



**WOLFSONIAN**

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**THE WOLFSONIAN-FIU HONORS SEVENTY-FIFTH ANNIVERSARY OF THE NEW DEAL IN 'A BITTERSWEET DECADE: THE NEW DEAL IN AMERICA, 1933-43'**

Miami Beach, FL (March 27, 2008)— *A Bittersweet Decade: The New Deal in America, 1933-43* considers the impact of Franklin D. Roosevelt's New Deal programs on American culture. The exhibition explores how the government's patronage of art, design, and architecture were integral parts of the larger project of the New Deal, which aimed to spur recovery from the Great Depression and change American society. Commemorating the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the New Deal, the exhibition will be on view at The Wolfsonian-FIU from July 3, 2008 through January 19, 2009. It is curated by Marianne Lamonaca, associate director for curatorial affairs and education, Jonathan Mogul, curatorial research associate, and John A. Stuart, professor, School of Architecture, Florida International University.

The New Deal encompassed a great variety of federal government programs, many of which contributed significantly to the visual culture and built environment of the 1930s and 1940s. The Federal Art Project employed painters, sculptors, printmakers, poster designers, and craftspeople. The Section of Fine Arts in the Treasury Department commissioned artworks, such as murals, for federal buildings. The Farm Security Administration hired photographers who traveled the country and produced an enormous body of images documenting the hardship experienced by the rural poor. And other agencies, such as the Public Works Administration and the Tennessee Valley Authority, built large infrastructure projects – such as dams, bridges, and highways – that permanently changed the landscape of the United States.

Drawing largely on the resources of The Wolfsonian-FIU, and complemented by the collections of local and national supporters, including Martin Z. Margulies, Jason Schoen, Frederic A. Sharf, and Wolfsonian founder Mitchell Wolfson, Jr., this exhibition will showcase the range of art and design that New Deal programs generated. Paintings, sculpture, prints, posters, mural studies, photographs, books, models, furniture and a variety of other kinds of objects will be on view. Two overall themes, "The Personal New Deal" and "The Public New Deal," will organize the exhibition's narrative. The first section of the exhibition will feature artworks, such as portraits and landscapes that express subjective

FLORIDA INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY

visions of individual artists, as well as items intended for private spaces, to show how federal patronage promoted an outpouring of highly idiosyncratic and personal images and objects. The second section will focus on the more familiar, public face of the New Deal, featuring objects meant to be viewed by great numbers of people, as well as depictions of projects (such as the Tennessee Valley Authority) meant to produce large-scale changes in living conditions. Throughout the exhibition, the impact of the New Deal on South Florida will receive specific attention.

The exhibition is accompanied by the catalogue *The New Deal in South Florida: Design, Policy, and Community Building, 1933-1940*, a compilation of essays exploring how local organizations with federal assistance re-shaped the South Florida landscape. Co-edited by FIU faculty members John F. Stack, Jr. and John A. Stuart; other essayists include FIU faculty member Ted Baker, Marianne Lamonaca, and Cornell University professor Mary Woods. The catalogue was published by the University Press of Florida.

#### About The Wolfsonian—Florida International University

The Wolfsonian is a museum, library, 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, historical, and technological changes that have transformed our world. The collections comprise approximately 120,000 objects from the period of 1885 to 1945—the height of the Industrial Revolution to the end of the Second World War—in a variety of media including furniture; industrial-design objects; works in glass, ceramics, and metal; rare books; periodicals; ephemera; works on paper; paintings; textiles; and medals.

The Wolfsonian is located at 1001 Washington Avenue, Miami Beach, Fla. Admission is \$7 adults; \$5 seniors, students, and children six-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](http://www.wolfsonian.org).

The Wolfsonian receives ongoing support from the State of Florida, Department of State, Division of Cultural Affairs, the Florida Arts Council and the National Endowment for the Arts; Miami-Dade County Department of Cultural Affairs and the Cultural Affairs Council, the Miami-Dade County Mayor and Board of County Commissioners; City of Miami Beach, Cultural Affairs Program, Cultural Arts Council; Crispin Porter + Bogusky; Continental Airlines, the preferred airline of The Wolfsonian; the Arthur F. and Alice E. Adams Foundation; and Pistils & Petals.

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