

---

RESEARCH ARTICLE

# Exhibiting Reform: MoMA and the Display of Public Housing (1932–1939)

Rixt Woudstra

---

While the explicit aestheticization of modern architecture during MoMA's first decade of exhibitions is well known, it is too often forgotten that this interpretation was countered from the beginning by exhibitions advancing an understanding of architecture that emphasized its social effects. Coinciding with America's first large-scale public housing projects, part of the New Deal's attempt to end the Great Depression through relief, recovery, and reform, MoMA installed several shows advocating for public housing during the 1930s — an overlooked facet of the museum's well-documented history. This article explores how MoMA was instrumental in introducing and promoting the concept of public housing to the American public by cooperating on several exhibitions with local and federal public housing authorities, such as *Housing Exhibition of the City of New York* (1934), *Architecture and Government Housing* (1936) and *Houses and Housing* (1939). Figures involved in several of these exhibitions such as self-acclaimed 'housing expert' Catherine Bauer were also active as part of governmental and non-governmental housing organizations, creating the laws that radically reformed housing in the United States. And yet, these exhibitions simultaneously presented housing as a distinct subcategory of architecture — a category in which quantity and affordability were valued over excellent design. The housing exhibitions made the living environments of the poor visible but perpetuated the divide between a prized elitist modernized aesthetics and built environments for the working-class masses.

---

## Introduction

On December 6, 1938, the eminent architectural historian Henry-Russell Hitchcock wrote a short note to the Museum of Modern Art (MoMA) in New York in which he criticized a proposal for a forthcoming exhibition that included several American public housing projects. *Houses and Housing* was scheduled to take place in the spring of the next year, as part of the museum's tenth-anniversary exhibition. In particular, Hitchcock expressed his concern that the focus of the show was 'sociological' rather than 'aesthetic'. Housing, he wrote, was 'increasingly an economic and sociological, not to say political, problem'. Therefore, it should no longer be 'the prerogative of those primarily concerned with modern architecture to be its chief propagandist'. Instead, Hitchcock proposed a survey of American architecture of the last few decades. This overview of domestic architecture should include housing, but the selection should be made based on '*architectural excellence* rather than according to the many possibly more generally valid criteria of rent level, subsidy, location, etc.' (Hitchcock, 'Houses and Housing', MoMA Exhs. 87–88.1; emphasis mine). Hitchcock's comments alluded to an ongoing internal debate at MoMA in the 1930s — a debate that remains relevant to the display of architecture within the art museum today: Should exhibitions empha-

size the *design* aspect of housing or focus on the *social* and *political* impact of architecture? Was public housing, within the context of the art museum, a matter of aesthetics or ethics, or both?

The explicit aestheticization of modern architecture during MoMA's first decade of exhibitions is well known. The museum's seminal inaugural architecture exhibition in 1932, *Modern Architecture: International Exhibition* — better known as *The International Style*, in part organized by Hitchcock himself — stressed the particular aesthetic qualities of the designs, their shapes, colors, and materials, as did monographic shows such as the one in 1938 on Alvar Aalto. Yet it is often forgotten, as Barry Bergdoll (2011) has argued, that MoMA's aestheticization of modern architecture was countered from the beginning by exhibitions advancing an understanding of architecture that emphasized its social effects. Coinciding with America's first large-scale public housing projects as part of the New Deal, attempting to end the Great Depression through relief, recovery, and reform, *Houses and Housing*, on view in 1939, was, in fact, one of several shows installed by MoMA advocating for public housing during the 1930s — an overlooked facet of the museum's well-documented history (see Staniszewski 1998; Bee and Elligott 2004). Throughout the 1930s, MoMA's galleries displayed designs and urban plans for public housing projects, both foreshadowing and documenting the advent of the distinct architectural typology that would so radically change the American urban landscape.

Often omitted too is that the exhibitions on housing were organized in collaboration with newly founded local and federal public housing authorities. For *Houses and Housing*, for example, John McAndrew, architectural historian and curator of MoMA's Department of Architecture and Industrial Art during the late 1930s, cooperated with the United States Housing Authority (USHA), established in 1937. *Houses and Housing*, a show that traveled across America, displayed plans and photographs of a variety of USHA-sponsored housing projects across the country, many still under construction. Collaborating with MoMA offered an opportunity for the USHA and other public housing authorities to familiarize the American public with the new concept of government-funded housing. Aside from emergency housing settlements during World War I and the provision of subsidized loans to help veterans buy their own homes after the war, the United States government had not been involved directly in the housing business (Radford 1996: 16–17).

The rationale behind the decision to provide public housing – over a decade after the first public housing projects in Europe – was primarily to create job opportunities within the building industry to stabilize the economy through the provision of employment (Madden and Marcuse 2016: 129–130). In the summer of 1933, several months after President Roosevelt's inauguration, the Public Works Administration (PWA) established the Housing Division, a small and semi-independent housing agency for the construction of low-cost housing and slum clearance. After four years, the organization had financed and developed fifty-one projects across the country, often in collaboration with municipal housing authorities (Radford 1996: 89–107; also see Goetz 2013). In 1937, with the passing of the U.S. Housing Act, the government took its first steps toward the creation of a national housing program, resulting in the foundation of the first federal housing authority, the USHA. Unsurprisingly, the idea of public housing faced strong opposition in the United States, where its opponents argued, practically, that the American taxpayer bore the cost of any government spending and, moralistically, that public housing led to a loss of self-sufficiency and locational stability. The real-estate lobby, public housing's most vociferous opponent, deemed government-funded housing 'un-American' (Hayden 2016: 62).

To understand the ideological and curatorial challenges that the display of public housing brought to the art museum, this article examines three exhibitions organized by MoMA in collaboration with the USHA and other public housing authorities: *Housing Exhibition of the City of New York* (1934), *Architecture in Government Housing* (1936), and *Houses and Housing* (1939). I show how the museum played an instrumental role in introducing the concept of public housing to the American public by combining dynamic graphics with architectural models, plans, and photographs to forcefully argue for government-funded housing. Broadcasts on national radio with well-known European architects of public housing, such as Ernst May, and with government officials, such as New York City mayor Fiorello La Guardia, helped disseminate the message beyond the walls of the museum. Figures

involved in several of these exhibitions, such as the self-acclaimed 'housing expert' Catherine Bauer, were also active as part of local and federal housing organizations, creating or shaping the laws that radically reformed housing in the United States.

At the same time, these exhibitions reveal how 'housing' came to be considered a separate category at MoMA, different from 'architecture'. In the 1930s, the era during which MoMA organized and hosted these shows, housing, as an object of expertise and administration as well as a distinct architectural type, was anything but a stable, fixed category. In America, the word 'housing' was not commonly associated with providing shelter for the lower classes until the 1930s – the period the government first intervened in the housing market. Until then, the preferred term was 'tenement house', a word defined by law as any building housing three or more families, but commonly used to refer to any dwelling housing several poor families, lacking air, light, and amenities (Dolkart 2016: 45). In other words, what housing meant in the American context, and what form it took, was still in the process of being defined.

### From Exhibition to Policy

At MoMA, 'architecture' and 'housing' were separated from the beginning. In 1932, one year before the construction of the first government-funded housing projects in the United States, several designs for affordable housing found their way into MoMA's galleries. The *Modern Architecture: International Exhibition*, held from February 10 till March 19, 1932, contained an isolated – and consequently often neglected by scholars – section on housing (Fig. 1).<sup>1</sup> Curated by Hitchcock and Philip Johnson, chairman of MoMA's Department of Architecture, the exhibition became well known for casting modernism as a style based on particular formalistic characteristics and presenting to the American public the work of leaders of the modern movement, Mies van der Rohe, Walter Gropius, Le Corbusier, and J.J.P. Oud.

Yet, as Bergdoll (2015: 140) explains, this perception of the exhibition is based not on what was on view in the museum's galleries, but rather on the concurrent yet substantially different publication, *The International Style: Architecture Since 1922*. One reason for scholars' common but erroneous use of *The International Style* publication as a blueprint of the exhibition is that visual documentation of the exhibition is scarce, with just a few black and white installation photographs surviving. *The International Style*, written by Johnson and Hitchcock, and published by W.W. Norton & Company, appeared at the same time as the exhibition's catalog, *Modern Architecture*, but was intended for a broader audience. Whereas the catalog showcased the work of the individual architects presented in the exhibition, *The International Style* adopted a broader argument that focused on the principles of what Johnson and Hitchcock identified as the new 'modern style'. Because of the popularity of *The International Style* over the exhibition's catalog, the inclusion of the work of various American architects in the exhibition, for example, is less acknowledged (see Jordy 1965; Riley 1998; Matthews 1994). Rather than offering a corrective view



**Figure 1:** Installation view of the Housing Section of *Modern Architecture: International Exhibition*, February 9, 1932–March 23, 1932, The Museum of Modern Art, New York. In the middle, Otto Haesler's model for Rothenburg; on the wall, from left to right, the plan for Radburn, New Jersey, two photographs of row houses on Long Island and Sunnyside Gardens in Queens, two aerial photographs of tenement housing on Manhattan's Lower East Side and apartment buildings on Park Avenue, and two aerial photographs of the Amalgamated Houses in the Bronx and Kiefhoek in Rotterdam. The Museum of Modern Art. Digital Image © The Museum of Modern Art/Licensed by SCALA/Art Resource, NY.

on American architecture by exclusively discussing the work of European architects, the exhibition introduced and compared the work of Frank Lloyd Wright, Raymond Hood, George Howe, William Lescaze, Richard Neutra, and the little-known Bowman Brothers of Chicago with that of their European colleagues.

