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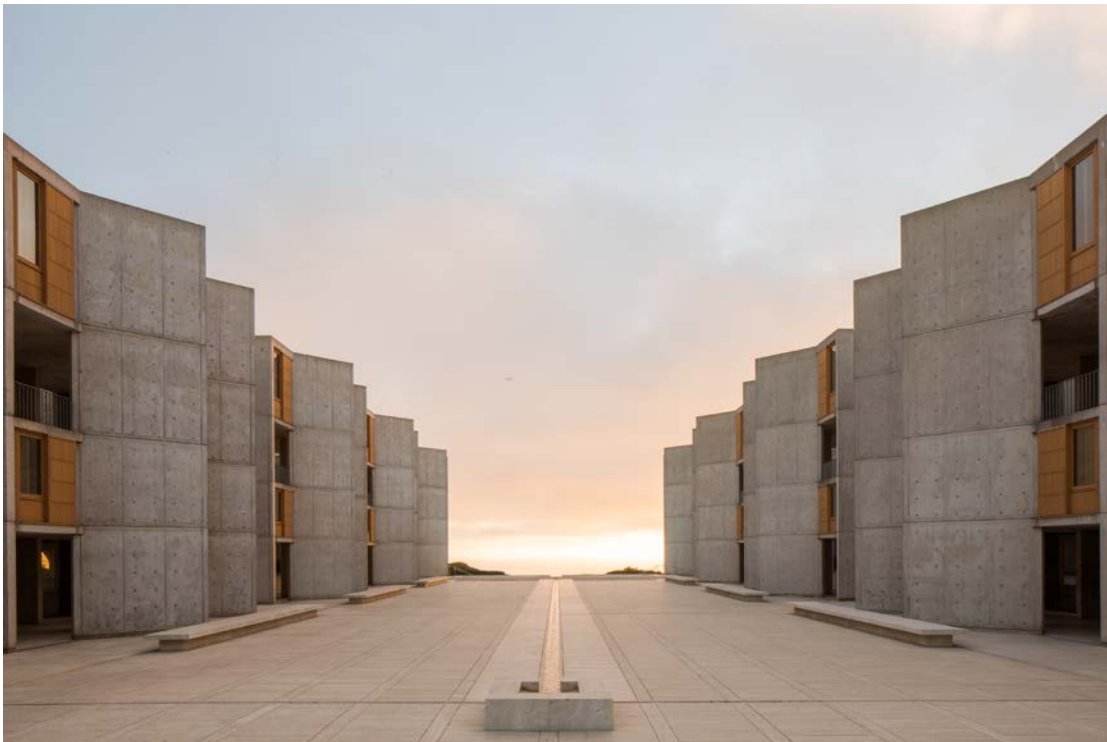
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MEDIA CONTACT

Alexandria Sivak
Getty Communications
(310) 440-6473
asivak@getty.edu

GETTY CONSERVATION INSTITUTE AND SALK INSTITUTE ANNOUNCE COMPLETION OF MAJOR CONSERVATION EFFORTS

Getty-led research and funding partnership leads to important site repairs and long-term conservation management planning



Salk Institute for Biological Studies, photo by Elizabeth Daniels

LOS ANGELES – The **Getty Conservation Institute (GCI)** and **Salk Institute for Biological Studies** announced today that after four years, conservation efforts are complete for one of the key architectural elements at the Salk Institute in La Jolla, California—its teak window walls. The site, completed in 1965 and designed by famed architect Louis I. Kahn, is widely considered to be a masterpiece of modern architecture. It is also home to globally renowned scientists making breakthroughs in research areas of cancer, neuroscience, metabolism, plant science, genetics, and more.

“The GCI’s partnership with the Salk Institute is an excellent example of what can be achieved when architects, scientists and conservators are given the resources and time needed to develop practical solutions, demonstrating how best-practice conservation methodologies can be applied to future projects at the Salk and other works of modern architecture,” says Tim Whalen, director of the Getty Conservation Institute. “We thank Salk for their ongoing commitment to good stewardship of this remarkable site, as well as their enthusiasm and cooperation throughout this project.”

Kahn was commissioned by Jonas Salk, the developer of the polio vaccine, to design the campus for his new scientific research institute on a coastal bluff in the La Jolla area of San Diego.

Kahn worked closely with Salk on the design of the building, which houses offices, studies, laboratories, and other research facilities.

After 50 years in an exposed marine environment, the institute’s distinct teak window walls, set within the monolithic concrete walls of the study towers and offices, had weathered to a non-uniform appearance and were deteriorated. The construction work, designed by Wiss, Janney, Elstner Associates, Inc. (WJE), addressed these issues, and Getty-led research and funding as part of the GCI’s Conserving Modern Architecture Initiative (CMAI) helped to initiate the construction.

