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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

EXCELLENCE IN PRESERVATION AWARD WINNERS ANNOUNCED

Restoration of the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum to be honored

ALBANY, NY – May 4, 2009 – The Preservation League of New York State has selected the restoration of the **Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum** in Manhattan to receive a Preservation League award for Excellence in Historic Preservation.

The League's statewide awards program honors notable achievements in retaining, promoting and reusing New York State's irreplaceable architectural heritage.

"The Awards Jury was particularly impressed with the extensive monitoring and documentation associated with the effort, including multiple peer-review meetings to refine the project scope and approach," said Jay DiLorenzo, President of the Preservation League. "Frank Lloyd Wright's 'Pantheon' has emerged from its enclosure of scaffolding after three years and now displays the results of a technically and aesthetically outstanding restoration."

Contributing to the success of this project were the Solomon R. Guggenheim Foundation; Wank Adams Slavin Associates LLP (WASA/Studio A); Robert Silman Associates, PC; Integrated Conservation Resources; William B. Rose & Associates; AKF Engineers LLP; and Nicholson & Galloway, Inc.

Wright designed the building – his only major commission in New York – from 1943 through 1956. Built from 1956 through 1959, the Guggenheim was, when it opened, as much a marvel of construction as it was of design. "When the building opened in October 1959, six month's after Wright's death, it created a sensation; more than 16,000 people visited it on the first Sunday after it opened its doors," said Richard Armstrong, Director of the Solomon R. Guggenheim Foundation and Museum.

Completed in 1959, the museum is considered one of Frank Lloyd Wright's masterpieces and an international icon of modern architecture. Like many modernist structures, the building is experimental in nature and had begun to exhibit multiple cracks and other signs of deterioration. According to Pamela Jerome, Partner in charge for WASA/Studio A, "Despite these issues, the fabric, once revealed under up to 11 layers of paint, was in remarkably good condition."

(more)

The award will be presented at the Preservation League's Annual Meeting and Awards Ceremony in New York City at 6:00 p.m. on **Wednesday, May 13th** at the historic **New York Yacht Club, 37 West 44th Street**.

The complete list of award winners is: Astor Courts in Rhinebeck, Dutchess County; Christ Episcopal Church in Poughkeepsie, Dutchess County; Asbury Delaware Church – “Babeville,” in Buffalo, Erie County; The Emerson in Manhattan, New York County; The Guggenheim Museum in Manhattan, New York County; the Theodore Roosevelt Executive and Legislative Building in Mineola, Nassau County; and The Chapel of the Sisters in Prospect Cemetery, Jamaica, Queens County. The Fred L. Emerson Foundation and Foundation Historical Society in Cayuga County will be honored for organizational excellence, and Dr. Robert B. MacKay of Cold Spring Harbor, Suffolk County, will be honored for individual excellence. *The Olmsted City – The Buffalo Olmsted Park System: Plan for the 21st Century* (University at Buffalo, 2008) will be honored as an outstanding publication.

“Excellence in Preservation Awards are our principal means of honoring the preservation community and educating the public about the important contribution that historic preservation projects make to our quality of life throughout New York State,” said DiLorenzo. “Each year, we are impressed by the number and variety of laudable projects, and this year was no exception. We are delighted to give the restoration of the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum the statewide recognition it deserves.”

The restoration was initiated in 2003 when former Chairman of the Guggenheim Board of Trustees, Peter B. Lewis, pledged a significant gift to the project. “We are extremely grateful to Peter for providing the impetus and enabling this critical restoration,” said William Mack, Chairman of the Board of Trustees. “Peter’s commitment to the preservation of this architectural treasure and his history of support of the Guggenheim was an inspiration for which we are most grateful.” Mr. Mack continued, “We are also indebted to Mayor Bloomberg, the New York City Council, Manhattan Borough President Scott Stringer, and Cultural Affairs Commissioner Kate Levin for their very generous support. Significant grants from the State of New York, as well as many individual and corporate sponsors, also made this restoration a reality.”

Mr. Lewis joined the board of the Guggenheim in 1993, and was Chairman from 1998 to 2005. “I have always considered this building to be the most important piece of art in the Guggenheim’s collection, and it has been a privilege to be part of its historic restoration.”

The Preservation League’s Excellence in Historic Preservation awards program is funded by a generous grant from the Arthur F. and Alice E. Adams Foundation of Miami, Florida.

By leading a statewide preservation movement, sharing information and expertise and raising a unified voice, the Preservation League of New York State promotes historic preservation as a tool to revitalize our neighborhoods and communities, honor our heritage and enrich our lives.

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