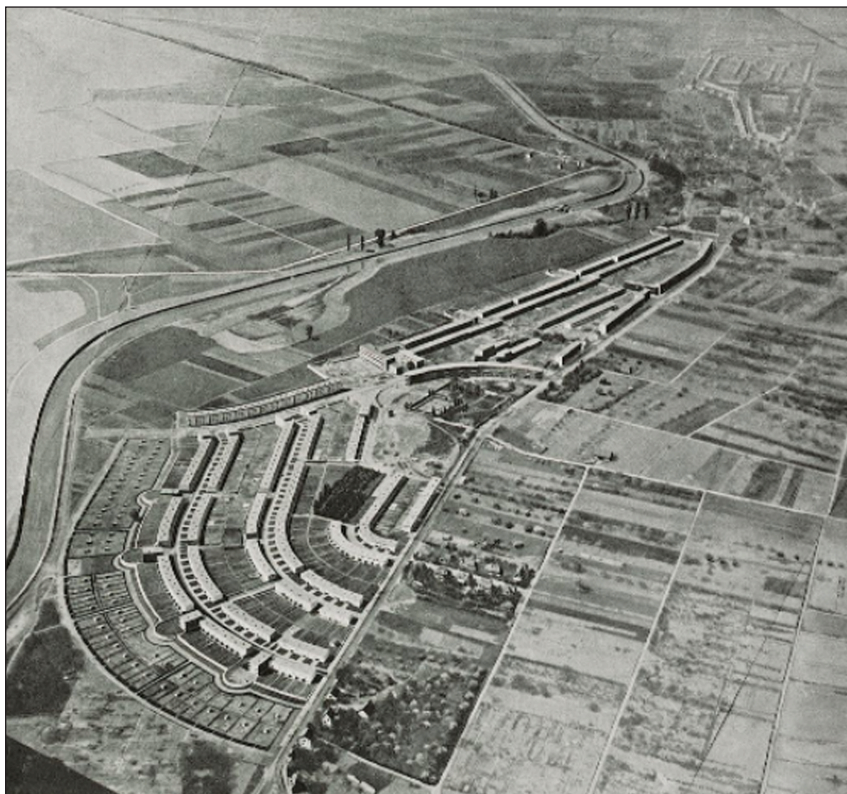
Often omitted too – insofar as *The International Style* is taken as a guide to the exhibition – is the attention given to housing in both the show and the catalog. The exhibition catalog, *Modern Architecture*, contained a separate chapter on housing, written by historian and sociologist Lewis Mumford (Mumford 1932a: 179–191).<sup>2</sup> Together with the urban planners Clarence Stein and Henry Wright and housing activist Edith Elmer Wood, Mumford was part of a group of New York intellectuals, the Regional Planning Association of America (RPAA), who avidly advocated for public investment in housing. Mumford also probably assisted Johnson and Hitchcock with selecting the materials for the separate housing section, although in official documentation he is only mentioned as the author of the article on housing in the catalog.<sup>3</sup> Stein and Wright, core members of the RPAA and the planners of both Sunnyside Gardens, a housing development in Queens, and Radburn, a garden city in New Jersey, were likely involved too, as was Catherine Bauer. The young Bauer had, as one of few Americans, toured several European housing projects after attending Smith College and Cornell University, and had just published a prize-winning article in *Fortune* about Ernst May's public housing project, Römerstadt, in Frankfurt (Bauer 1931; also see Oberlander and Newbrun 1999; Rikala 2002). Two years later, Bauer would publish

the seminal book *Modern Housing*, in which she showed the intricate relationship between social ideals and stylistic and technical developments in modern European housing projects.

The difference between the main gallery and the housing section was remarkable, in terms of the material and the way it was exhibited. The main rooms of the exhibit presented the new architectural style by focusing on individual architects, displaying the architects' models on pedestals, surrounded by unframed photographs. The housing section, on the other hand, attempted to show what 'good' housing was by not only exhibiting projects but also juxtaposing those projects with examples of 'bad' housing. The small space contained models and photographs of European public housing projects as well as American moderate- and middle-income housing developments backed by private investment and indirectly subsidized through tax exemptions. A large model of Otto Haesler's project for public housing in Kassel was the centerpiece of the housing section. On the walls hung photographs of the Kassel project, the Radburn plan, and of May's Römerstadt development – the subject of Bauer's article for *Fortune* (Hitchcock and Johnson 1932b: 194) (Figs. 2 and 3). The small space also contained three pairs of juxtaposed pictures. Sunnyside Gardens in Queens, developed by the City Housing Corporation, a limited-dividend company founded by the philanthropist Alexander Bing, was compared to a block of row houses on Long Island. Sunnyside, modeled after the British garden city, was the 'good' example; houses had plenty of air, light, and communal outdoor space. In wall text, Kiefhoek, a housing



**Figure 2:** Street view in Römerstadt. Ernst May, Carl-Hermann Rudloff, 1927–1928 (May and Wichert 1930: 82). Digitized by Heidelberg University Library, CC-BY-SA 3.0.



**Figure 3:** Aerial photograph of Römerstadt, Frankfurt. Ernst May, Carl-Hermann Rudloff, 1927–1928 (May and Wichert 1930: 84). Digitized by Heidelberg University Library, CC-BY-SA 3.0.

project by the Dutch architect J.J.P. Oud in Rotterdam, was contrasted with the Amalgamated Dwellings in the Lower East Side, one of America's first cooperative housing projects, developed by the Amalgamated Clothing Workers Union. The text preferred Oud's project in terms of design (more light, more space), urban planning (part of a larger project of slum rehabilitation), and cost (public funding, available for the lowest incomes) ('Slum Improvement', MoMA Exhs. 34d.1).

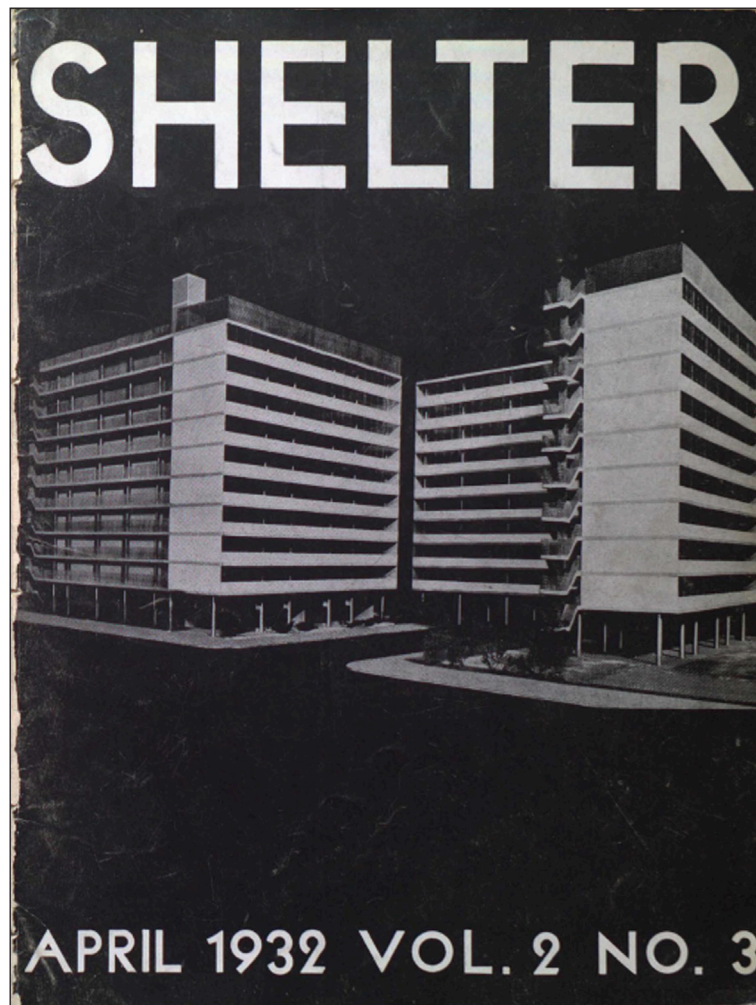
Most provocative were the aerial photographs of tenement housing on Manhattan's Lower East Side and apartment buildings on Park Avenue. A wall text pointed at similarities between the houses of the rich and poor, particularly regarding how much light and air they received. If 'disease, crime, indifference' was the result of tenement housing, Park Avenue housing caused 'unhealth [*sic*], neurosis, indifference' ('Slums – Super-Slums', MoMA Exhs. 34d.1). The photographs were labeled as 'slum' and 'super

slum', concepts of Mumford's mentor Patrick Geddes, the Scottish biologist, sociologist, and town planner. Geddes did not use *super slum* as a superlative, but as being above — *super* in Latin — the level of the slum (Welter 1999: 68; also see Novak 1995). Housing, the curators seemed to argue, was not an issue exclusive to the lower classes; the 'average city dwelling regardless of rent is below a decent housing standard' (Press Release 9, 1932). In his catalog essay, Mumford repeated the idea that *all* houses of his time were 'outworn modes of living' (Mumford 1932a: 179). For Mumford, the examples on display represented a new domestic environment, filled with light, air, and ample green space for everyone. Yet comprehensive planning, efficient design, and mass production alone would not solve the housing problem that plagued American cities, he wrote. 'If they [those unable to find affordable housing] are to have new quarters, these houses can only be built — failing an economic revolution — by one form or another of public subsidy' (Mumford 1932a: 187).<sup>4</sup>