“You have the brightest people working in one of the most collaborative and inspiring environments, so maintaining a long-term conservation plan for the buildings is incredibly important,” says Elizabeth Blackburn, president of the Salk Institute. “The GCI and partners have done a remarkable job. If Louis Kahn and Jonas Salk could see the building today, I think they would be overjoyed.”



Salk Institute for Biological Studies, photo by Elizabeth Daniels

The 203 teak window walls are significant elements of the overall site, expressing a human element and scale within the monumental structure. Although prefabricated, every window has a hand-crafted quality due to the detailing of the teak wood by carpenters and customization to fit many sized openings. Each offers a different combination of sliding windows, louvers and shutters, allowing staff to control light and air in their workspaces. The window walls are significant within Kahn's larger body of work, as they expand upon his office's language of custom exterior woodwork.

Research found that the window walls suffered from surface erosion, the growth of a fungal biofilm (likely spread by nearby eucalyptus trees) that gave the wood a black appearance that varied significantly by exposure, changes to teak color due to previously applied sealers and finishes, insect infestation and moisture infiltration due to the omission of flashings and weather stripping during the original construction project and the failure of sealants.



Salk Institute for Biological Studies, photo by Elizabeth Daniels

"Restoration of the teak wood presented a number of challenges," says Kyle Normandin, WJE project manager and associate principal. "The success of the project is that we were able to save so much of the original material."

In order to understand the causes of the problems, the GCI and its consultants engaged in historical research, explored the extent of damage to the window walls, and performed physical and laboratory analysis to identify materials used and various causes of damage and deterioration. Possible treatments for the wood and wood replacement option were also researched, as well as design modifications to improve the overall performance of the assemblies. Finally, the GCI and WJE developed a series of on-site trial mock-ups to evaluate different repair approaches and treatments to identify the most appropriate ways to move forward.

Drawing upon the results of the project team's earlier research and the trial mock-ups, WJE developed comprehensive construction documents to implement the repair and conservation of the window walls, with interventions ranging from minor (cleaning and repair), to moderate (cleaning, repair, and some replacement of materials), to major (removal of the entire window assembly where severely



Salk Institute for Biological Studies, photo by Elizabeth Daniels

deteriorated and replacement using like-for-like materials). WJE, with consultants Peter Inskip + Peter Jenkins Architects (I+J), also recently completed a comprehensive conservation management plan for long-term care of the institute's buildings and site, funded by a grant from the **Getty Foundation's Keeping It Modern initiative.**

"Through the careful planning of everyone involved, the restoration effort was able to reuse over two-thirds of the original Southeast Asian teak," says Tim Ball, senior director of Facility Services at Salk. "The teak will last a minimum of 50-70 years more thanks to the conservation plan."

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The J. Paul Getty Trust is an international cultural and philanthropic institution devoted to the visual arts that includes the J. Paul Getty Museum, the Getty Research Institute, the Getty Conservation Institute, and the Getty Foundation. The J. Paul Getty Trust and Getty programs serve a varied audience from two locations: the Getty Center in Los Angeles and the Getty Villa in Pacific Palisades.

The Getty Conservation Institute works to advance conservation practice in the visual arts, broadly interpreted to include objects, collections, architecture, and sites. It serves the conservation community through scientific research, education and training, model field projects, and the broad dissemination of the results of both its own work and the work of others in the field. In all its endeavors, the Conservation Institute focuses on the creation and dissemination of knowledge that will benefit the professionals and organizations responsible for the conservation of the world's cultural heritage.

The Getty Foundation fulfills the philanthropic mission of the Getty Trust by supporting individuals and institutions committed to advancing the greater understanding and preservation of the visual arts in Los Angeles and throughout the world. Through strategic grant initiatives, the Foundation strengthens art history as a global discipline, promotes the interdisciplinary practice of conservation, increases access to museum and archival collections, and develops current and future leaders in the visual arts. It carries out its work in collaboration with the other Getty Programs to ensure that they individually and collectively achieve maximum effect. Additional information is available at www.getty.edu/foundation.

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About the Salk Institute for Biological Studies:

Every cure has a starting point. The Salk Institute embodies Jonas Salk's mission to dare to make dreams into reality. Its internationally renowned and award-winning scientists explore the very foundations of life, seeking new understandings in neuroscience, genetics, immunology and more. The Institute is an independent nonprofit organization and architectural landmark: small by choice, intimate by nature and fearless in the face of any challenge. Be it cancer or Alzheimer's, aging or diabetes, Salk is where cures begin. Learn more at: salk.edu.

About WJE

Wiss, Janney, Elstner Associates, Inc. (WJE), is an interdisciplinary firm of engineers, architects, and materials scientists that specializes in the investigation, analysis, testing, and design of repairs for historic and contemporary buildings, bridges and other structures. For additional information, please visit www.wje.com.