

Architecture in Art

With only a year until the dramatic new Modern Wing opens, we can't help but be excited about the union of architecture and art. Join in the thrilling anticipation as this tour explores these often interwoven creative fields.



GALLERY 109

Ando Gallery (1992) by Tadao Ando

Feeling like you've stepped into the tranquility of another world? That was precisely the intention of Pritzker Prize-winning architect Tadao Ando, commissioned by the Art Institute in 1989 to design this gallery for *byobu*, or Japanese screens. Ando aimed to create a space that would present the *byobu*, not as art objects in isolation, but within "the spirit of the original Japanese space." The illuminated *byobu* are thus placed at floor-level as they would be in traditional spaces, and the rift-sawn oak pillars recall the columned porches or entrance halls of Japanese buildings. The regularized geometry and restrained light of the space all effectively contribute to a truly transporting museum experience.



GALLERY 133

Pigsty and Latrines (206 B.C.–222 A.D.), Chinese, probably from Henan province

From earliest times, the Chinese constructed elaborate underground tombs and furnished the dead with all the necessities and luxuries of daily life. During the Han dynasty, these burial customs spread from the aristocracy to a broader middle class. Brick tombs were furnished with clay models such as this pigsty with the hope that familiar objects would comfort the deceased. Since Chinese buildings were primarily timber-framed constructions and rarely survived, these burial models also provide a valuable record of contemporary architectural styles. With its handsome roof of rounded tiles and elaborately paved stairs and walkway, this pigsty certainly makes one envy the pigs.



GALLERY 240

Carnival in Arcueil (1911) by Lyonel Feininger

With the literal parade of colorful characters that dance across this brilliantly hued canvas, it is perhaps not surprising that the American artist Lyonel Feininger began his career as a cartoonist. While his contemporaries were painting anxious scenes of modern life, Feininger's figures, frolicking down the street in fanciful frock coats, baggy trousers, and silly stovepipe hats, evoke a nostalgia for an earlier time. Yet it is not only the capering parade-goers who recollect the past; the immense, yellow, medieval buildings and the ancient aqueduct looming high above the town reiterate an idealized vision of a bygone era.



GALLERY 221

The Interior of the Palm House on the Pfaueninsel Near Potsdam (1834) by Carl Blechen

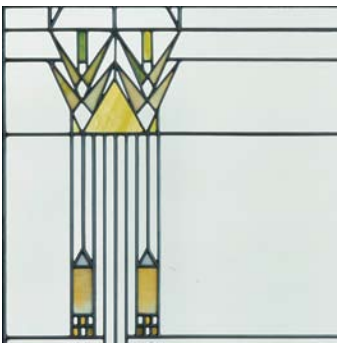
In 1832, King Friedrich Wilhelm III commissioned the landscape painter Carl Blechen to paint two views of the Palm House, a building designed by Blechen's friend and lauded architect Karl Friedrich Schinkel to house an extensive collection of palms recently purchased by the king. Blechen cleverly emphasized the Palm House's grand scale and luxury by situating a towering palm in the foreground. The crisply articulated fronds frame the view and lead the eye into the building's shimmering, green interior. While achieving a dazzling degree of naturalistic detail, Blechen also improved upon the building's exotic charm by adding a group of women lounging about in oriental costumes of gold silk.



GALLERY 213

Landscape with the Ruins of the Castle of Egmond (1650/55) by Jacob van Ruisdael

In this ominous landscape, architectural ruins take on great symbolic significance. Specifically the crumbling Castle of Egmond acts as a stirring reminder of national sacrifice. The castle was damaged in 1575 during a war in which the Dutch fought to free themselves from Spanish occupation. Rather than surrender the castle to the enemy, the Prince of Orange ordered his troops to set fire to it. Besides patriotic pride, Van Ruisdael's ruins also evoke the power of nature over man. Against a gray, threatening sky, nature runs rampant over the castle remains. Dwarfing the tiny shepherd, nature's majesty clearly triumphs over man and his achievements.



GALLERY 200

Mahony, Gerald House Window (1907) by Marion Mahony Griffin

Marion Mahony Griffin, the second woman to receive an architecture degree from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and the first licensed female architect in Illinois, is perhaps best known for her work with Frank Lloyd Wright. However, she also worked with other architects and independently. This window, in fact, comes from the house she was commissioned to design for her brother, Gerald, even though Gerald's wife was a close family friend of the Wrights. While few details are known about the house, demolished in 1965, the exquisite art glass with its geometricized wheat design is a brilliant specimen of the Prairie Style.



GALLERY 200

Modern Wing Site Plan

Increasing the museum's size by one-third and housing the museum's collections of modern art, contemporary art, architecture and design, and photography, the Renzo Piano-designed Modern Wing is a work of art itself. The perforated rooftop, appropriately termed the "flying carpet" by Piano, whimsically sets the building afloat, but this feature functions practically as well. Its skylights and daylight-linked interior lighting system not only provide excellent lighting for viewing art but also save electricity. Another dramatic element, the gracefully arching Nichols Bridgeway, will connect the new building to the equally architecturally rich Millennium Park.

Learn more about Chicago's rich architectural history with one of the Chicago Architecture Foundation's over 85 architectural tours. Among these guided explorations of the city's built environment are the ever-popular Tiffany and Sullivan tours, which make a stop at the Art Institute. For the full selection, visit www.architecture.org.