



Palm Springs
Art Museum

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Media Contact: Darius Sabbaghzadeh
Kyle Hinton

darius@hellothirdeye.com

kyle@hellothirdeye.com

Palm Springs Art Museum Announces Permanent Exhibit of Iconic *Aluminaire House*™, The First All-Metal Home in the United States, Opening in February 2024



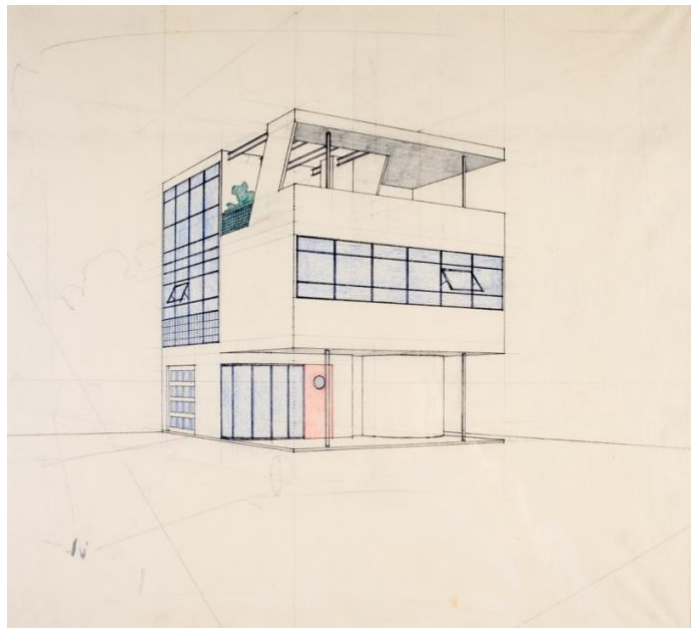
Caption: *Aluminaire House*™ on-site at Palm Springs Art Museum, 2023. Rendering by Claudia Cengher.

PALM SPRINGS (September 28, 2023) – Palm Springs Art Museum is delighted to announce the upcoming permanent exhibit of Albert Frey and A. Lawrence Kocher’s seminal prototype structure *Aluminaire House*™ on the museum’s downtown Palm Springs campus. Named after its aluminum components, the *Aluminaire House*™ is an important work of architecture conceived of as an experiment to explore new industrial materials and Modern design in the creation of low-cost housing. It is representative of Frey’s utopian belief that the power of U.S. industry could be used to create affordable housing for everyone. The structure will be accessible in February 2024 on the museum’s south parking lot and will be timed to the exhibition *Albert Frey: Inventive Modernist* that opens January 13, 2024 at the Architecture and Design Center, Edwards Harris Pavilion.

"This iconic work of modern architecture will be a tremendous contribution to the cultural landscape of Palm Springs," said Adam Lerner, the JoAnn McGrath Executive Director and CEO of Palm Springs Art Museum. "One of the museum’s core values is rooted in showcasing and preserving the architectural and design legacy that has come to define our city and continues to attract so many visitors from around the globe. The *Aluminaire House*™ represents a significant new phase in the museum's engagement with our community's extraordinary passion for architecture."

Originally shown in 1931 as part of the Architectural League of New York's annual Exposition of Architectural and Allied Arts, the *Aluminaire House*[™] was one of the first examples of Modern architectural design in the United States, and the country's first all-metal house. The structure was built as a collaboration between Swiss-American architect Albert Frey and architect and editor A. Lawrence Kocher, who were each deeply inspired by European Modernism as exemplified by Le Corbusier and Mies van der Rohe. The house notably used all factory-made prefabricated materials sourced from distributors across the Eastern United States such as sheet metal, plate glass, steel beams, and linoleum in order to provide a case study of how to build modern mass-produced, affordable housing.

Upon its first public showing, *Aluminaire House*[™] was acclaimed as an icon of modern practical design. It was later erected at a private residence in upstate New York where it ultimately fell into disrepair. In 1986, through the efforts of architects Frances Campani and Michael Schwarting, the house was acquired and moved to the New York Institute of Technology on Long Island. The closure of that campus necessitated another relocation of *Aluminaire*. Campani, Schwarting, and Palm Springs resident Mark Davis, established a foundation to facilitate the relocation to Palm Springs Art Museum, a move all agreed made sense given the museum's ongoing work to preserve other examples of Frey's legacy throughout the Coachella Valley.



Captions: (Left) Photographer: Julius Shulman. Architect: Albert Frey. *Albert Frey in front of Frey House I*, ca. 1955. © J. Paul Getty Trust. Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles (2004.R.10).
(Right) Architects: Kocher & Frey, *Exterior Perspective Sketch of Aluminaire House*[™], 1931, graphite, colored pencil on paper, 12 x 15 inches, Courtesy of Special Collections, John D. Rockefeller Jr. Library, The Colonial Williamsburg Foundation.

Timed to the completion of the *Aluminaire House*[™] will be the special exhibition *Albert Frey: Inventive Modernist* that opens at the museum's Architecture and Design Center, Edwards Harris Pavilion on January 13, 2024 and documents the Swiss-American architect's life and career. The exhibition complements the permanent exhibit by offering a survey into Frey's "simple but severe" style of Desert Modernism that cemented his legacy as one of the most influential architects of his time. The retrospective is curated by Brad Dunning, and presents rare and previously unexhibited architectural models, drawings, films, photographs, and

furniture. A richly illustrated hardbound book, published by Radius Books, will also accompany the exhibition with contributions from writers, historians, and architectural critics.

The museum launched a capital campaign in January 2023 to raise the needed \$2.6 million to complete the construction. To date, the campaign has reached \$2.3 million of that goal.

Coordinating the installation and permanent exhibit of the *Aluminaire House*™ at Palm Springs Art Museum are museum board members L.J. Cella and Leo Marmol, Managing Partner of celebrated design firm Marmol Radziner.

About Palm Springs Art Museum

Palm Springs Art Museum is the largest cultural institution in the Coachella Valley. The flagship building, located in downtown Palm Springs, features compelling art exhibitions, a vast permanent collection, and the Annenberg Theater, all in a 150,000-square-foot, architecturally significant building. Five blocks away, the Palm Springs Art Museum Architecture and Design Center, Edwards Harris Pavilion, features exhibitions and programming that explore the rich topics of architecture and design.

For more information about Palm Springs Art Museum exhibitions, programs, and events, please visit psmuseum.org or call (760) 322-4800.