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**For Immediate Release:**

## ***Jim Olson: Architecture for Art*** **First Retrospective Devoted to the Architect's Career**

**September 30-December 10, 2011**

**September 29, 2011 / Opening Reception: 6:00 PM / Lecture: 7:00 PM**



Jim Olson, [Tim Bies/  
Olson Kundig Architects]



American Place, [Paul Warchol]



Red House, [Bruce van Inwegen]

**Pullman, WA, June 1, 2011** – The Museum of Art at Washington State University is organizing “Architecture for Art,” the first comprehensive exhibition devoted to the career of Jim Olson, one of the Northwest’s most significant architects and founder of the internationally recognized Seattle-based firm, Olson Kundig Architects.

The exhibit will serve as a retrospective for Olson’s 45-year career, highlighting his residential legacy, including his own homes—an apartment in downtown Seattle and his cabin on Puget Sound—as well as his public design work, which encompasses the Lightcatcher Museum in Bellingham, Washington, St. Mark’s Cathedral and the Pike & Virginia Building in Seattle, and the Noah’s Ark Exhibit at the Skirball Cultural Center in Los Angeles.

Along with the projects themselves, the exhibition will explore the artistic, cultural, natural and personal influences that have made the architect’s career so highly regarded by his peers and sought after by clients. “Architecture for Art” will include a range of materials that showcase Olson’s process, including notebooks and ephemera, original sketches and drawings, stunning large-scale photo displays, and models. Original art work from selected residences will be on display, as well as a custom-designed art installation that will provide visitors with a first-hand experience with Olson’s use of space and collaboration with art.

“It’s rare that Northwest museums devote a full exhibit to architecture; doubly so for rural eastern Washington,” said WSU Museum of Art Director Chris Bruce. “The combination of world-class architecture and world-class art is something few people experience, so we expect this exhibit to be a revelation for university students and the general public alike.”

“Architecture for Art” opens at the Museum of Art at Washington State University in Pullman on September 30, 2011. The museum will launch a multi-layered web site that includes images and information about Olson’s projects, links to architectural and artistic references, and workshop exercises for students. An extensive video interview will be included in both the exhibition and on the website. Olson will give a lecture about his work on September 29 at 6 pm at the Museum of Art. Additional locations for the exhibit will be announced in coming months. For additional information about the Museum of Art at WSU, visit [museum.wsu.edu](http://museum.wsu.edu).

**About Jim Olson:**

Jim Olson is the founding partner of Olson Kundig Architects and the most prominent heir to the legacy of the 1950’s Northwest master architects. A 1963 graduate of the University of Washington, Jim Olson served early apprenticeships with two of the Northwest’s legendary architects: Paul Kirk and Ralph Anderson. In 1966, he established his first firm in Seattle and in 1970 established the partnership Olson/Walker.

The office has since grown into a diverse practice with an international reputation as Olson Kundig Architects. Among Olson’s numerous built designs are residences for major art collectors around the world, the Pike & Virginia Building in Seattle’s Pike Place Market, and the recent Lightcatcher at the Whatcom Museum in Bellingham, Washington. He has served on the boards of numerous arts organizations including the Seattle Art Museum, and lectures extensively on the relationship of architecture and art.

Olson’s work has appeared in publications worldwide, including the *New York Times*, *Architectural Digest*, *Architectural Record*, *Art + Auction*, *Monocle*, and *Interior Design*. In addition to the most recent monograph, *Jim Olson Houses* (The Monacelli Press) which features sixteen of his projects, his work has also been featured in *Art + Architecture: the Ebsworth Collection and Residence* (William Stout Publishers) which focuses on the home of an art collector; and a monograph on the firm’s work, *Architecture, Art and Craft: Olson Sundberg Kundig Allen Architects* (The Monacelli Press). He is the recipient of the 2007 Seattle AIA Medal of Honor.

**About Olson Kundig Architects:**

Olson Kundig Architects is a Seattle-based architecture firm led by four owners: Jim Olson, Tom Kundig, Kirsten R. Murray, and Alan Maskin. The 85-person office specializes in a range of projects both nationally and internationally, including new and renovated residential projects, particularly for art collectors; mixed-use buildings; academic and civic projects; museums and exhibit design; cultural centers; places of worship; urban design; and interior design. In 2009, the firm was honored with the National Architecture Firm Award by the American Institute of Architects. For additional information, visit [olsonkundigarchitects.com](http://olsonkundigarchitects.com).

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