

architectureforsale

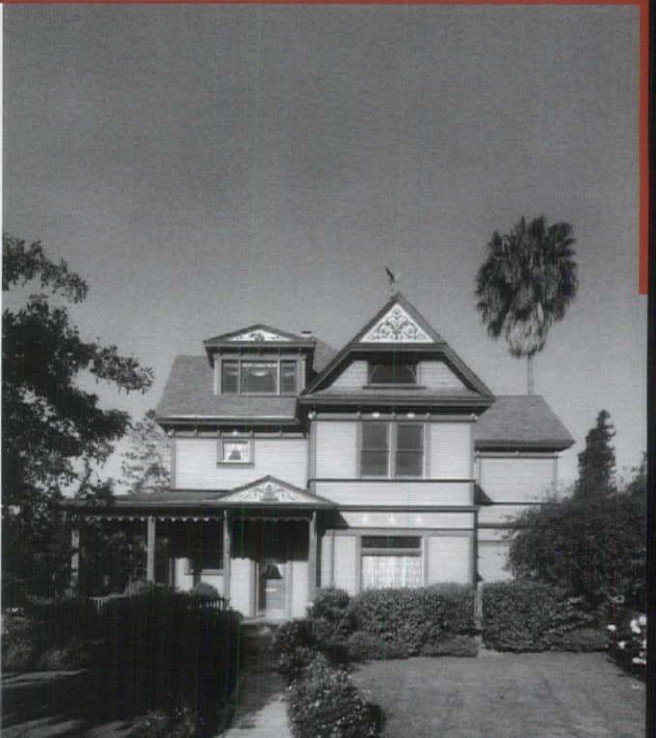
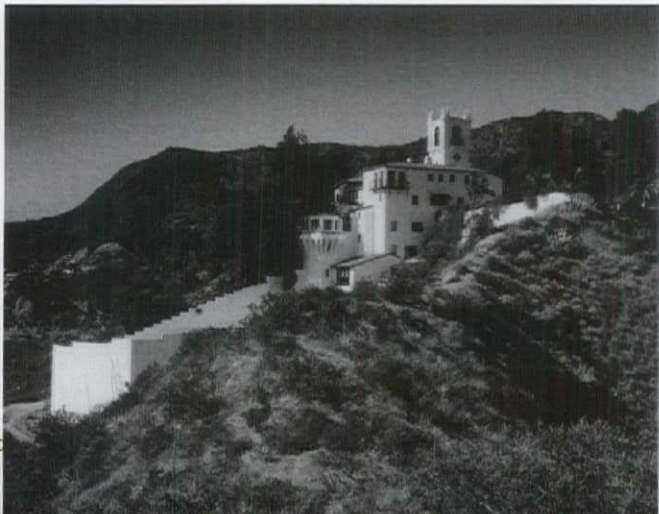
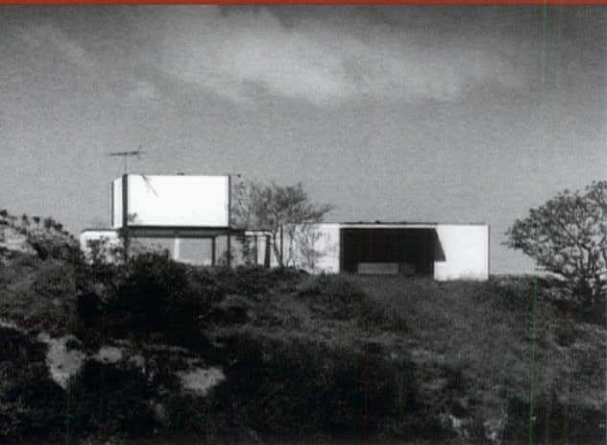
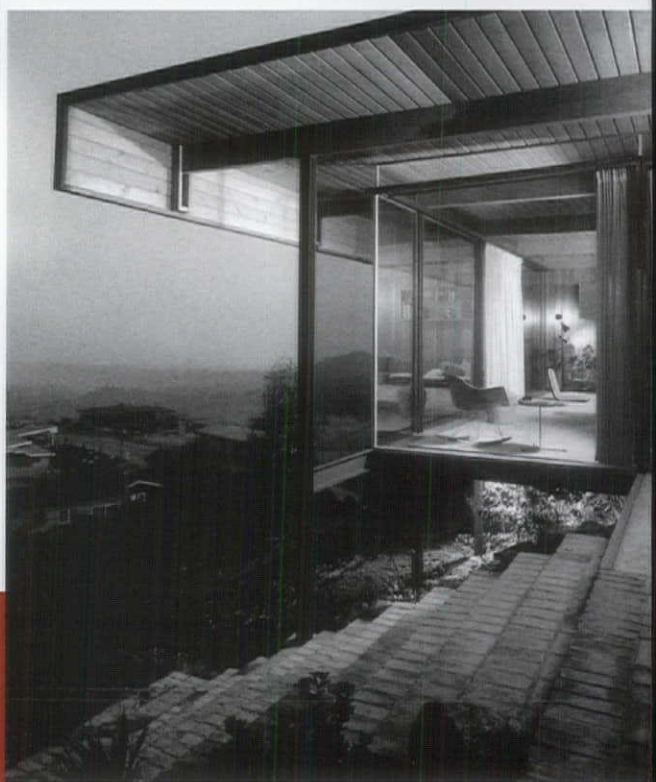
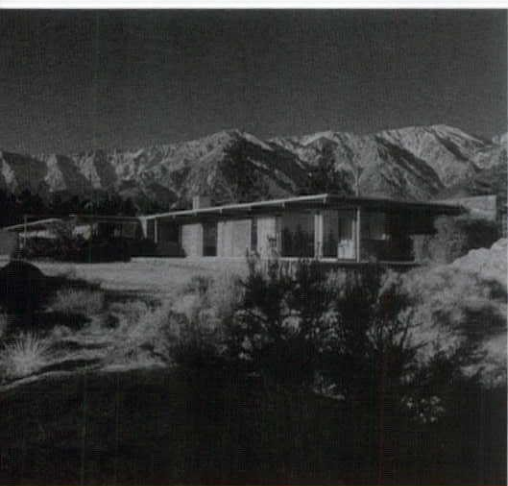
Quarterly

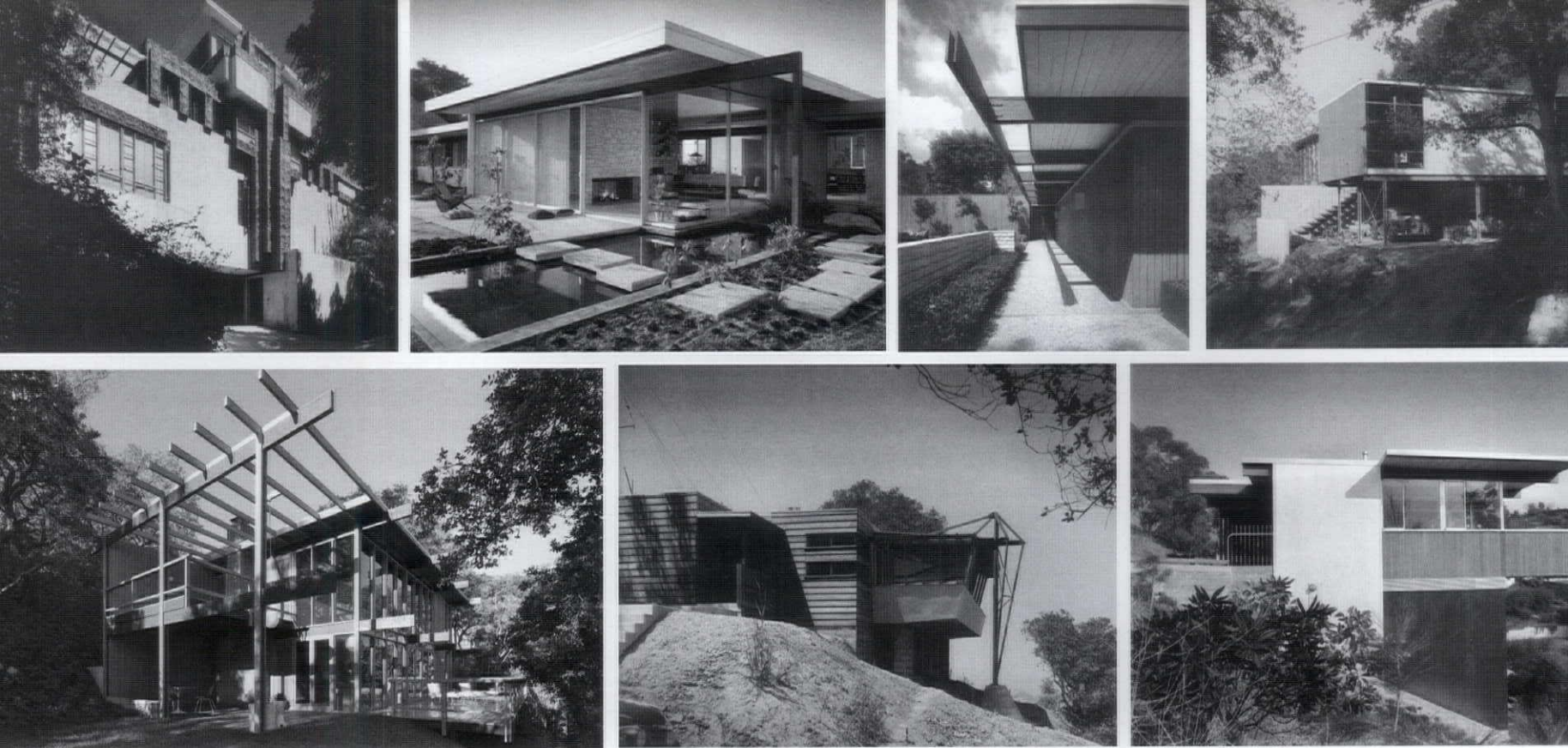
MODERNISM ISSUE
Spring 2015

\$5.95

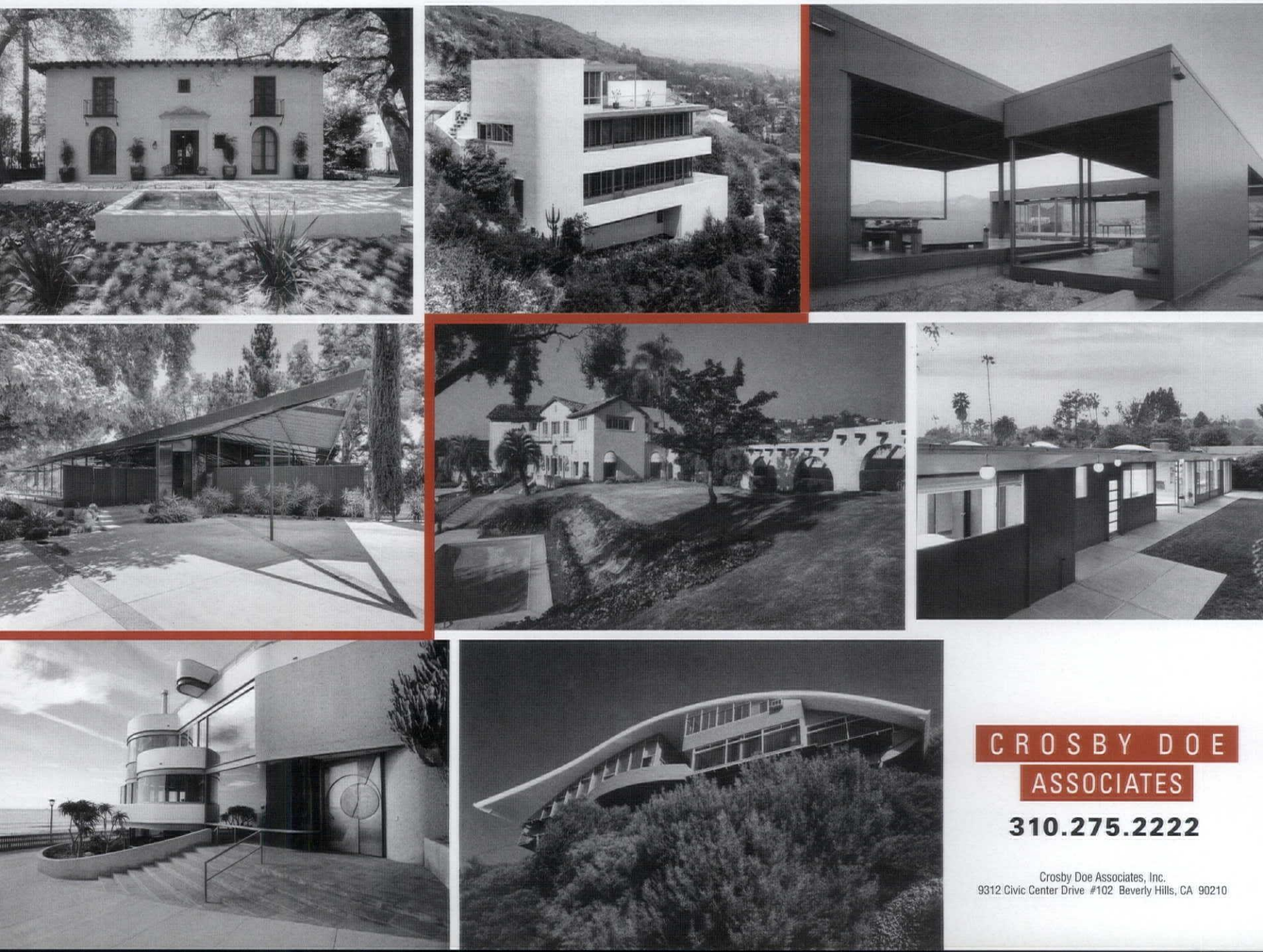
LADD & KELSEY,
F.A.I.A.

The Kelsey Residence, 1962
Pasadena, California





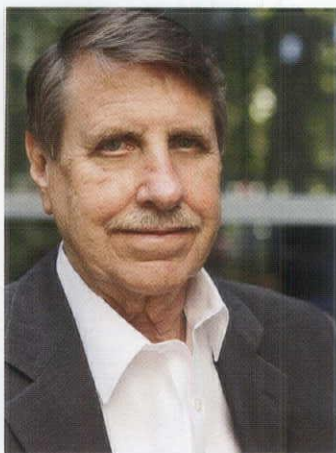
MAKING A MARKET FOR ARCHITECTURE SINCE 1974



**CROSBY DOE
ASSOCIATES**

310.275.2222

Crosby Doe Associates, Inc.
9312 Civic Center Drive #102 Beverly Hills, CA 90210



EDITOR'S NOTE

A PERSONAL NOTE ON MODERNISM

Growing up in the 1950s and 1960s, I was conditioned to a strong belief in a brave new world—the promise of Tomorrow! Every week, the Sunday *Los Angeles Times* featured a new modern house on the cover of its magazine and celebrated its clean lines, indoor-outdoor aesthetic and popular use of materials such as cinder block, plywood and steel. Disneyland opened in 1955, reinforcing the message; from 1957–67, its Monsanto House of the Future put the “tomorrow” in Tomorrowland and was viewed by 20 million visitors. Set in the year 1986, its fiberglass shell employed fiberglass components and featured household appliances such as a microwave oven that was not yet commercially available. And if the comfortable homes my friends and I were living in with our families were on the traditional side, then our elementary school was a different kind of place—it was modern. Designed by architect Harold Bissner and opened in 1949, it employed spans of glass to bring in light and an interior sense of the outdoors. Exterior facades displayed clean lines and smooth surfaces, its wide Spruce doors fitted with the latest industrial-grade brass hardware. Every element of the building effectively conveyed the message of modernism to young minds.

Art historians have traced the ideals of modernism as far back as the Renaissance. And the humanist idea that man can improve society through the art and architecture he creates is not new. Yet, there was a particular zeal and enthusiasm to postwar America that suited mid-century Modernism and defined the era. These were boom years and all things were possible. The idea that civilization could create a better world flourished worldwide. In the United States, this impulse was so strong that modernism spread across the continent as an American vernacular. In this issue, we celebrate inspiring mid-century modern architecture for sale in its many forms across the country—from Marcel Breuer’s impeccably maintained Lauck House in Philadelphia, a 3,800-square foot expanse under a butterfly roof, to Bruce Walker’s Ferris house, a 1954 post-and-beam gem in Spokane, Washington. This Spring Issue of *Architectureforsale.com Quarterly* offers an array of equally inspiring properties which not only illustrate the diversity of the modern aesthetic, but also the sense of hope and possibility it still conveys today.

A stylized, handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Crosby Doe'.

Crosby Doe

Contributors

RAFI SEGAL

Rafi Segal is an award winning designer and Associate Professor of Architecture and Urbanism at MIT. He combines design practice and writing on architecture and urbanism. Segal is co-editor of "Cities of Dispersal" (2008), Territories — Islands, Camps and Other States of Utopia (2003), and "A Civilian Occupation" (2003), and has exhibited his work widely, most notably at Storefront for Art and Architecture; KunstWerk, Berlin; Witte de With, Rotterdam; Venice Biennale of Architecture; MOMA in New York; and at the Hong Kong/Shenzhen Urbanism Biennale. His writings and exhibitions have provided a critical contribution to architecture's role in the peripheries of our cities. He holds a PhD from Princeton University and two degrees from Technion — Israel Institute of Technology - M.Sc and B.Arch. Among his current projects is the curation and design of the first ever exhibition, and forthcoming book, on the architecture of Alfred Neumann undertaken during the 1960s.



ANDREA HUNTER DIETZ

Andrea Hunter Dietz is a Los Angeles-based architect, designer, and educator. She is interested in alternative and responsive platforms for both learning about and practicing architecture. She has a background in participatory and public interest design (with Design Corps) and in relational aesthetics and event production (with estudio teddy cruz). She is a longtime associate of Woodbury School of Architecture where she coordinated a multi-million dollar federal grant, led graduate program curriculum development, oversaw digital fabrication facility improvements and operations, and delivered coursework in research methodologies and theory. She presently teaches at Cal Poly Pomona and freelances as a creative consultant.



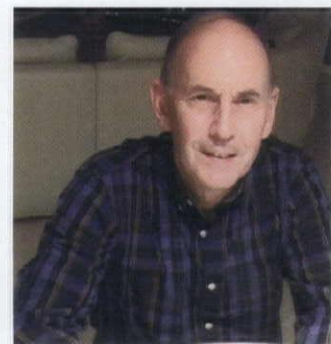
PIERLUIGI SERRAINO

Pierluigi Serraino, AIA, is an architect, author and educator. Prior to entering his independent practice, he has worked for Mark Mack, Skidmore, Owings & Merrill, and Anshen + Allen. He has lectured extensively on postwar American architecture, California modernism, architectural photography, changes in architectural practice, and digital design. His work and writings have been widely published, and he has authored four books, among them Donald Olsen. "Architect of Habitable Abstractions" (Stout Publishers, Fall 2013), "Modernism Rediscovered" with Julius Shulman (Taschen, 2000), and "NorCalMod: Icons of Northern California Modernism" (Chronicle Books, 2006), as well as numerous essays. Pierluigi is recipient of the 2013 Graham Foundation award for his upcoming book on architectural photographer Robert Damora (Taschen, forthcoming in 2015).



RHODRI WINDSOR — LISCOMBE

Rhodri Windsor Liscombe graduated from the Courtauld Institute and taught for London and the Open University before taking up posts at McGill and the University of British Columbia. He has published widely on architectural and design history, mainly in the modern to modernist eras in Britain, Canada and the United States. A J.S. Guggenheim Fellow, he continues to research Modernism's impact recently in web format colonizingmodernism.wordpress.com and co-writing the Canada volume in the "Reaktion In History" series.



architectureforsale *Quarterly*

EDITOR & PUBLISHER

Crosby Doe

CREATIVE DIRECTOR

Joan Scheibel

MANAGING EDITOR

Bret Bradigan

EDITORIAL CONSULTANT

Mark Morrison

FOUNDER & EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

Crosby Doe

Publishing Consultant

Bradigan Group, LLC

Contact Us

Editorial & Advertising

Crosby Doe Associates, Inc.

9312 Civic Center Drive

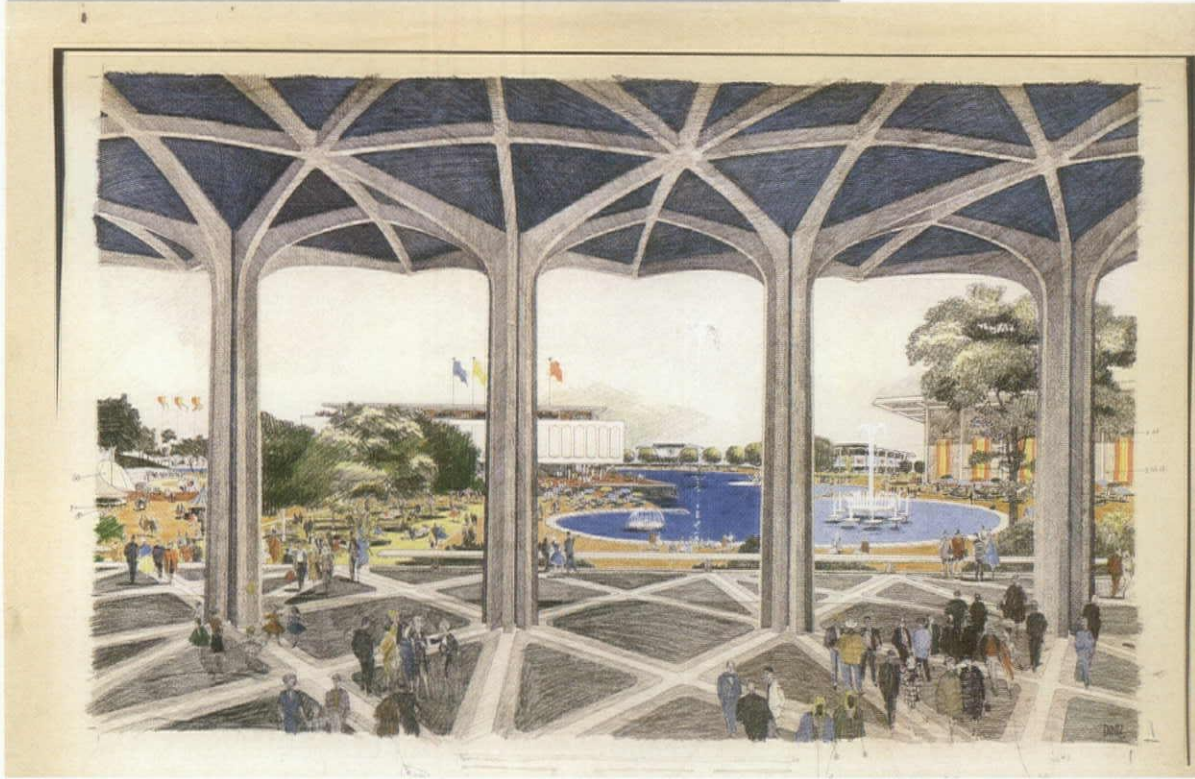
Beverly Hills, CA 90210

310.275.2222

The contents of *Architecture For Sale, Quarterly*, may not be used, reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means without the written consent of the publisher. You can also e-mail us at info@architectureforsale.com

©2015 crosby doe associates, inc.

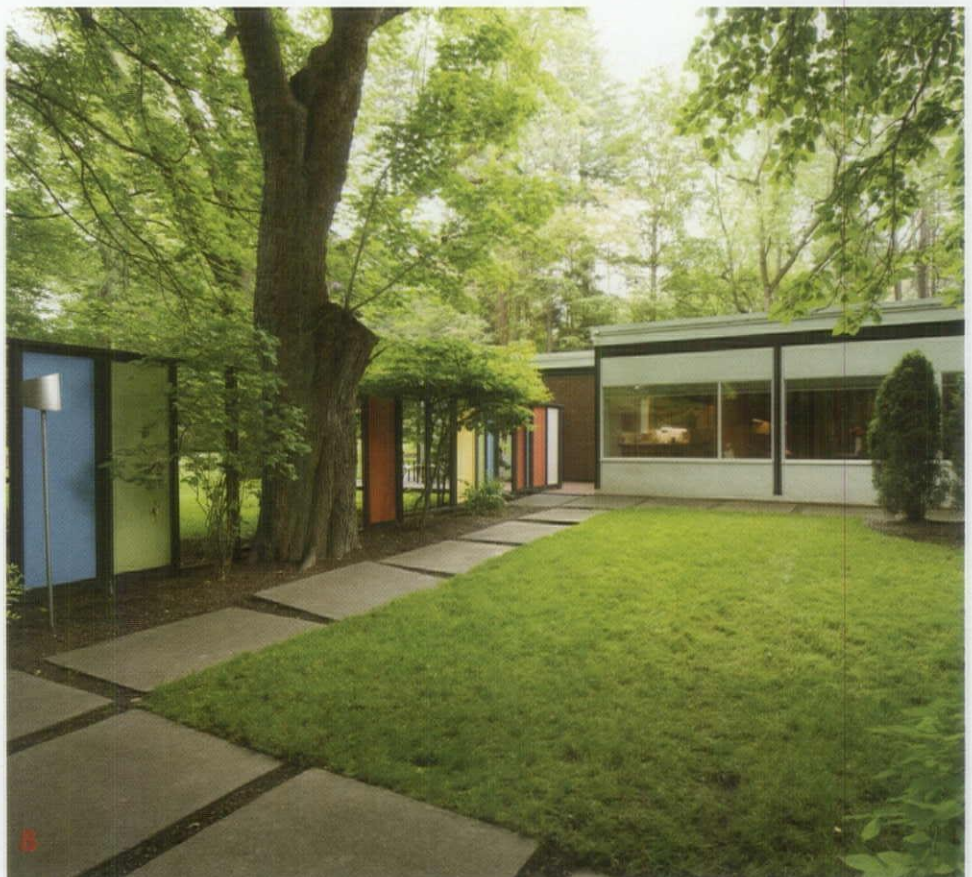
Contents



4 EDITOR'S NOTE

5 CONTRIBUTORS

8 SPOKANE MODERN: WHERE ELEGANCE AND MODESTY MEET By Rhodri Windsor – Liscombe



Contents

26

BETHLEHEM BAPTIST CHURCH: A SACRED ISLAND IN A SEA OF AUTOMOBILES

By Pierluigi Serraino

44

URBANE ARCHITECTURE: LADD & KELSEY'S QUIET DYNAMISM

By Pierluigi Serraino

62

FIFTY YEARS FOR A REFRAIN: DUSTING OFF THE PAST AT HENBREST-BIRKETT

By Andre Dietz

82

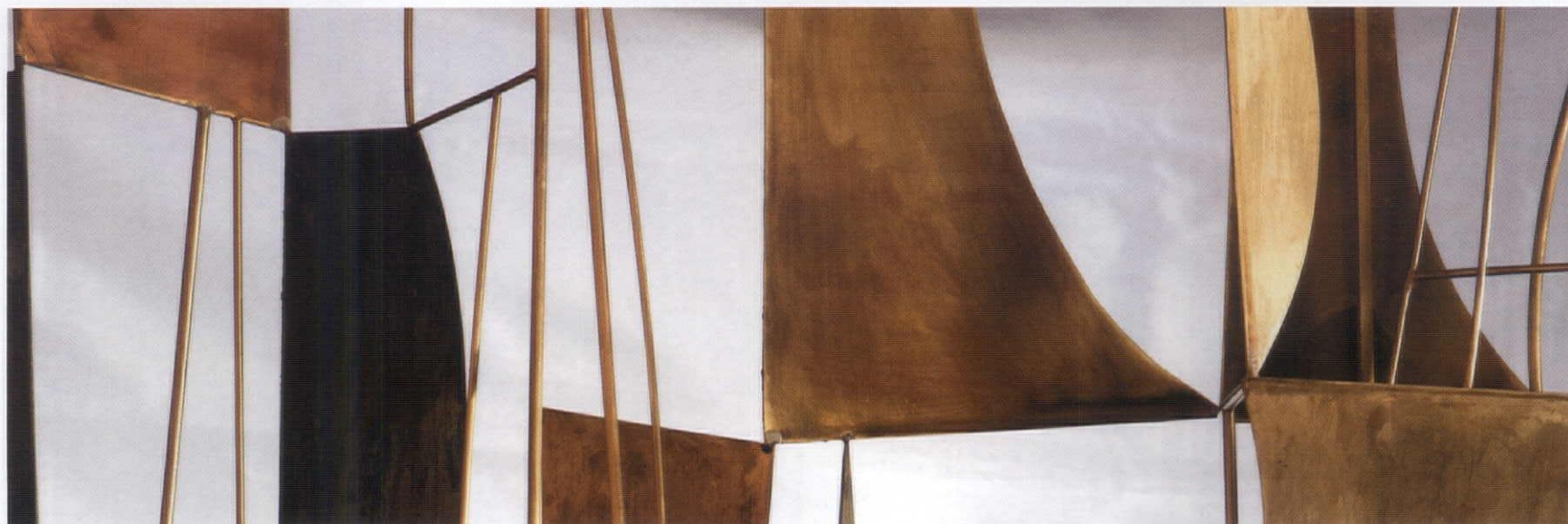
MARCEL BREUER'S HOUSE IN THE GARDEN: MOMA AND THE AMERICAN SUBURB

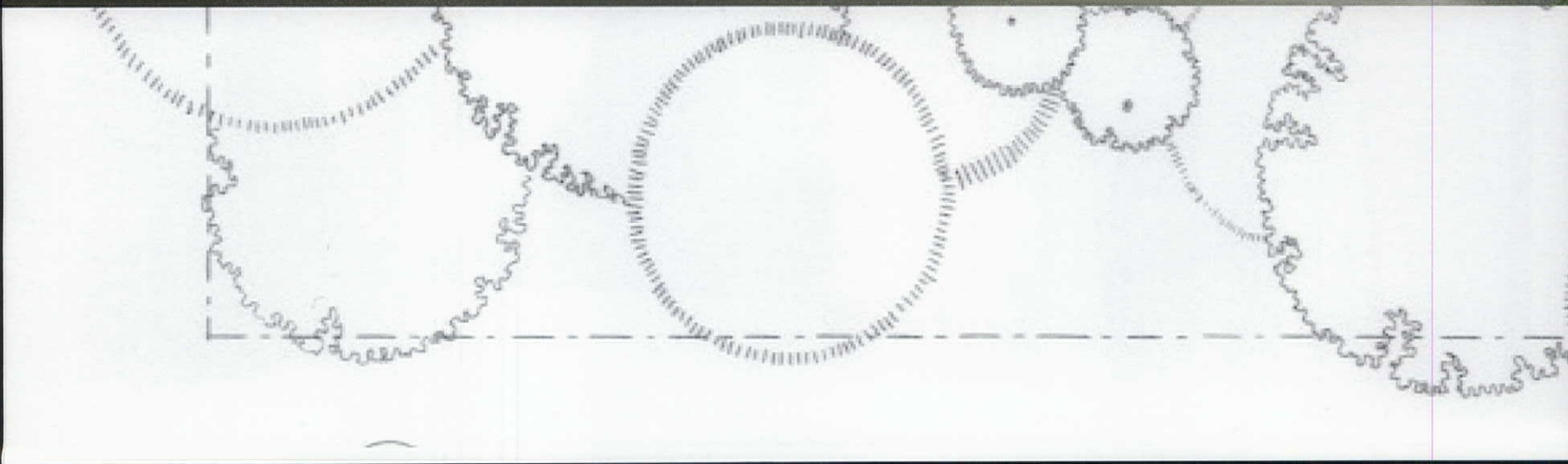
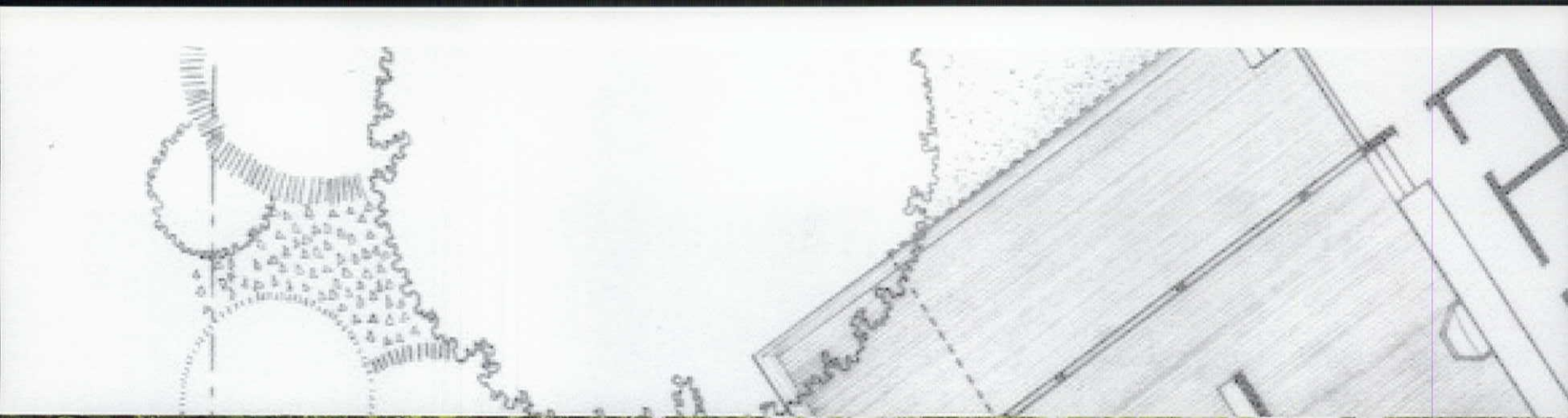
By Rafi Segal

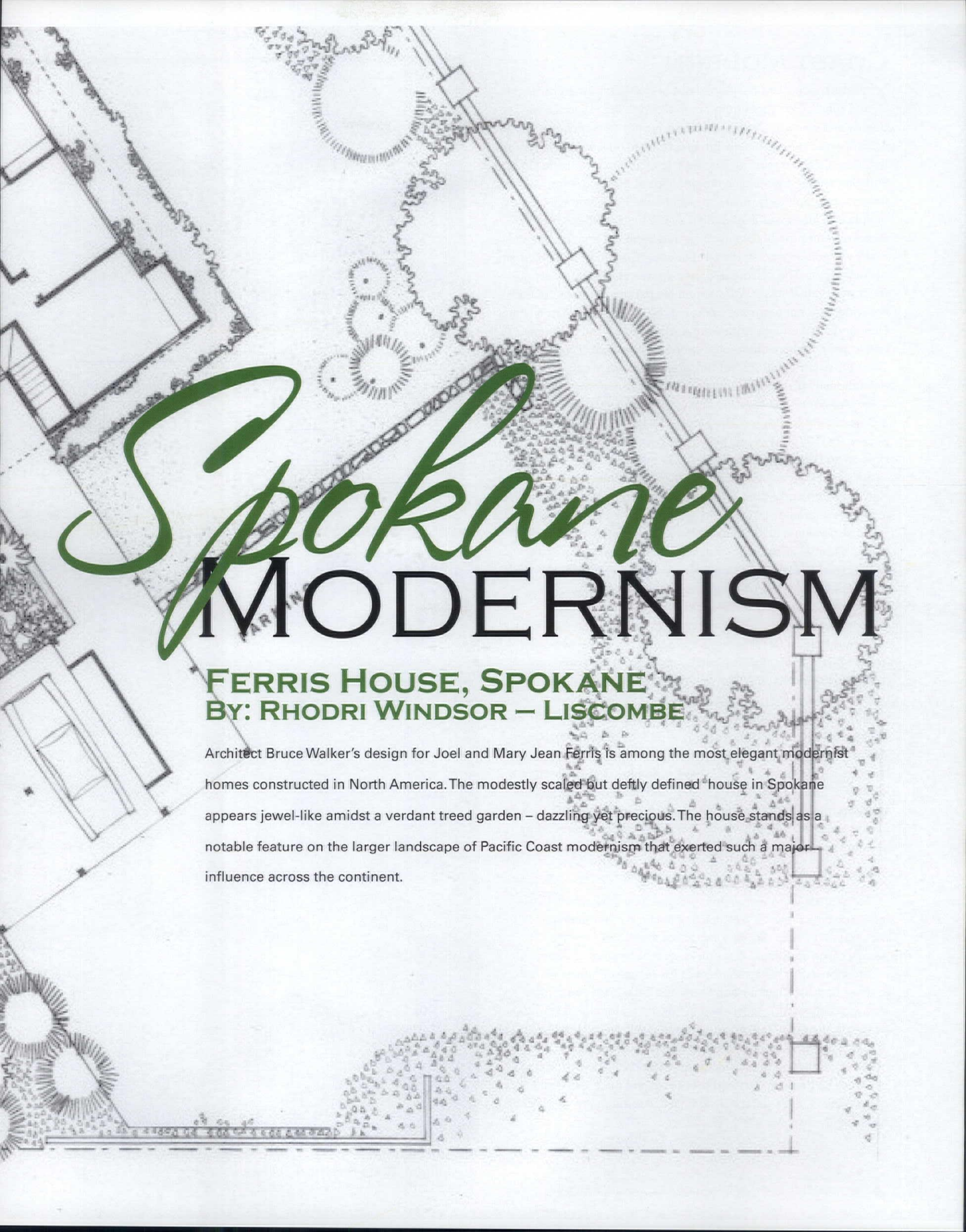
92

ON THE MARKET

A selection of architecturally significant properties for sale around the world.







Spokane MODERNISM

FERRIS HOUSE, SPOKANE
BY: RHODRI WINDSOR – LISCOMBE

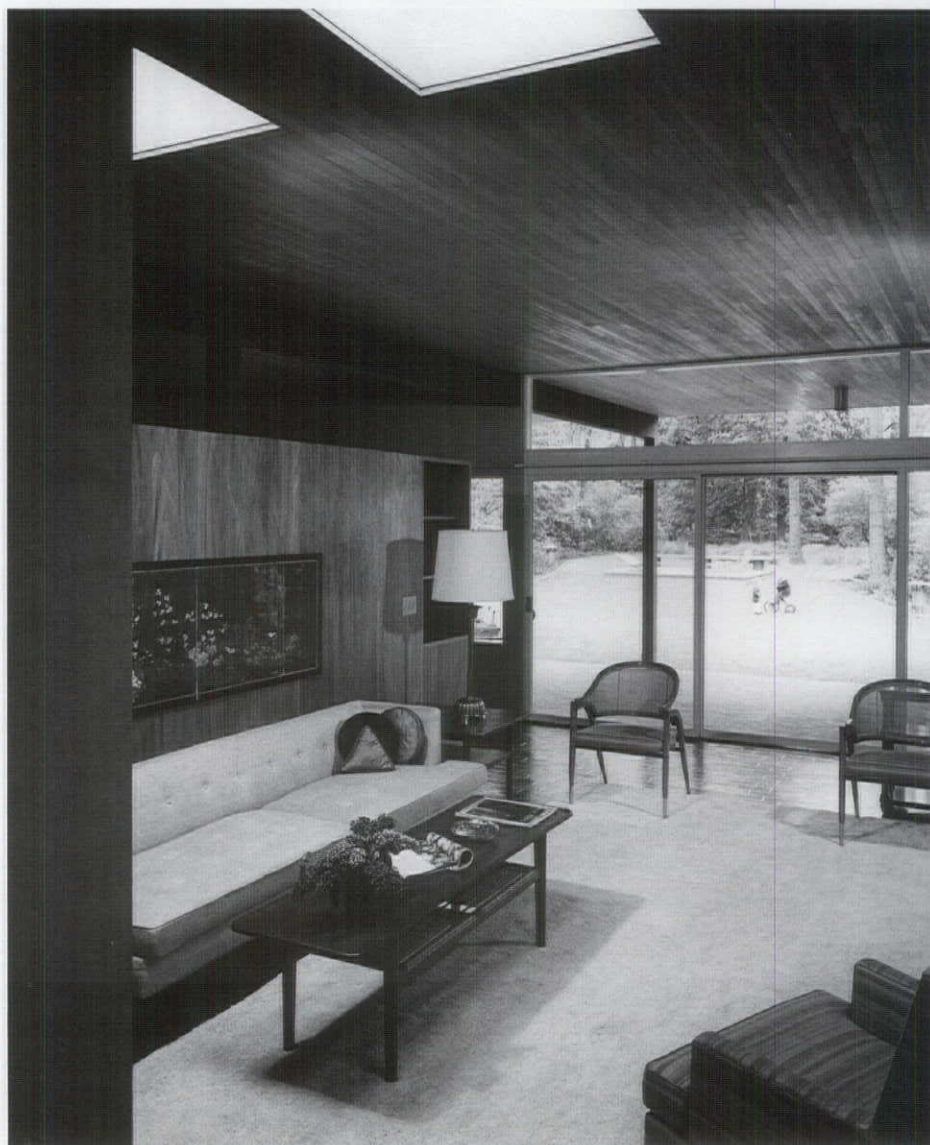
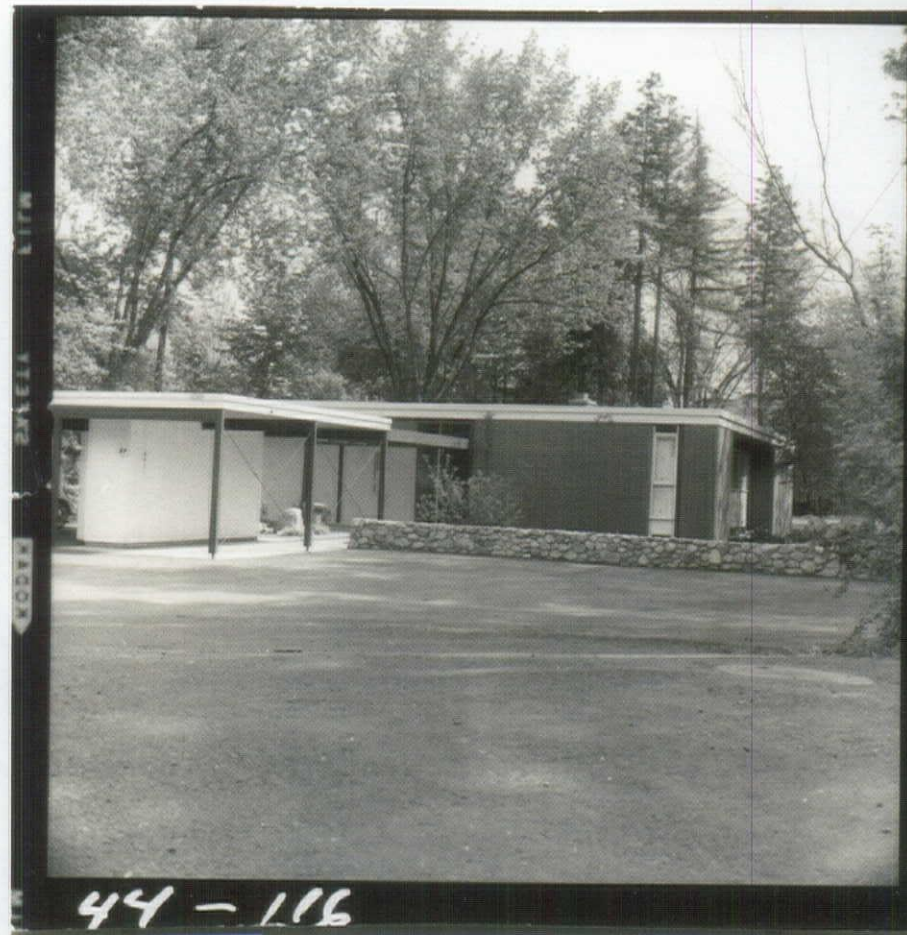
Architect Bruce Walker's design for Joel and Mary Jean Ferris is among the most elegant modernist homes constructed in North America. The modestly scaled but deftly defined house in Spokane appears jewel-like amidst a verdant treed garden – dazzling yet precious. The house stands as a notable feature on the larger landscape of Pacific Coast modernism that exerted such a major influence across the continent.

COAST MODERN

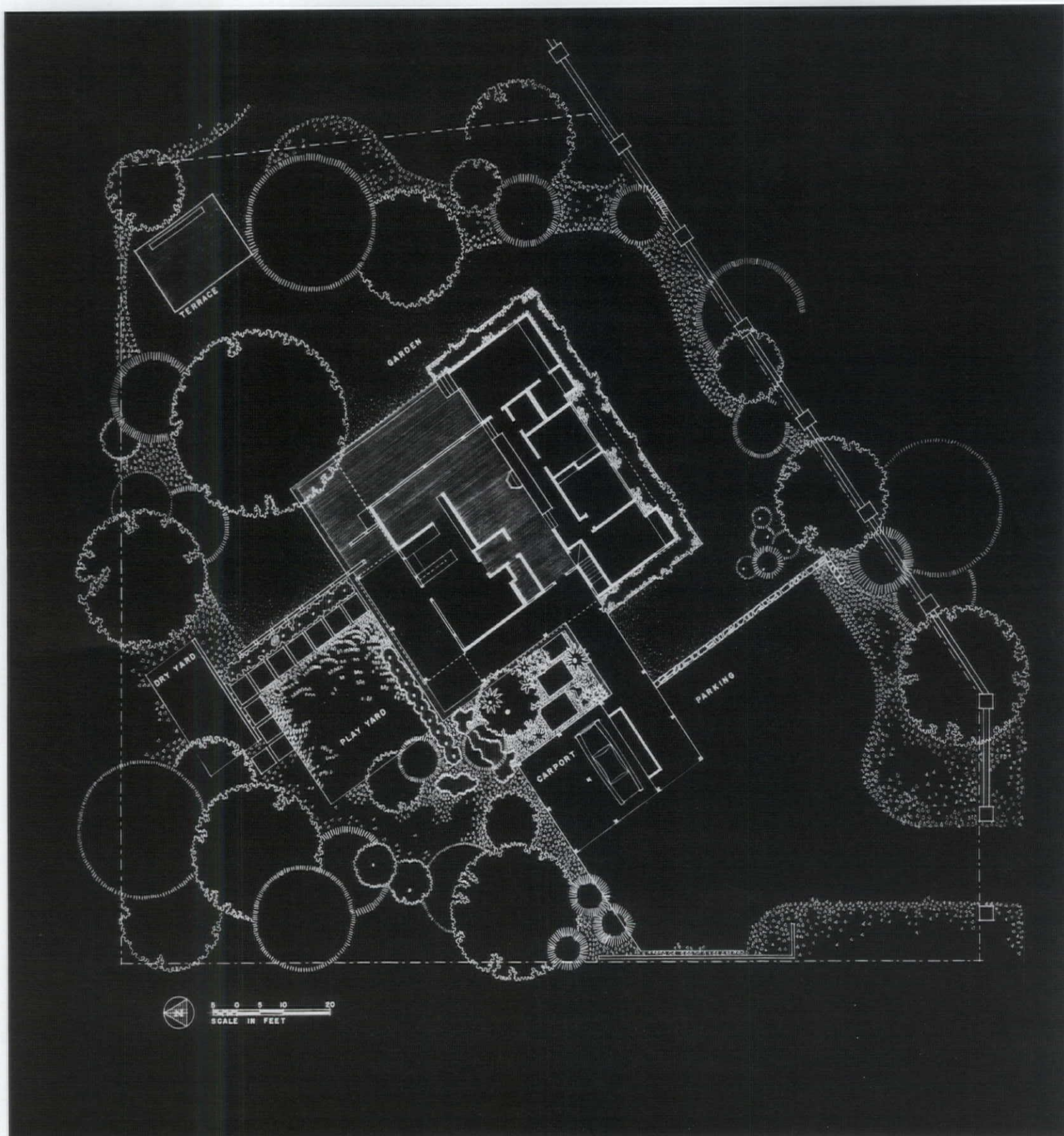
Coastal modernism developed out of well-established economic and cultural networks running north from San Francisco to Seattle and western Canada. Particularly after 1945 these networks accompanied innovative design practice and educational initiatives in California and Cascadia. That mythic region – comprising Oregon and Washington States plus the province of British Columbia – was linked topographically, financially and socially. The interchange of people and ideas was exemplified by the much lauded visits Richard Neutra made to Vancouver and Banff, Alberta, and by those many Canadians who studied at Berkeley, Oregon or the University of Washington. The discourse of design was especially vibrant in California, with William Wurster and his partner Catherine Bauer enjoying national prominence during the 1950s; interestingly, Peter Oberlander, an émigré from Vienna who worked and taught in B.C., would write Bauer's biography, appropriately titled "Houser" (1999). The 1949 exhibition of recent Bay area architecture carried forward the nationally distributed publications of Elizabeth Mock and John McAndrew that focussed mainly on modernist domestic architecture in California. The work of Harwell Harris or Raphael Soriano in California, Paul Thiry, John Yeon and Pietro Belluschi in Oregon and Washington was greatly admired by their counterparts in the Canadian northwest, among them Ned Pratt, Fred Hollingsworth and Arthur Erickson. Either side of the 49th Parallel, architects shared an empathetic response to geography and climate while also valuing an aesthetic derived from function articulated through formal abstraction. Indeed, two significant figures in American abstract expressionism grew up in the Canadian West and were educated in Washington: Agnes Martin at Western Washington University in Bellingham and Clyfford Still at Washington State University in Spokane. To European modernist objectivity Pacific Coast architects brought, like those two great artists, a lyric sensibility inspired by the natural environment. It is in that spirit that the Ferris house takes its place.

Drawing up the deceptively simple plans and elevations in 1954, Walker realized the optimistic spirit of post-Second World War America and the transatlantic modern movement itself. He neatly blended functionalist aesthetic, new materials, contemporary art work and fittings to create a spacious and convenient setting for everyday family life, a setting that embraced natural landscape as well as artificial form in order to stimulate "greater contribution to society" and to "elevate" personal and communal sensibility.

Those ideas were written into a September 1958 article in the local Spokane press by Walker's architectural mentor, Royal McClure. His words disclose important themes in American design of the early Cold War era: ideas that deserve greater recognition in our re-assessment of the legacy of modernism in the Americas. Chief among them was a desire to seize upon innovative thinking and technology for the material and spiritual benefit of the individual and community, and the conviction that architecture and planning could build a better social fabric – one that married artistic and natural values with technical expertise so that standardized processes and materials could be given distinct, even personal significance through the exercise of high quality design.



Historic Photographs, Plans and Drawings Courtesy of The Eastern Washington State Historical Society.



Joel E. Ferris, II House - Original Floor Plan

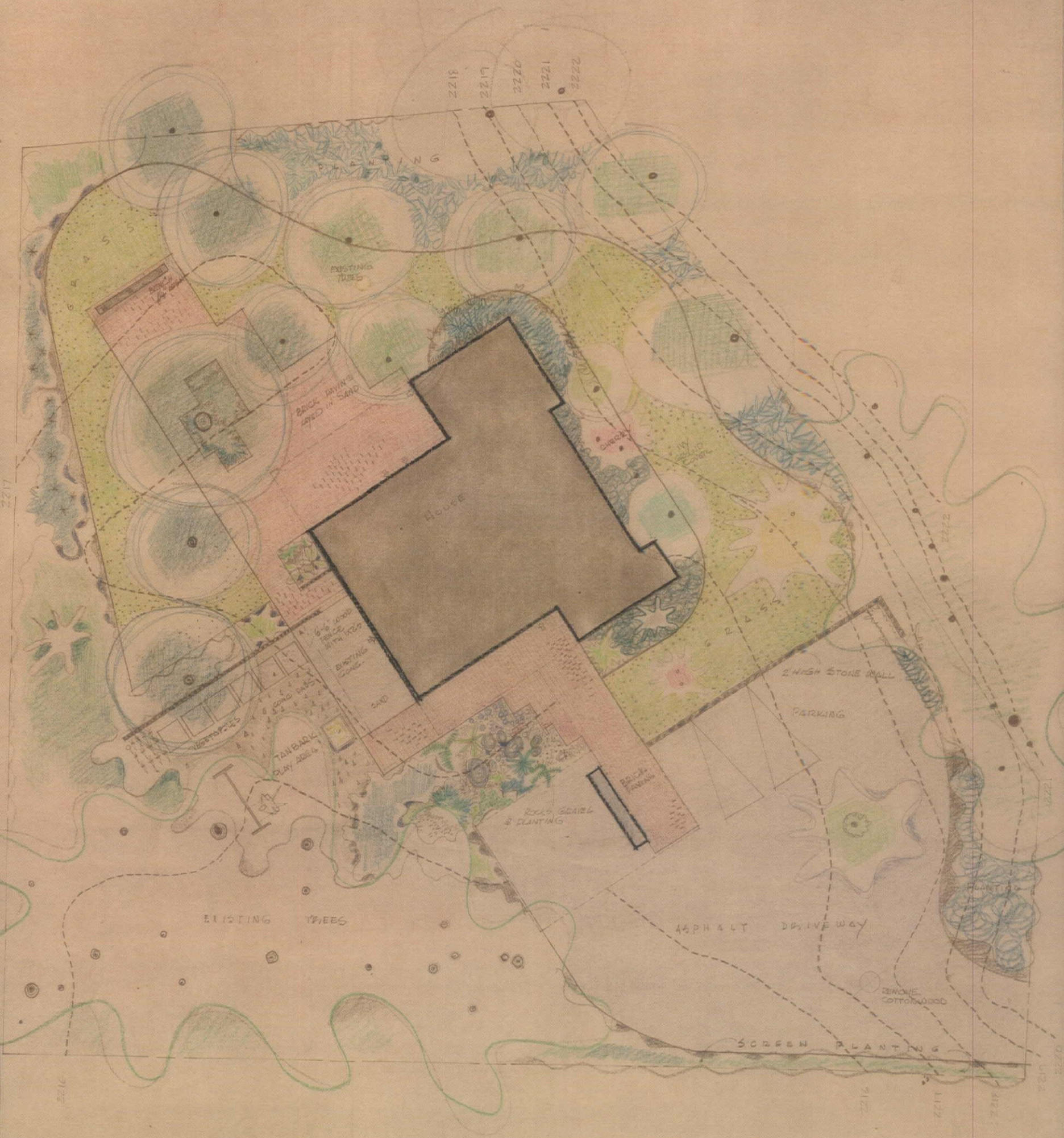




TIME, MOTION AND EFFICIENCY

The Ferris house is a remarkable example of the application of that ethos, and of the growing appeal of modernist design in 1950s architectural culture and social economy. How so, when the house is relatively small and its location relatively obscure, Spokane being distant from the centers of state industry, finance and government? Because the modern movement developed alongside the increased compression of time and space largely consequent upon the two World Wars and Depression – typified by the emergence of mass electronic media and the jet engine. With respect to modernism, two of its most influential texts have titles that express concepts of spatial and temporal change, plus universal relevance: the French architect, Le Corbusier’s “Vers un architecture” (1923) translated into English as “Towards a New Architecture” (1927), and the German, later American historian-theorist, Siegfried Giedion’s “Space, Time and Architecture” (1941). Giedion’s book was often re-printed and widely used in architectural and planning education, including in the architectural school at the University of Washington attended by Walker from that same year. Walker was even more directly exposed to European modernism when he enrolled at the Graduate School of Design at Harvard, coming under the tutelage of Walter Gropius of Bauhaus fame.

West Coast Americans and Canadians had already integrated modernist design into their practice, in addition to the influence of immigrants like Neutra, or of his erstwhile patron, Frank Lloyd Wright. The rise of Nazi power had forced many talented artists and architects imbued with modernist thinking, notably Gropius and Mies van der Rohe, to relocate in North America. The Second War also accelerated radical technological and cultural change. For example, Walker served in the US Navy and was exposed to radical technical applications such as radar, but also to efficient compact spatial organization. The application of ergonomics to naval and military design represented just one of several interconnections between modernist precept and contemporary production. High technology, centralized organization and large-scale planning seemed essential to Allied victory in Europe and the Pacific. The war’s legacy also included, albeit soon contested, the notion of internationalism. Among Walker’s peers were young and creative designers from around the world, including German-born Cornelia Hahn and her soon-to-be husband, Peter Oberlander; like Walker they helped transform the North American design idiom – respectively in landscape architecture and community planning.



PRELIMINARY LANDSCAPE PLAN		SCALE 1/8"
MR & MRS JOEL FERRIS		DATE
SPOKANE		REVIS
WASHINGTON		
LAWRENCE HALPRIN		

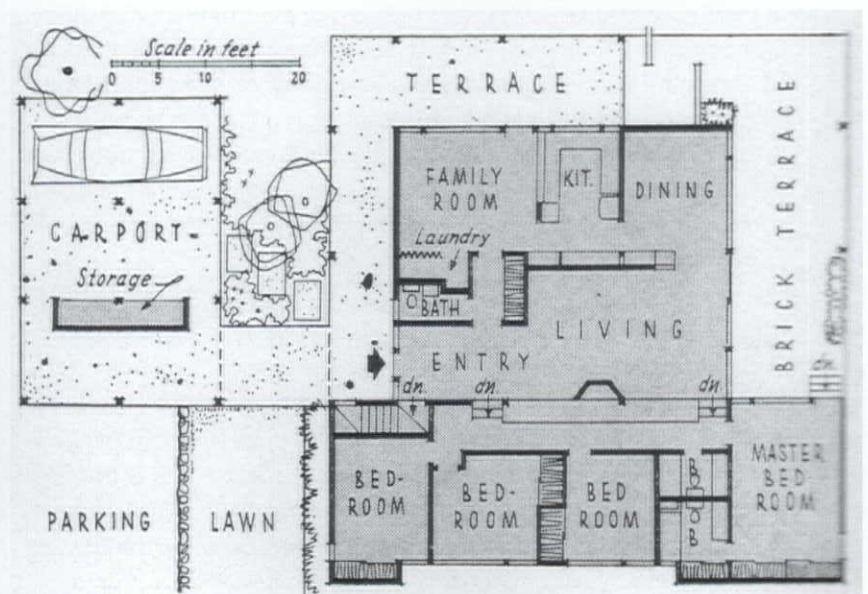


Walker excelled at Harvard, winning the Appleton Travelling Scholarship and the Small House competition organized by the *Architectural Forum*. That professional journal had, and would continue to open up American awareness of European modernism which Walker's travels confirmed. He returned to Spokane and in 1953 opened an office with his life-long friend, John W. McGough. They shared a sense of mission: to mobilize design for improving everyday living. In the period before fame culture took hold, they were content to carry the new aesthetic of modernism into the rebuilding of local and regional environs. The heading of McClure's 1958 article on the Ferris house is instructive, reading "Needs are seen as Design Basis." Much as modernism's geography was wide-ranging, so Walker and McGough designed for a range of building types. Among their earlier work was the Ridpath Motor Inn (Spokane, 1953). It demonstrated modernism's alliance with the automobile both as icon of effective design and of the potential of techno-industrial production to bring good housing no less than personal mobility within the reach of most citizens.



Le Corbusier and Neutra liked to highlight the quality of their new architecture by including late model automobiles in publicity photographs; and Wright cherished his late 1940s red Lincoln. Interestingly, with his prize money, Walker in 1952 purchased a Raymond Loewy-designed Studebaker Champion convertible. Anticipating the road trip of popular culture, he drove from the East to the West Coast, before the Interstate system (and later, the Trans-Canada Highway) reconfigured North American social geography as much as radio and television. A photograph has survived of Walker's Studebaker parked in the carport of the Ferris house. Such photography of automobile and new house pepper the pages of professional and popular media. Especially in the photographs American, Julius Schulman or Canadian Selwyn Pullan, shot of houses along the West Coast.

In many such photographs the automobile figures as family companion, reflecting its utility for North American modernism's greatest legacy – a huge new wave of suburbanization.



Original Floor Plan



The Ferris house located at 431 East 16th Avenue is less typical in being built within the central district of Spokane, near Manito Park, the Episcopal Cathedral and Providence Sacred Heart Medical Center. Still, in a May 1960 article on the Ferris family and home in the *Spokesman Review*, the youngest of their four children, Toby, is shown sitting in a pedal-car watching Mary Jean and his three siblings gardening. A year later the house was covered at greater length in the widely circulated *Sunset Magazine*. More populist than *Arts & Architecture*, it compared with Vancouver B.C published *Western Homes & Living*, as organ of modern architecture and consumer design attuned with the blue-to-white collar society of the new peripheral housing subdivisions.

Those sub-divisions seldom matched the inventive standards of California's "Case Study" houses or the plainer Canadian "Trend" Houses, but created habitable neighbourhoods — not always the melancholy "Little Boxes" of the popular song. The new communities were usually constructed with schools and churches but also shopping precincts. Indeed, Washington State had already set a continental precedent with Norgate. This new neighbourhood was designed by Victor Gruen to accommodate the tremendous growth in the workforce required by the Boeing Aircraft Company. Gruen revised early European modernist stress

on community facilities as the core of city and neighbourhood planning in favour of retail. This arrangement fitted well with the rise in automobile ownership, and appeal of auto-aesthetic in North American culture prior to Ralph Nader and the compounding of traffic congestion and pollution. But the legacy of auto-modernism could also destroy architectural and urban patrimony as exemplified by the rending apart of downtown Seattle for expressways.

MARRYING ART TO FUNCTION

The Ferris house, as noted, stands far apart from that outgrowth of North American modernism. Instead it embodies other more creative alliances stimulated by the movement. Walker's obvious attention to family needs, introduction of art work and melding of economy with delight reveals the more benign force within the modern movement. On a smaller scale both Walker and the Ferris' valued the visual arts akin to Philip Johnson — who would collaborate with Mies van der Rohe on arguably the most celebrated modernist building: the Seagram Building in New York, a steel and glass temple of commerce commissioned by the Canadian Bronfman dynasty.



There is an echo in the Ferris house of the even more severe modernist geometry of Johnson's renowned 1949 house at New Canaan, Connecticut. The sense of optimistic social purpose running through the post - 1945 decades undergirded policy in both the States and Canada that augmented lending and funding for housing with a massive expansion of cultural and educational institutions.

Walker would design the Spokane Opera House in 1974, while Mary Jean Ferris served as president of the Junior League and of the Women's Association of the Spokane Philharmonic Society. A prominent feature in the entryway of the Ferris house is a handsome bronze and metal sculpture designed and made by Spokane artist Harold Balazs. Screening the entrance door and partly also the sleeping from the living areas of the house, the sculpture's qualities of disciplined yet dynamic abstract composition contributed to the award accorded to Walker for the Ferris house by the Inland Empire Chapter of the American Institute of Architects in 1960. A contemporaneous article in the Spokane newspaper announcing a talk by Joel Ferris about their home was captioned "Ferris' Talk to Tell of Home Art."

Another significant alliance within North American modernism relates to the retail furnishing business that helped Joel and Mary Jean Ferris commission Walker and finance construction of their house. This was the mutually beneficial alliance between progressive design and commerce in household furnishings and supplies - the average post-Second War North American home, to misquote Le Corbusier's famous sentence, became a place to run machines in! More specifically, the commerce in, or rather consumption of, furniture, fittings and decorative objects purveyed by the Ferris's business: JOEL Inc. Joel Ferris garnered fine design for the enlightened citizens of Spokane to purchase: from chairs and tables, to fixtures and ornaments from European, Scandinavian and American designers and craftspeople, among them Ray and Charles Eames. JOEL Inc. mirrored larger retail companies in the States and Canada in seizing the profitability of good and affordable new style design. JOEL Inc. prospered, eventually occupying a group of renovated 1890s brick warehouses on South Post Street. The store only closed in 2005, three years after the death of its founder and shortly after the passing of Bruce Walker.

