

Exhibition celebrating the work of architect Michael Graves on view at the Minneapolis Institute of Arts

From Towers to Teakettles: Michael Graves Architecture and Design
August 29, 2009, through January 3, 2010

MINNEAPOLIS, SEPTEMBER 1, 2009

The Minneapolis Institute of Arts (MIA) is proud to present an exhibition celebrating the work of renowned architect Michael Graves, titled "From Towers to Teakettles: Michael Graves Architecture and Design" on view August 29, 2009, through January 3, 2010. Over a career spanning more than 40 years, Michael Graves has developed an individual approach to architecture and design that combines his love of classical forms and elements with a sense of sophisticated wit. This exhibition, organized on the occasion of the 10-year anniversary of Michael Graves's partnership with Target, showcases Graves's celebrated style and focuses on the roles of context, accessibility, and total design in his work.

"I am very honored to have my work presented in such a thoughtful, comprehensive retrospective," said Graves. "This exhibition truly captures the spirit of my professional and personal work, as well as many of the great partnerships I've formed over the past four decades."



Michael Graves, American, born 1934, *Teakettle*, 1984, stainless steel, polyamides, manufactured by Alessi, image courtesy of Michael Graves Design Group



Michael Graves, *Resorts World at Sentosa*, Sentosa, Singapore, General View, Computer rendering courtesy of Michael Graves & Associates

Beginning in the 1960s, Graves sought to put meaning back into architecture as an alternative to the prevalent “glass box” modernist aesthetic. His version of “figurative architecture” employs a classical sense of order along with elements such as columns, porticos, and rotundas, but does not imitate the past. An architectural mini-retrospective section for Michael Graves & Associates will represent a range of the firm’s projects, through models, drawings, and photographs, including the Fargo-Moorhead Cultural Bridge (1977), the Washington Monument Restoration (1998–2000), the Minneapolis Institute of Arts Target Wing (2006), and an extensive, integrated resort in Sentosa, Singapore (2006–present).

Since his time studying in Italy in the 1960s, Graves has admired the ability of Renaissance artists such as Michelangelo to design anything and everything, from churches to stage sets. Graves’s product and graphic design firm, Michael Graves Design Group, has turned its attention to the improvement of everyday objects—often with a dose of whimsy—and taught the general public to expect more than just utility in products used throughout the home. Graves’s equal regard for the design of a building and anything to be used in it—from towers to teakettles—has set his firms apart in the architecture and design fields of today. A section devoted to product design, which has literally made Graves a household name, includes his iconic whistling bird teakettle for Alessi (1985), jewelry designs for Belvedere (1991), selections from his “top 25” product designs for Target (1999–present), and a soon-to-be launched line of accessibility products for Drive Medical. Support for this exhibition is provided by Target.

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