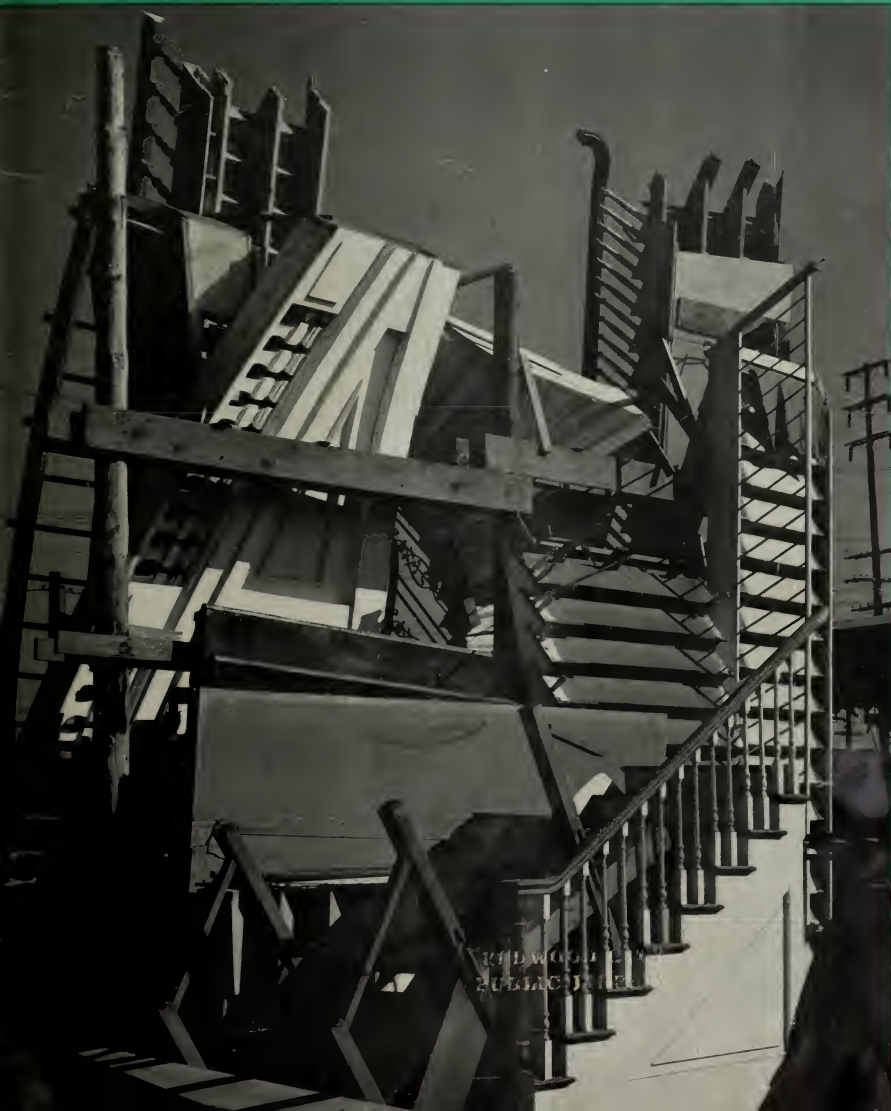


Redwood City Public Library
Redwood City, Calif.

California

arts and architecture



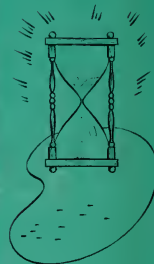
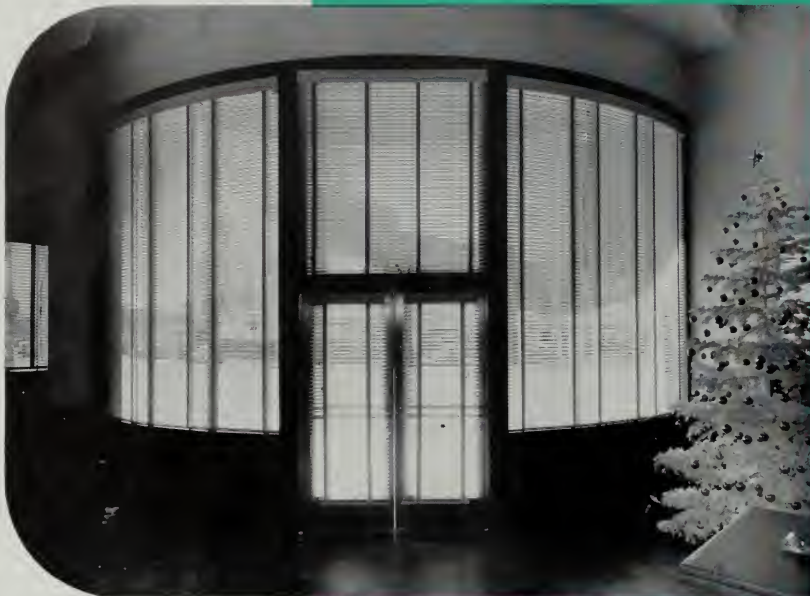
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OF MUSIC

BACH: RECORDINGS OF THE CHORALE PRELUDES

Keyboard music until the time of Buxtehude was composed as much for the delight of the performer as of his audience. This older tradition, now almost gone out of music, depended upon an audience who were themselves for the most part amateur participants. And we read of the pleasure of Queen Elizabeth in the virginals music of William Byrd, and of her hope, as she told the ambassador, that her playing was better than that of Mary of Scotland. The ambassador reassured her.

This old tradition, an art of expressive decoration, was applied by Samuel Scheidt, who lived a century before Bach, to the hymn melodies of the young Lutheran church. In the work of Pachelbel, who lived a generation before Bach, it reached its greatest elaboration. And by the time of Bach's young manhood it was an art form already going out of fashion. But it was Bach who gave the chorale prelude its enduring significance.

Listeners today, anxious though they may be to appreciate the beauties of Bach's chorale preludes, are usually repelled by the excessive difficulty of understanding what is going on in them. Even the old hymn melody, some portion of which is at the core of every prelude, is no longer common knowledge. Public performances of these compositions usually seem more complicated than impressive. At best it is the decorative melody which surrounds the hymn-tune core rather than the whole chorale as an entity that provides a relative enjoyment.

Fortunately a renewed appreciation of these exceedingly personal works is now made possible through hearing them well played on recordings. One hearing of this music is not enough; a dozen hearings are only a beginning. But after a dozen hearings the listener may begin finding in these chorale preludes something of the expressive significance and the internal beauty which have been hitherto a secret confined to the understanding performer. The music widens; rough-edged cadences become expressive with the angularity of intimate speaking. Within the confined infinity of the musical ornamentation, as within a chapel, the listener finds fresh inducement to meditation, the prayerfulness of personal and solemn thought.

Six groups of chorale preludes by Bach may be distinguished: chorale variations, in which each variation represents a stanza of the original hymn—this is the earliest form in which Bach wrote, and which with the exception of one late masterpiece, the 'Canonic' Variations on Vom Himmel Hoch, the afterwards abandoned; the Little Organ Book, comprising chorales for several seasons of the church year—this work was left unfinished, it dates from Bach's young manhood; six 'Schuebler' preludes transcribed from cantatas; the Klavierübung, Part III, which Bach himself engraved for publication; the Eighteenth Chorale Preludes, containing his most mature work; and a number of early and late miscellaneous preludes.

Three fine albums of the chorale preludes of Bach are available to the fast-enlarging public which collects recordings. Two of the albums, comprising more than two-thirds of the Little Organ Book, are issued by RCA Victor. These are played by the well-known American organist E. Power Biggs on the organ of the Germanic museum at Harvard, an organ designed to reproduce as far as possible the exact qualities of the German organs on which Bach himself played. The third set, issued by Columbia, comprises a selection of chorale preludes from early as well as late periods of Bach's life, including a chorale variation on Sei Gegrusset, seven selections from the Little Organ Book, and four of the great Eighteen, among them a masterly reading of what is often considered Bach's masterpiece in the form, Schmucke Dich. This set is played by the great Bach authority, religious scholar, and saintly missionary Albert Schweitzer, on the organ of the Strasbourg Cathedral. A collector who can afford only one of these albums will do well to prefer the more expensive (\$7.50) Columbia set, one of those rare recording triumphs of which it may be said that the playing itself, apart from the music, is a work of genius, reflecting the intense spirituality of a man who has not merely played but lived the spiritual life glorified by Bach. But the two Biggs sets, though more conventional in performance, are not to be neglected by

(Continued on page 37)



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ART

SAN FRANCISCO

It is fascinating to follow, in large exhibitions, the green trail that leads from one to another of the paintings born of an emotion actually felt and transferred. The gleam of life may be a child's picture daubed with the fingers, or the work of a great technician; even sometimes a small piece of painting in an otherwise dead picture, a frill perhaps, or even a button in a portrait, which has this quality of interest about it, of emotion transferred.

