400 square foot, Silver LEED-certified building named The Galen that presents rotating exhibitions and special collections. It is surrounded by the four-acre Faye Sarkowsky Sculpture Garden featuring important sculpture works. Admission to the Palm Desert location is free, generously underwritten by Helene V. Galen. For more information, call 760-322-4800, visit psmuseum.org, and follow the museum on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram.