STATEMENT FROM THE GETTY

THE GETTY MOURNS THE PASSING OF ARCHITECTURAL WRITER

ADA LOUISE HUXTABLE

March 14, 1921 – January 7, 2013

The Getty Research Institute will ensure that her legacy will endure through her archive

LOS ANGELES—The Getty mourns the passing of celebrated architecture critic and author Ada Louise Huxtable (American, 1921-2013). Her papers, as well as those of her husband, industrial designer L. Garth Huxtable (American, 1911-1989), which include notes, correspondence, research files, manuscripts, drawings and photographs, will become part of the GRI’s rich architectural collections.

The Getty acquired these extensive archives from Huxtable in December 2012 and they will become widely available to researchers once they are processed and cataloged. In addition, Huxtable bequeathed the entirety of her estate as well as her intellectual property rights to the Getty, in order to advance the study of architecture.

“By working with the Getty, Ada Louise Huxtable not only ensured that the wealth of research material she amassed throughout her distinguished career will be accessible to anyone interested in the history of modern architecture but through the gift of her estate she protected her work for posterity and strengthened the field by supporting the Getty’s collecting and research activities,” said James Cuno, President and CEO of the J. Paul Getty Trust.

Ada Louise Huxtable was the first dedicated architecture critic writing for a major newspaper when she began writing for the New York Times in 1963. In 1970 she was awarded the first Pulitzer Prize for Distinguished Criticism. She wrote 10 books and received many distinguished awards for criticism and preservation activism. Huxtable served frequently on architectural award committees—including the Pritzker Prize and the Praemium Imperiale of Japan—and building design committees—including the architectural selection and building
design committees for the both Getty Center and the Getty Villa. Huxtable became the architecture critic for the *Wall Street Journal* in 1997, and continued to be an active and prominent voice in the field throughout her life. She wrote her final column for the *Wall Street Journal* in December 2012, one month before her death.

Huxtable was an outspoken critic and an ardent advocate of the contemporary preservation movement. Huxtable developed a broad audience through her well-informed and approachable writing as well as the issues she wrote about. Throughout her career, she received thousands of letters, many of them related to her columns advocating the preservation of certain buildings. Included in this correspondence are letters from architects who felt compelled to pen their agreement or disagreement with what she had written about other architects, and sometimes themselves. All of these letters constitute an abundant trove of information about the popular reception of modern and contemporary architecture as well as the professional discourse on both new buildings and preservation for the latter half of the 20th century.

Huxtable's archive also contains correspondence with friends and colleagues, day calendars, note cards documenting research for her books, research files, photographs, manuscripts and drafts of her articles and essays, videotapes on architectural subjects, and ephemera collected for her research.

"For five decades Ada Louise Huxtable was America's preeminent architecture critic and a foremost voice for historic preservation," said Thomas Gaehtgens, director of the Getty Research Institute. "Indeed the scope of her work is a survey of the history of post-war architecture and the birth of the contemporary preservation movement. Her archive is a tremendous addition to the Getty Research Institute's wealth of architectural material."

Ada Louise Huxtable's husband, L. Garth Huxtable, was an independent industrial designer. He designed giftware, tableware, kitchen tools, appliances and automobiles, among other things. In the 1950s, working out of his firm's New York office, he prolifically designed hand tools and power tools for the Millers Falls Company in Massachusetts. For the Four Seasons restaurant in the Seagram Building in New York, opened in 1959, Garth and Ada Louise Huxtable collaborated on the serving and cookware design. Several of these pieces are in the collection of the Museum of Modern Art, New York. In addition to correspondence and records, the Garth Huxtable archive donated to the GRI by Mrs. Huxtable includes many detailed and refined drawings by Garth Huxtable.
The Huxtable Archives become part of the Special Collections at the Getty Research Institute. The GRI’s architecture and design collections include a vast array of materials related to the fields of architecture and the design of exhibitions, interiors, graphics, textiles, and industrial materials. These diverse resources reveal the complex dimensions of the design process from initial sketches and study models to evocative final renderings, detailed construction drawings, and published promotional photographs.

The GRI’s extensive archival materials include letters, notebooks, audiovisual materials and ephemera that outline the evolving themes and issues of architectural discourse. International holdings date from 1500 to the present, with concentrations in 19th- and 20th-century avant-garde movements and mid-20th-century modernism.

Highlights of the collection include the archives of progressive Southern Californian architects Pierre Koenig, John Lautner, Ray Kappe, Frank Israel, and William Krisel; international projects by Coop Himmelblau, Peter Eisenman, Yona Friedman, Zaha Hadid, Philip Johnson, Daniel Libeskind, Aldo Rossi, Bernard Rudofsky, Lebbeus Woods, and Frank Lloyd Wright; the influential architectural photography of Julius Shulman and Lucien Hervé; the papers of Reyner Banham and Nikolaus Pevsner; and critical drawings by Francesco Borromini and Antonio Asprucci.

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The Getty Research Institute is an operating program of the J. Paul Getty Trust. It serves education in the broadest sense by increasing knowledge and understanding about art and its history through advanced research. The Research Institute provides intellectual leadership through its research, exhibition, and publication programs and provides service to a wide range of scholars worldwide through residencies, fellowships, online resources, and a Research Library. The Research Library—housed in the 201,000-square-foot Research Institute building designed by Richard Meier—is one of the largest art and architecture libraries in the world. The general library collections (secondary sources) include almost 900,000 volumes of books, periodicals, and auction catalogues encompassing the history of Western art and related fields in the humanities. The Research Library’s special collections include rare books, artists’ journals, sketchbooks, architectural drawings and models, photographs, and archival materials.

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