The San Francisco Museum is filled just now with part of the Albert Bender collection of oils, watercolors, drawings and sculpture. Albert Bender as an art patron is first of all a humanist; he does not believe, with so many, that the only good artist is a dead artist; he prefers to buy from artists while they are alive and producing rather than to wait until they are dead and canonized, and his collections bear the imprint of this human motive. As a consequence he sometimes acquires very mediocre work, and sometimes masterpieces; so that the green trail is heightened by contrast.

Here is a Kathie Kollwitz among prints of carefully controlled landscapes, nudes and street scenes, powerful because of her tremendous reaction to human misery, so strong that never in her work is there the least hint of the sentimental. Her prints have the impact of life, but heightened by the artist's masterly technique into form carrying an aesthetic reaction. A large print shows a starved mother fleeing with her children — the line is simple and direct, cut and scraped into wood with a grained surface, so that the rich wood texture is contrasted with soft white areas and sharp cut lines. The abstract quality of texture and line which some artists strive so for as an end in itself is here too, but only as a means to convey emotion. The sweep of miserable humanity across another print is an epic. If one wishes other values they are here also, in the sensitive textures, the beautiful drawing and the sure, simple composition.

Among the Mexican prints Orozco echoes Kollwitz with scenes of revolution, bitter and sometimes sardonic, but part of the green trail also; restless, surging figures, the mob spirit, a mass of huge toothy mouths, legs, hands, feet, banners, parades, seas of hats — or the poor and broken, harlots drunk, women with babies on their backs following the army, spiky maguays and burdened figures.

Carlos Merida succeeds here and there in transmitting emotion by means of black and white abstractions, with texture and line. What these convey is necessarily more delicate, more dreamlike and impersonal, than the human epics of Kollwitz and Orozco.

Rivera's large brown chalk drawings of hands, made as mural studies, are fine things. Ramos-Martinez has three beautiful drawings — one on newspaper, of a seated peon, and two landscapes in rich dry brush and ink, of the jagged mountains of Mexico, houses and figures. His two large paintings seem juicier in comparison.

Among the drawings are several of Stackpole's beautiful pencil studies, two small Maillol nudes, Maurice Sterne's Balinese and figure drawings, two Girls' Heads by Speicher, a Charles Stafford Duncan, a Lloyd Wulf, Boris Deutsch's Boy with Violin, a tiny delicate sketch by Modigliani, and several Foujita drawings and prints, some of them in color.

There are watercolors by Dong Kingman in his flowing, almost calligraphic technique, two large and well designed Tom Lewis landscapes, Berlandina flowers, a small Carl Hofer — Man and Horse — Peasant Dinner, by Chagall, a Grosz Street Scene, William Gaw's landscapes.

Sargeant Johnson's kneeling Negro Woman, carved in the round and lacquered in brown, black and white, is very fine sculpture. He also has a room full of beautiful negro masks in hammered metal. Schmier's gilded relief of The Gardener, some of Bufano's early



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ceramics, and many small pieces by other local sculptors complete this section.

A very small piece of the Albert Bender Oriental collection is shown; it includes some good early scrolls of horses, and a few contemporary studies of fish and animals.

Since the oils in this collection have so often been exhibited, it would be repetition to describe them here.

For a few days in December the Museum showed work from the children's Saturday art classes in connection with a Christmas party complete with disappearing rabbits — and ginger ale. Someone is missing a good bet. Wonderful textile designs for children could be made from some of these pictures.

Luke Gibney's show in the Art Association gallery was good. Gibney paints with a great deal of emotion, in light and form, with subdued colors and a lush use of paint. Dancing Harlequin is beautifully painted and well composed. Sorrow, a man slumped over a table, painted in orange red, deep blue and brown glazes, was the most brightly colored canvas shown. The Rebel, and Self Portrait are almost in black and white values, very boldly painted.

Another fine show was of drawings by Rico Lebrun. Most of these were freely drawn ink studies of animals in violent movement, a horse on his back and kicking, a steer in the butcher's trap, or studies of beggars, soldiers, and war — no reliance here on stylization. There were in particular four large drawings of a fat woman in a sandstorm, in ink and chalk; they were marvelous renderings of fat hard flesh, the wind in clothing, the special character of this woman buffeted and exposed by the irreverent storm — again, the green touch. One wonders where this storm occurred.

D. W. P.

LOS ANGELES

Los Angeles County Museum. For those who happen to be a bit on the snobby side, or liable to an attack of the vapors at the thought of Mickey Mouse invading the galleries, it will be reassuring to hear that the Retrospective Exhibition of the Walt Disney Medium presented by the Los Angeles County Museum is not an *art* exhibition. At least that is what Disney says. He and his associates are far too busy to become involved in the ramifications of an argument about "what is art." They prefer to call their pictures entertainment, and let it go at that.

So instead of putting some fancy frames around a few of the background paintings, Director McKinney has arranged the next best thing to a trip through Walt Disney's fabulous studio. The exhibit is a combination backstage tour and survey of a medium which progresses so rapidly that today's techniques are out of date tomorrow. It is a three-ring circus of drawing, painting, sculpture, mathematics, science, and the continuous screening of excerpts from Disney films. Add to this the music of Bach, Beethoven, and Stravinsky, and you have some idea why this is one of the most popular exhibits ever presented in Los Angeles.

Tracing the development of animation from the early "Mickey's" and "Silly Symphonies" to the feature-length films, "Snow White" and "Pinocchio," the exhibit concludes with drawings from Disney's latest, the revolutionary musical picture, "Fantasia." Included are examples of the various stages in the production of an animated film from rough idea sketches for story, characters, and backgrounds, to the finished work which is photographed for the screen.

While the show is entertaining and instructive to the general public — more so than the average art exhibition — it should be of particular importance to young artists and designers. Here, for the first time, one is able to really see the fine drawing and painting which makes Disney's pictures so superior. (Continued on page 36)

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BOOKS

CALIFORNIA AND THE WEST, a book of 96 photographs by Edward Weston, and delightful text by Charis Wilson Weston. *Duell, Sloan & Pearce, in conjunction with U. S. Camera. (\$3.75).*

There are difficulties involved in appraising this book. Edward Weston has been canonized as the latter day Saint of Photography in America. To some of us, he is more than that. When our spirits are bogged down, we rush to Carmel as fast as our four wheels will carry us, and there, in his cottage, overlooking the ocean, we sit down with Edward and Charis. The conversation can be hilarious, or gentle, or incisive. He is a man of comfort, with the simplicity of greatness, and a perception that is denied most men. Sometimes he comes South, and after a few busy days goes away again, leaving behind some of the prints which somehow reflect his integrity, his wisdom, his discernment, and, of course, his masterly technique.

For a friend to review the book of friends is a precarious responsibility. Jacket blurbs and backscratching have cast a shadow of doubt which so often cancels out the sincerity of book reviewing. Therefore, we exercise restraint and merely jump up and down waving a copy of the *New York Herald-Tribune*, in which Lewis Stiles Gannett, a reviewer of unbroken faith, devotes two columns to *California and the West*, and concludes that it is the best book of 1940.

For thirty-some years, Weston has been perfecting his matchless technique. His discretion and his taste, his energy and his sense of values, are something more than exemplary. He is one of the great people of our time, and should be so recognized by thoughtful people. He is one of California's important contributions to contemporary attitude. His prints should be in homes, schools and museums. He should never be permitted to delay his work a single day for want of funds. He should be endowed. Astounding amounts in tax money are awarded each year, perhaps wisely, to call attention to California. Perhaps this is good business. But some of us wonder, now and then, why a man like Weston, a giant among pigmies, should not be more widely understood and more appropriately endowed.

