

*WHAT IS  
THE ASPEN INSTITUTE?*

The Aspen Institute is a global forum for leveraging the power of leaders to improve the human condition. Through its seminar and policy programs, the Institute fosters enlightened, morally responsible leadership and convenes leaders and policy makers to address the foremost challenges of the new century.

The Aspen Institute seminar programs focus on developing enlightened, responsible leaders by providing participants with the opportunity to reflect on some of the greatest literary and philosophical writings of the ages. Through dialogue with their peers, seminar participants gain understanding into the importance of core values to leadership and judgment and how these conflicting values are often at the heart of complex decisions. If you are interested in obtaining additional information regarding the Executive Seminar programs, please contact Executive Seminar's Dept. at extension 7915 or (970) 544-7915.

The Aspen Institute policy programs complement the seminar programs by convening preeminent leaders and policymakers, together with renowned scholars, to develop innovative solutions to the structural challenges of the new century. The programs focus on these challenges from the same humanistic perspective that informs the seminars program, a perspective that is often underemphasized in policy discourse and decision-making.

The Aspen Meadows Resort Hotel & Conference Center is located on forty acres of meadows in Aspen's historic West End neighborhood. The Aspen Meadows represents a unique blend of indoor and outdoor space. Original Bauhaus architect, Herbert Bayer, applied modern design concepts to the collection of meeting facilities and guest accommodations that form the campus, creating an atmosphere that offers ample opportunity for both stimulating conversation and casual strolls.

The Aspen Institute also has year-round conference facilities on the Eastern Shore of Maryland at the Wye Campus. Additionally, there are other offices and facilities in Washington, D.C., Chicago, Berlin, Lyon,

Rome, London and Japan.

The Aspen Institute is an independent, nonprofit organization supported by foundation grants, tuition, and individual and corporate contributions.

## HISTORY OF THE ASPEN INSTITUTE

During the 1950's a renowned group of intellectuals, artists and societal leaders were inspired to establish a cultural and recreational retreat in Aspen. That genesis evolved into the present Aspen Institute created to enable scholars and world leaders in politics, business, education and the humanities to meet and address the key issues and challenges facing modern society. These goals have guided the Institute's development for the past four decades.

The first major international event to take place in Aspen was the Goethe Bicentennial which was held during the Summer of 1949.

Besides being a poet, dramatist and critic, Goethe (1749 - 1832) was also a Minister of State. He had also a sustained pre-occupation with the natural sciences. He worked out a scientific theory of colors and vision, discovered the inter-maxillary bone in man, established an evolutionary outlook fully 70 years before Darwin. The core of Goethe's literary work into which he poured all his genius was FAUST, a drama of human destiny.

Decades before other people dreamed of the projects, he spoke of a Panama Canal, a Suez Canal and a canal between the Rhine and the Danube, as the means by which the human community might expand and grow through communications. What he wanted, said he, was "the union of groups of good mental standards which hitherto had little contact with each other, the recognition of one common purpose, the conviction of the necessity to keep informed about current course of world events in the real and the ideal sense."

The Goethe convocation was the ideal instrument to begin Mr. Paepcke's ASPEN IDEA for the future.

The Goethe Bicentennial was able to draw a number of national and international renowned educators, musicians, philosophers, architects and business leaders to the mountain village of Aspen. The main drawing card was Dr. Albert Schweitzer, renowned philosopher and humanitarian. Other dignitaries included the likes of Dmitri Mitropoulos with the Minneapolis Symphony, Arthur Milstein, Jose Ortega y Gasset, Thornton Wilder and many others.

There was nowhere in Aspen to house a full orchestra and an audience of 2,000. To solve this problem Mr. Paepcke purchased 120 acres of land in the West End of Aspen. He also engaged Eero Saarinen to design a massive tent to house the festivities. The tent housed the Aspen Music Festival until 1965, when the current tent was constructed by Herbert Bayer and Fritz Benedict.

The Goethe Bicentennial was a spectacular beginning, but a once in a lifetime event. The process of turning the experience into a continuing institution began in the summer of 1950 with seminars modeled after the University of Chicago's "Great Books" seminars. Dr. Mortimer J. Adler was one of the first moderators to lead the "Great Books" seminars for corporate executives. The seminars focused on the work of great thinkers on universal human questions: justice, freedom, equality, property and democracy.

