

Contact: Mary Lou Keenon
Communications
Telephone: 517/373-0011

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**State Historic Preservation Office and Archives of Michigan
Join Forces to Save Minoru Yamasaki's Architectural Records**

Lansing, MI – Good luck, good timing, and personal relationships played a major role in saving materials from the office of Minoru Yamasaki, one of the world's premier Modernist architects. A native of Seattle, Yamasaki (1912-1986) moved to Detroit in 1945 to work for the firm of Smith, Hinchman and Gryls before starting his own firm in Troy, Michigan. Yamasaki, best known for designing the World Trade Center in New York, also designed the Century Plaza in Los Angeles, the Michigan Consolidated Gas Company Building in Detroit, the Lambert-Saint Louis Air Terminal in Missouri, the McGreagor Memorial Building at Wayne State University and the U.S. Consulate building in Kobe, Japan. Yamasaki's firm continued after his death in 1986.

When the closing of the office precipitated the imminent destruction of records, a phone call between friends started an eleventh-hour effort to salvage and preserve Yamasaki's papers. Pauline Saliga, executive director of the Society of Architectural Historians in Chicago, then contacted Michigan's State Historic Preservation Officer Brian Conway, who in turn alerted State Archivist Mark Harvey of the Department of Natural Resources that the papers were to be destroyed the following morning. The Michigan History Foundation supplied a moving van and two movers, and Harvey made arrangements to be at the offices first thing the next morning. There he and two members of the preservation office and one archives staff member spent the day assessing and packing the available materials. Presentation drawings, original drawings and materials related to Century Plaza, as well as Yamasaki's personal library from which he drew inspiration are among the items now in the state's care.

The Michigan State Historic Preservation Office, Michigan State Housing Development Authority, is just beginning a *Michigan Modern* project to document Michigan's Modern

architecture from 1940 to 1970. Yamasaki was one of a number of architects and designers who made Michigan a leader in the Modern movement. “For us to be able to get these materials now, at the beginning of this project, and to be able to preserve materials related to one of the world’s greatest architects and his architectural legacy is just amazing,” stated Conway.

According to Harvey Tawny Ryan Nelb of Nelb Consulting, Inc. will conduct a needs assessment for the collection. The Archives of Michigan will seek grant money and donations for the cataloging and conservation of the collection, which includes original plans and renderings, handwritten notes, photographs, slides, and books.

“The Archives of Michigan is honored to be the repository of the international legacy of Minoru Yamasaki,” stated Harvey.

The State Historic Preservation Office is part of the Michigan State Housing Development Authority. The Michigan State Housing Development Authority is dedicated to building a thriving and vibrant future for Michigan. MSHDA provides tools and resources to improve people’s lives through programs across the state. These programs assist with housing, build strong neighborhoods, and help create places where people want to live and work. MSHDA’s programs work in four areas: affordable rental housing; supporting homeownership; ending homelessness; and creating vibrant cities and neighborhoods. For further information on this or other MSHDA programs, go to www.michigan.gov/mshda.*

*MSHDA’s loan and operating expenses are financed through the sale of tax-exempt and taxable bonds as well as notes to private investors, not from state tax revenues. Proceeds are loaned at below-market interest rates to developers of rental housing, and help fund mortgages and home improvement loans. MSHDA also administers several federal housing programs.

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