Of course, the book just issued at a low price for a fine picture book was made possible by endowment. The Guggenheim Foundation awarded its first Fellowship in photography to Weston — and for two years he worked without having to worry about cost of materials. The book is, in a sense, an intimate and certainly a delightful and moving report on this work — a report to the public.

The reproductions of the photographs in the book approximate the clarity and quality of original Weston prints. There are other fortunate attributes. Horizontals and verticals are always straight on the pages. And the California Weston reveals has nothing to do with orange groves with snowcapped mountains as a backdrop, or mission ruins restored, or art colonies or Hollywood.

The book is, in a sense, a fine adventure. It conveniently permits us all to journey with the Westons and share their difficulties and their moments of triumph. From between the lines emerges a concept of the man and his attitudes — and of the bright and understanding capacity of Charis to help. Her gentle laughter echoes through the pages.

Finally, there is a statement by Weston concerning his photographic difficulties, and technical notes which people interested in photography should ponder.

The photographs in the book are not mere pictures to be looked at casually. They comprise a document of beauty, transcending, of course, "prettiness" — as do all Weston photographs. These pictures lend us Weston's eyes which, for all these years, have been seeing things which somehow escape the rest of us.

But these words are inadequate. People who are sensitive to such values should own the book and owning it should go through it time and time again, and in the years to come.

THE ARTIST'S HANDBOOK OF MATERIAL AND TECHNIQUES — by Ralph Mayer, *Viking Press, New York*. During the last ten years artists have developed great interest in the various techniques of painting and a healthy curiosity about the materials of their craft. For information they had to *(Continued on page 37)*



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AMONG OTHER THINGS

Exhibitions

Beatrice Wood, Greta Grossman, Maria Steinhof, and Paval are at work on material for an exhibition which will show good modern ceramics, furniture, fabrics, and silver, all of which will be brought together at the Raymond & Raymond Galleries beginning the 1st of March. It will be the first time that such a project has been placed on exhibition hereabouts and the results promise to be extremely interesting.

Man Ray is showing his "Imaginary Portraits of an Eighteenth Century Frenchman" in his new studio at 1245 North Vine Street, Los Angeles, from 3 to 5 until January 13.

New Book

The Ghosts in the Underblows, a poem in ten parts by Alfred Young Fisher, has just been published as a joint effort of Ward Ritchie, Gordon Newell, Lawrence Clark Powell, and Dr. Elmer Belt. Fisher is now a professor of English at Smith College. The book has been designed by Alvin Lustig.

Lecture

André Maurois will speak on "How to Save Freedom" at the Wilshire-Ebell Theater on Wednesday evening, January 22. An open forum will be presided over by Charles Boyer. It promises to be an extremely interesting and enlightening evening, inasmuch as Mr. Maurois is newly arrived from the war zones. He was, as everyone knows, a liaison officer with General Gort's army in the Battle of Flanders. Ruth Cowan, who has arranged Mr. Maurois' appearance, also announces an evening of Sheila Barrett on Wednesday, January 29th.

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THEATER

December is a stupid month. Old shows fold, new ones wait the coming year. The few openings that do occur are limited tryout engagements. And comment on a play already off the boards is as helpful as last week's want ads. But so long as that certain holiday means frenzied shopping and reduced budgets and vacations, the situation will remain unchanged. Yes, December is a stupid month.

One play looks as if it might last out till our publication date. But even now on opening night there is talk of the *Show Off*. Joe E. Brown and all, being played for a limited engagement and then taken on tour.

To anyone who has seen Joe E. Brown (would anyone recognize him without the initial?) the necessity for telling about the story is superfluous. Even the title is unnecessary. In his curtain speech the actor stated his attitude about entertainment: He would go to any lengths for a laugh so long as it was clean. And this was exactly what he did. Mugging like a senior Mickey Rooney, the comedian literally squeezed every last laugh out of the smallest bit of business. But this alone would not have made an entertaining farce. Clara Bandick, playing Mrs. Fisher, the Philadelphia mother-in-law, almost stole the show with her well rounded characterization.

Frothy as it is, the *Show Off* is a welcome addition to the local bill.

This is a tongue-in-cheek paragraph. It concerns the smut shows; and it calls for a sarcastic laugh. *Shotgun Wedding* opened in Los Angeles. How much or little the name reflects the play's content can be suggested by the well authenticated rumo: that the producers took pains to be in the east on opening night. Did the police close the show? Did a morals squad investigate? Was the show closed? No. But *White Cargo*, an Earl Carroll revival that has been running for seasons on end had all those things happen. Which incident doesn't make sense until one realizes that the local run is pretty well worn out and publicity attendant to a morals squad raid will do wonders to the box office on the show's road tour.

Box Office and Holidays don't seem to upset the schedule at Pasadena Playhouse where the usual full bill was presented. *See My Lawyer* was typical George Abbot slapstick fare while Maxwell Anderson's *Knickerbocker Holiday* was a fitting seasonal yarn of Peter Stuyvesant and the early Dutch settlers of New York. The performance of the latter was marked with what we thought was the Playhouse's finest cast of the year.

San Francisco had an interesting though meager month. A tryout of Milton Lazarus' *Every Man For Himself* with Lee Tracy seemed to have been of some avail, according to news from Broadway. *About Tomorrow* by George Seaton opened and closed for repairs after a short run. Beside Frank Craven and Sally Eilers the cast included veteran actor J. M. Kerrigan.

Both the Bay City and Los Angeles are in for a treat this month when Tallulah Bankhead comes west with the *Little Foxes*. No other New York play is due here till the middle of February when the Lunts bring the Finnish war saga, *There Shall Be No Night*.

Hollywood Theater Alliance is treading lightly these days. And wisely too. Despite the fact that the group possesses an empty theater, they refuse to rush production and invite another failure. Instead they are presenting occasional musical programs and biding their time. An all-negro revue, as yet unnamed, is in production and is expected to reach the "ready" stage any day.

Last month we saw a good play. What's more it was unusually well done. So the whole column was devoted to rapturous praises of Eighteen Actors Incorporated. The fact that it got lost in the Christmas wrappings won't stop us. Morris Ankrum's superb direction and Joan Wheeler's remarkable physical and vocal flexibility were, perhaps, above the excellent standard of the whole. Because the actors also work in the movies, their performances are limited to very brief runs usually in the form of one night stands in Santa Barbara, Claremont, Pasadena and other coast towns. In view of the scarcity of fine acting companies in America, and especially on the coast, this dilemma is lamentable. Already a movement is on foot to find an adjustment; meanwhile the performance schedule is too erratic for us to say any more than don't fail to see them next time they appear.

SYLVAN PASTERNAK

CALIFORNIANS



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Notes in Passing

• We are looking forward to Tallulah Bankhead and "The Little Foxes" which begins the week of January 13 at the Los Angeles Biltmore. Bankhead, who is never bad and is often superlatively good, has, at long last, a play that gives her something upon which to ride off to glory. It's all about "the little foxes that spoil the grapes," the mean, greedily little people of the world who pick the minds and hearts of their fellow human beings, who scavenge about in the midst of other people's decency—and end up with fine funerals.

It's a very true thing about the Old South, after you dig under the pap about magnolia blossoms and the—have-another-mint-julep-colonel kind of "Gone With the Wind" hocus-pokus. The dear old South has been caught in the early morning of its entrance into this century, its hair undone and without benefit of primping. The terse Lillian Hellman has carefully carved the outline of a few choice little stinkers that speak for a whole, nasty tribe. We are contemplating a nice, meaty evening in the theater.

• We are finding it rather difficult to settle down after the holidays. It isn't because we had so much fun, or that we regret the time which went so quickly. Perhaps it's because of an inescapable nervousness about the new year and what will develop in the twelve months immediately before us. Nineteen thirty-nine, nineteen forty—those were years in which we could see many unpleasant things in the making. We raged at the turn of events in the hands of those world politicians whom we particularly disliked. We applauded those who stood up against the approaching storm with nothing but words and ideas and sticks and stones for weapons. We rooted for the Ethiopians and the Czechs and the Spaniards. We bickered and fought our way through a thousand bitter arguments and we watched with sinking hearts the tall, bony old gentlemen as they padded softly through one little country after another playing out their game with the boys in the back room. "Peace in our time," they said. But everyone who understood anything about liberty and the dignity of freedom, knew that the people of the world were being betrayed. When the war came, these same old gentlemen had the effrontery to say that their obscene political progressions that ended in Munich had won for the defenders of democracy time to prepare against the whirlwind. What, then, had they been doing in the years before? What strange blindness assailed them that they could not see while there still was time? What was their plan as they intrigued and connived to help Germany to grow strong? What insanity made them believe that by throttling the defenders of liberty in the little countries they could somehow save that liberty for the rest of the world?

