

In Support

Putting the Pieces Together

Collaborative Support for Pierre Chareau

When the Jewish Museum began to outline the plans for its celebrated exhibition, *Pierre Chareau: Modern Architecture and Design*, it was clear assembling the right group of supporters was as delicate an art as designing a beautifully furnished home.

Just as curating the exhibition required the thoughtful balance of objects, virtual reality, and historical documentation, it also provided an opportunity for lovers of great design and appreciation for Chareau to come together to celebrate his visionary work and bring it on a wider audience. The complexity of executing such an avant-garde exhibition — one that *The New York Times* hailed as a “treat” — became a delightful collaboration for all involved.

The many generous participants who contributed included a collection of foundations, corporations, and private philanthropists who are patrons of the arts and believe in the essential role of culture and museum life. The Jerome L. Greene Foundation was the first funder, providing critical support to make the exhibition a reality. Essential support was also provided by the generosity of the Grand Marnier Foundation and Selz Foundation. Individuals holding a particular interest in design — and the desire to bring the underappreciated designer to great acclaim — included Jewish Museum patrons Tracey and Robert Pruzan, Susan and Benjamin Winter, and Marie-Josée

and Henry Kravis. All played a vital role in giving Chareau’s work and life story broader recognition.

“Pierre Chareau is a modernist icon of 20th-century design, but he is little known in the United States,” said Christina McNerney, President and CEO of the Jerome L. Greene Foundation. “We wanted to help bring him to a wider audience. We were also moved by his personal life story — the success and acclaim in 1930s Paris, his exile to New York during WWII, and his tragic last years.”

Citing curator and Princeton University professor Dr. Esther da Costa Meyer’s thoughtful scholarship and innovative exhibition design by Diller Scofidio + Renfro, McNerney said the results were “brilliant” and something in which they wanted to take part. They weren’t alone.

The iconic store of tasteful, modern design, Design Within Reach, was also eager to come aboard. In addition to offering Museum Members exclusive retail discounts, celebrating Chareau was personally important to the store’s leadership.

“Pierre Chareau’s work is very important to my family,” said Design Within Reach CEO John Edelman. “When I was growing up, my parents had two major design

influences: Jean-Michel Frank and Pierre Chareau. Both were geniuses and both are underappreciated, so when the opportunity came up to help support this important show, there was no question that I’d be part of it.”

UOVO, which coordinates art moving and storage, also contributed its services, providing essential in-kind support. “As a logistics provider deeply engaged in the arts community in New York, we are committed to supporting projects with the institutions we admire,” said founder Steve Guttman.

The collaboration was a huge success for a show that *The New Yorker* hailed as “a rare achievement.” Like a perfectly appointed home, the parts made the whole greater than any one object, providing visitors to the Museum a chance to experience the transformative nature of design. The Jewish Museum is grateful to all the participants for their generous support, including from the Graham Foundation for Advanced Studies in the Fine Arts, Barr Ferree Foundation Fund for Publications, Department of Art and Archaeology, Princeton University, and the Cultural Services of the French Embassy.

Image: Installation view of *Pierre Chareau: Modern Architecture and Design*. Photo: Will Ragozzino / SocialShutterbug.com