Instead of signifying an uncomfortable position within Johnson and Hitchcock's aestheticizing narrative of modern architecture, as architectural historian Richard Pommer (1978) and others have reasoned, archival records indicate that housing was considered a topic that demanded *extra* attention. An early press release stated the museum considered the question of housing 'so important ... that an entire section is devoted to this subject' ('Modern Architecture

Exhibition by Museum of Modern Art', MoMA Exhs. 15.3). According to a note by Johnson, it was the housing section that was particularly well received (Johnson to Elmer Wood 1932, MoMA Exhs. 15.2).<sup>5</sup> The overwhelming attention for housing during a conference on the occasion of the exhibition, which took place a few days after the opening of the show, also underlines the importance of housing as a topic. Whereas the exhibition featured a range of recent works, including public buildings, office buildings, schools, and several villas, during the conference most invited participants chose to speak about 'the housing problem'. Mumford and Wright, for example, both reaffirmed the responsibility of the architect to work on housing and argued for a new, active work ethic within the architecture profession, lobbying for funding to develop projects to house the poor (Mumford 1932b: 3–4; Wright 1932: 4–6).

Looking again at the exhibition itself, it is telling that the first model encountered upon entering the show, visible from the museum's foyer, was not a design by Le Corbusier or Gropius, but indeed a proposal for affordable housing in New York.<sup>6</sup> The Chrystie-Forsyth Houses, designed by George Howe and the Swiss émigré William Lescaze, and backed by the philanthropist August Heckscher, was a scheme for slum clearance and affordable housing on New York's Lower East Side and embodied the exhibition's idea of what housing should be: modern and audacious (Fig. 4). Howe and Lescaze conceived of a



**Figure 4:** George Howe and William Lescaze's model of the Chrystie-Forsyth Houses, on the cover of *Shelter*, April 1932.

series of ten-storied concrete interlocked L-shaped towers on *pilotis* with open galleries. Breaking with the original grid, Howe and Lescaze reconfigured the area into two superblocks with spacious green areas and a playground in between. Labeled ‘housing on stilts’ by the *New York Times*, the project was deemed too expensive and too radical from an aesthetic perspective and was never executed (Caramellino 2016: 74–92).

In fact, a letter written by MoMA’s director, Alfred Barr, to Frances Perkins – the U.S. Secretary of Labor, one of the driving forces behind the New Deal, and a personal friend of Roosevelt – reveals that the museum attempted to influence federal policy directly by bringing the designs for modern European public housing projects to the attention of the national government (Barr (?) to Perkins, n.d., MoMA Exhs. 15.3; Downey 2009).<sup>7</sup> ‘We believe that the planners of President Roosevelt’s building program should see this graphic display of what has already been done,’ Barr wrote to Perkins:

The material has not, except for this show, been concentrated in one unit which can readily be studied and understood by the expert and public ... To us the whole principle of modern architecture is so fundamentally associated with large scale planning and the social needs of our country that we could consider the failure to apply it to the great construction problems at hand, a major catastrophe. (Barr (?) to Perkins, n.d., MoMA Exhs. 15.3)

Barr’s attempt to reach out to the federal government in itself is not surprising – the museum’s connections with Washington were intimate during these years – but his full support for government-funded housing is (Saab: 2004). The letter, written shortly after the establishment of the Housing Division, at a time the exhibition was still traveling around the country, indicates the museum’s commitment to the cause of public housing. Although the exhibition would never travel to Washington, Barr’s letter may have led to future collaborations on exhibitions with local and federal housing organizations; the years thereafter witnessed a time of unprecedented collaboration between MoMA and the government on exhibitions that disseminated a sense of activism in pushing for radical housing reform.<sup>8</sup>

Barr’s comments also underline that Barr’s, Hitchcock’s, and Johnson’s purported aesthetic interest in architecture was not as directly opposed to Mumford’s and Bauer’s support for the social aspects of housing design as previously thought. Emphasizing the form, shape, and materials of an architectural design does not preclude paying attention to social and political circumstances; in fact, there are several occasions in the catalog when these two positions seem to merge. Hitchcock, for instance, concluded his description of the Chrystie-Forsyth project with an urgent plea for political action. Architecture alone, he argued, would never solve the housing problem: ‘action must be political as well as architectural if the city is to be made habitable for the majority of its citizens’ (Hitchcock and Johnson 1932b: 146).

## Curatorial Strategies

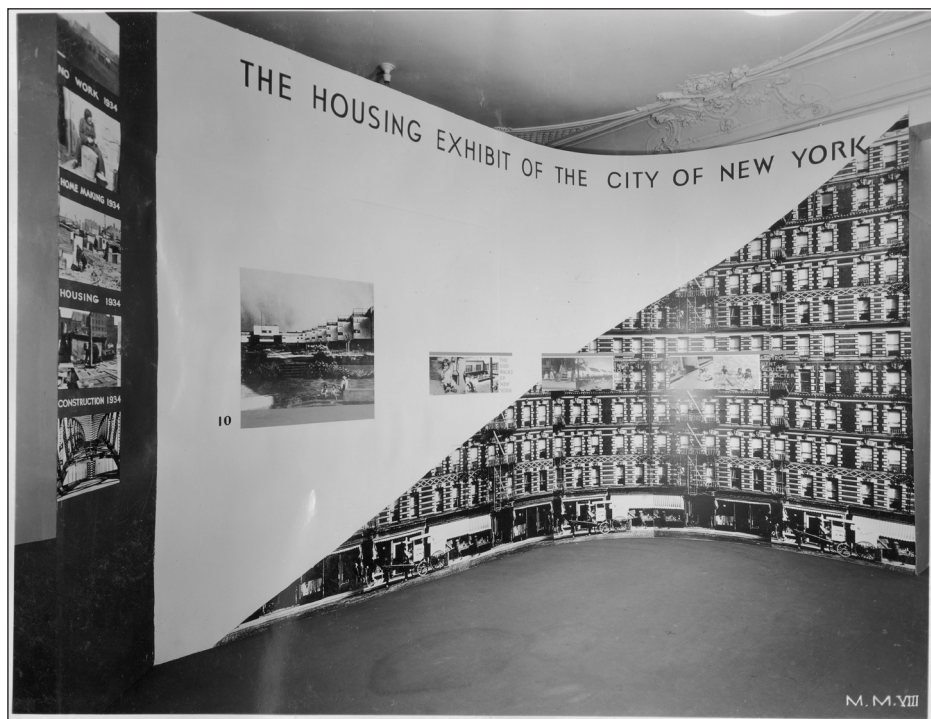
In the fall of 1934, MoMA’s galleries displayed plans for the Williamsburg Houses in Brooklyn, one of the first (and most expensive) large-scale housing projects in the United States (see Zipp and Dagen Bloom 2016: 94–99). The project was the result of a collaboration between the Housing Division and the New York City Housing Authority (NYCHA), founded by New York City’s Mayor La Guardia in the same year (see Dagen Bloom 2009; Williams 2013). Designed by a team of architects led by Lescaze, the Williamsburg Houses (originally called the Ten Eyck Houses) consisted of twenty mid-rise housing blocks situated at an angle from the street, replacing sixteen blocks of old Brooklyn tenements (Fig. 5). Using an inventive combination of texts, graphics, and photomurals, the *Housing Exhibition of the City of New York*, organized in collaboration with NYCHA, positioned projects such as the Williamsburg Houses as the single solution to the city’s soaring housing problem (Fig. 6).<sup>9</sup> NYCHA’s partnership in the MoMA exhibition, directed by architect and NYCHA employee George Lyman Paine together with Johnson, was highly visible; both content and curatorial strategy showed the municipal organization’s signature.<sup>10</sup>

The exhibition’s purpose was to educate the New York public about ‘what good housing is’ and to ‘promote among the public ... a more lively interest in better housing’ (Lane, n.d., MoMA Exhs. 36.2.). A book published in conjunction with the show, provocatively titled *America Can’t Have Housing*, helped spread NYCHA’s message beyond the walls of the museum (Fig. 7). The cover featured the Siemenstadt housing project in Berlin by Walter Gropius, the photograph superimposed over a cloud of question marks; could this be America’s future? Looking to Europe as an example, the book contained various articles on housing by Gropius and others (Aronovici 1934). Two broadcasts on national radio on the opening night included well-known guests such as the town planner Raymond Unwin, as well as government officials such as Horatio Hackett, director of the Housing Division, and New York City’s mayor, La Guardia (Press Release 12, 1934–35, MoMA).

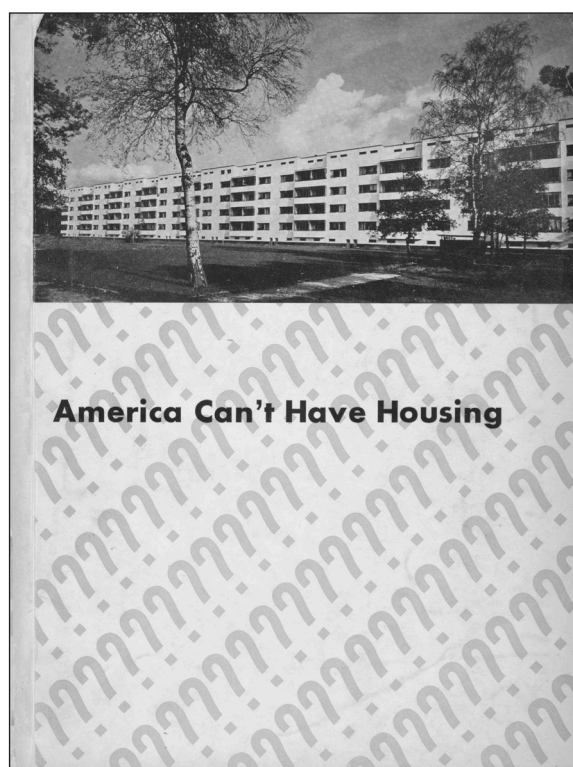
Contrary to *Modern Architecture: International Exhibition*, the *Housing Exhibition* provided a class-based definition of housing: ‘housing’ exclusively referred to housing for the lowest income groups. Contrasting large photographs of crowded New York sidewalks, shantytowns, and tenement buildings with views of public housing projects in Europe surrounded by ample green space, the *Housing Exhibition* put forward social and economic arguments for government-funded housing; the slums were a problem that impacted *every* inhabitant of the city.<sup>11</sup> The enormous expenses for hospitalization and criminal rehabilitation in the city’s slums affected ‘all pocketbooks through taxes’ (‘Outline of Exhibit’, n.d., MoMA Exhs. 36.1). As such, the *Housing Exhibition* effectively reversed one common critique made by opponents of public housing – that housing cost the taxpayer money – and opted for high-quality, affordable housing on economic grounds instead. The intended public for the exhibition, then, was not the future inhabitant of the



**Figure 5:** Aerial view of the Williamsburg Houses in Brooklyn, designed by William Lescaze, ca. 1939 (Short and Stanley-Brown 1939: 662).



**Figure 6:** Installation view of the exhibition *Housing Exhibition of the City of New York*. The Museum of Modern Art, New York. October 15–November 7, 1934. Gelatin silver print, 9 7/8 × 7 5/8" (25.1 × 19.3 cm). Photographic Archive. The Museum of Modern Art Archives. The Museum of Modern Art, New York. Digital Image © The Museum of Modern Art/Licensed by SCALA/Art Resource, NY.



**Figure 7:** Cover, *America Can't Have Housing* (Aronovici 1934). From the exhibition *Housing Exhibition of the City of New York*, October 15–November 7, 1934, The Museum of Modern Art. Published by the Committee on the Housing Exhibition by The Museum of Modern Art. The Museum of Modern Art. Digital Image © The Museum of Modern Art/Licensed by SCALA/Art Resource, NY.

government-funded housing projects, but the taxpayer — who indirectly contributed to these developments. By emphasizing charts and numbers, the exhibition differed from contemporaneous displays organized by MoMA's Department of Architecture; the *Housing Exhibition* offered 'facts' to convince its audience.

To make the living experience of the poor even more tangible, the show concluded with two life-size interior models of apartments: the interior of an 'old tenement house' and an example of a 'modern apartment' in a public housing project (Press Release 11, 1934–35, MoMA; emphasis mine). As in 1932, a 'good' design was juxtaposed with a 'bad' example. (A model house would not appear in the museum until 1949 when Marcel Breuer designed an expandable house for the courtyard). The first apartment consisted of a three-room furnished flat that was lifted almost completely intact from a recently demolished Manhattan tenement house (**Fig. 8**). The dark apartment, 'exactly as it was in the slum tenement where over fifty years it has housed unfortunate tenants', was an example of a 'dumbbell' design: the latest version of tenement houses in which only a few of the many apartments on one floor received natural light (Press Release 11, 1934–35, MoMA). Disorderly and dirty, the tenement apartment stood in sharp contrast with the low-cost apartment designed by Johnson (**Fig. 9**). The space, a white floor, white walls, and plenty of natural light, was furnished with 'modern style' furniture provided by the Macy's department store ('Modern Furniture', n.d., MoMA Exhs. 34d.1). If the juxtaposition of the two spaces underlined the urgency of the city's housing problem, it also

contributed to an image of a lower-class life lived in a distinctly different manner from Johnson's idealized vision. In presenting this vision of the 'other' to its middle class audience, the exhibition toed a line between being educational and sensational, not always successfully.

### An American Typology

Mirroring the growing government support for public housing during the second half of the 1930s, the relatively small exhibition *Architecture in Government Housing* of 1936 promoted the idea of public housing as a distinct American typology. While *Modern Architecture: International Exhibition* offered suggestions for possible directions for affordable housing development, and the *Housing Exhibition* presented a first glance of what public housing in the United States might look like, *Architecture in Government Housing* gave a broad survey of the government's accomplishments. Co-organized by the Housing Division and the Suburban Resettlement Division of the Resettlement Administration, a short-lived chapter in the history of the New Deal that promoted new forms of collective living in the suburbs, the exhibition displayed both large-scale housing projects and rural experiments. They ranged from Langston Terrace in Washington, D.C., one of the few New Deal projects for African American residents, completed by Hilyard Robinson in 1938, to the Jersey Homesteads, a small rural town located near Hightstown, New Jersey, designed by Alfred Kastner with the assistance of Louis Kahn (see Ash and Musgrove 2017: 249–150; Quinne 2007; Rothstein 2017: 17–38) (**Figs. 10, 11 and 12**).





**Figure 8:** 'Dumbbell' apartment lifted from tenement house in Yorkville. Installation view of the exhibition *Housing Exhibition of the City of New York*, October 15–November 7, 1934, The Museum of Modern Art, New York. Gelatin silver print 7 5/8 × 9 7/8" (19.3 × 25.1 cm). Photographic Archive, The Museum of Modern Art Archives. The Museum of Modern Art. Digital Image © The Museum of Modern Art/Licensed by SCALA/Art Resource, NY.



**Figure 9:** Philip Johnson, interior of a low-cost apartment, furnished by Macy's. Installation view of the exhibition *Housing Exhibition of the City of New York*, October 15–November 7, 1934, The Museum of Modern Art, New York. Gelatin silver print, 9 7/8 × 7 5/8" (25.1 × 19.3 cm). Photographic Archive, The Museum of Modern Art Archives. The Museum of Modern Art. Digital Image © The Museum of Modern Art/Licensed by SCALA/Art Resource, NY.



**Figure 10:** Hilyard Robinson, Langston Terrace, Washington D.C., 1938, Photographer: Theodor Horydczak. Library of Congress, Prints & Photographs Division, Theodor Horydczak Collection LC-H814-2189-028.



**Figure 11:** Alfred Kastner and Louis Kahn, Jersey Homesteads, Hightstown, New Jersey. Photographer: Arthur Rothstein. Library of Congress, Prints & Photographs Division, FSA/OWI Collection, LC-USF342-T01-025241.

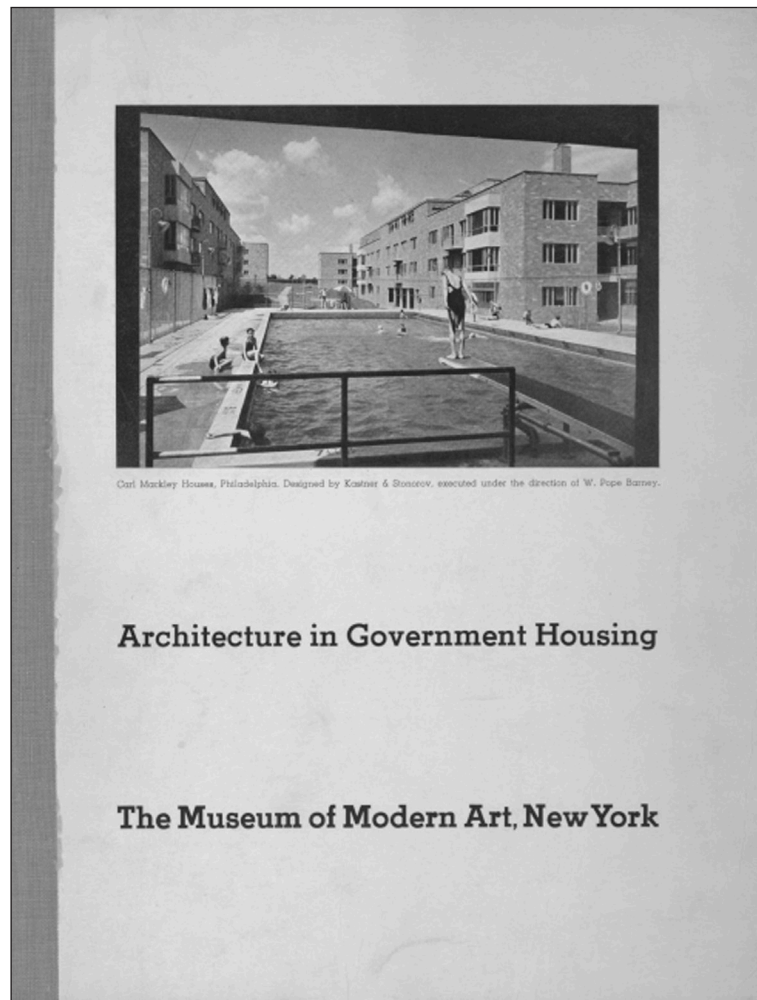


**Figure 12:** Alfred Kastner and Louis Kahn, Jersey Homesteads, Hightstown, New Jersey. Library of Congress, Prints & Photographs Division, FSA/OWI Collection, LC-USF345-003894-ZA.

In her introductory article for the publication accompanying *Architecture in Government Housing*, Bauer considered the position of public housing within America's architectural history. Bauer, whose appointment to MoMA's Committee on Architecture and Industrial Art in the same year reflects the museum's commitment to housing, looked back at the first three years of government-funded housing in the United States. Were the housing projects merely 'certain strange experiments' in which the government was temporarily engaged, she asked, or actually 'the start of a new chapter in American architecture?' While Bauer pessimistically described the Housing Division's achievements as 'a few more or less accidental

housing projects', the exhibition seemed to suggest the contrary by displaying a wide range of housing projects under construction across the country (Bauer 1936: n.p).

Indeed, the designs on view in *Architecture in Government Housing*, curated by Ernestine Fantl, who started her career at the museum as Johnson's secretary and became curator after Johnson left the museum in 1936, reveal several shared characteristics, such as the idea of residential districts as 'complete communities' (Radford 1996: 96). The Carl Mackley housing project, a PWA-sponsored design on Philadelphia's outskirts featured on the cover of the catalog, was planned as an independent neighborhood (Fig. 13). Just like Langston Terrace and the Williamsburg



**Figure 13:** Cover, *Architecture in Government Housing*, featuring the Carl Mackley Houses in Philadelphia, designed by Oscar Stonorov and Alfred Kastner (1936). The Museum of Modern Art, New York. The Museum of Modern Art. Digital Image © The Museum of Modern Art/Licensed by SCALA/Art Resource, NY.

Houses, this project, designed by Oskar Stonorov and Alfred Kastner, consisted of mid-rise residential blocks surrounded by green space, inaccessible to vehicular traffic (see Sandeen 1985). The design even included a community hall, a cooperative store, and a swimming pool. The plans of the ‘greenbelt towns’ on view – the Jersey Homesteads (currently known as Roosevelt) and Greenbrook, self-sustaining suburban communities with farms, parks, gardens, and other amenities administered by the Suburban Resettlement Division – were likewise rooted in the idea of a complete community (see Reblando 2010). The Jersey Homesteads was a town for Jewish garment workers, a cooperative containing a factory, a farm, and two hundred houses. Henry Churchill and Albert Mayer developed plans for Greenbrook, also located in New Jersey, a town revolving around a cooperative farm – a plan that would remain unexecuted. Primarily intended to resettle poor urban workers living in tenement housing, these rural towns were testing grounds for a new communal way of life.

Another trait many of the housing projects in the exhibition shared was the use of brick, which gave the designs a more conservative look in comparison to their European counterparts. New Deal regulations stipulated

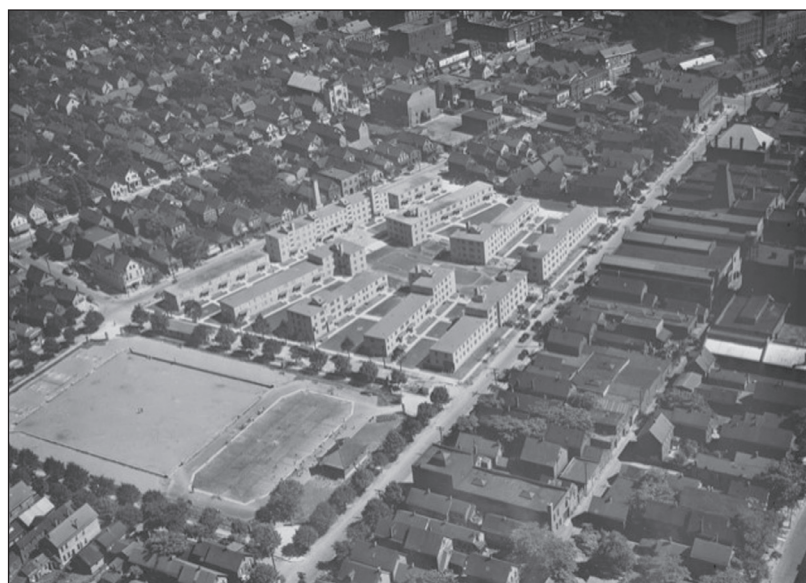
the use of local materials, and the use of brick complied with the explicit aim of the PWA to alleviate unemployment by hiring workers in the construction industry; brick required extensive labor. The aesthetics of brick also aligned with the PWA’s ideas about American public housing. The *Sample Book* (1935), a set of recommendations for local housing authorities and architects published by the PWA’s Housing Division, rejected extensive ornamentation, details, or other extravagances. A belief in efficiency, durability, reliability, and above all, quantity undergirded the Housing Division’s philosophy of design. The *Sample Book* reframed quantity as aesthetics; it encouraged housing designs based on the principles of ‘basic economy’ and projects that expressed ‘mass beauty’ (Rudorf 1984: 75).

### Separating ‘Architecture’ and ‘Housing’

A subsequent show organized by MoMA in the late 1930s, *Houses and Housing* (1939), presented public housing as an important part of the American contemporary architectural landscape by combining designs for individual houses with schemes for public housing. In 1937, following sustained lobbying efforts of Bauer and other ‘housers’, the government passed the U.S. Housing Act (see Von Hoffman 2005). The act, drafted by New York Senator



**Figure 14:** Installation view of the exhibition *Houses and Housing, Industrial Arts*, May 10–September 30, 1939, The Museum of Modern Art, New York. Gelatin silver print, 8 1/9 × 10" (20.6 × 25.4 cm). Photographer: Peter Sekaer. Exhibition Records, 87–88.5, The Museum of Modern Art Archives. The Museum of Modern Art. Digital Image © The Museum of Modern Art/Licensed by SCALA/Art Resource, NY.



**Figure 15:** Frederick Backus, Willert Park, Buffalo, 1939. Library of Congress, Prints & Photographs Division, FSA/OWI Collection, LC-USW33-019996.

Robert F. Wagner and Bauer, laid the foundations for housing legislation in the United States and created a new semi-autonomous housing agency, the USHA, an organization Bauer would work for as director of information. Described as a piece of ‘radical legislation’ by Bauer, and hailed as a significant expansion of the state’s responsibility in the provision of affordable housing, the 1937 Housing Act also signified that public housing was not just a temporary experiment but a long-term project (Bradford Hunt 2009: 15–34). For *Houses and Housing*, which was part of MoMA’s extensive tenth-anniversary exhibition *Art in Our Time*, the museum collaborated with the new federal housing organization and exhibited a variety of USHA-sponsored projects.