But these old gentlemen were not stupid. They were not foolish or doddering or naive or innocent, in what we know were their tragic mistakes. In the light of the events of the last eighteen months we know they must have had a plan. It begins to make a horrid pattern which slowly becomes clearer as one bit of evidence is piled on another. Perhaps if we, and enough other people, ask enough angry questions—ask them often enough—and insistently enough, we might get the answer.

Perhaps our nervousness about the new year is based upon the fact that there no longer is any choice in the matter of the role we must play in the tragic sequence of international events. There is no

longer any argument about what there is to do and how we must go about doing it. "Our way of life," as we proudly call it, must now be defended up to the last shred of American effort, must be geared to a furiously accelerated war economy, because an old gentleman with an umbrella played out the last hand of a vicious game of political poker in a place called Munich and lost. Lost the peace of the world and the lives of hundreds of thousands of human beings, lost a miserable game for power that has taken away the last vestige of sanity and good sense from the lives of millions upon millions of little people. This, then, is a decisive year. The Year of Our Lord 1941. What happens in this fateful time will set the mould, will make the pattern of human life for generations. We as a people are not doing what we might choose to do but what we must do.

No doubt the liberties which have been placed in such deep peril will be saved in the end. No doubt our way of life will win. Obviously, we must do everything humanly possible to be very sure of that. But it might be a good idea to have a good long smell of the stench of world politics that put us in a position where we are forced to defend to the death those liberties with which, we believe, all men are born. On the threshold of this fateful year it might be an excellent idea to clear the air with the resolution that these liberties, once more defended, will, in the future, be secured against all danger and will never again become the stakes in a game for which we as human beings have no stomach. Winning or helping to win a war is merely one phase of the battle for human rights. Victory is nothing if the peace that comes after it is lost.

• One suffers humiliation of a furious kind when a poor guy in a telegraph office is obliged to sing Christmas carols over the phone for the amusement of one's dopey friends. In our case we picked up the receiver, settled back for what we believed was to be the routine reading of a wire, and suddenly had sung at us, in a quavering and embarrassed voice a nasty little Christmas ditty. No doubt the Western Union employee thought we were a bit touched, but we succeeded in getting his name, and later that evening derived a curiously satisfying pleasure out of calling him back and singing him our own little version of Christmas cheer. His name was Roger Thorpe, and though we are sure he thinks we're light headed, we feel that he rather enjoyed the revenge, and we were rather happy about it, too.

• There is a mighty fine story going around. No doubt you have heard it by now, but just in case, and because it warms the heart and cheers the soul, it bears repeating.

It concerns the people of Paris and their reactions to the activities of their conquerors. It seems that a public attitude of studied indifference is driving the German military into the jitters. The French are simply looking through the stolid anatomies of the victors as though they were refuse merely waiting to be cleaned off the streets. It seems that on several occasions fleets of trucks piled high with life preservers were routed through the streets of Paris on their way to the coast for use of the troops in a possible attempt to invade England. As the trucks rumbled by, guarded by the efficient military, men, women, and children stood at the curb, gazed somberly at the parade as though it were a funeral cortege, and made a comment that paled the faces of the infuriated Germans.

The people of Paris chanted dolefully: "Glug—Glug—Glug."



SUN BATH AT TED COOK'S

COOLIDGE DAM, ARIZONA



CHARIS IN MOSQUITO ARMÖR



Edward Weston



CAT AND CAT TAILS



FLOOR OF DEATH VALLEY FROM ONE MILE ELEVATION

IN March, 1937, when I read the list of newly appointed Guggenheim Fellows, I rejoiced, first that there was a photographer among them, second that the photographer was Edward Weston. A wiser choice I could not have imagined. I haven't seen a write-up of Weston since that failed to mention that he was the first photographer to receive this accolade. But to me, far more interesting than the mere statistical fact, is what he did with it.

First, to explain just why I rejoiced, I'll have to go behind 1937 for some background material. Edward Weston was sixteen when his father gave him a camera, thereby deciding a good deal of his future. It wasn't any time at all before Weston Jr. found that school work interfered too much with his photography. When Weston Sr. discovered the same fact from a casual glance at the report cards, it was decided that the young photographer might as well quit school and go to work.

Edward Weston ran through a variety of jobs before it occurred to him that he might as well make a living with his camera, whereupon he built a studio in Tropic, California, (now absorbed by Glendale and Los Angeles) and became a portrait photographer. He had the age old problem of the artist's compromise pretty well worked out. Portraiture was to be his bread and butter — in that field he would please the public; his other photography would be done for himself, to please himself — if anyone wanted to buy it, fine; if no one did that was all right, too.

For a while the system worked beautifully. Weston married and had four sons. He was prospering. Then he gave up the whole business and sailed off to Mexico.

The system has begun to break down, and in the years that followed its collapse continued. The simple fact was that Weston had too much integrity for his own financial good. He couldn't keep his right hand from finding out what his left hand was up to. Every time he removed seventy-five pounds from a buxom matron (with such skillful retouching that she'd really believe the result) he got a little sicker, and finally he stopped doing it altogether. First he stopped using soft lenses and soft papers, then he stopped retouching, then he stopped enlarging. If you get a Weston portrait today it's an unretouched 4 x 5 contact print on glossy paper, and incidentally it's likely to be the most beautiful portrait you have ever had. Weston (Continued on page 34)

One of the greatest living photographers

receives the only Guggenheim Fellowship in his field

the why and wherefore and what he did about it.

By F. H. Halliday

RUBBISH AND LILY



MODERN MUSIC IN THE WESTERN WORLD

*Some of the best of modern music gets itself performed
by the labor of loving hands in Southern California*

by Wolfgang Rebner

ARTISTS these days cannot afford to build their recital programs in a casual or arbitrary manner. They must use their allotted time between 8 and 10 P. M. to raise the roof and bring the house down. They must not distract the attention of the audience by choosing queer-sounding vehicles for their performance. They want to be re-engaged, don't they? Better make the program fool-proof and play the Flashlight Sonata, as requested in the note sent backstage. If a colleague played the same selection here last week, so much the better.

While so much new music is continuously being written, does it seem plausible that our live concert repertoire should be shrinking? Comparatively few contemporary works have come to stay in our regular programs. On the other hand—according to my program research—we have condensed our choice of *classical* pieces to a minimum! Famous example: How many Beethoven Symphonies are there? Answer, three; the Third, the Fifth, and the Ninth. In other words, we make a "Listeners' Digest" of our entire literature, a trend which may be interpreted in different ways. Again, I speak *not* of Town Hall recitals in New York City or similar metropolitan events which address a limited circle of listeners. I refer to the average program of the touring recitalist.

I was not there to witness it, but the books say that, some generations ago, they played much more of their contemporary music than we play of our own, pro rata, of course. That they did not have as many "standard classes" to draw from makes no difference. But the nineteenth century did develop a type of artist—the virtuoso-composer—who might provide us with the reason for this inconsistency. Many, if not most of these musicians—including Mozart, Beethoven, Chopin, Liszt, Paganini and, in a sense, also Berlioz and Wagner—were their own ambassadors to the Court, or, rather, to the courting of the Public. This would indicate that, whenever new works were being performed, they were mostly of solistic, if not virtuoso character. The second half of the nineteenth century is responsible for much music of this type. Again, this is a symbol of the social evolution of that period in history.

Though the function of music has changed somewhat, we still have composer-performers like Hindemith, who gave a new lease of life to the viola; Toch, who extended the requirements for modern piano technique; Raehmaninoff; Kreisler; John Powell, and Gershwin. And Stravinsky—whose scores are red hot for conductors. Not being a performer himself, Schoenberg asks the soloist to be a veritable Olympic Decathlon athlete with his new violin concerto.

