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**Master Architects** by [Jackie Craven](#)**Philip Cortelyou Johnson**

1979 Pritzker Prize Laureate

July 8, 1906 - January 25, 2005



Place of Birth: Cleveland, OH

Education: Architectural History (1930), Architecture (1943), Harvard University

Selected Projects:

1949: [Glass House](#), New Canaan, CT1958: [Seagram Building](#) (with Mies van der Rohe), New York

1962: Kline Science Center, Yale University, New Haven, CT

1964: NY State Theater, Lincoln Center, New York

1980: [Crystal Cathedral](#), Garden Grove,

CA

1984: [AT&T Headquarters](#), New York,

1984: Pittsburgh Plate Glass Company, Pittsburgh, PA

1984: [Transco Tower](#), Houston, TX

Philip Johnson was a museum director, writer, and, most notably, an architect known for his unconventional designs. His work incorporated diverse influences such as the neoclassicism of Karl Friedrich Schinkel and the modernism of Ludwig Mies van der Rohe.

After graduation from Harvard in 1930, Philip Johnson became the first Director of the Department of Architecture at the Museum of Modern Art, New York (1932-1934 and 1945-1954). He coined the term International Style and introduced the work of modern European architects such as Ludwig Mies van der Rohe and Le Corbusier to America. He would later collaborate with Mies on what is considered the most superb skyscraper in North America, the Seagram Building in New York City (1958).

Johnson returned to Harvard University in 1940 to study architecture under Marcel Breuer. For his master degree thesis, he designed a residence for himself, the now famous Glass House (1949), which has been called one of the world's most beautiful and yet least functional homes.

Philip Johnson's buildings were luxurious in scale and materials, featuring expansive interior space and a classical sense of symmetry and elegance. These same traits epitomized corporate America's dominant role in world markets in prominent skyscrapers for such leading companies as AT&T (1984), Pennzoil (1976) and Pittsburgh Plate Glass Company (1984).

In 1979, Philip Johnson was honored with the first Pritzker Architecture Prize in recognition of "50 years of imagination and vitality embodied in a myriad of museums, theaters, libraries, houses, gardens and corporate structures."

#### Related People:

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- | [Walter Gropius](#)
- | [Le Corbusier](#)
- | [Richard Neutra](#)
- | [Ludwig Mies van der Rohe](#)

#### More Information:

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- | [Twentieth Century Trends in Architecture](#)
- | [The Architecture of Philip Johnson](#) - A comprehensive guide by Stephen Fox, Philip Johnson, and Richard Payne

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