

Ringling College and Sarasota Architectural Foundation Create Preservation Plan for Paul Rudolph-Designed Canopy at the Sarasota Museum of Art

Sarasota, FL – March 31, 2015 -- Ringling College of Art and Design president Dr. Larry R. Thompson today announced that following meetings with architect Carl Abbott and delegates of the Sarasota Architectural Foundation (SAF) and Ringling College's Sarasota Museum of Art (SMOA) builder David Sessions of Willis A. Smith Construction, a workable plan has been developed to preserve the architectural integrity of the 1960's era Paul Rudolph-designed canopy adjoining the historic 1920's Sarasota High School Building.

"I am excited that we were able to come together and work out a viable creative design solution for preservation that allows access to the rear of the building for safety and loading purposes," stated Dr. Thompson. "Our community has shown overwhelming commitment and dedication in supporting our shared vision for the Sarasota Museum of Art. We are so pleased we have begun the work to transform the historic Sarasota High School and make it come alive for a new purpose. And, we are especially happy to have come to a mutually-agreeable solution with the Sarasota architectural community to save a portion of the Rudolph canopy that is connected to SMOA."

"Larry's deep-rooted regard and respect for our creative community and his willingness to listen to our concerns have allowed us to together devise a win-win plan for everyone," said architect Carl Abbott, who was also an early protégé of Paul Rudolph's. "We understand the extraordinary effort that has been invested over the past seven years in making SMOA a reality, and we are happy to have worked together as a team to generate a solution for canopy preservation."

The Rudolph canopy at the historic high school will be a great part of this modern and contemporary art museum's face on the south side next to the parking area as people enter the south entrance to the facility. This is especially important because of Paul Rudolph's impact historically, culturally, and architecturally on Sarasota and the nation.

Larry Thompson praised the leadership of the Sarasota Architectural Foundation for its willingness to work through these issues and find a creative common ground. "They really did a great job to help us find a workable solution that benefits all parties."

SAF Board Chair Janet Minker said, "This is wonderful news for fans of Paul Rudolph, SMOA and the entire Sarasota community. A significant Rudolph project (c.1960) will continue to enjoy great visibility from Tamiami Trail and will serve as an elegant link between the new museum and the beautifully renovated Rudolph-designed Sarasota High School just around the corner."

According to Willis Smith's David Sessions, "We believe that the immediate removal of that short section of canopy should give us the access we need to continue construction and provide access after the museum is complete.

As part of the ongoing construction at SMOA, the Patrick Dougherty installation, 'Out in Front' was today removed from the front grounds of the building site. His 239th Stickwork sculpture, 'Out in Front' had a long and fruitful installation at SMOA, where it was viewed by millions of travelers along Tamiami Trail and brought significant attention to SMOA and the volunteer support integral to its assembly. "Today was another history making moment for SMOA, Ringling College and Sarasota: resolution on the canopy and the removal of the wonderful temporary Stickwork Sculpture created by Patrick Dougherty and numerous volunteers. Progress ... and more progress," said, Wendy Surkis, President of SMOA.

As Sarasota's first art museum devoted to modern and contemporary art, SMOA will interweave exhibitions, educational programs and community outreach initiatives to engage a diverse audience and serve as a stimulating hub for creative discovery. Ringling College and SMOA are transforming the former Sarasota High School building into nearly 60,000 square feet of space, a 110-seat, multi-purpose auditorium, a sculpture court, an indoor/outdoor café, classrooms and studios providing education programs for adults and children, and meeting spaces.

The Sarasota Museum of Art (SMOA) is a division of the Ringling College of Art and Design. SMOA has already been engaging and educating the community through the ARTmuse program which has featured artists Lisa Hoke and Patrick Dougherty. Their public works exemplified the power of art to engage residents and visitors, with hundreds of volunteers helping both Lisa and Patrick create their works and thousands visiting and walking through their creations. Additional ARTmuse artists were: Judy Pfaff, Seth Randall, Janet Echelman and Lesley Dill as well as Museum professionals Karole Vail, Curator from the Guggenheim and Stephen Brown, Curator from the Jewish Museum.

About Ringling College of Art and Design

Ringling College of Art and Design is a private, not-for-profit, fully accredited college offering the Bachelors of Fine Arts degree in 11 disciplines: Advertising Design, Computer Animation, Film, Fine Arts, Game Art, Graphic Design, Illustration, Interior Design, Motion Design, Photography & Imaging, and a Bachelor of Arts degree in the Business of Art & Design. Located in Sarasota on Florida's Gulf Coast, the picturesque 48-acre campus now includes more than 110 buildings, and enrolls nearly 1,300 students from 48 states and 65 countries. It is recognized as being among the best and most innovative visual arts colleges in the United States as well as a leader in the use of technology in the arts. <http://www.Ringling.edu>

About the Sarasota Architectural Foundation (SAF)

The SAF is a nonprofit organization focused on increasing awareness of the "Sarasota School of Architecture" movement, helping to preserve or rehabilitate its irreplaceable midcentury buildings and demonstrating its relevance to the contemporary built environment.

In addition to its ongoing architectural lecture, film and house tour series, SAF will present the second annual SarasotaMOD© Weekend November 6 – 8, 2015, a festival celebrating the work of the best known architect of the movement, Paul Rudolph. SAF is building a replica of Rudolph's iconic 1952 Walker Guest House on the campus of The Ringling Museum of Art, officially opening for the first time during the MOD celebration. <http://SAF-SRQ.org>

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