It is well to remember, too, that people have a taste of their own. However, our social and economic set-up has been responsible for that ominous abyss between popular and—don't say it—music. This division of the two fields of music is not necessarily a sigh of good health. "Popular" music means the people's music and it can do no wrong. It includes both folk music and folk dance. It used not to be frowned upon by the "highbrows," or considered to be inferior to the same extent as it is today. Why should contemporary folk music, which is our urge for self-expression, be inferior to the folk music of other days? Unless, of course, our very emotions have deteriorated. In which case, we might as well give it all back to the Indians.

The masters absorbed and transformed down-to-earth tunes into up-to-heaven music. Examples are numerous and obvious. Many of our treasured "standards" are but glorified folk songs. I have it from actual witnesses that Brahms could listen for hours to "that kind of

music." And on a copy of the "Blue Danube" he wrote: "Too bad it's not by Johannes Brahms."

Gradually many musicians stopped thinking that jazz was really below-the-belt music and should be relegated to the mental bathroom. Now they will admit its potential, if not already actual, value as a folk expression.

Since new developments and additions to the concert repertoire are bound to take place, it has become necessary to create a platform where composers can speak their mind and where audiences can hear music on approval.

There is much composing going on in Southern California and there is more to come. The country has attracted an ever-growing number of creative artists who seem to find peace and relaxation amid the mountains, the ocean and the flowers of this blessed region.

Many of these resident composers now take an active part in the newly founded Music Council of the Hollywood Theater Alliance which presented its inaugural concert on December 15. This society, according to the "Statement of Purpose" in the program pages, is a "non-profit community organization" to foster and promote contemporary, primarily, American music.

This means both an offer and a challenge to Southern Californians. A non-profit society on *this* side of the footlights; the public will benefit by these advantages. A community organization? Here is the challenge.

Let us glance at the program and meet the performers: Harpichordist Alice Ehlers; Commentator Edgar Barrier; Conductors Ingolf Dahl and Nathan Kroll; Vocalist Paul Keast and the hand-picked members of the orchestra and string ensembles. We are first greeted by the perpetual contemporary, Couperin, who proves himself more than the conventional curtain raiser. And then we dive right into it, with the Octet by Shostakovich, the *Enfant Terrible*, whose music is a frequent condiment in our concert diet. Darius Milhaud, now a resident of California, contributes three of his "Little Symphonies," unusual in form and material, obviously made by a connoisseur. The small but select gathering of instruments includes some woodwind individualists expressing their own opinion, and key.

The introduction to the public of Sol Kaplan would in itself warrant your presence that night. This youth, whose Suite for String Quartet, you would have heard, is a "go-placer" and he should be invited back for more. Louis Gruenberg's "Daniel Jazz" is exactly that. In this Colored Cantata, Gruenberg, with his innate sense of style and brilliant technical equipment has successfully reconciled negro and jazz idiom in the concert hall.

Programs like this one are not easy to produce. They should, nevertheless, be presented at regular intervals, to make the "Music Council" a real property and asset to the community. "We do not ask you to like it, but to give it a fair chance," said Stokowski! *One* chance might not be sufficient. Have a historian compile the embarrassing list of recognized masterworks which were mocked or howled down upon first hearing; then frame and memorize it.

We need a committee to investigate Musical American Activities. Judges: the Public. Membership in the jury out to include most able-minded citizens. To keep such a venture alive and make it an institution should be a matter of civic self respect.

The moving picture industry has, of course, a substantial share in this cultural responsibility and also in its success. With so much superior talent at their command this industry knows how to make *pleasure* its business. When Stravinsky saw (Continued on page 35)

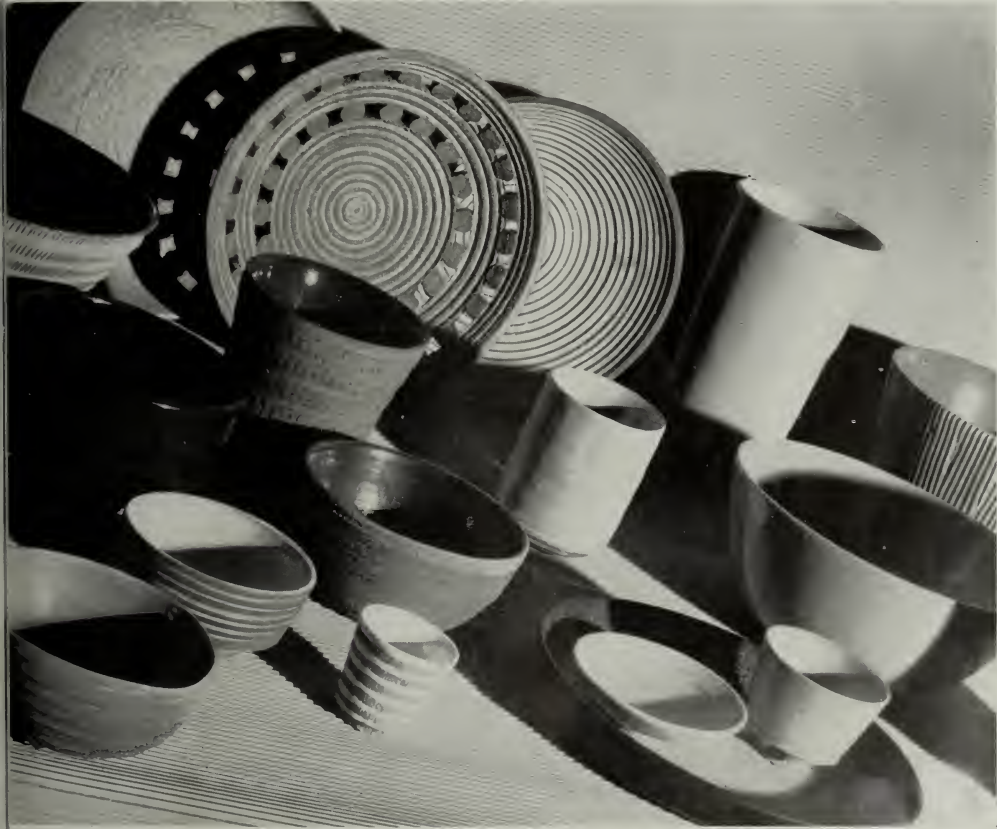


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URA ANDRESON'S PIECES RANGE ALL THE WAY FROM DELICATELY CONTOURED LITTLE VESSELS TO BIG, VIGOROUS POTS WITH APPROPRIATE TOOLING OR GLAZING



*A lady with a "green thumb"
at the wheel turns her creative
vocabulary into craftsman's hands
that is sensitive and honest.*

HOUSE IN THE CALIFORNIA HILLS

Architect, William Wilson Wurster, A. I. A.

Landscape Architect, Thomas D. Church



Roger Sturtevant

THIS is a free-flung and informal country house designed in no set pattern and developed simply and directly out of the nature of its surroundings. It is of redwood which is almost the color of the red soil. The flexible living areas adapt themselves to the indoor-outdoor kind of living so popular in California. Glass areas permit generous views of the orchards, hills, and wooded slopes. The house is simple and straightforward and without any stylistic affectations. It flows easily within the few restrictions of the site. Ramps take the place of conventional steps by which one proceeds from one level to another. There is excellent separation between service and the living areas.

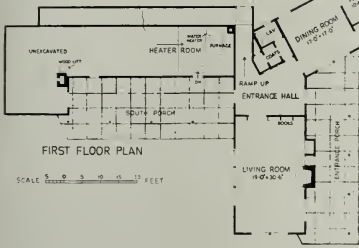
Interiors, Everett Sebring

THE HOUSE OPENS EASILY INTO THE LARGE GARDEN AREA WHERE THE GENERAL LANDSCAPING PLAN FORMS A PART OF THE GENERAL UNITY OF DESIGN





SECOND FLOOR PLAN



FIRST FLOOR PLAN

SCALE 0 5 10 15 20 25 FEET



PLOT PLAN

RAMPS ARE USED INSTEAD OF CONVENTIONAL STAIRWAYS



COUNTRY HOUSE

**House for Mr. and Mrs. A. M. Chaffey
Brentwood Park, California
Architect, John Byers
Associate, Edla Muir**

THE PROBLEM consisted of building an entirely new two story house on the brink of the canyon and dismantling and re-assembling in various ways an existing house to form a harmonious group. The grounds consist of many acres, well planted and laid out with trees and shrubs.