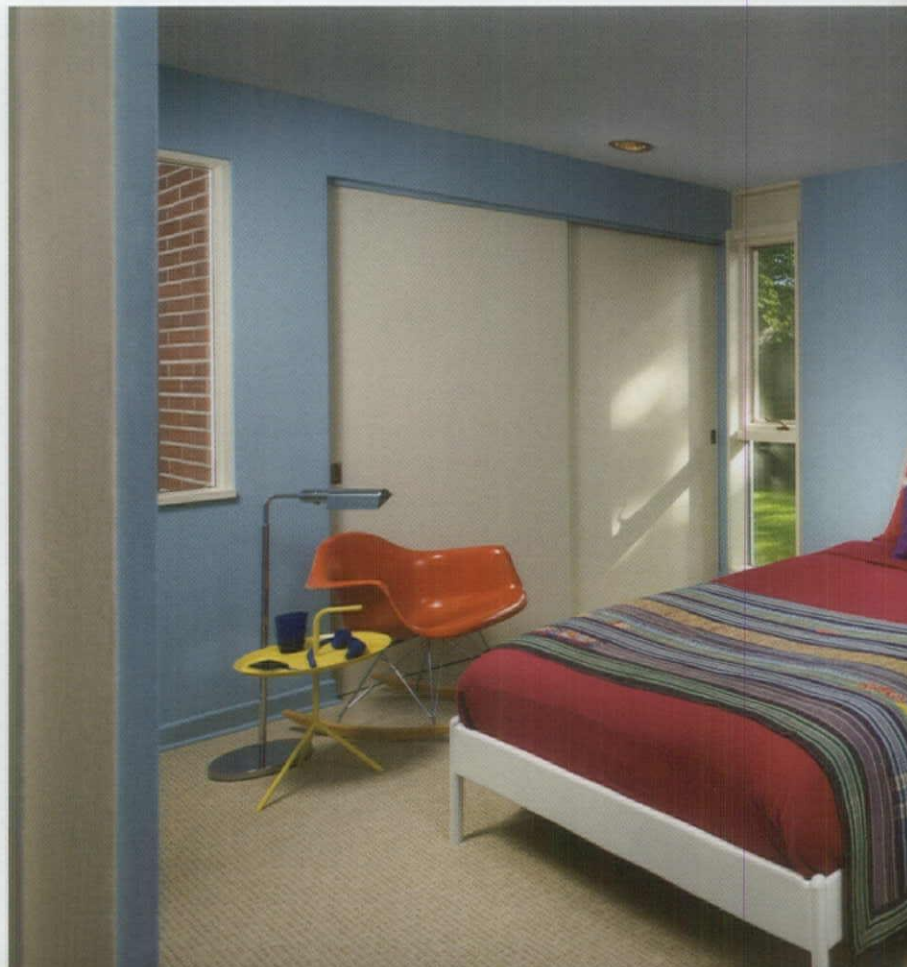
ORGANIZATION AND AESTHETIC: STRUCTURE, PLAN AND SPACE

The spirit of innovation, informality and inspiration distinguishes the Ferris house. The low-rise glue-laminated post-and-beam structure is exposed externally and internally modernist fashion. It is relieved by red brick and white stucco walls that provide weather protection and shield more private interior spaces. The glulam posts nicely modulate the embracing grove of old-growth trees. And Walker's disposition of those posts – around the carport simulating Le Corbusier's famous slim pilotis – sets a theme of volumetric geometry. In turn, that theme is varied through an equally adept arrangement of the wall planes and horizontal capping eave. The several precincts of activity, from parking to living or sleeping, are delineated with delicate clarity. Moreover, the positioning of harmonious architectural elements introduces a surreptitious order of articulation, and visual interest. On the one hand the house seems to advance toward the visitor, and on the other to move out toward the garden. This sense of movement – a kind of unobtrusive yet determined re-working of Picturesque conventions – is most apparent in the trellis screen bridging house and tree-scape, replete with panels painted Mondrian-style in primary colours. The gentle march of exposed posts around the house perimeter is augmented by the changing textual qualities of glazing and brick or stucco enclosure.

This fabric encloses under 2,000 square feet of living and sleeping space yet inside appears remarkably spacious. The ceilings are ten feet high in the living precinct and only slightly lower in the bedrooms. Their space-expanding effect is increased by extensive fenestration, both fixed vertical windows and horizontal sliding glazed panels. The opening into each other of the nonetheless discrete precincts for the functions of everyday living is alike reinforced by diversity in materials and surfaces. The red tile floor in the main living space contrasts with the successively more diffused wood panelling and painted plaster walls and ceiling.

And throughout the simplicity in form and finishes suffuses light inward from the fixed and sliding glass windows, framing and enticing appreciation of nature.

This configuration was part of Walker's satisfaction of what McClure had described as "Needs" – the provision of material and psychological environs for family life. The house comprises two rectangles placed alongside the central axis leading straight from the entrance to the window wall of the living area overlooking the garden. The footprint of the living area is broader than that of the contiguous sleeping accommodation, which extends a little beyond its perimeter at either end. It is elevated by two steps, and built over an excavated basement. Entered from a steeper staircase beside the entrance, the basement was reserved for the furnace, freezer and storage, plus art display and book shelves. The bedroom accommodation is further separated from the open-plan living area by a three-quarter height wood divider. This is sufficiently wide to house display and book shelving plus storage. A second flat panelled wood divider on the main living area side also boasts a central stove fireplace. From the ergonomically functional galley kitchen, in which even the finish of the appliances is married with the restrained decorative composition of functional components, Mary Jean could observe her children at play or tasks inside and outside. Yet when entertaining or seeking quiet, the utilitarian facilities did not obtrude. Likewise the bedrooms have built-in cupboards and ready access to compact bathrooms. In the same vein, Walker conceived the structural system to allow easy expansion. This happened three times; the largest in 1963 upon the birth of the Ferris's fifth adding a new master bedroom with attached balcony, and the last in 1983 pushing the dining area to the eave line and thereby realigning the living accommodation from north-south to east-west.



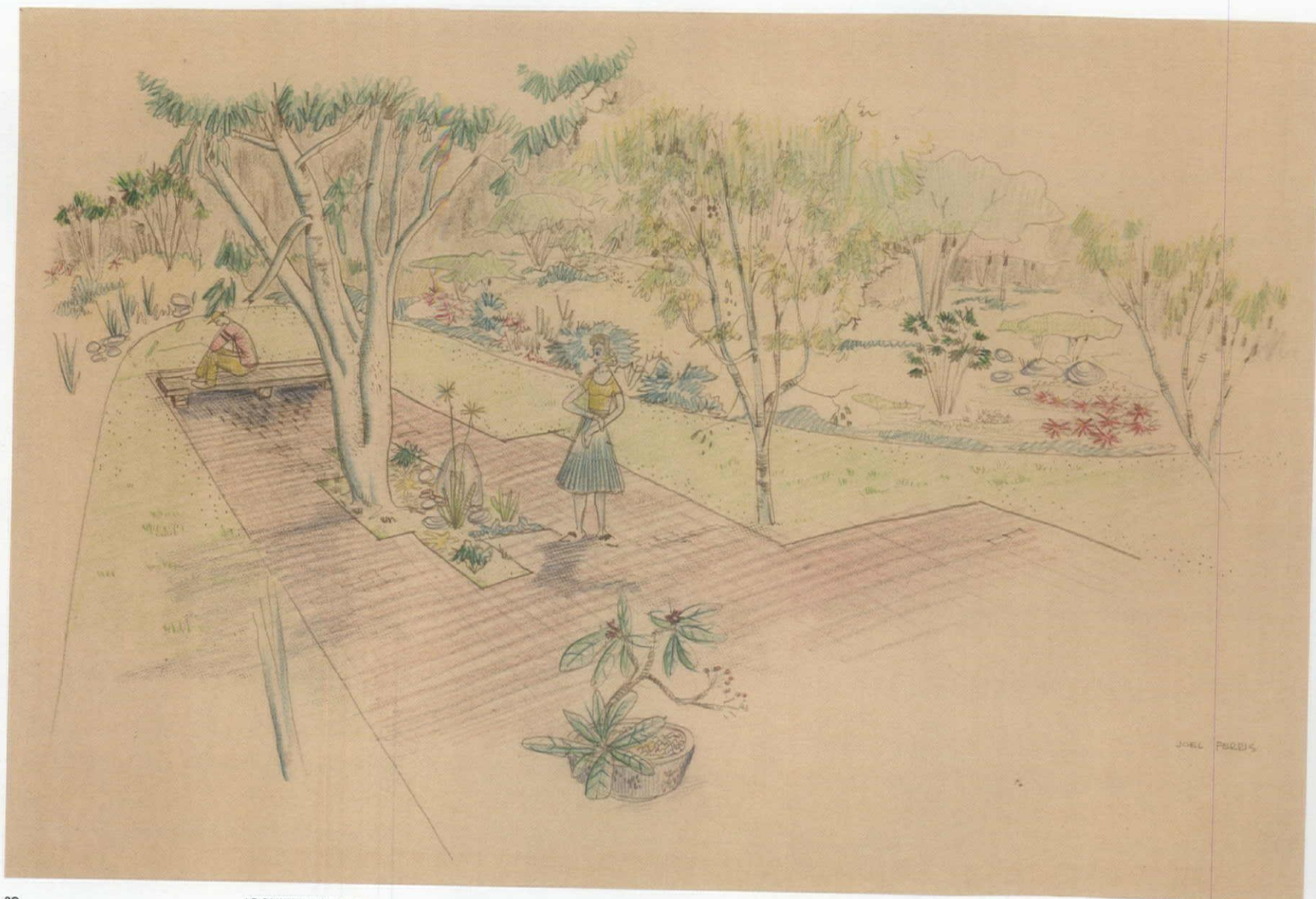


STRUCTURE A NEW RELATION TO NATURE

Such neat and efficient marriage of plan and structure was the hallmark of what might be termed Coast Modernism. Variegated in terms of composition and effect, this patrimony embraces houses by a tally of remarkably talented architects beyond those already named. Their work, in company with Walker's Ferris house, explodes one persistent misconception about modernism, namely that modernism rejected nature and humanist sensibility. The truth is quite the contrary, especially with respect to natural topography – including its climatic conditions – and the botanical realm. In fact, considerations of site, and of social attitude, played a major part in the evolution of the Ferris house. Initially the Ferris' engaged McClure and selected a plot in the Comstock Park Neighbourhood. But its citizenry rejected McClure's designs as too radical. Fortunately, Joel's uncle owned part of a turn-of-the-century estate that included a walled clay tennis court which he offered to them as an alternative site. Then Mary Jean decided against McClure's next scheme. This envisaged a house raised on stilts but which would thus overlook neighbour's property. So Walker stepped in with his beautifully modulated design – satisfying family requirements while honoring the truly lovely setting amongst fine trees. Moreover, architect and client had the advantage of the temporary presence in Spokane of the rising young American landscape architect, Lawrence Halprin.

Already well-established in California, Halprin build a transcontinental practice, later to layout the Sea Ranch condominiums and Levi Plaza in San Francisco. He shared the minimalist yet empathetic approach to landscaping advocated by another Northwest Coast designer, Christopher Tunnard, who had won international recognition with his book *Gardens in the "Modern Landscape"* (1938). Halprin realized his holistic vision of design and landscaping by reinforcing existing planting. Thereby he contributed to the effortless reach of house and trellising into the natural setting, further visually orchestrated by a tiled seating platform in permanent converse with house and garden. The lap of botanical realm around precisely regulated architecture – punctuated by a Japanese-influenced courtyard – celebrated his idea that modernism could embody the vital archetypal needs of individual and group.

The sophisticatedly simple architecture Bruce Walker created for Joel and Mary Jean Ferris in 1954 survives as an inspiring, pleasurable and remarkably convenient living environment. Its very economy of means yields an ambience of subtle repose always animated by the diurnal play of light and vista on Halprin's superb garden.

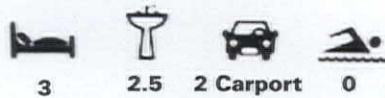








431 East 16th Street — Spokane, Washington



Details & Information at: arch.forsale/view/spokanemodern.com



CROSBY DOE
ASSOCIATES

+ **architectureforsale.com™**

Are pleased to announce
the sale of The Storor House by Frank Lloyd Wright.

310.275.2222




STURTEVANT **DOUBLE TROUBLE**

MARCH 20–JULY 27, 2015

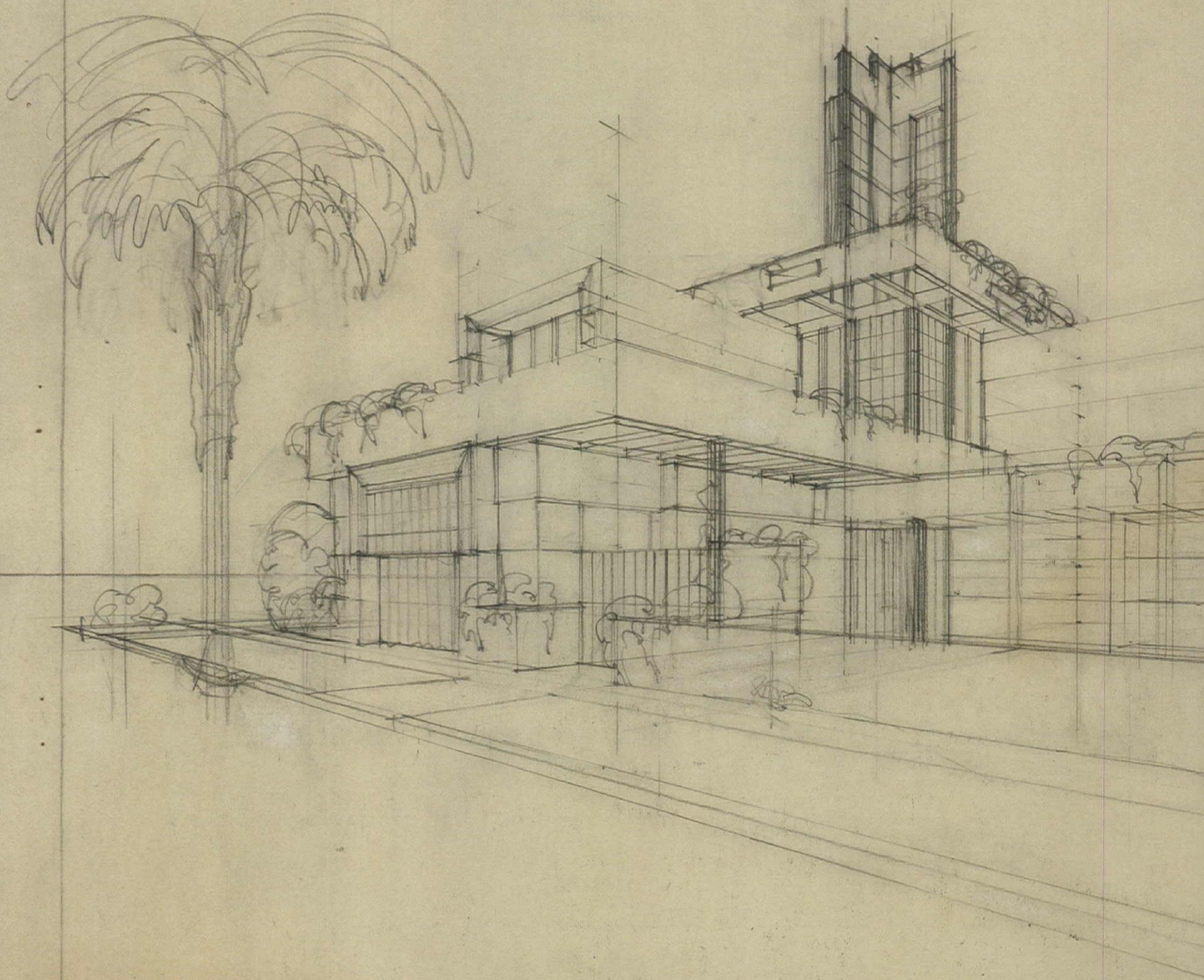


STURTEVANT: *DOUBLE TROUBLE* IS ORGANIZED BY THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART, NEW YORK. **MoMA**
CURATED BY PETER ELEEY, CURATOR AND ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR OF EXHIBITIONS AND PROGRAMS, MoMA PS1.

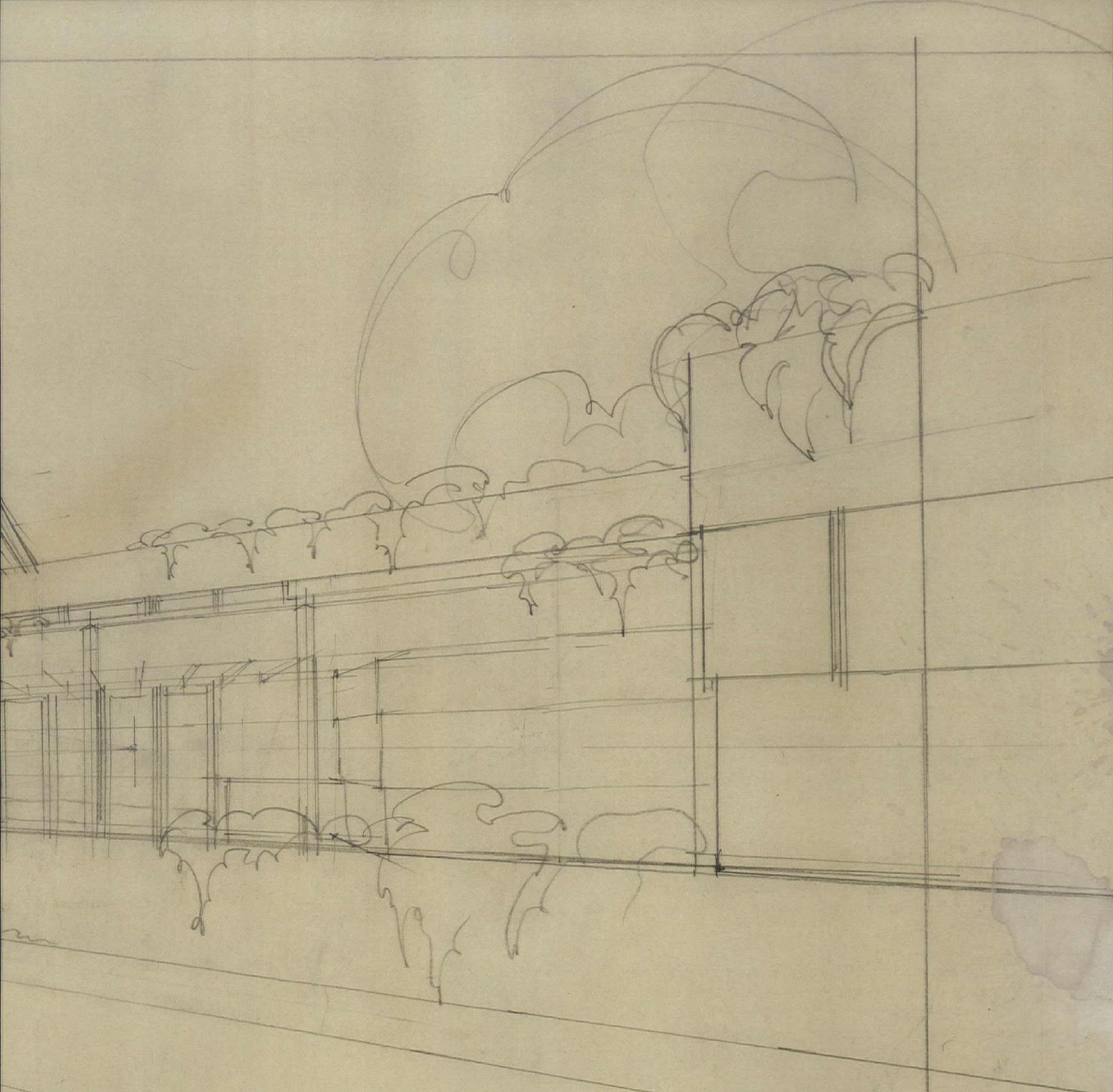
GENEROUS SUPPORT IS PROVIDED BY THADDAEUS ROPAC. ADDITIONAL SUPPORT IS PROVIDED BY
GAVIN BROWN'S ENTERPRISE, SCHIFF FINE ART, AND THE PASADENA ART ALLIANCE.

