

LOUIS L. HORCH, 90, FOUNDER OF MUSEUM

Set Up Master Institute of Arts — Foreign-Exchange Expert

Louis L. Horch, a specialist in international exchange and the founder of the Master Institute of United Arts in New York City, died last week at his home in Hallandale, Fla. He was 90 years old.

Mr. Horch was the senior partner in the foreign-exchange firm of Horch Rosenthal from 1914 to 1928 and the founder and president of the Roerich Museum, built in 1928. It later became the Master Institute of United Arts.

A 29-story, \$1,000,000 edifice at 310 Riverside Drive, the West Side skyscraper housed one of the city's earliest contemporary art museums, known locally as the Riverside Museum.

Combined Space and Culture

A formidable venture in combining living space and culture, it contained a theater seating 300, a school of fine arts and a collection of contemporary art, with living quarters for artists above the third floor. The museum was free to the public and took no commission on the sales of artists; the school was nonprofit.

Originally the museum held a number of paintings by Prof. Nicholas Roerich, an artist and scientist, in whose honor it was founded. When, 10 years later, the two men had a falling out, Mr. Roerich and his work gave way to American and international artists, including Rockwell Kent, Alfred Maurer, John Sloan, Jean Liberté, Stuart Davis, Franklin Watkins and Aaron Goodleman.

Wife Helped With Project

"We worked hard, day and night, but that was no sacrifice, it was our pleasure. We had no self-interest — we simply wanted to help artists and derived great satisfaction from their creative endeavors," Nettie Horch, who worked closely with her husband on the project, said in an interview many years later.

In 1938, Mr. Horch became associated with the Department of Agriculture, where he administered foreign-exchange transactions in connection with exports. Two years later, he was made senior district supervisor of the Department of Agriculture for New York State, Connecticut and Northern New Jersey. In that capacity, he administered the food stamp plan and the school lunch program.

In 1942 he was appointed manager of the Economic Board of Warfare in New York City, and from 1946 to 1948, he was the Department of Commerce's regional director of commerce for the New York region.

Left Government in 1947

Mr. Horch resigned from government service in 1947 to return to private industry, over strong protests from leading foreign traders and trade association officials, by whom he was highly regarded.

In 1958, he was chairman of the Bloomingdale Conservation project, a program to rehabilitate the Upper West Side neighborhood of which the Master Institute was part.

Besides his wife, the former Nettie Silverstein, Mr. Horch leaves a daughter, Oriole Farb of Amherst, Mass., and four grandchildren.