The old house was 28 years old. The second floor was completely demolished and discarded in order that the building might come more in scale of the new house. The living room of the old house was then moved over adjacent to an existing three-car garage where it became a part of a guest house. The remaining portion of the original building consisting of a billiard room and several smaller rooms, was left intact to serve as a playroom.

The old pergola covered with huge grape and wisteria vines was left intact and a new curving pergola was designed to connect the old and new structures. A splendid framed view of the low mountains at the upper end of Kenter Canyon.

The new house virtually overhangs the edge of the canyon and is three stories on that side, with heater basement, servants rooms, storage and wine rooms on the lower level. The curved deck accessible from the second floor bedrooms affords a view of the ocean as well as the canyon. The living room is paneled and finished in natural pine, with one whole wall devoted to books. The library is done in bleached redwood. The breakfast room is floored with 1x12" yellow pine surfaced nailed with equally spaced copper headed nails. The fireplace in that room is furnished with a hinged grate which converts it into an indoor barbecue.



Miles Berné

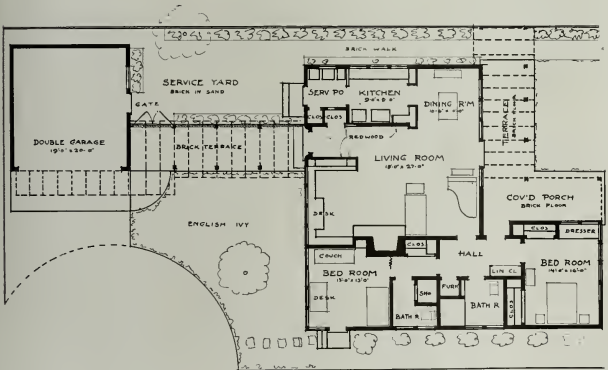


SMALL HOUSE



**Designed by Walter R. Koessler
Brentwood, California**

House for Mr. and Mrs. Walter Koessler



PRIVACY, the feature of this small house for a family of three, was predetermined by its location at the dead end of a short drive. House and flower-bordered lawn are on level ground, and the remainder of the property, an eastern downward slope, assures seclusion and commands a view which culminates in the San Bernardino mountain range 100 miles away.

Garage and house are connected by a pergola, the louvred fence of which conceals the service yard. The latter is completely separated from indoor and outdoor living section as well as from the main approach, yet conveniently accessible through delivery gate and kitchen wing.

To take full advantage of the scenic beauty toward the east, an intimate relation between indoor and outdoor space is attained by the use of very large windows and French doors opening out onto a brick terrace.

In the living room, built-in cabinets, bookshelves and desk as well as panels along the entire north wall are of California redwood veneer. Indirect lighting is installed into the top of the high bookshelf, the back of which forms the entrance hall. The fireplace is of red split brick and has rounded edges.

Ventilation and daylight make the bedroom hallway worthy of notice. Its door with built-in double hung sash leads out to the roofed-over part of the terrace.





Harry Ruskevici

Man-made magic gets itself properly housed



THEATER ENTRANCE SHOWING PIERCED CONCRETE FRAME

"Besides the actual physical operation, the comfort of mind and the happiness in the place of your work depends not only upon pure, practical, and functional solutions but also on their appearance. It has been part of the psychological wisdom in the directing mind of this organization to recognize such requirements. The result depended upon a balance making the operation, structure, and economic functions a part of form and color instead of superimposed architectural or design convictions. All of the plant and its equipment has grown out of the men and the work that built the plant. Those who built the buildings and the equipment coordinated existing trends."

KEM WEBER





PROJECTION ROOM WITH ADJUSTABLE CHAIRS DESIGNED BY KEM WEBER



ONE OF THE ROOMS IN THE OFFICE SUITE DESIGNED FOR WALT DISNEY



TERRACE AND PERGOLA OF THE RESTAURANT

WALT DISNEY STUDIOS

Kem Weber, Supervising Designer

James Lill, Structural Engineer

F. Scott Crowhurst, Supervising Contractor

TRADITIONALLY, the design and construction of the new studio had to be a work of unusual urgency and complexity. For this reason design units and full size construction crew were organized on the studio payroll and coordinated in a field office (future warehouse) built on the job. In this way foundations and underground work could proceed while the superstructure was still a series of conferences and studied sketches. In addition to the usual supervision, all drawings were continually and meticulously edited by the production staff and future tenants; revisions were made or compromised hourly.

There had to be as many buildings as there are processes in production. All had to be made resistant to heat and cold, dust and darkness, noise, decay and earthquakes. The absolute necessity of function adapted to intricate and even unborn studio processes precluded any boredom on the part of the designers. A sense of economy was exercised on the architectural styling, so that the utmost in adequacy was neither stinted nor exceeded. Layout provided for future expansion of all structures.

THE DIRECTORS CONFERENCE ROOM FOR DAILY STORY DISCUSSIONS





THE HOUSE IS SO ORIENTED THAT EVERY ROOM HAS A VIEW AND DOUBLE EXPOSURE TO SUNSHINE



Shulman

HOUSE FOR E. M. LIPETZ
DESIGNER, RAPHAEL S. SORIANO
LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA

THE HOUSE is built on the highest portion of a hill below which there is a large lake. The view includes three ranges of mountains running east and west. The large living room has been especially designed for music. Shelves have been provided to accommodate several hundred record albums.

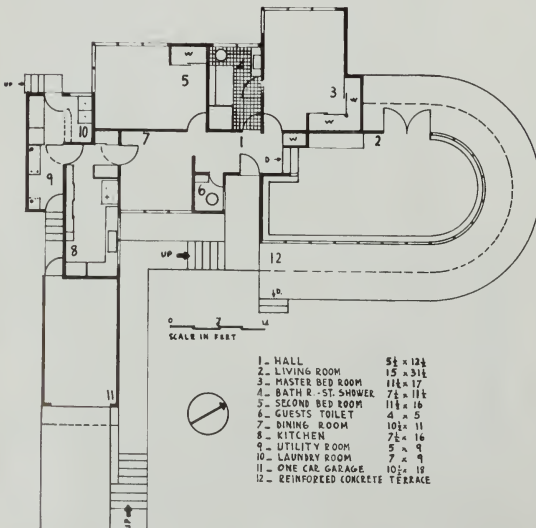
The small dining room accommodates eight people. There has been no attempt in the general design to create a workable living unity with all of its parts coordinated around a central idea.

One approaches the house by two sections of steps. Entrance is through a small hall overlooking mountains and distant trees. The large living room, 15 x 31 feet, is almost completely of glass. The floor is carpeted in a broadloom of coral-rose. The walls are covered with ribbon mahogany, natural finish. The couch and chairs are upholstered in fawn colored fabric. The drapes are ribbed corduroy. Two steel doors open upon a large terrace.

The acoustics have been carefully considered. The general form of the ceiling, the multiple pockets of the bookshelves, and the general openness of the plan make reverberation impossible.

Much of the furniture throughout the house has been built in and incorporated as part of the general plan. In the bedrooms, the wood used is gray ash. Walls and ceilings have been painted dull white.

The efficient forced air system heats, cools, filters, humidifies, and changes the air within the house every fifteen minutes.



OUTDOOR THEATER

The modern theater moves outdoors to tell its story. Rehearse your lines for you are the actors in this theater of today and tomorrow

||URING the two great periods of the theater — the Greek and the Elizabethan — plays were given entirely out-of-doors. The audience formed an almost complete circle around the actors — an arena effect which accomplished two things: 1, concentration on the action from all sides as in a bull fight or boxing match, and 2, a physical closeness to the action because the audience extended a short distance in all directions instead of a greater distance in one.

Today we drowse, sometimes contentedly, in the plushness of one room while the actors, pasted like paper dolls against a backdrop, struggle frantically behind a proscenium to do something exciting and interesting. It is a polite tradition which can be justified on the most valid technical grounds — once you accept the tradition.

We have scenery; therefore we have a proscenium. We have actors and technicians; therefore we have a backstage. We have mechanical equipment; therefore we have a loft. As Voltaire put it, we have spectacles; therefore we have noses.