‘The issue is no longer, shall there be public housing?’ wrote curator John McAndrew in his introductory text for *Houses and Housing*, but rather ‘what kind of housing shall we build?’ (‘Facts Concerning the Houses and Housing Section’, n.d., MoMA Exhs. 87–88.1). McAndrew, who replaced Fantl as curator of the Department of Architecture and Industrial Art in 1937, selected photographs and plans of Westfield Acres in Camden by Oskar Stonorov, the Dixie Homes in Memphis by Joe Frazer Smith, and Greendale near Milwaukee, one of the ‘greenbelt towns’ planned by, among others, Jacob Crane (Fig. 14). A separate section in the exhibition was reserved for the USHA-sponsored projects, including Willert Park in Buffalo, a housing project for African American residents designed by the local

architect Frederick Backus, and the Queensbridge Houses in Queens, by Henry Churchill and others – still the largest public housing development in North America (Fig. 15). A section devoted to European housing contained earlier exhibited projects such as May's Römerstadt, but also new work like Arne Jacobson's Bellavista flats north of Copenhagen and Alvar Aalto's housing in Finland ('Houses and Housing', MoMA Exhs. 87–88.3). If the early housing exhibitions showcased European housing designs as examples for American developments, by the late 1930s, American housing was presented as on par with European design. In McAndrew's view, architects of housing had 'naturalized' their style, adapting to the specific conditions of construction in America: 'European doctrines are being translated into American terms' (McAndrew 1938: 75).<sup>12</sup>

Despite Hitchcock's, Johnson's, and Fantl's support for the cause of public housing, it was McAndrew who fervently advocated for government-funded housing. McAndrew considered the provision of affordable housing as one of the critical problems facing American architects, but he also attempted to write housing into the history of American architecture. Public housing was what the skyscraper had been in the 1920s, 'the characteristic monument of the '40s' (McAndrew 1939: 12). One year before *Houses and Housing* opened, McAndrew had selected several public housing designs for *Three Centuries of American Art*, on view at the Galerie nationale du Jeu de Paume in Paris, the first exhibition the museum sent abroad. The Paris exhibition, a broad overview of American art and architecture, showed housing designs and other New Deal public work projects, such as the dams constructed by the Tennessee Valley Authority, as an indispensable part of the panorama that constituted contemporary American architecture (see Goodyear 1938). For a brief – and long-forgotten – moment in history, one of America's most renowned cultural institutions proudly promoted the country's investments in public housing.

Still, by exhibiting individual houses together with public housing, *Houses and Housing* explicitly acknowledged both as *separate* categories. For the show, McAndrew divided MoMA's galleries into different sections, not only separating American housing from European designs, but also individual houses from large-scale public housing schemes. The section on individual houses included large panels displaying photographs and models of, among others, Le Corbusier's Villa Savoye, Mies van der Rohe's Villa Tugendhat, and Paul Nelson's Suspended House – houses selected not so much for their low cost as for their unusual designs ('Housing and New Architecture', n.d., MoMA Exhs. 87–88.1). In fact, the exhibition's purpose was to point out how the design for individual houses influenced the design of housing. The 'modern individual house, built by private clients', stated the press release, constituted an:

Important laboratory in which three discoveries have been made which are important to public housing: the development of the open plan, the use of new building materials, and the creation of new and standard parts of the house and the creation of a *new style*. (Press Release 18, 1939, MoMA; emphasis mine)

While large-scale housing design taught architects working on individual houses about efficiency, design innovation, the show seemed to suggest, happened in individual homes, not in large-scale, publicly funded projects. The distinction between 'houses' and 'housing' was also visible in the exhibition itself. Linking architectural style to individual authorship, the names of the architects featured prominently above the designs and photographs in the individual housing section, presenting the individual architect as the catalyst for architectural innovation. In the rooms dedicated to housing – the result of a large team of architects and planners – the title simply consisted of the project's name and location. In the catalogue essay, McAndrew and Frederick Gutheim, employed by the USHA, repeatedly emphasized how public housing design was 'good' or 'decent' design, while describing the individual houses as 'beautiful' (Gutheim and McAndrew 1939).<sup>13</sup> By separating 'beautiful' houses for the upper classes, commissioned by private clients, from government-sponsored 'good' design for the lower classes, the exhibition cast housing as a subordinate category of design.<sup>14</sup>

During the war period, MoMA continued to organize shows on housing, such as *Wartime Housing* (1942) and *Look at Your Neighborhood* (1944), increasingly focused on small-scale housing, community planning, and individual responsibility rather than large-scale, government-led public housing (see McKellar 2018). *Wartime Housing*, curated by Eliot Noyes, sponsored by the Committee on Emergency Housing, and prepared in cooperation with the National Housing Agency, focused on the new or expanded houses for workers in the war industries. The exhibition pointed to what people could do in planning their town and community: 'housing is more than houses. You can't just call in an architect and expect him to work everything out. It is a community job that takes a lot of planning by everyone in the community' (Noyes 1942: n.p.). *Look at Your Neighborhood*, curated by Bauer's sister, Elizabeth Mock, also concentrated on community planning, again stressing people's responsibility in planning their neighborhood and shaping the postwar world. The show, consisting of twelve easily mountable panels, traveled extensively throughout the country, to civic organizations, schools, and colleges. Contrary to the *Housing Exhibit* or *Architecture in Government Housing*, the purpose was not only to educate but also to activate; good housing was not only the government's responsibility but also that of the American citizen.

## Conclusion

Curated by a diverse cast of individuals in collaboration with several federal and local housing authorities, MoMA's exhibitions on housing do not easily fall into one category. Taken together, however, the exhibitions show the formation of American public housing policy during its first and defining decade, from the display of European housing designs – underlining the successes of government-funded housing abroad – to the presentation of housing projects emerging across the United States under the auspices of the Housing Division, the USHA, and local housing authorities. Launched one year before the first New Deal housing programs, *Modern Architecture: Inter-*

*national Exhibition* showed various examples of European public housing and a speculative proposal for affordable housing in the United States: the Chrystie-Forsyth project by Howe and Lescaze. The show advocated for direct government intervention in the housing market while pushing for modern architecture in combination with large-scale community planning as the solution to America's housing problem. Two years later, in 1934, NYCHA presented its first project in New York as part of the *Housing Exhibition*, an exhibition that attempted to persuade the visitor of the necessity of public housing and slum clearance through photomurals, two model apartments, a publication, and radio broadcasts. In the second half of the 1930s, *Architecture and Government Housing* and *Houses and Housing* promoted the idea of American public housing as a distinct typology, different from European housing, showing a broad survey of projects under construction across the country.

The press — almost unanimously positive about MoMA's housing exhibitions of the 1930s — closely observed the museum's expanding focus. 'Doubtless some visitors will cry out against the exhibition, contending that it has no place in an art museum', a critic of the *New York American* wrote about the *Housing Exhibition* of 1934, but 'there is an ounce of virtue in the complaint, even though the display can claim architecture as its theme'. Instead of perceiving a rift between an aestheticizing display and an emphasis on the sociological and political aspects of architecture, the review claimed that by becoming a bold crusader for housing conditions in the United States, the museum had returned to the ancient idea of aesthetics: 'beauty as that which raises our morale' (Vaughan 1934).

Still, despite endorsing and promoting public housing with optimism that quickly dissipated in the years to come, MoMA's exhibitions on public housing organized in collaboration with local and federal public housing authorities simultaneously presented housing as a distinct subcategory of architecture — a category in which quantity and affordability were valued over excellent design. The exhibitions maintained a tacit boundary between architecture for the lowest classes and the rest of the population. Comparable to Jacob Riis's photo book on the miserable life in New York tenement housing in the early nineteenth century, *How the Other Half Lives* (1890), the housing exhibitions made the living environments of the poor *visible*, but at the same time perpetuated the divide between a prized elitist modernized aesthetics and built environments for the working-class masses. Shows such as the *Housing Exhibition* paired models and photographs with social and economic facts but paid little attention to architectural design. A successful project was one that provided its inhabitants with air, light, and green space, but was also economical, and produced as many housing units possible. The exhibitions showed 'mass beauty' achieved by 'mass design'. In downplaying the design aspect or underlining how public housing projects were 'good design' (rather than excellent), MoMA was implicit in generating the — still prevailing — conception of public housing in the United States as an architecture that, contrary to European public housing of the interwar

period, is not fully appreciated aesthetically. Funding public housing was a radical project — but not so much in terms of its architectural design, the exhibitions seemed to suggest.

