

eero
saarinen
huominen
hahmottuu

eero
saarinen
framtidens
tar
form

eero
saarinen
shaping
the
future

When Finnish-born American architect Eero Saarinen died prematurely at age 51 in 1961, he had already become one of the most celebrated designers of the modern era. In the years following World War II, he produced a series of masterpieces of breathtaking individuality, including the 630-foot-tall, stainless steel St. Louis Gateway Arch (1948-64) along the Mississippi River, commemorating America's westward expansion; the TWA Terminal (1956-62) at New York's John F. Kennedy Airport, where swooping concrete vaults thrilled travelers with the new glamour of worldwide flight; and "a Versailles of Industry" of aluminum and glass for General Motors (1948-56) near Detroit.

Deploying progressive construction techniques and a highly personal, exuberant, and often metaphorical aesthetic, Saarinen's work defied Modernist orthodoxies and gave iconic form to the postwar American ideal of an open-ended society of unbounded choice and diversity – an ideal that persists to this day. In his search for a richer and more varied modern architecture, Saarinen became one of the most prolific and controversial practitioners of his time, and one of the most influential.

In October 2006, the landmark exhibition *Eero Saarinen: Shaping the Future* – the first major museum retrospective ever mounted to explore this remarkable figure – will begin a four-year international tour of Europe and the United States with a viewing at the Kunsthalle Helsinki, where it will mark the 50th anniversary of the Museum of Finnish Architecture.

landmark museum retrospective of renowned architect eero saarinen to launch international tour october 2006

Following its presentation in Helsinki, *Eero Saarinen: Shaping the Future* will travel to Oslo, Brussels, Detroit, Washington D.C., Minneapolis, St. Louis and New York City, ending its tour at Yale in 2010, in conjunction with the 100th anniversary of Saarinen's birth. In New York City, the exhibition will be presented at the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum in 2009 as part of that institution's commemoration of the 50th anniversary of its Frank Lloyd Wright building on Fifth Avenue.



Eero Saarinen: Shaping the Future explores the architect's career from the 1930s through the early 1960s, when the last of Saarinen's buildings were completed posthumously by colleagues Kevin Roche and John Dinkeloo. By surveying the architect's entire output, the exhibition will provide the first opportunity to understand Saarinen's collective work in the larger context of postwar Modernism and as an articulation of the ambitions and values of a prosperous, technologically endowed, democratic society.

Among highlights of the exhibition will be never-before-seen sketches, working drawings, models, photographs, furnishings, films and other ephemera from various archives and private collections. A significant portion of the material presented has been loaned by Yale University Manuscripts and Archives, which became the largest repository of Saarinen material with the donation by Kevin Roche of the Eero Saarinen and Associates office archives in 2002. Yale students created digital animations specifically for the show.

A man of great individual talent who was, and still is, celebrated as a lone, heroic creator, Eero Saarinen was actually proud of his ability and willingness to collaborate with other architects, artists, engineers, and clients to achieve designs that harmonized with their contexts and atmospheres as "total expressions ... dominated by a strong, simple concept".

To illustrate how Saarinen's collaborative approach helped achieve his holistic design concept, "The Architect and his Milieu" – the smaller of the exhibition's two sections – will explore facets of the architect's complex network of friends, family, and colleagues. Film, press clippings, documents, and photographs by such masters as Ezra Stoller and Balthazar Korab will paint a portrait of a man in full command of the most sophisticated, media-savvy strategies of his age, and guided by a vision of modern life as a constant collaborative dialogue infused with clear purpose.