Even the most advanced theatrical presentation today generally overlooks the integral relation between form and content. Instead of a form evolving from the dramatic statement, every message is delivered in a variation of the conventional three-act pattern. And what is the reason? Our polite theaters!

The Greek theater evolved out of the fragments of music, dance, and literature which required a place of synthesis. A platform to give a hearing. A means of communication in an ancient world. The Elizabethan theater came out of the play. It reflected rather than dominated. They had plays. We have theaters.

Theaters today are designed for pictorial effects, not for drama. Experiments such as the space stage sets and plays like "The Living Newspaper" only reveal the inadequacy, for the drama is inherently a three dimensional presentation. Behind a proscenium, it is just the painting of drama, and delivering the dramatic message of today in such a theater is like trying to carry on a conversation in

iambic pentameter. And so, with drama all around us it is a rare phenomenon in the theater. When we want the real thing, we must dash to a fire at three o'clock in the morning.

We can learn from the ancient Greeks that a theater is a means of communication. This does not mean that the Greek theater can be successfully transplanted into a world of printing presses and mechanical gadgets. Nor does it mean that we should neglect any of the mechanical aids we have developed. It means simply that we should evolve theaters that can hold and communicate the dramatic message of today.

We can learn from the Elizabethans that the form of this new theater must come out of the message, and not from a series of polite conventions to cure insomnia. We can learn that the play, not the proscenium, is the thing.

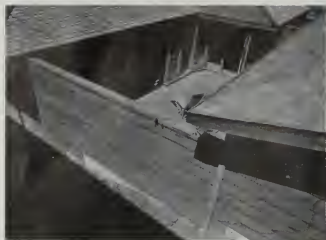
We can learn from both that action is where you find it. It is in a street fight. It is in a football game and a prize fight. It is in our minds. It should be in the theater, but the only way we can get more than a glimpse — the only way we can take an active part — is to bring it out of the "other room" so that we can feel it just as we feel it at home or in the street or at the game.

Perhaps one day someone will realize that noses were made before spectacles, and present a play instead of "a painting of sorrow." It would never fit into our theaters. It would upset a lot of proud little conventions. It would be impolite, but what a relief!

by James Rose

Below: A series of plays, completely surrounded by the audience, is provided for the intimate action of the play. Outer stages beyond the audience are for vignettes, atmospheric action similar to that of the Greek chorus. Thus the audience becomes an integral part of the action. Scenes are shifted by spot light from one play space to another with a tempo equal to that of a motion picture.





REDWOOD HOUSE

THE PROBLEM of the McPherson house was to design for a young couple, a home on a sloping site in the Berkeley hills, to take full advantage of the magnificent view of Mt. Tamalpais and the Golden Gate and to provide outdoor living space sheltered from the prevailing western trade winds. The three main rooms of the house, it will be noted, have direct access to the court, one of whose walls is louvred allowing freer circulation of air on warm breezeless days as well as providing privacy.

The large living room window of alternate fixed and hinged steel sash encompasses the sweeping bay and mountain view to the West; the living-dining room walls and stair cabinet of redwood plywood, untreated, absorb and mitigate the glare of the afternoon sun. The living room ceiling of integral color plaster follows the slope of the roof rafters over the entire area for the enhanced acoustical effect on musical performance of the added room volume. The ceiling of the dining space drops to 6'-3" providing a more intimate relation to the diners and freeing the living room indirect light trough fascia of unnecessary breaks.

THE PRIVATE COURT SHOWING THE OVERHANG OF THE ROOF WHICH PROTECTS THE HOUSE FROM THE SUN



THE LIVING ROOM WITH VIEW OF THE HILLS AND BAY



THE OWNER'S BEDROOM WITH GLASS DOORS WHICH OPEN INTO COURT



**The Residence of Dr. and Mrs. H. A. McPherson,
Berkeley, California**
Designed by Francis Joseph McCarthy
Consulting Engineer, A. V. Saph, Jr.
Landscape Design, Edward A. Williams



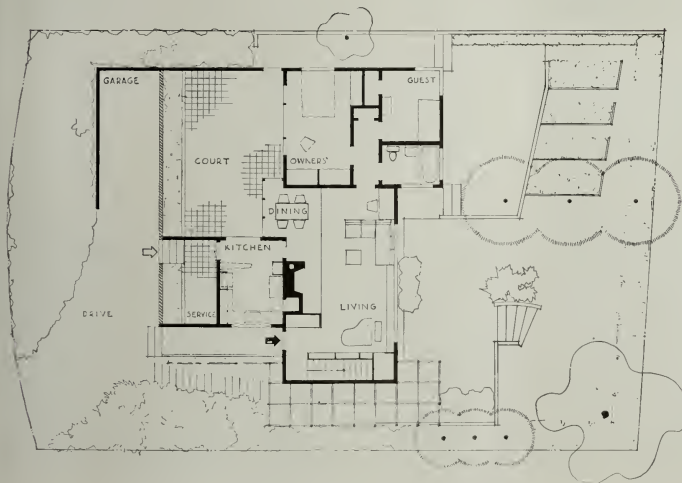
Roger Sturtevant



ENTRANCE DETAIL SHOWING DRIVEWAY AND LOUVRED REDWOOD WALL



THE LIVING ROOM AND DINING ROOM SHOWING FIREPLACE DETAIL



The owner's room has hinged glass doors for direct access to the garden court and ample morning sun; redwood plywood walls and indirect lighting similar to the living room, integral color plaster through the ceiling is flat. All bedroom drawers and closets are built-in, freeing the major part of the room for dressing.

Provision has been made for a future playroom, bath, and work shop on the basement floor which opens to the garden on the west. The furniture and most equipment for the house were included in the original budgeted expenditure for the house and were under the designer's control. The furniture designed with the house for a variety of uses and arrangements is being added to as the need is found for it.

The exterior siding is of beveled redwood siding treated with Logwood oil. The steel sash is painted blue-green and the roof is of cedar shingles, untreated.

NEW PRODUCTS AND PRACTICES

ABOUT GOOD TENNIS COURTS

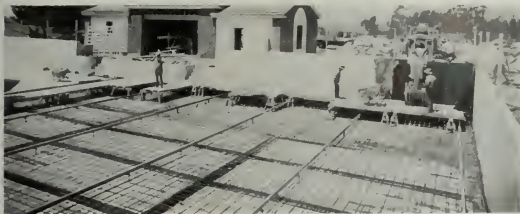
ALFRED A COOK is a young man who by merely improving the specifications and construction of standard tennis courts evolved among the world's best tennis courts. And it all started when the Beverly Hills Tennis Club asked him to finish a swimming pool on which he was working with a contractor who was about to abandon it because of financial difficulties. Cook finished the pool alone. The club then asked him to build a tennis court reasoning that one who could build a good cement swimming pool could also build a good cement tennis court!

That court, like all his courts, covered the usual area of 60 by 120 feet and the net posts and playing lines were laid out in accordance with the rules and regulations of the U. S. Lawn Tennis Association. Naturally Cook, who does not play tennis, has always followed the accepted rules and regulations and in this case he also accepted standard specifications and construction for building the court.

When he finished that court a studio script writer, Joe Swerling, wanted one just like it and Cook built his second and last standard tennis court for he was convinced that by improving standard specifications and construction he could improve standard courts. Thus while working for Barbara Stanwyck he started to build a tennis court as he thought it should be built.

He took the site and natural grade as it was and did the necessary fine hand grading and installed the court slab which consisted of a base course $3\frac{1}{2}$ " thick of grade "A" concrete consisting of 1 part pure Portland cement, $2\frac{1}{2}$ parts clean washed sand and $3\frac{1}{2}$ parts graded $\frac{3}{4}$ " rock and a top course of $\frac{1}{2}$ " thick consisting of 1 part pure Portland cement to 2 parts of top sand.

He changed the construction in the $3\frac{1}{2}$ " base course from reinforcing mesh to $\frac{3}{8}$ " reinforcing steel bars placed 12" on center both ways and tied to form a rigid mat with the result he not only did away with the usual lines in the top course, along which cracks are supposed to follow, but he also eliminated the cracks!