IN-KIND MEDIA SUPPORT IS PROVIDED BY **KOET 50**  **Los Angeles**

STURTEVANT, *JOHNS TARGET WITH FOUR FACES (STUDY)*, 1986, ENCAUSTIC COLLAGE ON CANVAS WITH OBJECTS, 33 1/4 x 26 1/4 x 2 3/4 IN.
(84.46 x 66.36 x 6.67 CM), THE MUSEUM OF CONTEMPORARY ART, LOS ANGELES, GIFT OF RON AND KELLY MEYER, © ESTATE STURTEVANT, PARIS



BETHLEHEM



BETHLEHEM BAPTIST CHURCH —
A SACRED ISLAND IN THE CITY OF THE AUTOMOBILE

R.M. Schindler, Architect

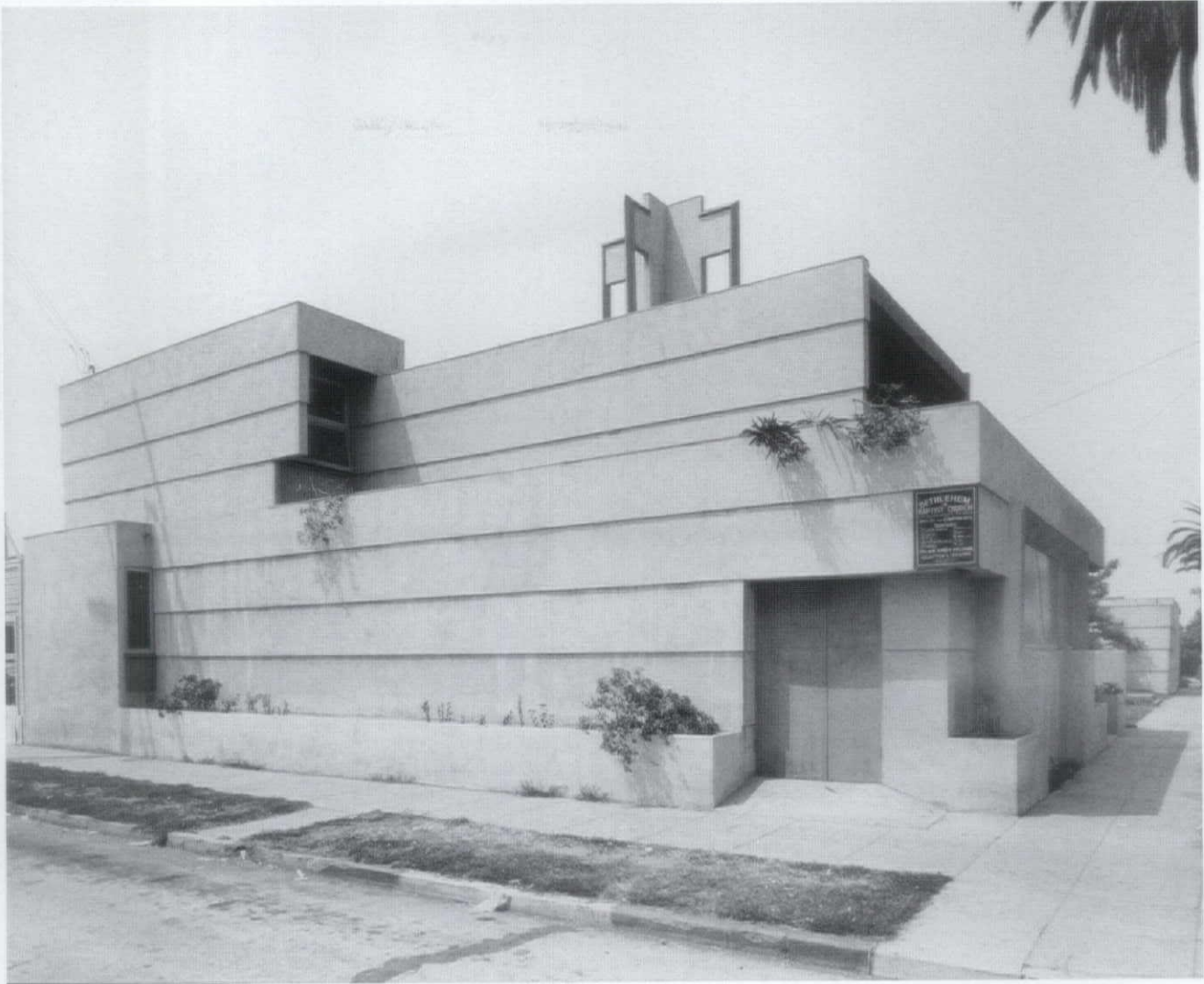
By Pierluigi Serraino

THE BETHLEHEM BAPTIST CHURCH IN LOS ANGELES CAL. R.M. SCHINDLER ARCH. LOS ANGELES 1944.

Much is known about the work of Austrian master Rudolph Mark Schindler (1887-1953). It is certainly one of the first names architects and lovers of modern architecture quickly learn in their initial exposure to modernity and Los Angeles. His signature is distinctive, his design attitude cultivated, and his massing instantly recognizable. His artistic talent was poured into over 200 residential structures he authored, largely in Southern California, using experimental building techniques, and a decidedly original spatial conception. Most of his architecture is painted white, earthbound, privileging massing to transparency, skillfully articulated for maximum functional use, variety, and addictive visual awe. Although he designed neither big buildings nor cities, his own house on Kings Road in Los Angeles, and the Lovell Beach House in Newport Beach are two projects, among many, that place him in the pantheon of the greats. What is less known is that he has conceived and executed one of the most imaginative sacred buildings in the history of modern architecture: the Bethlehem Baptist Church on Compton Avenue and 49th Street in Los Angeles completed in 1951.

Occasionally modern architecture history textbooks feature landmarks in the religious typology filled with aspiration to radically rethink the imagery and experience of a church, no matter what the denomination is. The position of the core elements is tightly predetermined and worshippers enter these environments with a set of expectations on how they are going to inhabit and pray in them. Within these general parameters, there has been wide latitude of design expressions to represent the will to go beyond the physical world into the metaphysical realm. European examples by Otto Wagner, August Perret, Le Corbusier, Rudolf Schwarz, and Alvar Aalto provide key names in this new vision of places of worship. In the United States the Northeastern and the Midwestern counterparts by Frank Lloyd Wright, Eliel and Eero Saarinen, Wallace Harrison, and Paul Rudolph are powerful statements signaling the genuine artistic investment of these personalities in commissions whose spiritual foundations were in doubt in a deeply secular age.





Photographs:
© J. Paul Getty Trust. Used with permission. Julius Shulman photography archive, research library at the Getty Research Institute.



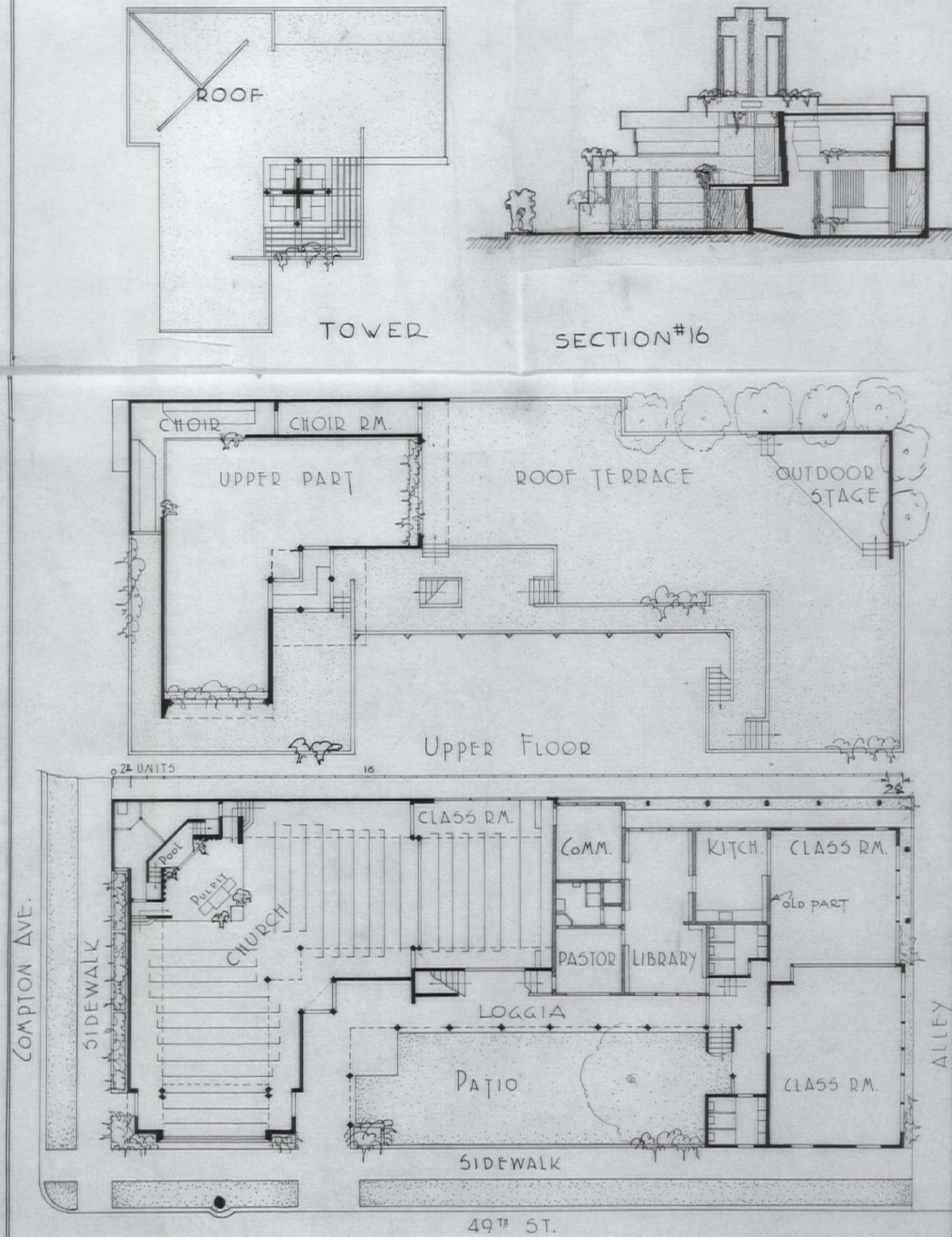
By the time Schindler got hired to give a new facility to the congregation in 1943, the Golden State could boast but a handful of proto-modernist achievements in church architecture. The most notable amongst them was the First Church of Christ Scientist by Bernard Maybeck in Berkeley finished in 1910. And, with the exception of the Wayfarers Chapel by Lloyd Wright completed in 1951, the several religious buildings worthy of consideration in California Modernism appeared only after the Bethlehem Baptist Church was realized. Schindler arrived in Chicago in 1914, and California in 1918 to help Lloyd Wright in the realization of the Hollyhock House by his father Frank Lloyd Wright, effectively created a prototype for a spiritual complex approached by car. While well-informed through magazines and books about the themes and the iconic buildings of the makers of modern architecture in Europe, Schindler never returned to the Old World. He never saw any of the avant-garde classics now standard in the educational pilgrimage of a modernist architect. Schindler passed on in Los Angeles in 1953. Therefore this project stands out as an extremely novel approach in the context of what was being produced, and the models, religious or otherwise, he could have experienced directly.

For an architect so steeped into the temporal ideology of the 20th century, the mystique exuding from this space is both daring and indigenous to the city's culture. Although inconspicuous at first from the main thoroughfare, a closer look gradually unveils a carefully conceived compound – a miniature city – nested into the endless tapestry of city lots formative of the Los Angeles urban texture. The new scheme was to replace a 25-year old existing wooden church destroyed in a fire in 1943. On a rectangular parcel of land measuring 135' by 58', an old residence and an equally old

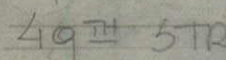
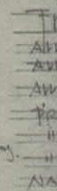
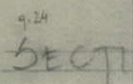


structure had to be reintegrated in the new arrangement with an increase in the membership congregation from 500 to 600 parishioners. While the \$20,000 construction budget was modest, the pastor Rev. C.C. Hall's resolve was to finance a modern building, a place where respect for the past and the expression of the future was going to be present in equal measure.

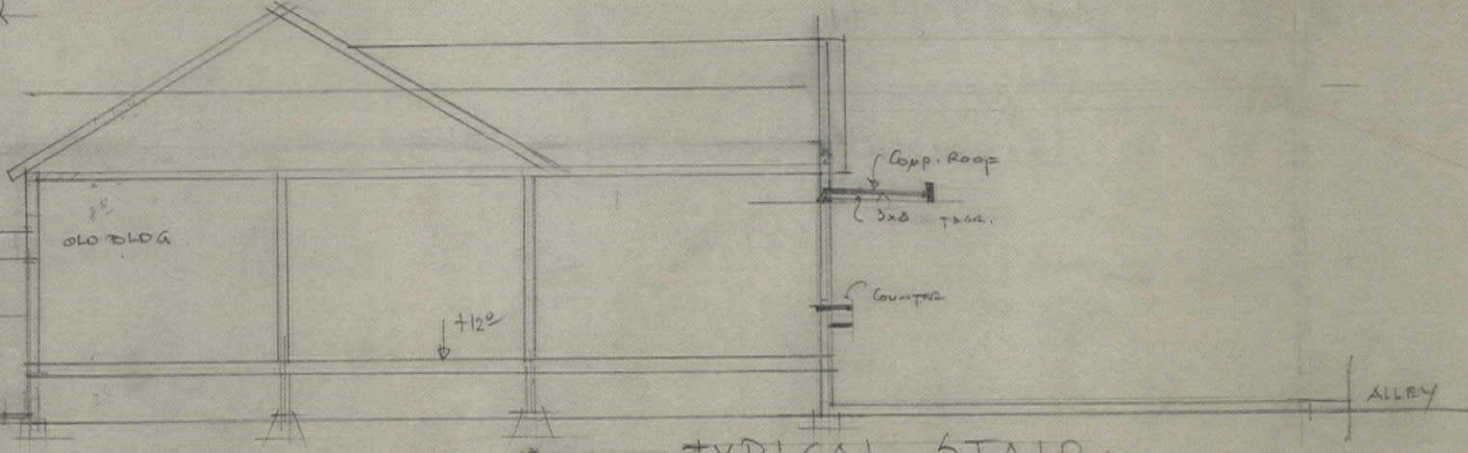
There are multiple surprising points of interest at the large and small scale that make this project in many ways exceptional. For starters, the heart of this religious hub is the garden to which all environments open, instead of the church. Due to the optimal weather conditions all year round, indoor and outdoor community gatherings are core experiences in the social dimension of praying. The church, while remaining prominent in massing relative to the internal hierarchy of the site, is subservient to the overall C-shape form wrapped around a central space facing due north. This arrangement shields the activity of the community from busy Compton Avenue, and shifts the weight of the composition toward E 49th street. The strength of this concept comes across very clearly when reading how emphatic Schindler was about the garden in a letter he wrote to a representative of the congregation where he stated: "I feel that we ought to do everything to complete the church, and especially the gardening around it. I am very much interested to have all this done in the right spirit, and would like to do everything I can to help you." This is a social space with a church in the mix as opposed to a church surrounded by accessory spaces. The structure is enmeshed into the overall scheme. A parade of wood posts rotated 45 degrees from the plane of the walls stakes out a covered passage delineating the patio geometry while providing circulation to all areas in the project.



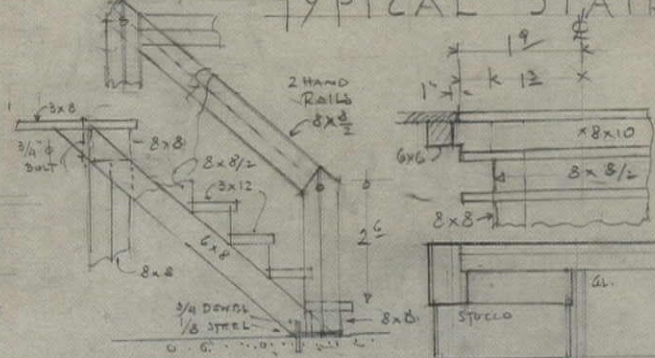
BETHLEHEM BAPTIST CHURCH R. M. SCHINDLER ARCHITECT



5

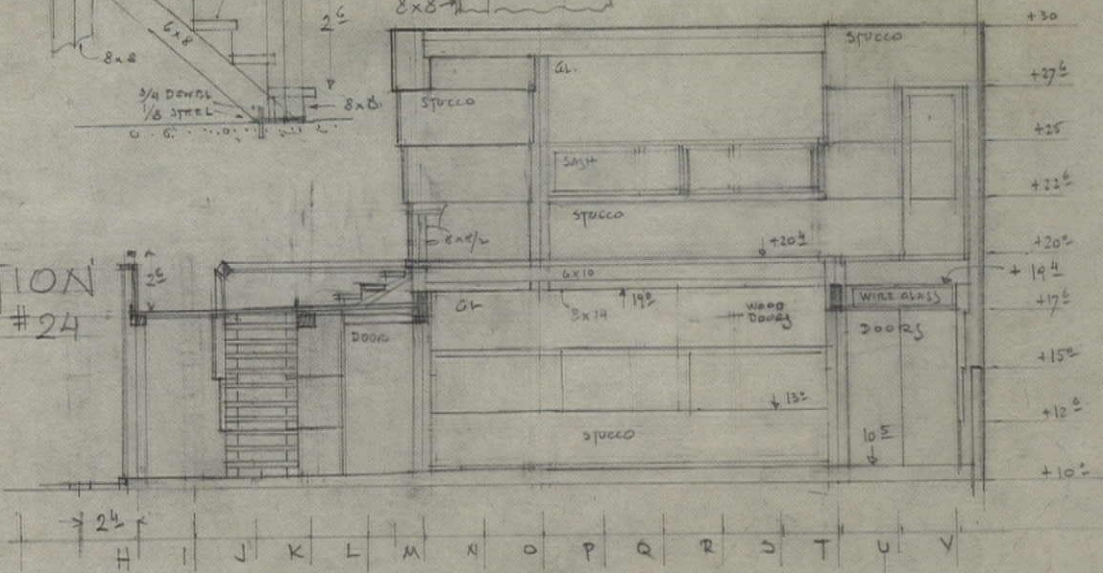


TYPICAL STAIR

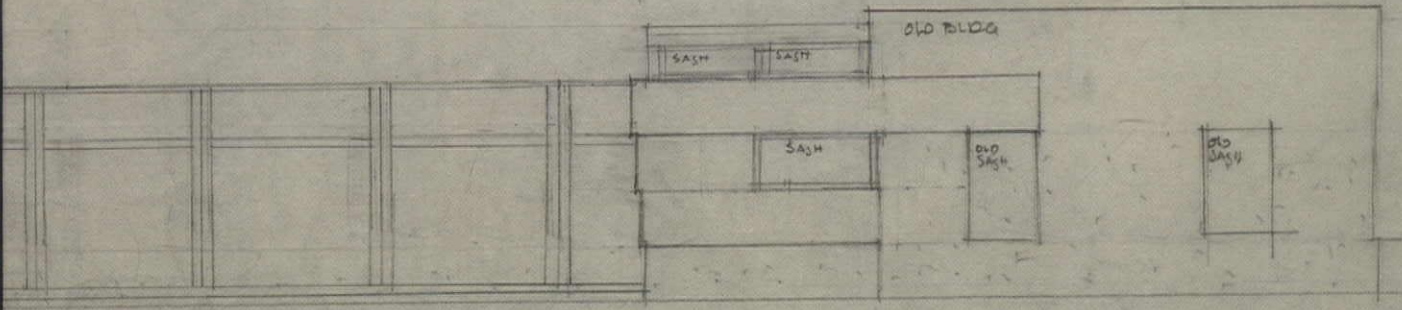


6:1
FOR ROOF FRAMING AND
FOR TRUSS MEMBERS SHALL BE GRADE #1800
FRAMING LUMBER " " " #1
GL BRACES AT AW CORNERS & EVERY 25'
25' AT CLG, FLOOR & IN BETWEEN
BRACING AT AW BEARING PARTITIONS.
W/2, PLASTERING ETC. ACC TO CITY CODE 1945

SECTION
#24



ONT



ANGELES.

