

# Architectural history gift largest of kind in nation

The nation's largest private endowment for architectural history library collections will be created as the result of a \$1.2-million bequest to UO's Department of Art History by the man known as Oregon's "dean of architectural history."

The gift is from the estate of Marion Dean Ross, a longtime UO professor of architectural history who died in April 1991.

In addition, it will establish an endowed professorship and create a new junior faculty position in architectural history under the state's Endowment Match Program, according to President Myles Brand.

Prof. Leland Roth (art history) has been appointed to the new Marion D. Ross Distinguished Chair in Architectural History, according to Art History Dept. Head Jeffrey Hurwit.

Roth, an expert on the history of American and modern architecture, will develop new courses and oversee research projects in architectural history.

"During his life, Marion Ross established a program in art and architectural history that has gained international recognition," Brand says. "This gift and the corresponding state matching fund will help to ensure that future generations of Oregon art historians, architects, educators and fine artists receive training here that is second to none."

The endowment will "greatly enhance the collections of the UO Architecture and Allied Arts Library, already the largest library of its kind in the state," Brand says.

"Professor Roth's research and teaching interests greatly overlap those of Marion Ross," Hurwit says. "Together with his own high level of scholarly accomplishment and dedication to his students, this makes him an ideal and fitting choice as the first occupant of the Ross chair."

"We will now be able to provide our students, and thus the people of Oregon, with both the opportunity and resources to study this major field of the humanities to a degree we could not before," he says.

Recruitment for the third architectural historian in the 10-member art his-

tory department will take place during the 1992-93 academic year.

Hurwit says the endowment is expected to yield about \$58,000 annually to help pay for acquisition of library materials and \$66,000 for professors' salaries and research support, as well as additions to the principal.

The bequest enables the UO Architecture and Allied Arts Library to compete nationally for prized items that otherwise would be beyond the university's reach financially, Hurwit says.

For example, one of the art history department's goals is to acquire original editions or rare and out-of-print monographs, photographs, architectural drawings and other materials touching on the wide range of Ross's interests, from the architecture of the Pacific Northwest to archaeology, town planning and the history of American, European, Islamic and Latin American architecture.

Ross, whose bequest funds the endowment, joined the UO faculty in 1947. He is credited with helping bring about preservation efforts in historic Jacksonville, Ore., as the result of an article he wrote in 1953 for the national *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians*.

One of the first historians to look closely at the dark, heavy, 19th-century architecture that his design training had taught him to dismiss, Ross sought out and photographed Oregon's Victorian buildings. In many cases, his record is all that remains, since many of the structures were demolished to make way for new construction.

At the same time, he followed the rise of modernism, particularly as defined by Oregon architects Pietro Bulluschi and John Yeon.

A Pennsylvania native, Ross earned a bachelor's degree in architecture from Pennsylvania State College in 1935 and a master of architecture degree from Harvard University in 1937. He taught at Tulane University and at Pennsylvania State College and was licensed as an architect

# Endowment from Ross is largest ever

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in Louisiana before coming to Oregon.

Ross directed the university's early program in art history, served as acting dean of AAA in 1962-63 and became art history's first department head when the department was established officially in 1963. He retired in 1978.

Among his honors was the Distinguished Preservationist Award, presented in 1981 by the Historic Preservation League of Oregon.

Roth joined the UO art history faculty in 1978. Prior to that, he taught art history at Northwestern University, Ohio State University and the University of Illinois-Urbana.

Roth earned his bachelor's degree in architecture at the University of Illinois-Urbana in 1955, graduating *summa cum laude*. His master's and doctoral degrees in art history are from Yale University.

In addition to numerous articles and papers, Roth has written books and a monograph on the work of New York architects McKim, Mead and White as well as *A Concise History of American Architecture* and *America Builds: Source*

*Documents in American Architecture and Planning*.

Roth currently is working on four books, including one on the model houses of the *Ladies' Home Journal*; the memoirs of students of McKim, Mead and White; an introductory text on the creation and study of architecture; and a second edition of *A Concise History of American Architecture*.

The UO School of Architecture and Allied Arts offers programs in art history, architecture, landscaped architecture, arts management, fine and applied arts, and planning, public policy and management. Of UO's 16,900 students, 1,456—almost nine percent—list their major in the school.

The Ross Chair brings to three the number of endowed professorships in the school. Others are the architecture department's Frederick Charles Baker Chair in Design and the art history department's Maude I. Kerns Professorship in Oriental Art.

The State Endowment Match program matches the annual income (at the rate of

5.5 percent) on new private gifts of endowment for faculty support made to the state's colleges and universities in the 1991-93 biennium.

The university has a total of \$6 million available from the matching program and this award is the first made to the university this biennium. Any new private gift of \$25,000 or more are eligible for this match if they provide for faculty position or related support of teaching and research, says Vice Pres. Brodie Remington (public affairs and development).

Hurwit says that with Roth in the new chair, the Ross endowment firmly in place Prof. Richard Sundt, an expert on medieval architecture, on board and the ability to hire yet another architectural historian next year, departmental offerings in the field will be enhanced considerably.