Thus he removed one of the causes why so many tennis players say so many soft-spoken dams when their ball deflects in an unexpected direction. And then by using a mica free material in both the base and top course Cook eliminated pops, (those rough, pock-marks), and sprawls, (those round cone shaped holes), caused by poor material or containing too much mica. And thus he irradicated the last two excuses for a ball not bouncing in an expected direction!

He refined these improvements while building a dozen courts for such notables as Zeppo Marx, Marion Nixon, Sol Lesser and others. But the next noteworthy improvement came when he returned to the Beverly Hills Tennis Club where he improved the drainage system on his first court and then built one of the world's best courts. The drainage system he evolved while building many courts. Along the fall side of the court there is installed a four-inch vitrified tile drain with six openings on the court. The six drain inlets are covered with a cast iron grating and the overflow of water is carried off through a stub outside the court. Cook has used this drainage system on most of his courts which is unique when you remember that the court is in two solid pieces, the largest



pieces of concrete poured without any construction joints, and yet the court is dry and puddleless a few minutes after a rain.

All these innovations he incorporated in his second court for the club and in addition he substituted an imported sand in both the base course and top course. This resulted in a perfectly graded aggregate, free from any foreign materials, which made possible his now famous Rotary Velvet Finish. Someone has said that this finish is an optical illusion, that either a secret tool is used or the contractor has a particular technique with a trowel that is worked in such a way as to leave rows of concentric circles overlapping each other and yet blending into one another. Cook passes it off by explaining that by using the imported sand and Monolith Portland Cement which gives best results for drying, curing and later staining he can obtain the desired effect.

Perhaps it is stretching it a bit to use the word velvet in conjunction with concrete but the finish is so smooth on the courts using the imported sand that your hand will remain unscratched when drawn across the surface, the fuzz remains on tennis balls which last nearly three times as long yet lose none of their characteristics when cut or topped. And yet the surface is non-skid—the players stop "right now" on its smooth finish.

The Rotary Velvet Finish has been pronounced by pros to be the nearest to a grass court as any cement court could possibly be and those who pronounce it should know, for they include Fred Perry, Alexander Vines, Alice Marble and Elinor Tennant. That particular court is considered by them to be the best ever built for any club or organization, and after two years it has still to develop its first flaw!

Only one other court is its equal or better, and that too was built by Cook, for Adolph Schauer, and rates as the best tennis court ever built for an individual for private use. Those who have played on the Beverly Hills Tennis Club court feel IT is the best court anywhere, but those who have been privileged to play on Adolph Schauer's court pronounce IT the best. To settle all arguments we should consider the statements of experts for Elinor Tennant, Alice Marble and William DuPont, Jr., included both the above courts in a two-week tour in search of the perfect court and decided that Adolph Schauer's court was the best.

In fact DuPont felt that way about it so strongly he asked Cook to come east and build him two identical courts at his estate in Saratoga, New York, and at his horse breeding ranch in Boyce, Virginia, thus acknowledging that the best tennis courts originate in the land of the best tennis players!

Because of below freezing possibilities both these courts were made six inches thick and reinforced with $\frac{3}{8}$ " steel bars on 6" centers both ways—which means that there was a heap of steel and concrete in those courts! And to insure getting a Rotary Velvet Finish DuPont had Cook's imported sand manufactured in New Jersey and sent to Boyce and Saratoga.

And that is not carrying it too far when you remember that in chemically staining standard tennis courts there is a wide variation because the sand in the top course is not uniform which results in an uneven color throughout the court and on no two courts can the color be exactly duplicated. In contrast the imported sand makes possible a uniformly colored court whose tints can be exactly duplicated in any other court as well. However, Caracotta Red seems to be preferred as it is easiest on the eyes and eliminates all sun glare.

As the acid wash and the coats of chemical stain cannot be applied until at least 30 days after completion of the courts, in which time the concrete is given ample time to cure, Cook must travel another 2000 miles just to stain those two courts. But then Cook doesn't mind for he plans on traveling far in the building of the world's best tennis courts—and he probably will for he is only twenty-eight!—HOWARD E. JACKSON.

NO-ACCIDENT CERTIFICATES AWARDED

Six months of no lost-time accidents led to awarding of certificates to two winners in the safety contest of the Northern California Section of the American Ceramic Society, at the recent annual meeting. C. L. Barr, Superintendent of Safety Engineering, State Compensation Fund, presented certificates to W. A. Hislop, California Art Tile Corporation; and A. C. Myers, Myers Ceramic Products Company. The names of these winners were ordered engraved on the safety trophy whose possession they will share during the forthcoming year. C. W. Kraft, Kraftile Company, presided as chairman of the section. Officers for the

(Continued on page 38)

EDWARD WESTON

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 17



Fine Homes . . .

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hasn't stopped flattering his sitters by a long shot, he has only stopped doing it by artificial means. What a less skillful photographer strives for via spotlights, diffusion disks, and the retouching pencil, Weston attains with daylight, sure technique, and excellent psychology.

Such measures were bound to reduce the ranks of Weston's prospective sitters — the world being full of timid souls who are terrified at the mere idea of a portrait's looking like them. So Weston, when he should have been about his own work, had to stick close to his studio for fear of missing the sittings that did come. (A state of affairs not altogether blameworthy since it may be held partly responsible for Weston's important close-up period — shells, vegetables, etc. — and the beautiful series of fragment nudes.) But to get back to my rejoicing: not only was the time ripe for the Guggenheim Foundation to bestow a fellowship on a photographer; it was equally ripe for Edward Weston to reap the full benefit of a period of freedom from financial pressure.

Anyone believing that all artists are impractical dreamers would be shocked to meet Weston, an eminently practical man. I don't know a business man who could have done as much with a year of freedom and \$2000. Weston and his (second) wife Charis — daughter of novelist Harry Leon Wilson — planned the project of photographing the West in such a way that every possible cent would go for photography and travel. I made one trip with them, and if I ever saw living reduced to essentials, that was it.

It was a week without radio, newspaper, or mail; without anything I would formerly have called a regular meal or a possible bed. The Westons didn't even carry a watch. For the first two days — during which we touched no settlement — I suffered sugar and creamless coffee and saltless food. But even when these deficiencies were remedied, life was rough enough. In the morning — and I mean morning: four or five A.M. — we rushed into clothes, swigged down fruit juice and coffee, packed up the car, and were on the road before sun-up.

After that the order of the day was dictated by the surroundings. Charis was chauffeur. She piloted Heimy (the travel-scarred Ford sedan) along at fifteen mph when the country was good; raced along at thirty-five if the going was dull. When Weston saw something he wanted to work with or investigate further, Heimy was halted, the 8 x 10 camera fixed to its heavy tripod. With that hoisted on one shoulder, the holder case in his free hand, Weston trudged off to examine his find. Meanwhile Charis pulled out her portable typewriter, set it up on the front fender, and pounded away at the daily log. If Weston made but a single negative, fifteen minutes would see us packed up and driving on. If he found several things to do we might stay half an hour or half the morning. There was no destination, no routine. One day we could cover a hundred miles; another day less than ten. One day would net two negatives, another day, eighteen.

After a week of this itinerary I was not unhappy to return to the decadence of apartment-dwelling, as represented by hot bath, frigid-air, radio, tables and chairs. But after a year of it, the Westons can hardly be blamed for failing to get back into step with urban existence. When a second Guggenheim Fellowship, awarded for six months more travel and photographing and six months of printing, made a permanent dwelling a necessity, the Westons built what a discerning friend calls the *Palatial Shack*. Neil, third, of Edward Weston's sons, carpenter and boat builder, put it up for them.

The oblong building perches on a bluff, above the coast highway and the sea, four miles south of Carmel. A small darkroom and a bathroom are partitioned off at one end, with a storage loft above them. The remainder of the building is one large room, 20' x 28' to be precise. There's a fireplace at one end, a kitchen stove at the other; a bed in one corner, a desk in another. There's a concrete storage vault for negatives, a set of built-in cabinets for prints, a big work table.

Now in case anyone is wondering why all the description and when am I going to say something about Weston's work, the answer is that that's what this is all about. In his photographs as in his living, Weston has followed a process of stripping away the non-essential. Discarding all the *extras* that are commonly added to a photograph to make it "art," he presents his subjects with uncompromising clarity. His straightforward technique and penetrating vision extract from whatever object lies before his lens, a recreation so compelling that in it the beholder grasps the significance of its basic truth. I have