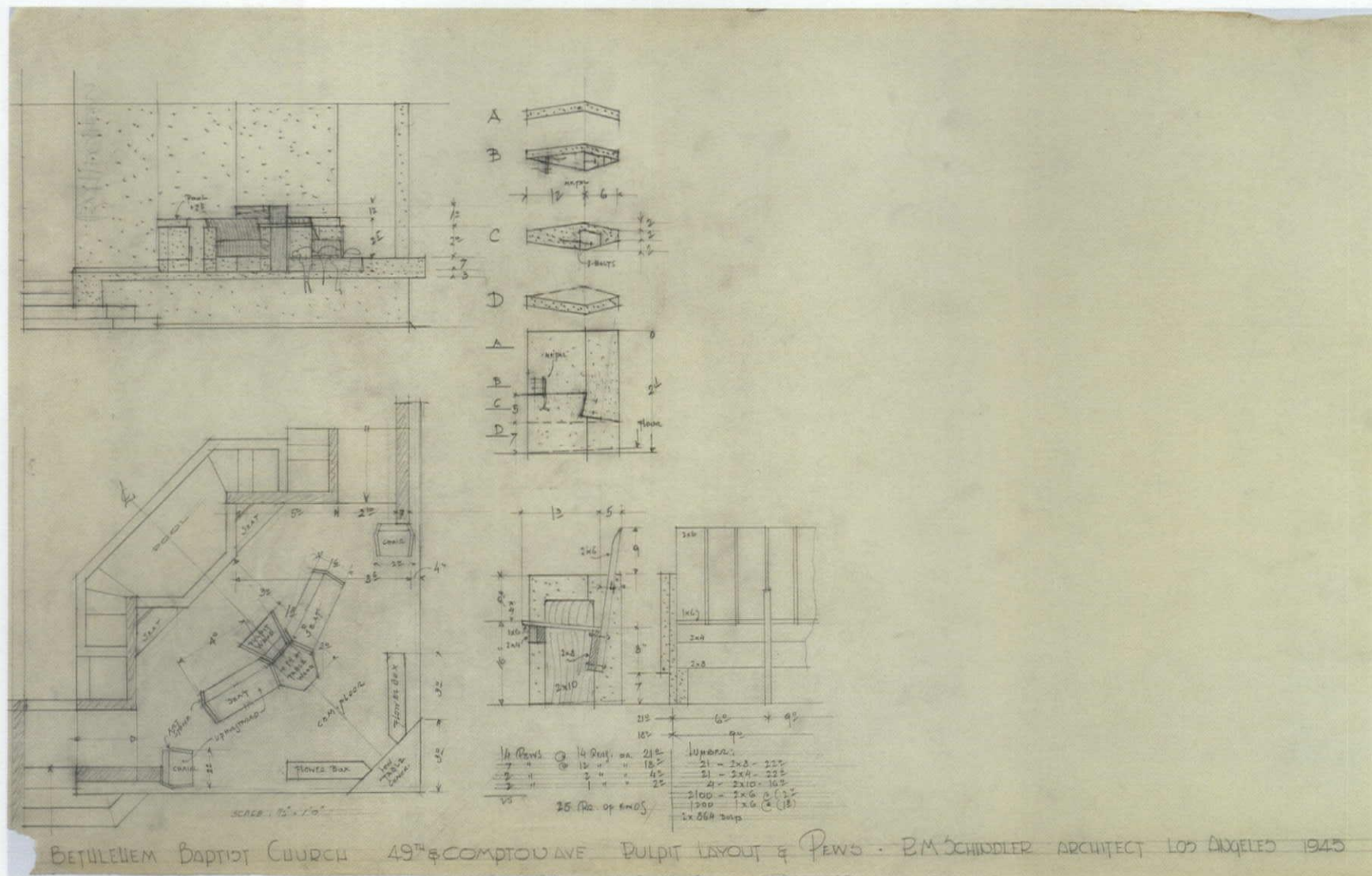
R.M. SCHINDLER ARCHITECT 1944



BETHLEHEM
BAPTIST
CHURCH





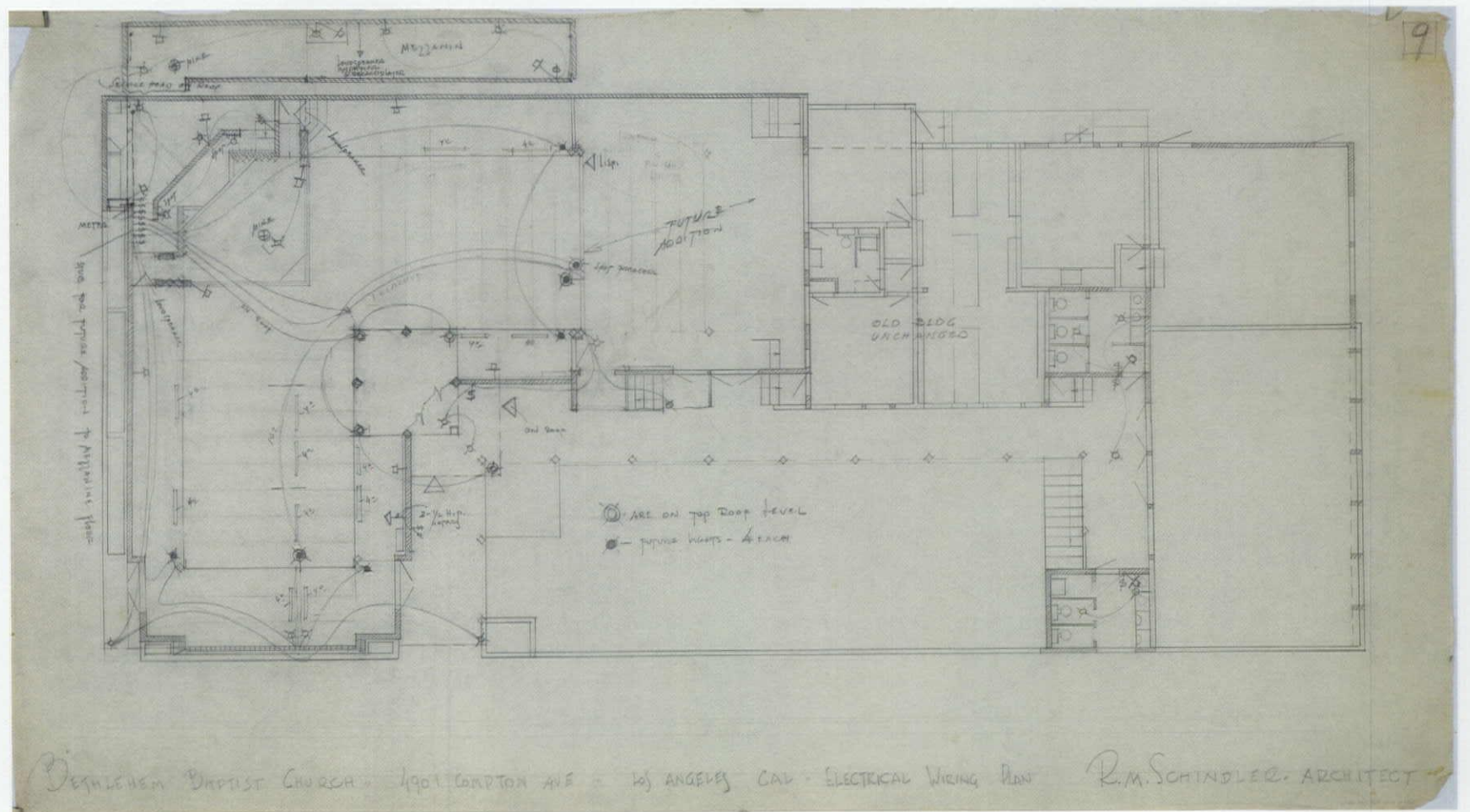
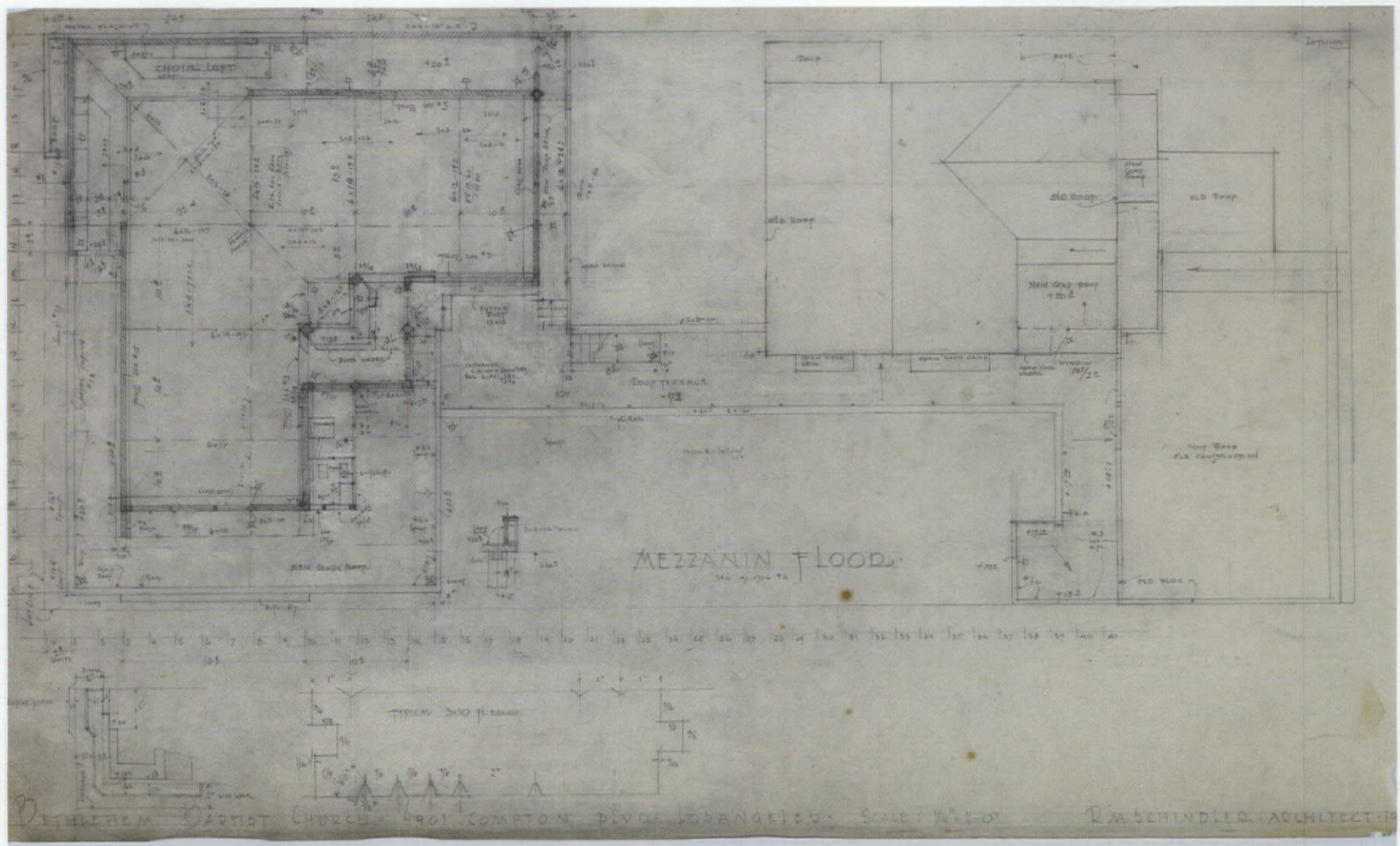


A second element of distinction is the church layout. Worshippers enter the space diagonally facing the altar and pulpit. The assembly is split along the two wings and can only be seen in its entirety from the altar. While Schindler never declared the origins of this unorthodox plan idea, a very similar arrangement can be found in Mission San Luis Obispo completed in 1819. That building presents a similar layout, with the pews arranged on an L-shaped plan, one wing hosting the nave, the shorter perpendicular one containing the chapel. In the architect's early intentions as shown in the schematic design drawings, one of the wings could open to turn a classroom into an extension of the split nave, but already in construction drawings that idea was abandoned to leave space for a lawn that was never built on. Also from the first iteration of the drawings, of the three outdoor stairs conceived to give access to a roof terrace on the second floor, only one was built leading to a partial upper level of limited collective use, yet giving entry to the space right underneath the tower.

The tower, holding the four sided cross is a third striking ingredient. It is within the tradition of sacred architecture for such a building type to be an anomaly- in either scale or architectural language, or in the built environment near and far. Whether Gothic, Neoclassical, Baroque, or Spanish Colonial, these structures stand out because they are singularities in the day-to-day inventory of utilitarian buildings. Here, although at street level the church rises straight up from the limits of the lot to reach similar height to adjacent construction, the three-dimensional cross operates both at the symbolic level because it signals the vertical centers of the space and at the prosaic level because it works as signage for car drivers looking for the church. The sculptural presence of

the cross dominates both the interior and exterior experience of the space. Such unique motive, unprecedented in early modern architecture and anticipatory of the iconicity of architect Louis Kahn, is a light source, a perpendicular magnet, a portal to the divine. Because the interior of the church is closed off to any exterior views, all the focus both from the pews and from the pulpit goes uniquely toward this powerful glow radiating the inside with soft graduated luminance. The remaining windows are clerestories occasionally affording views of the sky.

The subtle vertical and horizontal modularity of this unique architecture is its fourth point of distinction. The spacing of the pews at 2'-6" was used as a module, both for the plan and all the interior and exterior elevations, thus securing rhythmic coherence to the volumetric complexity of the project. A design characteristic of Streamline Moderne, an architecture period of the 1930s, is a pronounced horizontality in grooves and lines in the walls. Such disciplined striation marking the exterior surfaces of the Bethlehem Baptist Church is further accentuated by the singular profile of the inside and outside faces of the walls. They offset outward 3/4" per board, adding controlled dynamism to what otherwise would have turned into an abstract box. These corbelled walls are the architectural canvases for potent reveals under the angular California light. The vertical increments in the inches confer grandeur to the structure and activate every single plane to bestow metaphorical speed to the building with kaleidoscopic shadows penetrating every corner. It is worth noting that following the module the exact position of the cross in plan is in golden section ratio to length determined from the outer edge of the wall to the inside face of the existing building toward the patio, along the E 49th street side.





Budgetary constraints must have reduced the scope of work as originally stated. While the church remained intact in intent and execution to a reasonable extent comparing the initial version of the design with its latest stage, the educational and support spaces were drastically rethought. The perspective of the church on the E49th street side appeared in a brief article in the January 1945 issue of the *magazine Interiors*, showcases a highly compact banded massing, pierced strategically with open voids, and enclosed by a continuous partial height wall to protect the patio. In its final stage, the banded treatment is reserved to the church only and an iron fence replaced the pristine partial height wall along the patio side. Schindler's conflicts with the leaders of the parishioners were apparent by 1949 when he wrote: "The appearance of the whole is a disgrace to your community. Your congregation has spent a good deal of money to build the place, and it is quite apparent that they are getting neither use nor pleasure out of their sacrifices."

Despite the animosity of those years, the project was completed in its reduced form and the relationship was closed under more conciliatory tones. The domestic character of this community center with a church was in fact quite successful. The patio became a popular play area for children age 8 to 10 at all times as well as a

place where wiener bakes were being served, whereas on Saturday guitar classes were being given in the classrooms. The reception of the design as a religious complex was mixed in the congregation

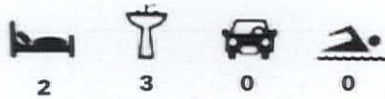
Due to its unusual appearance some felt it looks like a night club. And apparently, shortly after its opening, a real estate broker offered to buy the church for \$40,000 to indeed turn it into a night club. But the church remained as such. It received no significant coverage in the media, although correspondence by the architect with the client refers to visits of students to the premises and the chances that more people will come due to its inclusion in a book published by the University of Southern California.

Ambitious in spatial concept, the load-bearing structure is rather traditional. The wood frame was stucco outside and plaster inside, with various size blocking realizing much of the wall acrobatics. While tame in the building system, Schindler thought of a rather flamboyant color scheme for the church: it featured red floors, blue and plum for the interior, and pale mulberry for the exterior. Today the complex is white and fresh of code upgrade and long overdue maintenance. It remains one of the great treasures of Los Angeles. And justly so.

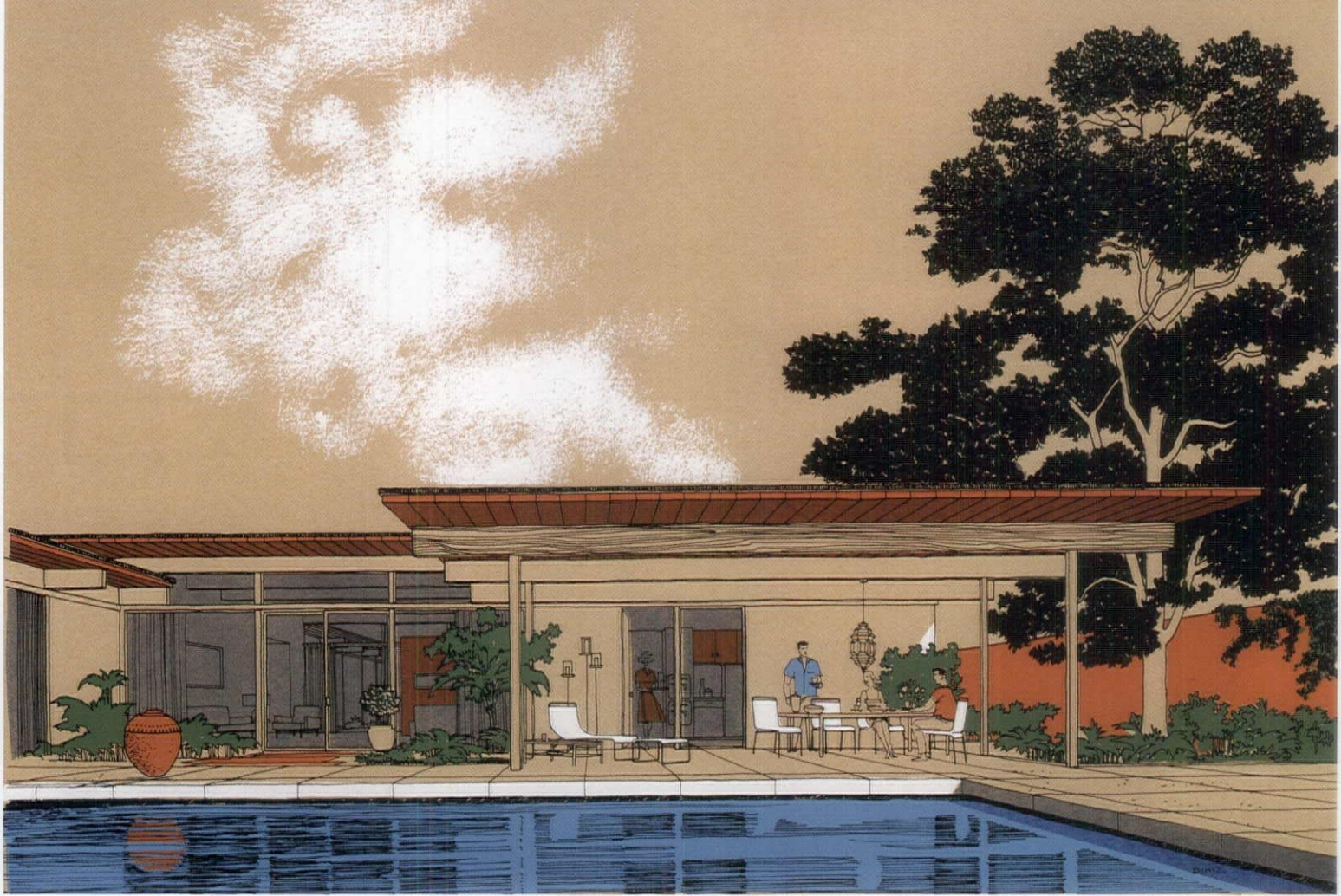




4901 South Compton Avenue - Los Angeles, California



Details & Information at: schindlerchurch.com

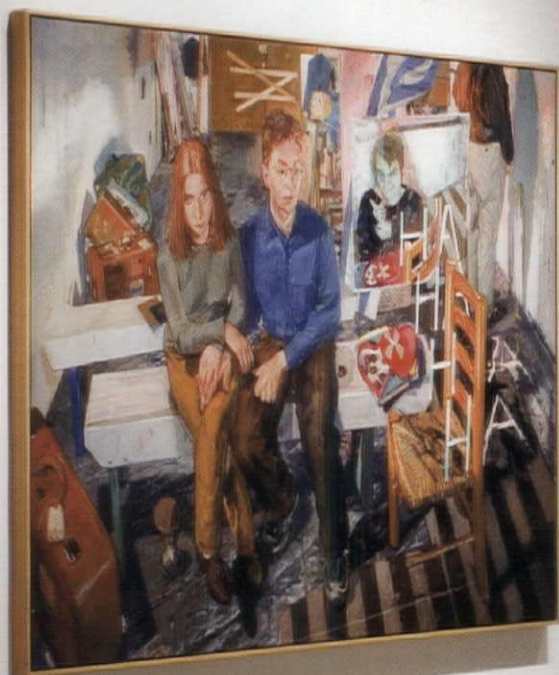


Specializing in original drawings and objects by architects.

