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The American Institute of Architects

## Palm Springs Art Museum's Curator of Architecture and Design Awarded Honorary Membership by American Institute of Architects



**PALM SPRINGS, Calif. (March 4, 2015)** – Palm Springs Art Museum's curator of architecture and design, Sidney Williams, has 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.

Founded in 1857 and based in Washington D.C., the AIA is the leading professional membership association for licensed architects, emerging professionals, and allied partners, with 300 chapters in the United States and its territories, as well as in the United Kingdom, Continental Europe and Hong Kong. The organization holds a long tradition of recognizing individuals and organizations for their outstanding achievements in support of the profession of architecture. Persons of esteemed character who are not eligible for AIA membership but who have given distinguished service to the profession of architecture or the allied arts and sciences for at least 10 years can be recognized with an honorary membership.

"Ms. Williams is a highly respected and talented curator for Palm Springs Art Museum, bringing a wealth of experience, knowledge, and passion to the work she does here, as well as in the community specific to architecture and design," said Liz Armstrong, the JoAnn McGrath Executive Director of the museum. "The recognition of her commitment and achievements in architecture and design by the AIA is a venerable award that we are thrilled to see her receive."

Williams was also recently recognized by the leading industry publication *Architectural Record* for her exhibition catalogue, *An Eloquent Modernist: E. Stewart Williams, Architect*, as a “Best Architecture Book” of 2014. The new Palm Springs Art Museum Architecture and Design Center, Edwards Harris Pavilion opened in November 2014 with this exhibition, garnering worldwide interest as a destination for serious midcentury modern enthusiasts. Williams’ book details the life of E. Stewart Williams, responsible for iconic midcentury buildings in and around Palm Springs, while sharing insight into his concepts about site-specific architecture and integrating buildings with the local environment.

Notably, Williams also spearheaded the vision for the new Architecture and Design Center which was in the works several years prior to its recent opening. It is a classic midcentury structure and a Class 1 Historic Site. Originally the Santa Fe Savings & Loan, the building itself was designed by E. Stewart Williams in 1960, and the opening exhibition was appropriately *An Eloquent Modernist, E. Stewart Williams, Architect*, celebrating his 50-year career defining desert modern style.

Williams has served as curator of architecture and design for 10 years with Palm Springs Art Museum. The exhibition, *An Eloquent Modernist, E. Stewart Williams, Architect*, closed on February 22. The next exhibition curated by Daniell Cornell, director of art, and Williams, is *Eye on Design: Andrea Zittel’s Aggregated Stacks and the Collection of Palm Springs Art Museum*, opening on March 14 and going through July 12, 2015.

### **About Palm Springs Art Museum**

Palm Springs Art Museum is the largest cultural institution in the Coachella Valley with three locations. The flagship building is in downtown Palm Springs featuring compelling art exhibitions, a vast permanent collection, and the 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. 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. For more information, call 760-322-4800, visit [www.psmuseum.org](http://www.psmuseum.org), and follow the museum on Facebook, Twitter and InstaGram.