

DESIGN MUSEUM



DESIGN MUSEUM, SHAD THAMES, LONDON SE1 2YD

JOINT TICKET FOR EXHIBITION AND HOUSE: Adults £8.50; Concessions £6.50; Students £5; Under 12s free. Tickets available from both Design Museum and Tate Modern (Level 4).

HOUSE OPENING (Tate Modern): Sun – Thurs 10.00–18.00, Friday and Saturday 10.00–22.00

EXHIBITION OPENING (Design Museum): Daily 10.00 - 17.45

PUBLIC INFORMATION T: 0870 833 9955 W: designmuseum.org

ADVANCE BOOKING T: 020 7940 8783 W: ticketweb.co.uk

MAISON TROPICALE FOR DESIGN MUSEUM AT TATE MODERN

5 February to 13 April 2008

Hotelier André Balazs, in partnership with the Design Museum and Tate Modern, brings a house designed by architectural visionary Jean Prouvé to Britain for the first time.

The prototype house, designed by the French architect Jean Prouvé (1901-1984), for 1950s colonial West Africa, will be erected outside Tate Modern.

Maison Tropicale for Design Museum at Tate Modern is an extension of the Design Museum's current exhibition **Jean Prouvé – The Poetics of the Technical Object** and the house demonstrates the full scale and vision of Prouvé's economy of design.

Visitors will be able to walk around this 'flat pack' house which was originally erected in Brazzaville, Republic of the Congo, in 1951. In 2000 the house was found in Brazzaville, in a dilapidated state and riddled with bullet holes. The house was dismantled, returned to France and restored.

Jean Prouvé designed and manufactured three prototype Maisons Tropicales for West Africa between 1949 and 1951. The Brazzaville house is made from folded sheet steel and aluminium. For ease of transport all the parts were flat, lightweight and could be neatly packed into a cargo plane.

The Maisons Tropicales were designed to address the shortage of housing and civic buildings in France's African colonies. Prouvé aimed to design for the demands of the climate and included a veranda with an adjustable aluminium sun-screen. The inner walls are made of fixed and sliding metal panels with blue glass portholes to protect against UV rays. A double roof structure was designed to produce natural ventilation.

Although designed for mass production, the prototype proved no less expensive than locally built buildings and with their industrial aesthetic did not appeal to the conservative expatriate French bureaucrats. So the house exists as a unique expression of a radical architectural vision.

To request further information and images please contact Josephine Gaffikin on 020 7940 8771 or email media@designmuseum.org. Register and download press images from the online press office www.designmuseum.org/press/images/register

Notes to Editors

Jean Prouvé (1901-1984) was a genius of 20th century design. With remarkable elegance and economy of means, he designed prefabricated houses, building components and façades, as well as furniture for the home, office and school.

André Balazs: La Maison Tropicale was purchased by visionary hotelier André Balazs in June 2007. André Balazs is a patron of contemporary architecture and has collaborated with some of the worlds most acclaimed architects including Jean Nouvel, Shigeru Ban, Richard Gluckman and James Polshek. André Balazs Properties is a collection of innovative hotels and residences, renowned for their pioneering design and carefully considered sense of place. Properties include The Mercer in New York, Chateau Marmont in Hollywood and The Raleigh in Miami Beach. More information at andrebalazsproperties.com

Jean Prouvé – The Poetics of the Technical Object is at the Design Museum until 13 April. A comprehensive exploration of Prouvé's life, work and ideas, the exhibition covers his early career as a blacksmith in Nancy, France, the establishment of his own factory in the 1930s producing metal components and structures, and his later work as a consultant engineer.

Jean Prouvé – The Poetics of the Technical Object is an exhibition of the Vitra Design Museum, Weil am Rhein, Germany in cooperation with Deutsches Architektur Museum, Frankfurt and Design Museum Akihabara, Japan. The exhibition is supported by Allies and Morrison, Lord and Lady Foster, Foster + Partners, with additional support from Wilkinson Eyre and Hopkins Architects.

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