Above: Carlos Diniz (1928-2001), *Monarch Bay Homes*, 1961, Kelsey & Ladd Architects, Vintage Screenprint

EDWARD CELLA
ART + ARCHITECTURE

COMING SOON: 2754 S. LA CIENEGA BLVD., LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA 90034 (323) 525.0053 EDWARDCELLA.COM



Collectible

Paintings
Drawings
Prints
Sculpture

JACK RUTBERG FINE ARTS

357 N. La Brea Avenue, Los Angeles, California 90036 Tel (323) 938-5222
www.jackrutbergfinearts.com

URBANE ARCHITECTURE



The John Kelsey Residence, 1962



On the Work of Ladd & Kelsey, Architects

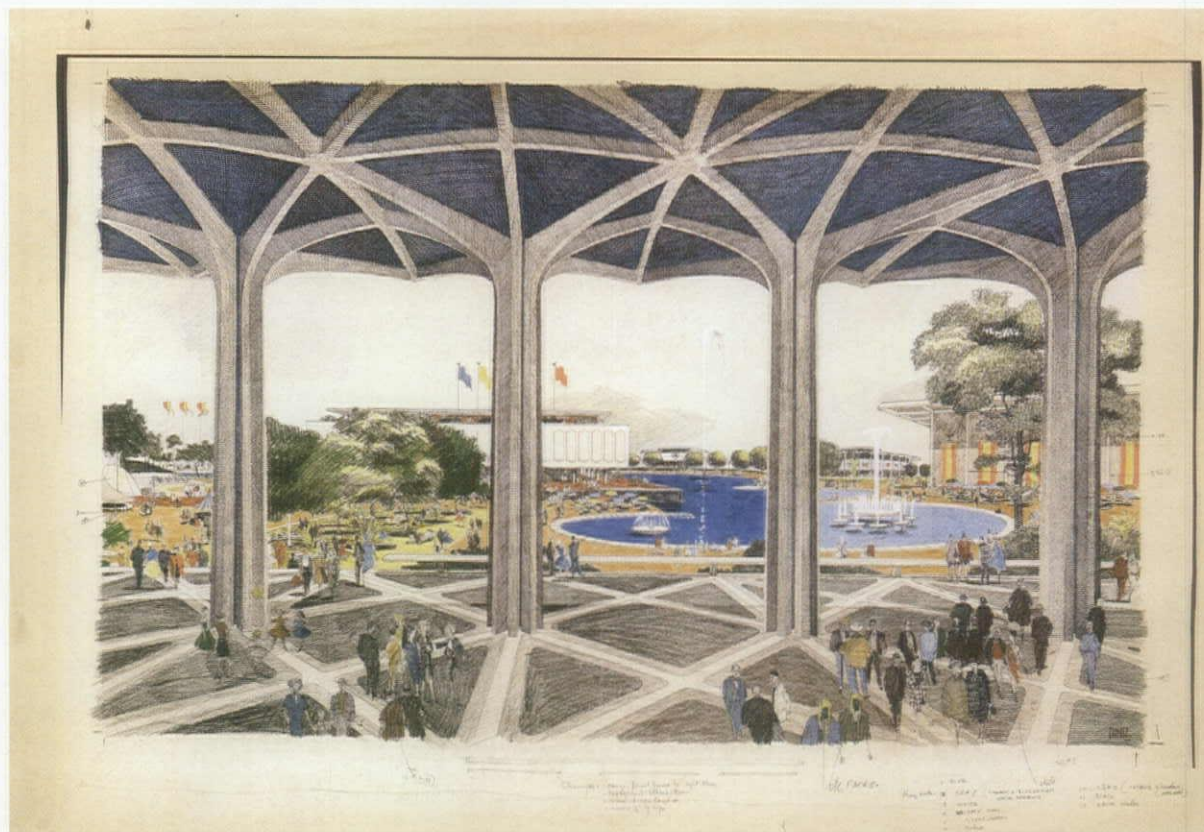
By Pierluigi Serraino

Midcentury modern in California came to age due to the phenomenal plethora of talented architects. Of that inspired group, the Pasadena-based partnership of Thornton Ladd (1924-2010) and John Kelsey (1925-2012) occupies a particular place. The story of that firm, operational from 1959 till 1982, is especially fascinating both for the level of its design achievements and for its puzzling invisibility in the burgeoning literature about California Modernism. Despite its lack of recognition today, even among the many experts of the period, the Ladd & Kelsey name is tied to some of the iconic buildings of Los Angeles modern architecture. The Pasadena Art Museum, today called Norton Simon Museum and completed in 1969, is one of their most notable projects.

She was also an art collector, with an extensive collection of Japanese prints, she often shared with her son. These prints were later purchased from her by her sister-in-law, Meta Babbott Ladd of New York, and were eventually donated to the Portland Art Museum in their name. Susan Dworski, Thornton Ladd's niece, reminisced, "I believe he came by his modernism most importantly via his immersion in Asian art, in particular Japanese woodcuts, paintings, sculpture, and their manicured temple gardens. He told me that one of his fondest memories as a child was sitting beside his mother on a rainy day in Portland when she would open the folios of Hiroshige woodcuts the family had collected from an old chest, and reverentially untie the ribbons, commencing to go through each print hand by hand, talking to him about the art and the artist." This world of

**Project: Ladd & Kelsey Pavilion
for Los Angeles Expo.**

**Architectural Illustration by
Carlos Deniz**



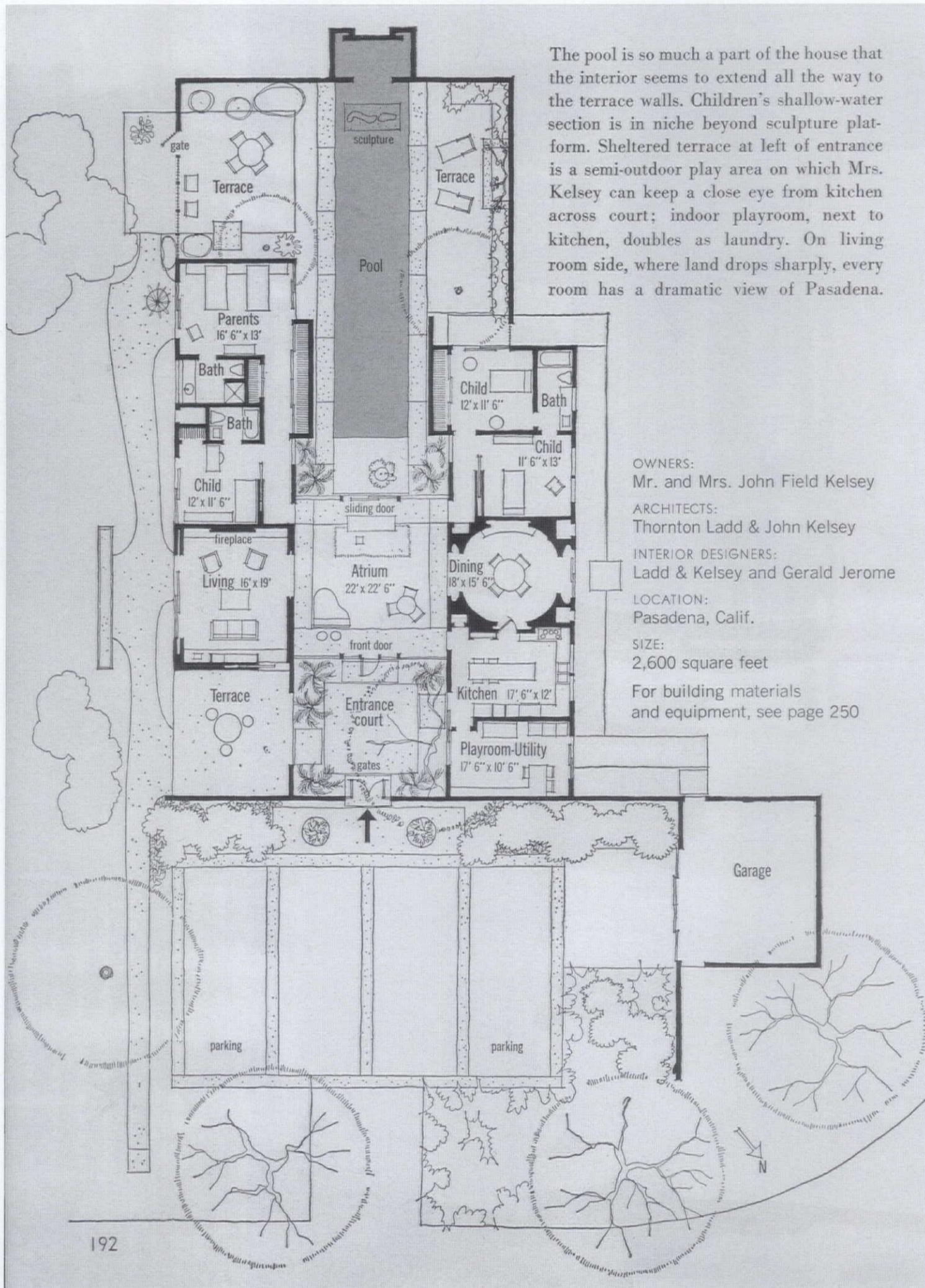
This strong-willed duo left few written traces of their stance about architecture. Those occasional pronouncements resurfacing from unpublished material retrieved through archival research, however, betray deep-seated convictions about the relationship between architecture and society. "The success of a culture is measured by history in terms of the civilization's architectural and artistic achievement." This closing statement found in an unpublished letter Ladd & Kelsey send to newly elected President Richard Nixon, pleading for his intervention to avert an imminent national crisis in the building industry, summarizes the philosophical underpinning of a practice unusually quiet about its position on matters of architecture.

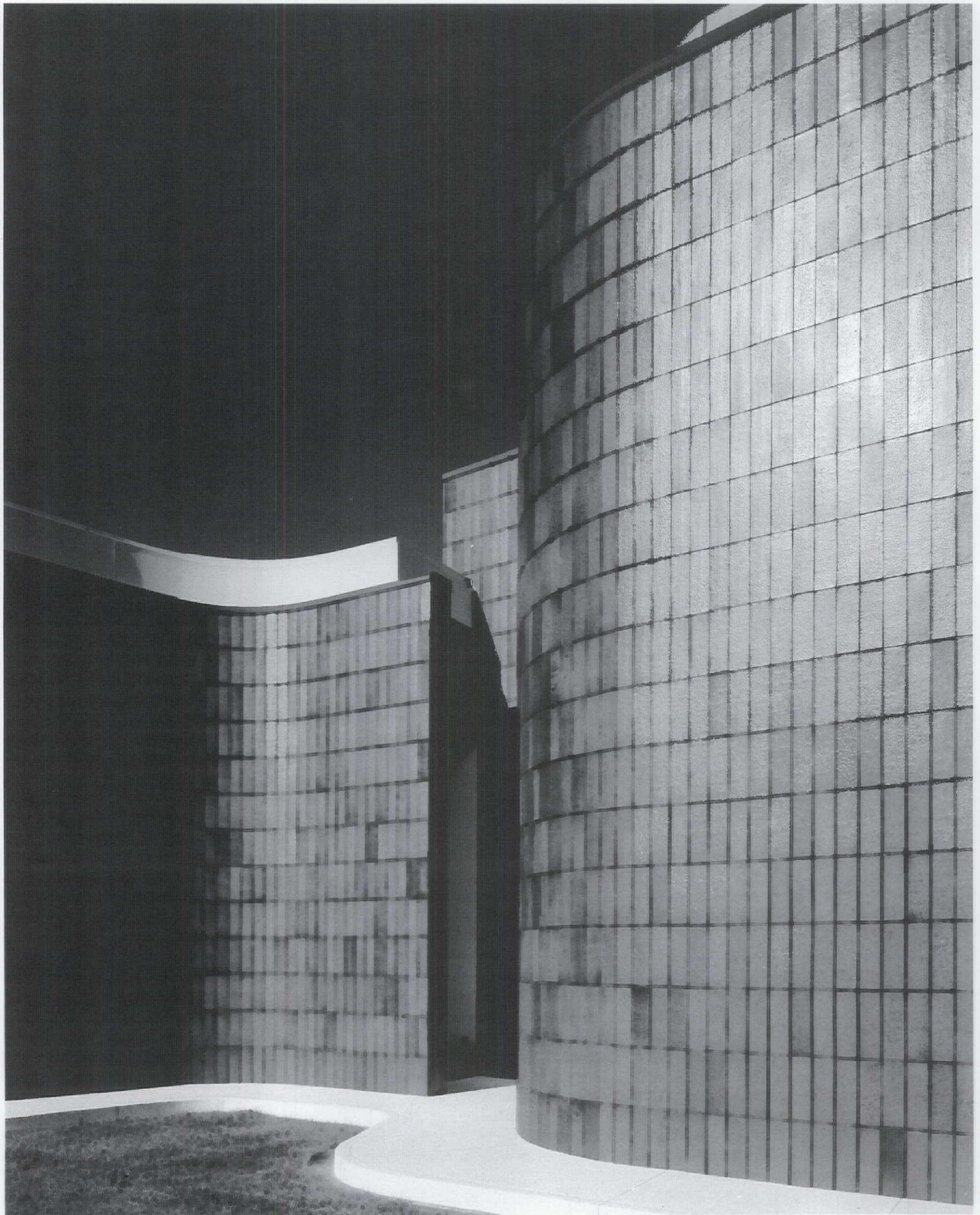
About Thornton Ladd, there is a thin trail of publications, but the lack of critical assessment concerning his contribution to California architecture is disconcerting, just as in Kelsey's case. A Portland native, he grew up in a large Victorian home that occupied a square block in downtown Portland. He came from a family of wealth (William Ladd, co-founder of the Ladd-Tilton Bank in Oregon was Thornton's grandfather), and exhibited acute musical talent early on, becoming an accomplished pianist. Love for music ran in the family. Mary Andrews Ladd, Thornton's mother, was a highly talented pianist and teacher.

understated, esthetic order was an emotional environment he remained true to for his entire life.

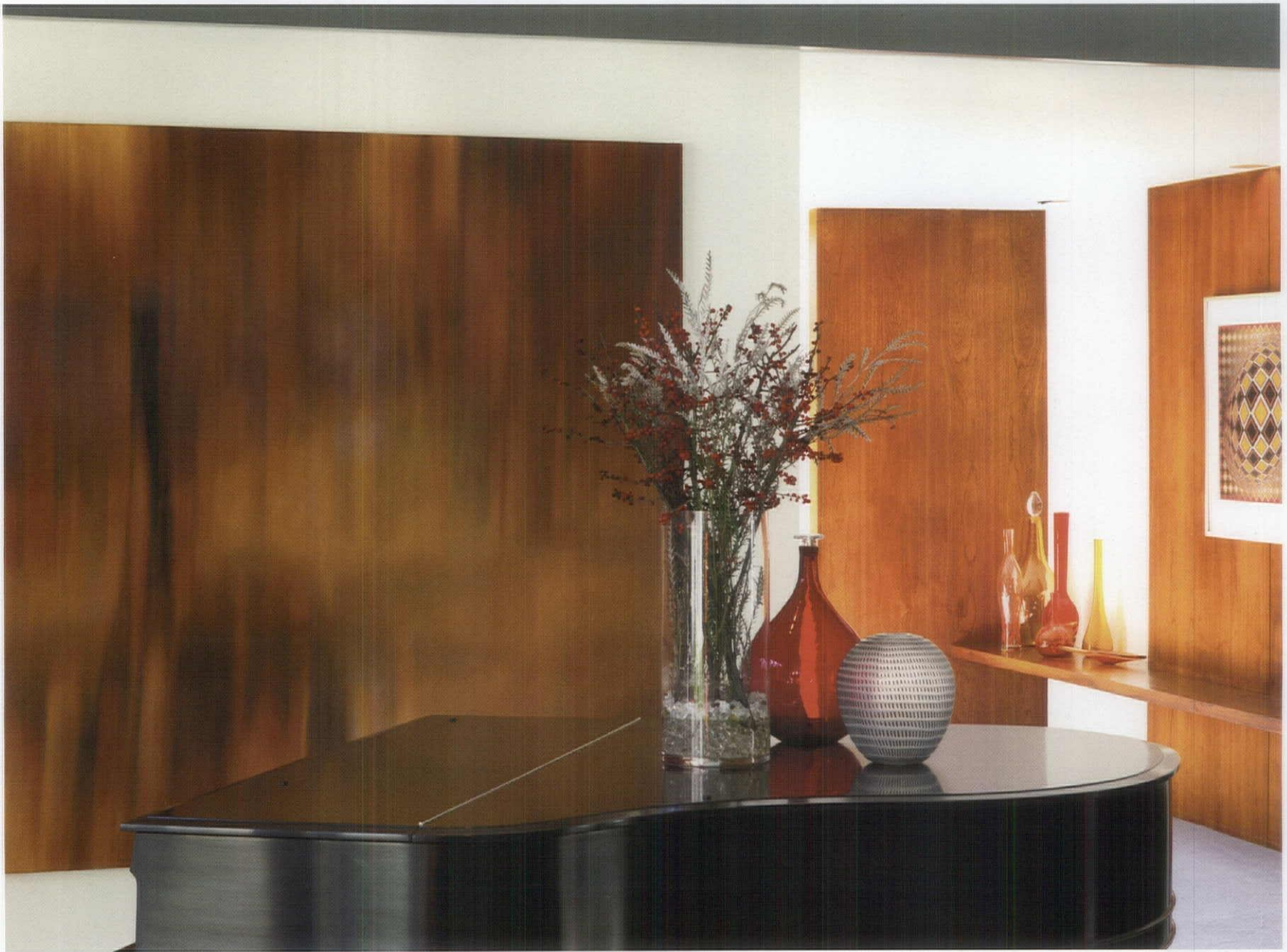
Ladd played the piano at a very early age and continued into his college years at the University of Southern California (USC.) At 22, however, he abandoned his professional aspirations in music to delve into architecture. He graduated Cum Laude from USC with a Bachelor of Architecture in June, 1953. Among his classmates were Robert Marquis, Pierre Koenig, Don Hensman, Conrad Buff, and John Reed. Gregory Ain was one of his instructors. Furthermore, he spent a year studying landscape architecture and won first prize in the City of Monterey, California Park Design and Layout. He apprenticed at a general contractor and later at Pereira and Luckman before establishing Thornton Ladd & Associates in 1954.

Already in Ladd's early residential work, the design language shared with his future partner Kelsey was present. In the design for his mother's house and his own studio, located slightly down the hill on the same property, Ladd master-minded a private Acropolis, a contemplative architectural totality based on a rectangular and square geometry. He devised a circuit of linked experiences that brought the relationship between topography and vistas to unparalleled poetic peaks. The whole gamut of outdoor structures – a pool, a pavilion, sleeping porches, gardens, a peristyle – is blended seamlessly in the uber-design of the entire complex, and is an excellent insight into Ladd's approach to residential architecture, uniquely flavored with a pervasive,









urbane harmony. In that estate Ms. Ladd kept two grand pianos where mother and son could nurture their abiding passion for music. Even at this early stage, the tall ceiling was an arresting feature, and would become a distinguishing architectural element in many future Ladd & Kelsey buildings.

Award-winning architects from the start, Ladd & Kelsey located their first office in Pasadena because Ladd's relatives were there. They won sought-after commissions early on. Although Ladd's family connections proved to be advantageous in securing high profile jobs, it was their combined talent that earned the confidence of an influential, institutional client base. Total design control, orderly articulation of space, and meticulous care in the solution of individual problems were the three basic principles informing their entire body of work. The practice was generalist in scope and they undertook a wide variety of building projects.

Business-minded, artistically endowed, and undeniably very well-connected, Ladd & Kelsey designed banks, housing developments, academic buildings, offices, churches, gardens, museums, shopping malls, hospitals, and corporate headquarters at a vertiginous pace. "Architecture is a profession demanding the same degree of experience, skill, and personal attention as medicine or the law" their firm's profile reads. These snippets of declaration found in scattered printed material prove in no uncertain terms that the two design principals had a very top-down approach to architecture.

They retained rigid design control of every project that came out of the office, explaining the consistency of their output over the years. In that same firm's profile, Ladd adds, "The successful execution of a project from conception to completion depends directly upon the caliber of the architect in charge, and this responsibility should rest only with a principal of the firm." They purposely employed a small staff of ten, and avoided the leap into the corporate structure in order for the two founders to maintain close proximity to each commission.

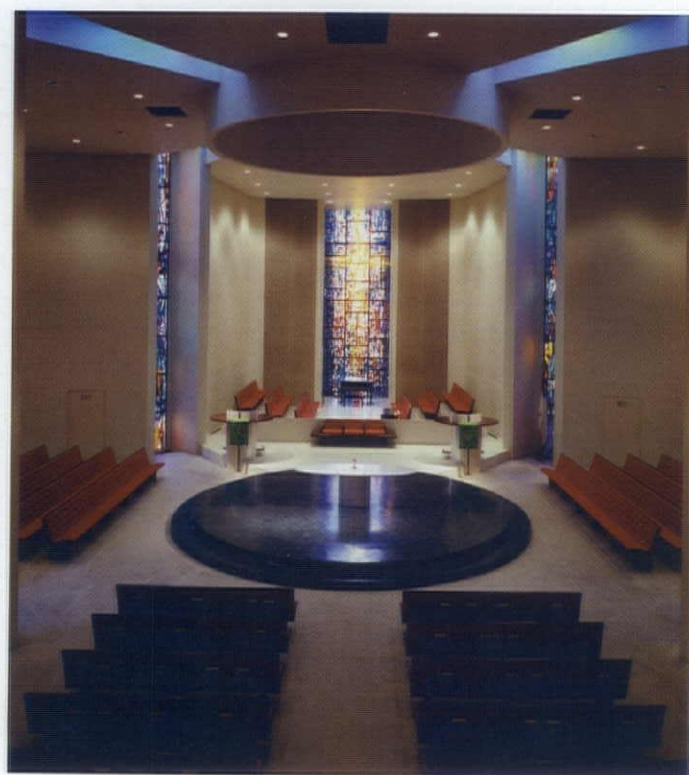
In an effort to explain and communicate their architectural vision to clients as clearly as possible, they made use of large-scale study and presentation models. Already in the late 1950s celebrated American Finnish architect Eero Saarinen had pioneered the use of this technique to study architecture ideas, achieving greater clarity in communicating design intent between his office and its clients. Ladd & Kelsey created a California version of that method. Their goal was to eradicate from the design process the guesswork of sketches to offer a committed rendition of the proposed options. Both as instruments of design evaluation and as presentation tools, these exact scale models, some more than 40 feet in length, allowed their clients, aided with a special periscope, to fully understand what they were paying for.