## Notes

- <sup>1</sup> The other separate section in *Modern Architecture: International Exhibition*, 'The Extent of Modern Architecture', contained work of thirty-seven other architects from fifteen different countries, and emphasized the visual uniformity of the new modern style in Europe and the United States.
- <sup>2</sup> Barry Bergdoll has offered an additional explanation for the lack of attention for housing in the exhibition's reception history: the housing section was not always included in the show during the two years the exhibition traveled across the United States. As a separate section, it was easy to discard if a museum lacked exhibition space (Bergdoll 2013).
- <sup>3</sup> Gwendolyn Wright, Alan Colquhoun, and others listed Mumford and Bauer as curators of the housing section, but I have been unable to locate any material in which Mumford's name is mentioned other than as author of the article in the catalog (see Wright 2008: 83–84; Colquhoun 2002: 231).
- <sup>4</sup> Mumford blamed lack of investment in affordable housing on the American attachment to the idea of home ownership: 'The reasons for our social backwardness in housing has been due to the fact that we have habitually confused the real issue of good housing with the very limited and abstract matter of ownership ... We have treated the house as an abstract symbol of safety, patriotism, citizenship, family stability; we have failed to deal with the house frankly as primarily a place to live in' (Mumford 1932a: 183).
- <sup>5</sup> Johnson to Edith Elmer Wood: 'I have been much gratified by the appreciative interest it, and especially the Housing Section, has evoked' (Johnson to Elmer Wood 1932, MoMA Exhs. 15.2).
- <sup>6</sup> This observation is based on Terrence Riley's reconstruction of the exhibition plan (see Riley 1998: 40).
- <sup>7</sup> While the letter is unsigned, it is likely that Barr is the author. Johnson himself is mentioned in the text, which excludes him as a possible author, and correspondence of a later date between Barr and Perkins shows that they knew one another, as the familiar tone of the letter already indicates. (Barr (?) to Perkins, n.d., MoMA Exhs. 15.3.).
- <sup>8</sup> Two years later, in the summer of 1934, the materials of the housing section were exhibited again as *Exhibition on Modern Housing*. In addition to Haesler's model and the other materials, the scarcely documented show included a display of research materials on a large-scale public housing project in Queens, a project that would eventually become the Queensbridge Houses (see Press Release 48, 1934, MoMA).
- <sup>9</sup> The Columbia University Housing Orientation Study Group, the Lavanburg Foundation, and the Housing Section of the Welfare Council also sponsored the exhibition. Records of NYCHA indicate that the organization attempted to organize an exhibition but had

trouble finding resources and a suitable location until MoMA offered three floors of its building. ('Report to NYCHA', La Guardia and Wagner Archives).

- <sup>10</sup> While documentation regarding the exact division of work between MoMA and the public housing authorities is scarce, in the case of the *Housing Exhibition* it is clear that Lyman Paine was responsible for the curatorial concept. Johnson wrote to Mumford, 'I am grateful for your good review of the Housing Show. The only thing I am sorry about is that Lyman Paine didn't get more credit. The whole idea of the show, mounting it on panels, writing the captions, gathering the statistics, choosing the photographs, designing the color scheme, was his. He is too modest a man to insist on being named as the director of the Exhibition, but I assure you that in fact he was.' (Johnson to Mumford, 1934, MoMA Exhs. 36.3.).
- <sup>11</sup> To create a compelling and coherent visual narrative, the photographer Walker Evans, known for documenting small-town life during the Depression for the Farm Security Administration, assisted Lyman Paine in organizing the photographic material.
- <sup>12</sup> Keith Eggner has pointed out that McAndrew's tenure at MoMA coincided with a particular period at the museum in which eighteen out of the twenty-two exhibitions focused on American topics. Influenced by Mumford's writings on American culture, such as *Sticks and Stones: A Study of American Architecture and Civilization* (1924), McAndrew promoted a regionalist modernism at MoMA (Eggner 2006).
- <sup>13</sup> 'Few things are as vital to the future of our country and of every city in it as the proper solution of the housing problem. And *good design* is a vital part of that problem' (Gutheim and McAndrew 1939: 317; emphasis mine).
- <sup>14</sup> The separation between 'houses' and 'housing' in McAndrew's exhibition mirrored the divide between the public and private sectors. During the 1930s, the government greatly expanded the federal role in the private housing market, establishing a highly regulated, state-supported national mortgage market (Massey 2012). The New Deal housing program, as David Madden and Peter Marcuse have argued, was 'carefully crafted to support, rather than compete with, private housing' (Madden 2016: 130). Rather than solving the lack of affordable housing, the 1937 Housing Act mandated that for each public housing unit constructed, another was to be demolished.

### Acknowledgments

I would like to thank Ana Miljački for her insightful comments on this text, as well as Robert Wiesenberger, Jackson Davidow, and Eliyahu Keller. I am also grateful to Gaia Caramellino and Stéphanie Dadour for providing me with an opportunity to present an earlier version of this paper at the conference 'On the Role of 20th Century Exhibitions in Shaping Housing Discourses' at the Politecnico di Milano in 2016. Additional thanks are due to the Museum of Modern Art Archives in New York and the LaGuardia and Wagner Archives in New York for facilitating access to information.

### Competing Interests

The author has no competing interests to declare.

### References

#### Unpublished Sources

The Museum of Modern Art Archives, New York

- Barr, A (?)**. N.d. Letter to Perkins. *Modern Architecture: International Exhibition: Publicity/Magazines*. The Museum of Modern Art Exhibition Records 15.3.
- 'Facts Concerning the Houses and Housing Section of Arts in Our Time'. n.d. *Houses and Housing: Industrial Art: Correspondence*. The Museum of Modern Art Exhibition Records 87–88.1.
- Hitchcock, H-R**. 1938. 'Houses and Housing', December 6. *Houses and Housing: Industrial Art: Correspondence: A–N*. The Museum of Modern Art Exhibition Records 87–88.1.
- 'Houses and Housing'. n.d. Checklist. *Houses and Housing: Industrial Art: Claims*. The Museum of Modern Art Exhibition Records 87–88.3.
- 'Housing and New Architecture'. n.d. Brochure. *Houses and Housing: Industrial Art: Correspondence: A–N*. The Museum of Modern Art Exhibition Records 87–88.1
- Johnson, P**. 1932. Letter to Edith Elmer Wood, February 24. *Modern Architecture: International Exhibition: Philip Johnson Correspondence*. The Museum of Modern Art Exhibition Records 15.2.
- Johnson, P**. 1934. Letter to Lewis Mumford, November 7. *Housing Exhibition of the City of New York: Correspondence*. The Museum of Modern Art Exhibition Records 36.3.
- Lane, R**. N.d. Note. *Housing Exhibition of the City of New York: Department Material*. The Museum of Modern Art Exhibition Records 36.2.
- 'Modern Architecture Exhibition by Museum of Modern Art, New York'. n.d. Press release. *Modern Architecture: International Exhibition: Publicity/Magazines*. The Museum of Modern Art Exhibition Records 15.3.
- 'Modern Furniture Needed by Macy's'. n.d. Inventory list. *Modern Housing Exhibition: Department Material*. The Museum of Modern Art Exhibition Records 34d.1.
- 'Outline of Exhibit of Slum Clearance and Low Cost Housing'. n.d. *Housing Exhibition of the City of New York: Master Checklist*. The Museum of Modern Art Exhibition Records 36.1.
- 'Slum Improvement'. n.d. Wall text. *Modern Housing Exhibition: Department Material*. The Museum of Modern Art Exhibition Records 34d.1.
- 'Slums – Super-Slums'. n.d. Wall text. *Modern Housing Exhibition: Department Material*. The Museum of Modern Art Exhibition Records 34d.1.
- MoMA Press Releases**
- No. 9, 1932**. The Museum of Modern Art, New York. Available at: [https://www.moma.org/momaorg/shared/pdfs/docs/press\\_archives/72/releases/MOMA\\_1932\\_0009.pdf?2010](https://www.moma.org/momaorg/shared/pdfs/docs/press_archives/72/releases/MOMA_1932_0009.pdf?2010).
- No. 11, 1934–1935**. The Museum of Modern Art, New York. [https://www.moma.org/momaorg/shared/pdfs/docs/press\\_archives/196/releases/MOMA\\_1934-35\\_0011.pdf?2010](https://www.moma.org/momaorg/shared/pdfs/docs/press_archives/196/releases/MOMA_1934-35_0011.pdf?2010).

