



WOLFSONIAN

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THE WOLFSONIAN-FLORIDA INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY AWARDED MAJOR EDUCATION GRANT FROM NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE HUMANITIES

NEH Grants Will Support Workshops for Educators on Using Design Landmarks
to Teach American History and Culture

Miami Beach, FL – January 2006 – **The Wolfsonian – Florida International University** has been awarded a \$148,000 grant by the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) as part of the NEH's 2006 Landmarks of American History and Culture program. This grant will enable The Wolfsonian and its partner, the Miami Design Preservation League (MDPL), to create two one-week summer workshops for K-12 educators, titled ***The Miami Beach Art Deco District: Using Buildings to Tell Stories***, which will use the city's historic built environment as a resource for research and teacher training. Miami Beach's landmarked district is the only 20th century site selected as part of the NEH's program, and the grant to The Wolfsonian is a reflection of the museum's leadership in the field of design education and presentation.

"We are thrilled to be awarded this grant, which will enable teachers from across the country to visit and learn from Miami Beach's Art Deco District," stated museum director Cathy Leff. "For The Wolfsonian, with our focus on revealing the deep connections and cross-influences between design and life, this grant is an acknowledgment of the historic importance of Miami Beach's architecture, and of the museum's commitment to our community."

The Landmarks workshops are part of the NEH's *We the People* initiative, which promotes the exploration of significant events and themes in our nation's history, and programs that share these lessons with all Americans. The principal goal of the NEH workshops is to empower educators with new skills in using historical architecture to explore history and the role of design that can then be implemented in their classrooms. As part of *Miami Beach Art Deco District: Using Buildings to Tell Stories*, The Wolfsonian and the MDPL will work with the educators to develop lesson plans by examining the culture and architectural environment of the city through interactive walking tours, lecture/discussions, hands-on teaching activities, and oral history presentations. The Art Deco Landmark Academic Team, which includes scholars of the era accustomed to using the built environment to engage people in the study of art, design, and history, will conduct these activities.

Specialists involved in the program will include museum curators and educators, university scholars in history and the arts and design fields, architectural critics, and the former Mayor of the City of Miami Beach. A keynote presentation will be made by **Allida Black**, Research Professor of History and International Affairs at The George Washington University, a leading historian specializing in the Great Depression and New Deal period. She will set the stage for the workshop with an overview of the state of the country during that period, how the arts were affected by the Depression and New Deal, and the pivotal roles of Franklin and Eleanor Roosevelt. Ms. Black is the editor of *The Papers of Eleanor Roosevelt: Volume I, The Human Rights Years, 1945–1948*, which will be published in August 2006.

Miami Beach's unique urban landscape is a result of its growth as a resort town during and after the Great Depression, and a subsequent post-World War II building boom. The city's architecture evolved from the retrospective revivalist styles through the vibrant eclecticism of the interwar period, to the stripped down functionalism of the International Style and the antecedents of Postmodernism. A period of economic decline and social disintegration threatened the Art Deco District in the late 1960's and 1970's, but historic preservationists brought new life and revitalization to the area. The District was saved as a landmark enhancing historical knowledge and cultural appreciation – effectively creating a museum of the streets. With a complex and rich historical background, the Art Deco District combines functionality with art, and provides a unique setting for teachers to learn about architecture, design, art, and American urban growth in the 20th century.

As part of the *Miami Beach Art Deco District: Using Buildings to Tell Stories* program, The Wolfsonian will also make available its research library, which contains approximately 45,000 items that illuminate the social, political, aesthetic, and technological issues that dominated the industrial age, and further demonstrate the vital role that design played in shaping perceptions of the modern world. This resource will support the program's teacher training and lesson plan development process by providing access to archival materials that support what the workshop participants will learn by exploring the built environment.

About The Wolfsonian–Florida International University:

The Wolfsonian is a museum and research center that uses objects to illustrate the persuasive power of art and design to explore what it means to be modern, and to tell the story of social, political and technological changes that have transformed the world. The 100,000 artifacts that comprise The Wolfsonian's collections range from fine art, graphic design and political propaganda to furniture, rare books and ephemeral materials such as postcards and travel brochures.

The Wolfsonian is located at 1001 Washington Avenue, Miami Beach, Florida. Admission is \$7 adults; \$5 seniors, students, and children 6 -12; free for Wolfsonian members, State University System of Florida staff and students with ID, children under six, and Miami Beach residents with ID. The museum is open Monday, Tuesday, Saturday and Sunday from noon-6pm; Thursday and Friday from noon-9pm; and is closed on Wednesday. Contact us at 305.531.1001 or visit us online at www.wolfsonian.org.

The Wolfsonian receives ongoing support from the State of Florida; Department of State; Division of Cultural Affairs; Florida Arts Council; Miami-Dade County Department of Cultural Affairs through the Cultural Affairs Council; the Mayor and the Miami-Dade County Board of County Commissioners; the Mayor and City Commission of the City of Miami Beach and the Miami Beach Cultural Arts Council; Crispin Porter + Bogusky; Dacra and the Miami Design District; Continental Airlines, the preferred airline

of The Wolfsonian; the Arthur F. and Alice E. Adams Foundation; Artécité, for inspired condo living; Carnival Foundation; and RBK Productions.

The Wolfsonian's partner, the Miami Design Preservation League, is a community-based, non-profit preservation organization with an extended history of working in public history projects.

Workshops Schedule:

June 26 – 30, 2006

July 10 – 14, 2006

Residence-based, hands-on, intensive workshops open to 50 teachers from across America. Housing has been reserved for participants at the ocean-front Park Central Hotel, named by the National Trust for Historic Preservation as one of the Historic Hotels of America <http://www.historichotels.org/hotel/43>

Rooms, single or double, are specially priced at \$80 per night (plus taxes), which includes a continental breakfast for workshop participants. Complimentary wireless internet access is also available throughout the property.

To Apply:

The deadline for applying for the workshop is **March 15, 2006**. You can obtain information or application materials for this workshop by contacting the Landmarks project staff at The Wolfsonian by mail, phone, or email:

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Any views, findings, conclusions, or recommendations expressed in this release do not necessarily reflect those of the National Endowment for the Humanities.

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