The values of a culture are handed down, not only through thought, but through the arts. Walter and Elizabeth Paepcke decided that these, too, should be present during the Aspen summer in music, theater, dance and the visual arts. The Aspen Institute sponsored seminars, music and discussions in the "tent" from 1950 to 1954. In 1954, the Music Associates of Aspen was formed and The Aspen Institute seminars moved into the Seminar Building.

The Aspen Institute has grown over the past forty-nine years into an organization of international importance. In the summer of 1990 the Institute celebrated its 40th anniversary with a week long program of special seminars and public presentations by President George Bush and British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher.

A Symposium entitled "Globalization and the Human Condition" celebrating the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Aspen Institute was held in Aspen in August, 2000.

## THE DESIGN

The facility is situated on 40 acres in Aspen's historic West End. Graced with full-growth Aspen and Spruce groves in a setting of meadows and parks overlooking the Roaring Fork River, the Meadows provides seclusion and natural beauty in a campus-like setting.

Designed by the noted architectural firm of Backen, Arrigoni and Ross of San Francisco, the buildings and interior decor pay homage to the work of the Bauhaus and the International School of Design of the 1950's, as originally conceived by artist and architect Herbert Bayer.

Many of the architectural details and interior furnishings are in accord with the Bauhaus history of the Meadows.

Herbert Bayer, a graduate of the Bauhaus, worked in advertising design for Walter Paepcke at the Container Corporation of America. Bayer was a painter, photographer, typographer, advertising designer, architect, sculptor, textile artist and designer of the original buildings of the campus. He also designed the Music Tent, Anderson Park, the Marble Garden, the tapestries in the Bandar bin Sultan Reception Center, the posters in the lobby and in your room and the lithograph prints in the restaurant.

The book, "Bayer, The Complete Work" documenting the prolific life work of Herbert Bayer, is available for reference in the Brown Library of the Reception Building.

The Bauhaus was a school of design, building and craftsmanship founded in Weimar, Germany, by Walter Gropius in the 1919. The curriculum of the Bauhaus embraced all of the visual arts. It's ideas and teachings have had a profound influence on relative fields throughout the remainder of the 20th century.

Primary among these ideas was the elimination of the distinction between artist and craftsman and, later, the unification of art and technology. The Bauhaus movement represented a shift from romanticism and impressionism to rationalism and objectivity in design. Other graduates and affiliates of the Bauhaus include Paul Klee, Wassily Kandinsky, Laszlo Moholy-Nagy, Marcel Breuer, Ludwig Mies van der Rohe, certainly a pantheon of 20th century designers.

The exterior details of bold Bayer colors, Gropius-like stair and

balcony rails, the window walls of the rooms, and the bare cement entries and stairs are all Bauhaus and International style details. The repetitive geometric patterns of the buildings, their scale and proportions also relate to the overall ideas of these schools of design.

The interior design, by Laurie O'Kane, San Francisco, also draws upon the work of Bayer and his contemporaries of the mid-20th century.

The webbed chrome-framed chairs in your room and in our lobby are the work of sculptor and furniture designer Harry Bertoia, first exhibited by Knoll Studios in 1952. Bertoia (1915-1978) was Italian born, studied at the Cranbrook Academy of Art and collaborated there with Charles Eames, including teaching there in the late 1930's.

The chrome framed, white surfaced coffee tables and side tables found both in our rooms and the public areas are Marcel Breuer's "Laccio" tables designed at the Bauhaus between 1925 and 1928. Breuer was a Bauhaus rebel who went on to become most famous for his furniture design, and also for his architecture.

The small white pedestal side tables are a signature furniture design by Eero Saarinen. The designer is more famous for his architectural works than his work in furniture. Such architectural works include: Dulles International Airport Concourse, the Kresge Auditorium at M.I.T., and the St. Louis Arch. Nevertheless, the tables from a collection for Knoll Studios, circa late 40's, exhibit his affinity for forms of a pure, simplified character with pronounced classicizing overtones.

Another highlight, in our lobby, are three black and white photographs by Henri Cartier-Bresson. Cartier-Bresson was Artist-in Residence at the Aspen Institute in the summer of 1971. His photo-documentary works are some of the most famous of the 20th century.

On a more contemporary note, the chairs and tables in the Hefner Lounge, and Meadows Restaurant were designed by architect and designer Frank Gehry. They were designed by Gehry, for the 1992 Summer Olympics in Barcelona, Spain. These "shaped wood" tables and chairs are first edition, reproductions by the Knoll Studios. They appear only here at The Aspen Meadows, a hotel in Barcelona, Spain, and several museums of modern design around the country. Gehry, by creating outstanding work in several medias, carries on the rich tradition of modern design.