- No. 12, 1934–35.** The Museum of Modern Art, New York. [https://www.moma.org/momaorg/shared/pdfs/docs/press\\_archives/197/releases/MOMA\\_1934-35\\_0012.pdf?2010](https://www.moma.org/momaorg/shared/pdfs/docs/press_archives/197/releases/MOMA_1934-35_0012.pdf?2010).
- No. 18, May 10, 1939.** The Museum of Modern Art, New York. [https://www.moma.org/momaorg/shared/pdfs/docs/press\\_archives/487/releases/MOMA\\_1939\\_0018\\_1939-05-10\\_39510-18.pdf?2010](https://www.moma.org/momaorg/shared/pdfs/docs/press_archives/487/releases/MOMA_1939_0018_1939-05-10_39510-18.pdf?2010).
- No. 48, May 16, 1934.** The Museum of Modern Art, New York. [https://www.moma.org/momaorg/shared/pdfs/docs/press\\_archives/181/releases/MOMA\\_1933-34\\_0048\\_1934-05-16.pdf?2010](https://www.moma.org/momaorg/shared/pdfs/docs/press_archives/181/releases/MOMA_1933-34_0048_1934-05-16.pdf?2010).
- La Guardia and Wagner Archives, City University of New York 'Report to the New York City Housing Authority by the Housing Exhibit Committee'. November 27, 1934. The New York City Housing Authority Collection 74D3, folder 2.
- Published Sources**
- Aronovici, C.** (ed.) 1934. *America Can't Have Housing*. New York: Museum of Modern Art.
- Ash, C and Musgrove, G.** 2017. *Chocolate City: A History of Race and Democracy in the Nation's Capital*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press.
- Bauer, C.** 1931. Prize Essay: Art in Industry. *Fortune*, 94–110.
- Bauer, C.** 1936. Pre-View or Post-Mortem? In: *Architecture in Government Housing*. New York: MoMA.
- Bee, H and Elligott, M.** (eds.) 2004. *Art in Our Time: A Chronicle of the Museum of Modern Art*. New York: Museum of Modern Art.
- Bergdoll, B.** 2011. The Art of Advocacy: The Museum as Design Laboratory. *Places Journal* (September). DOI: <https://doi.org/10.22269/110916>
- Bergdoll, B.** 2013. The Sixty-Second A.W. Mellon Lecture in the Fine Arts: Out of Site in Plain View: A History of Exhibiting Architecture since 1750: Better Futures: Exhibitions Between Reform and Avant-Garde, Part 4. *Delivered at the National Gallery of Art*, April 28. <http://www.nga.gov/content/ngaweb/audio-video/mellon.html> [accessed April 25, 2015].
- Bergdoll, B.** 2015. Modern Architecture: International Exhibition. In: Hanks, D (ed.), *Partners in Design: Alfred H. Barr Jr. and Philip Johnson*, 136–147. New York: The Monacelli Press.
- Bradford Hunt, D.** 2009. *Blueprint for Disaster: Unraveling Chicago Public Housing*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.7208/chicago/9780226360874.001.0001>
- Caramellino, G.** 2016. *Europe Meets America: William Lescaze, Architect of Modern Housing*. New Castle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing.
- Colquhoun, A.** 2002. *Modern Architecture*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Dagen Bloom, N.** 2009. *Public Housing That Worked: New York in the Twentieth Century*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.
- Dolkart, A.** 2016. Tenements. In: Bloom, ND and Lasner, MG (eds.), *Affordable Housing in New York: The People, Places and Policies That Transformed a City*. Princeton: Princeton University Press. 45–48.
- Downey, K.** 2009. *The Woman Behind the New Deal: The Life and Legacy of Frances Perkins, Social Security, Unemployment, Insurance, and the Minimum Wage*. New York: Doubleday.
- Eggner, K.** 2006. Nationalism, Internationalism and the 'Naturalisation' of Modern Architecture in the United States, 1925–1940. *National Identities*, 8(3): 243–258. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1080/14608940600842540>
- Federal Emergency Administration of the Public Works.** 1935. *Sample Book*. Washington DC.
- Goetz, E.** 2013. *New Deal Ruins: Race, Economic Justice, and Public Housing Policy*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.
- Gutheim, F and McAndrew, J.** 1939. Houses and Housing. In: *Art of Our Time: Tenth Anniversary Exhibition*, 289–317. New York: Museum of Modern Art.
- Hayden, D.** 2016. Building the American Way: Public Subsidy, Private Space. In: Chowkwanyun, M and Serhan, R (eds.), *American Democracy and the Pursuit of Equality*, 60–72. New York: Routledge.
- Hitchcock, H-R and Johnson, P.** 1932a. *The International Style*. New York and London: W. W. Norton & Company.
- Hitchcock, H-R and Johnson, P.** 1932b. *Modern Architecture: International Exhibition*. New York: Museum of Modern Art.
- Jordy, W.** 1965. The International Style in the 1930s. *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians*, 24(1): 10–14. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.2307/988273>
- Madden, D and Marcuse, P.** 2016. *In Defense of Housing: The Politics of Crisis*. London and New York: Verso Books.
- Massey, J.** 2012. Risk and Regulation in Financial Architecture of American Houses. In: Aggregate Architectural History Collective (ed.), *Governing by Design: Architecture, Economy, and Politics in the Twentieth Century*, 21–46. Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.2307/j.ctt5hjpr.5>
- Matthews, H.** 1994. The Promotion of Modern Architecture by the Museum of Modern Art in the 1930s. *Journal of Design History*, 7(1): 43–59. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1093/jdh/7.1.43>
- May, E and Wichert, F.** 1930. 'Siedlung Römerstadt'. *Das Neue Frankfurt*, 4–5(April–May 1930): 77–84.
- McAndrew, J.** 1938. Architecture in the United States. In: Goodyear, AC (ed.), *Trois siècles d'art aux États-Unis: peinture, sculpture, architecture, art populaire, photographie cinématographique*. Musée du Jeu de Paume, Paris, mai-juillet, 69–77. Paris: Édition des Musées Nationaux.
- McAndrew, J.** 1939. Architecture in the United States. *The Bulletin of the Museum of Modern Art*, 6(1–2): 2–12.
- McKellar, E.** 2018. Tomorrow on Display: American and British Housing Exhibitions, 1940–1955. Unpublished thesis (PhD), University of Boston.
- Mumford, L.** 1932a. Housing. In: Hitchcock, H-R and Johnson, P (eds.), *Modern Architecture: International Exhibition*, 179–192. New York: The Museum of Modern Art.
- Mumford, L.** 1932b. Symposium: The International Architectural Exhibition. *Shelter*, 2(3): 3–4.
- Novak, F.** (ed.) 1995. *Lewis Mumford & Patrick Geddes: The Correspondence*. London and New York: Routledge.
- Noyes, E.** 1942. Wartime Housing. *The Bulletin of the Museum of Modern Art*, 4(4): n.p.



- Oberlander, P** and **Newbrun, E.** 1999. *Houser: The Life and Work of Catherine Bauer*. Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press.
- Pommer, R.** 1978. The Architecture of Urban Housing in the United States during the Early 1930s. *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians*, 37(4): 235–264. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.2307/989243>
- Quinne, K.** 2007. Making Modern Homes: A History of Langston Terrace Dwellings, A New Deal Housing Program in Washington. Unpublished thesis (PhD), University of Maryland.
- Radford, G.** 1996. Modern Housing for America. *Policy Struggles in the New Deal Era*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.7208/chicago/9780226702216.001.0001>
- Reblando, J.** 2010. New Deal Utopias. *Places Journal*. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.22269/101123>
- Rikala, T.** 2002. Catherine Bauer and Six Riddles of Modernism. *The Journal of Architecture*, 7(2): 191–203. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1080/13602360210145105>
- Riley, T.** 1998. Portrait of the Curator as a Young Man. In: Elderfield, J (ed.), *Philip Johnson and the Museum of Modern Art*. New York: Museum of Modern Art. 34–69.
- Rothstein, R.** 2017. *The Color of Law: A Forgotten History of How Our Government Segregated America*. New York: W. W. Norton & Company.
- Rudorf, W.** 1984. The Housing Division of the Public Works Administration in its Architectural Context. Unpublished Master's thesis, Massachusetts Institute of Technology.
- Saab, J.** 2004. *For the Millions: American Art and Culture Between the Wars*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.
- Sandeen, E.** 1985. The Design of Public Housing in the New Deal: Oskar Stonorov and the Carl Mackley Houses. *American Quarterly*, 37(5): 645–667. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.2307/2712614>
- Short, CW** and **Stanley-Brown, R.** 1939. *Public Buildings: A Survey of Architecture of Projects Constructed by Federal and Other Governmental Bodies between the Years 1933 and 1939 with the Assistance of the Public Works Administration*. Washington: U.S. Government Printer.
- Staniszewski, M.** 1998. *The Power of Display: A History of Exhibition Installations at the Museum of Modern Art*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.
- Vaughan, M.** 1934. Modern Museum Opens Exhibition on Good Housing. *New York American*, October 20, 1934.
- Von Hoffman, A.** 2005. The End of the Dream: The Political Struggle of America's Public Housers. *Journal of Planning History*, 4(2): 222–253. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1177/1538513205278449>
- Welter, V.** 1999. 'Slum, Semi-slum, Super-slum' – Some Reflections by Patrick Geddes on Edinburgh's New Town. *Architectural Heritage*, 10(1): 66–73. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.3366/arch.1999.10.1.66>
- Williams, M.** 2013. *City of Ambition: FDR, La Guardia and the Making of Modern New York*. New York: Norton.
- Wright, G.** 2008. *USA: Modern Architectures in History*. London: Reaktion Books.
- Wright, H.** 1932. Symposium: The International Architectural Exhibition. *Shelter*, 2(3): 4–6.
- Zip, S** and **Dagen Bloom, N.** 2016. Williamsburg Houses. In: Bloom, ND and Lasner, MG (eds.), *Affordable Housing in New York: The People, Places and Policies That Transformed a City*. Princeton: Princeton University Press. 94–99.

**How to cite this article:** Woudstra, R. 2018. Exhibiting Reform: MoMA and the Display of Public Housing (1932–1939). *Architectural Histories*, 6(1): 11, pp. 1–17, DOI: <https://doi.org/10.5334/ah.269>

**Published:** 11 September 2018

**Copyright:** © 2018 The Author(s). This is an open-access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License (CC-BY 4.0), which permits unrestricted use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original author and source are credited. See <http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>.

**u[** *Architectural Histories* is a peer-reviewed open access journal published by Ubiquity Press.

**OPEN ACCESS** 