Scale Model: Hollywood Presbyterian Hospital



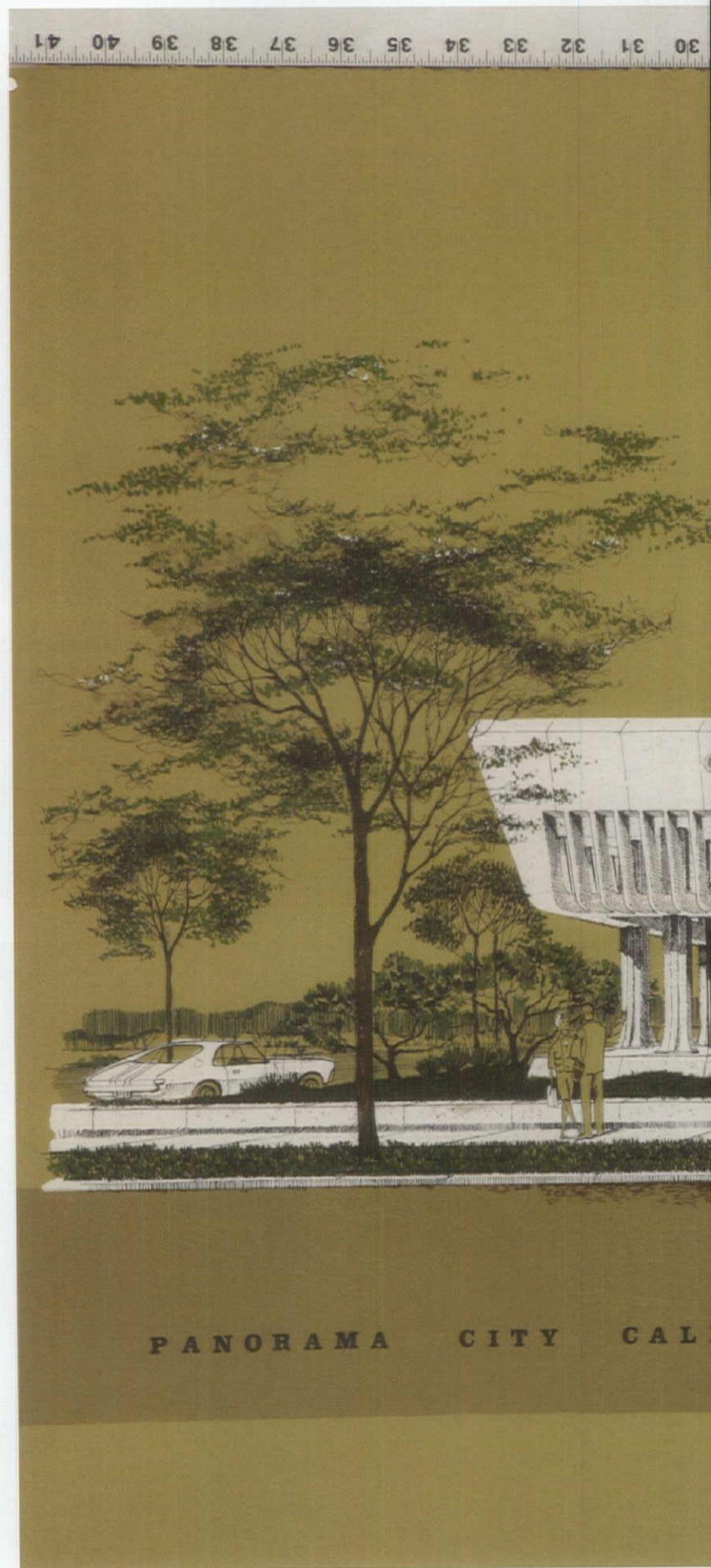
Herrick Chapel



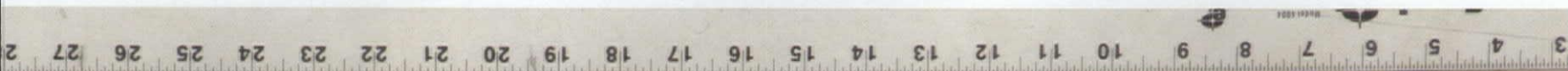
Herrick Chapel

Together, Ladd & Kelsey designed a number of landmarks of California Modernism. They were the consulting architects for the iconic design of the Department of Water and Power in downtown Los Angeles. The Steering Committee in charge of the project procurement referred Ladd & Kelsey to the reputable A.C. Martin & Associates, architect of record, because of their design skills. They designed the First Methodist Church Chapel in La Verne that was featured in the closing scene of 1967 movie "The Graduate," where a young Dustin Hoffman is desperately trying to interrupt the wedding of his former girlfriend. They authored the Herrick Memorial Chapel at Occidental College completed in 1965, built in poured-in-place concrete. It was the first use of slip form concrete construction in Southern California. They turned an abandoned industrial area in the San Fernando Valley into Busch Gardens amusement park, which included a monorail tour through the Anheuser-Busch brewery in Van Nuys. This tropical setting was open to the public from 1966 until 1979 – a dreamy landscape dotted with lakes, lagoons, pavilions, islands, cliffs, waterfalls, tropical birds, and flowers. Tackling a completely different commercial project, they conceived the Stuff Shirt Restaurant at Port Orange, Newport Beach, which has been recently renovated. This refined structure is a classic midcentury period piece consisting of thin-shell concrete domes, and explores with refined sensitivity the expressive range of this plastic material, beautifully utilized in a resort setting with commanding views of the harbor.

Walt Disney, however, was without doubt the most high profile client of Ladd & Kelsey. Ladd's family connections led to that relationship, making Thornton, then barely 40 years old, the principal-in-charge responsible for the design of the Master Plan and the buildings of the Cal Arts campus in Valencia. Also for Disney, they designed the unbuilt Mineral King Ski Resort and year-round recreational facility in the High Sierra. The Norton Simon Museum is possibly the most prominent project still standing created by this architectural duo. Even in its Gehry-modified version, it retains its distinctive continuous ribbon of Heath designed and fabricated ceramic tiles cladding the walls enveloping a cluster of exhibit chambers, classrooms, and 400-seat auditorium in the 7.5 acre Carmelita Park. In this scheme the rounding of the corners became their signature design device to embody the fluidity of the spatial experience, a stratagem they would utilize in many subsequent designs. In this particular design, noted architectural historian Robert Winter detected an echo of the Streamline Moderne style of the 1930s imbued with "a formal classic quality."



Architectural Illustration by Carlos Deniz



N I A



Ladd's early retirement from architecture brought the Ladd & Kelsey practice to a close. He delved into the study of the works of C.G Jung, with the intent of compiling a comprehensive, digitized index to the psychoanalyst's works to be made available to scholars worldwide. Kelsey, instead continued working in the field, practicing architecture solo, assisted by his third wife Catherine, and until the end of his life he designed custom homes, many of them located in Montecito, Palm Desert and Santa Fe NM, work closely with each client. Much to our dismay, the archive of Ladd & Kelsey was not put in storage, but simply disposed of. Ladd's niece commented on the issue, "Thornton was enormously sensitive, but also enormously unsentimental about stuff like this. He had a strong ego, yet he was very self-effacing when it came to pushing himself into the public eye, unlike many architects today." According to family members, John Kelsey shared similar inner traits.

A few biographical notes will position the career of John Field Kelsey, an Angeleno, in the local history of Los Angeles. His father, Van Frank Kelsey, a real estate businessman who handled transactions tied to the land where the famous Hollywood sign is

now standing, died of influenza in 1932, leaving behind three boys of very young age. John was the youngest and grew up in a house located close to USC. At 14 he contracted a mastoid infection which lasted for months. During his sickness he started making drawings and models showing the extent of his artistic bent for the first time. His brother Richard recalls his facility in using his hands to make sculptural forms, something he stayed true to for his entire life. In World War II he became an air cadet, although by the time he graduated the war was over. Like many of his generation, he took advantage of the 1944 GI bill to enroll in architecture school at the University of Southern California. He started college in his early twenties and met there a young Frank Gehry, who remained lifelong friend ever since. Most importantly, he was there where he befriended Thornton Ladd, a year his senior, with whom he will develop a very successful practice some time later. In those formative school years, he worked for noted architectural office A.C. Martin and was a member of Tau Sigma Delta, Honorary Scholastic Architectural Fraternity, and Scarab, the Honorary Architectural Design Fraternity. Kelsey earned his Bachelor of Architecture degree with a focus on comprehensive environmental and landscaping design.





Residential jobs represent both the point of departure and the bulk of the later phase of Kelsey's career. One outstanding early accomplishment was the realization of his own house on 1160 Chateau Road, Pasadena. Conceived for his family of five during his first marriage, this project stands as a manifesto of his distinct design sensibility. An unapologetic fan of Mies Van der Rohe, Kelsey was sold on the universality of that master's discipline. His brother, Richard Kelsey, remarked about Ladd & Kelsey's architectural references: "Greene & Greene was not their thing." On Chateau Road he combines skillfully planning rigor of Germanic descent with openness to the site's lush landscape, a hallmark of modern architecture in Southern California. Rather than rigid implementation of dogmatic principles, the residence showcases personal touches signaling a relaxed participation to the Miesian creed. The residence was completed in 1962, a time of turbulent reassessment of architectural history. Two groundbreaking essays – Rudolf Wittkower's *Architectural Principles in the Age of Humanism* of 1949 and Colin Rowe's *The Mathematics of the Ideal Villa* of 1947 – re-admitted in the debate the legitimacy of geometric formalism rooted in the architecture of Renaissance master Andrea Palladio. Together they re-established the supremacy of the plan as both generative and conclusive in the making of architecture. Later internationally celebrated architects Edward Durrell Stone and Minoru Yamasaki extended the modernist vocabulary to include design elements of decisively historical origins, such as screens, lattice, up-dated versions of ornamentation, and fine grained detailing. The aesthetic abstraction of architecture based on mass-production ideals was under attack.





National and international architectural magazines, of which Kelsey was an avid reader, reflected this change in taste and published a substantial number of projects structured around formal principles grounded in a renewed interest in classicism. The architecture that came out of this period was called 'Neo-Palladian', of which the nine-square-grid diagram is possibly the most momentous image affecting much architectural production of the day. Kelsey was well-informed about the conversation taking place in the journals of the English-speaking world. He was aware that his design was in consonance with what was being produced at that time and also intrinsically personal in the development of those design themes. Whether or not he ever read those essays, in his own residence he gave his version of the nine-square-grid spatial organization.

The controlled organization of the natural scene was something he felt invested in from the early days, thus becoming a constant to be found in many of the designs he signed: "He wanted to have the last word about the planting", his brother Richard recalls. His own residence demonstrates his mastery in choreographing the enmeshment of architecture and nature into one spatial entity. The baronial proportions of the house are apparent from the street, from the generous entrance court to the long stretch of a windowless white wall. Its mute assertiveness commands attention, cuing visitors to some anticipated rewards upon entering its majestic threshold. Vegetation already takes center stage in this entry experience where variegated foliage creates an organic counterpoint to the serene horizontality of the floating flat roofs.

Two full height teak gates mark the access to a courtyard, acting both as an open room and as a patio within the precinct. Once inside, a procession of white surfaces along a main axis punctuates a series of discrete, yet interconnected micro architectural experiences. Maybe an enclosed garden with multiple areas open to the sky, maybe a container of hardscape and landscape, it is this very ambiguity of reading that makes this project filled with compelling interpretative possibilities.

The squared patio, carefully sized and scripted in its ground articulation, is an outdoor prelude offering deep sightlines into the crevices of this scheme. It is the ordering axis along the 66-foot long pool, however, that brings cohesiveness to the plan layout. The influence of noted Mexican architect Luis Barragán is apparent, but consistent with the adaptation of a Miesian language to regional conditions. There is abundant reason to state that the pool stands to the Southern California House as the fireplace stands to residences in the North East. Rather than an amenity appended to the house design, the pool functions as its hearth, creating the perfect setting for the rituals of the Southern California lifestyle. In the Kelsey House, both sleeping quarters and the public areas have some visual relationship with the elongated stretch of water, thus becoming the dominant architectural image of the interiors. While certainly belonging to the modernist lineage, this house is a grand mansion contained within precisely staked out boundaries. It is designed to be an open plan, while being at the same time a calibrated addition of individual self-contained spaces.





Each room has very precise edges, but afford views of adjacent areas. To the individuation of every single part of the house, the same flat roof and continuous redwood fascias, where the vertical and horizontal surfaces meet, stitch all these functionally-specific areas into one common space. Within them the richness of the indoor-outdoor theme, a classic of the period, is imaginatively staged.

What is a unique episode in this project, in view of the formal repertoire of California Modernism, is the dining room, revelatory of future trends in architecture. The sweeping wooded surfaces of the Tugendhat house's dining room in Brno by Mies Van der Rohe appear to be Kelsey's homage to his symbolic mentor. But the amount of *poche* visible in the drawing betrays historical quotations latching to the Baroque heritage rather than the contemporary world, something virtually none of his contemporaries would have ever dared to connect to in 1962. In plan, it could be read as a chapel, or a miniature villa, almost a folly for someone so committed to modern forms. Yet the room's bilateral symmetry is oddly in sync with the overall parti of the house for it remains seamless in its connectivity to the rest. Only the organic niches bridging the curvilinear and rectilinear walls, a favorite hiding places for his three young children because of their scale, do signal that a whole new geometry is grafted on a strictly modular plan. More than an infatuation, Kelsey's fascination for the organic curvilinear reappears in the large-scale work, and consistently handled with design command.

Few modifications to the original design of the house have been made over time. Gone is the red brick floor framed in a black, polished concrete border that marked atrium.

The two sculptures (skull and horn) by Jack Zajak positioned at the vanishing point of the pool have been removed. In that same area, the grand freestanding wall has been painted red and the children's shallow-water section between the tall wall and the sculpture has been modified to become a Jacuzzi-type tub. Furthermore, an accessory structure (the Lyman Ennis addition) was built in 1973 – 74, to include room for the children of Mrs. Kelsey second husband, accessible from the kitchen, but detached from the main house. In the main, however, the Kelsey House remains intact and majestic as when it was first built.



John Kelsey

Thornton Ladd



1160 Chateau Road — Pasadena, California



Details & Information at: arch.forsale/view/laddkelsey.com



izuno Studio. 2011

GRANT MUDFORD

represented by

ROSAMUND FELSEN GALLERY

MOVING TO NEW LOCATION, APRIL 2015

1923 S. Santa Fe Ave, Los Angeles, CA 90021
(310) 828 - 8488 info@rosamundfelsen.com
www.rosamundfelsen.com

Fifty Years for a Refrain — Andrea Dietz





A New Vision for Pierre Koenig's West Coastal Design
The Henbest-Birkett Residence, 1966-2011

The roads that wind through the higher elevations of Rancho Palos Verdes are made for Sunday driving. It's possible, even, that Sunday driving was made for them. Wide and lazy, they meander up slopes and along ridgelines, intermittently opening up on incomparable vistas of blindingly blue waters and closing down on alleys of tree-canopied grass-manicures backed by role-model homes. It's the perfect cruising grounds for weekend reflection, the kind of taking stock best satisfied at twenty-five miles-per-hour, with the top down, and a brisk breeze blowing.

At that pace, the occasional property wall is a cruel disruption to the rolling daydream speculations on the lives playing out beyond the car body, behind the rhythmic pattern of painted doors and curtain-framed windows. A sudden blank facade betrays the back-seat imagination, pushing it to assume reclusive extremes of hidden inhabitants. Certainly, the obscuring barrier rarely is perceived as an indicator of the progressive. But, as with all things, there are exceptions. And, it is an uncommon surprise that waits on the invisible side of a sleek ipê board fence sited on a western bluff above Los Verdes Golf Course and overlooking the Pacific Ocean.

There, through a door-slip that upholds the illusion of an unbroken street-front blockade of vertical planks, the recently rejuvenated work of one of southern California's iconic architects holds quietly onto, ready to reassert, the light and air ideals of mid-century optimism. The microcosm beyond is more than a crystalline encapsulation of the Modern spirit; it's a vital argument for the timeless vision of the simple and the seamless.

Fittingly, the first steps past the entry gate into the Henbest-Birkett lawn encourage traversers to shake off the weight of whatever ails or grieves with a literal hop and a skip. The poolside paving – as it stitches outside ground to courtyard water feature, and then to home shelter – weaves its followers into both place and cheer. This playful fluidity then spreads across the lot, drawing the open and the closed together in a subtle game of boundaries and demarcations.

The house that frames this unified terrain, read as an abstract form, is an accordion canopy hovering above a u-shaped, transparent box. As an articulated, architectural composition, it is a





careful arrangement, in the vertical direction, of glass panels sliding through and around strategically opaque wall screens and room volumes; in the horizontal direction, the rise and fall of flat and pitched ceiling and minimally stepping floor planes correspond to activities programmed beneath and upon them.

The product of such a thoughtful assembly of surfaces is a sort-of never-ending residence, a public front green that becomes, within the bridge of the "enclosure," a wide hall for cooking, eating, and gathering and then, outdoors again, a springboard for gazing into the worlds of whales, islands, and celestial figures. Flanking this out-and-in-and-out space, within the structure's outstretched arms, are the private hideaways, the beds, the baths, and the studies –

utilitarian and intellectual, that work simultaneously as a part of and a retreat from the goings-on.

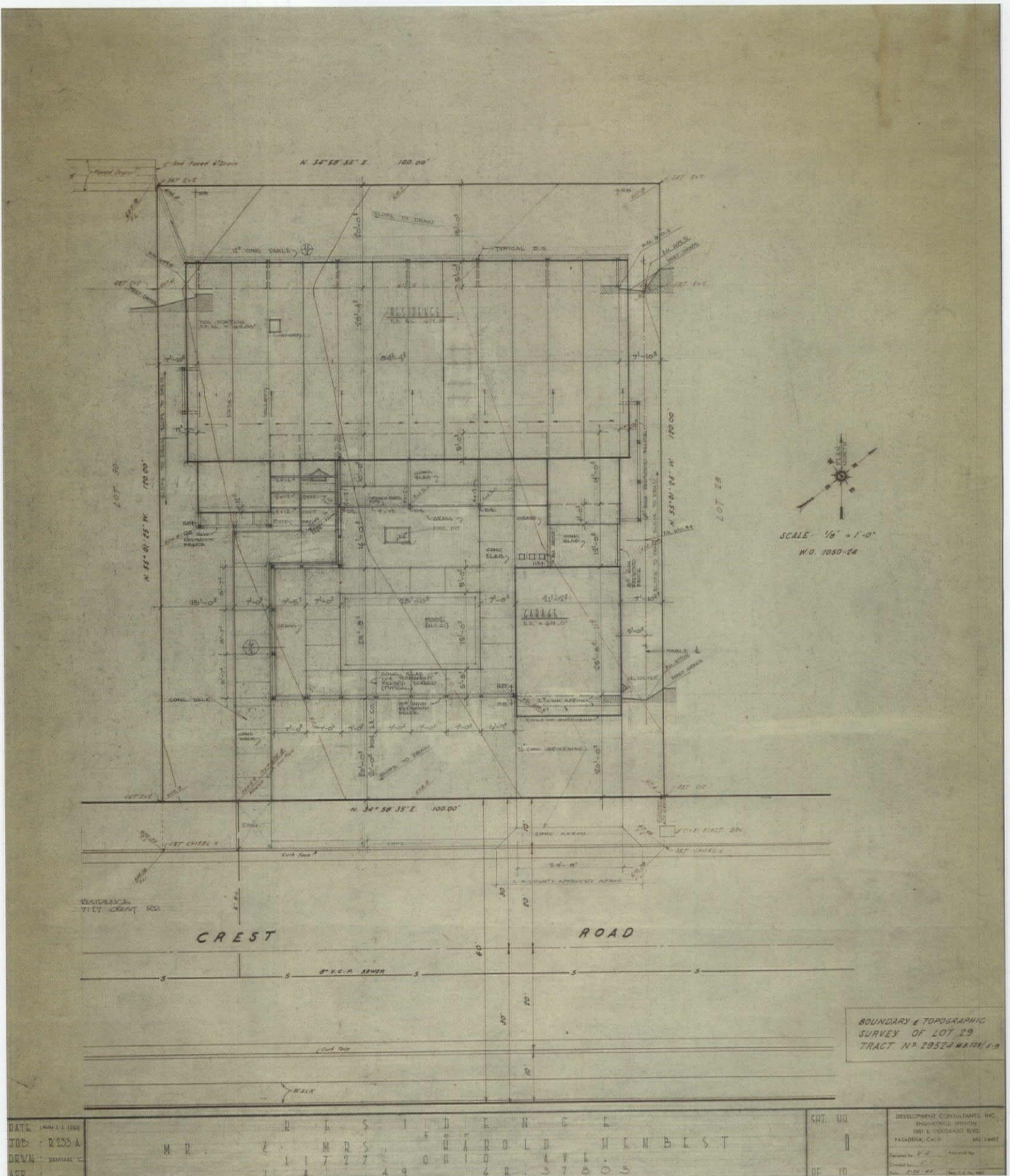
Indeed, the casual passer-by of the Henbest-Birkett house cannot know that the experience within its masked compound is akin, not to going back in time, but rather to a pulling forwards and dusting off of the past. In this place, reaching back and grabbing onto the infinite possibility of the 1960s is almost conceivable. It strikes such a fine balance between inside and out, the communal and the independent, as to inspire a forgotten sense of freedom, of compatibilities between concepts since deemed too diverse to mix. Here, the ambitions for a happy balance of culture, economy, nature, and technology, are outfitted for today.

Historic Photo: Scott Mayoral

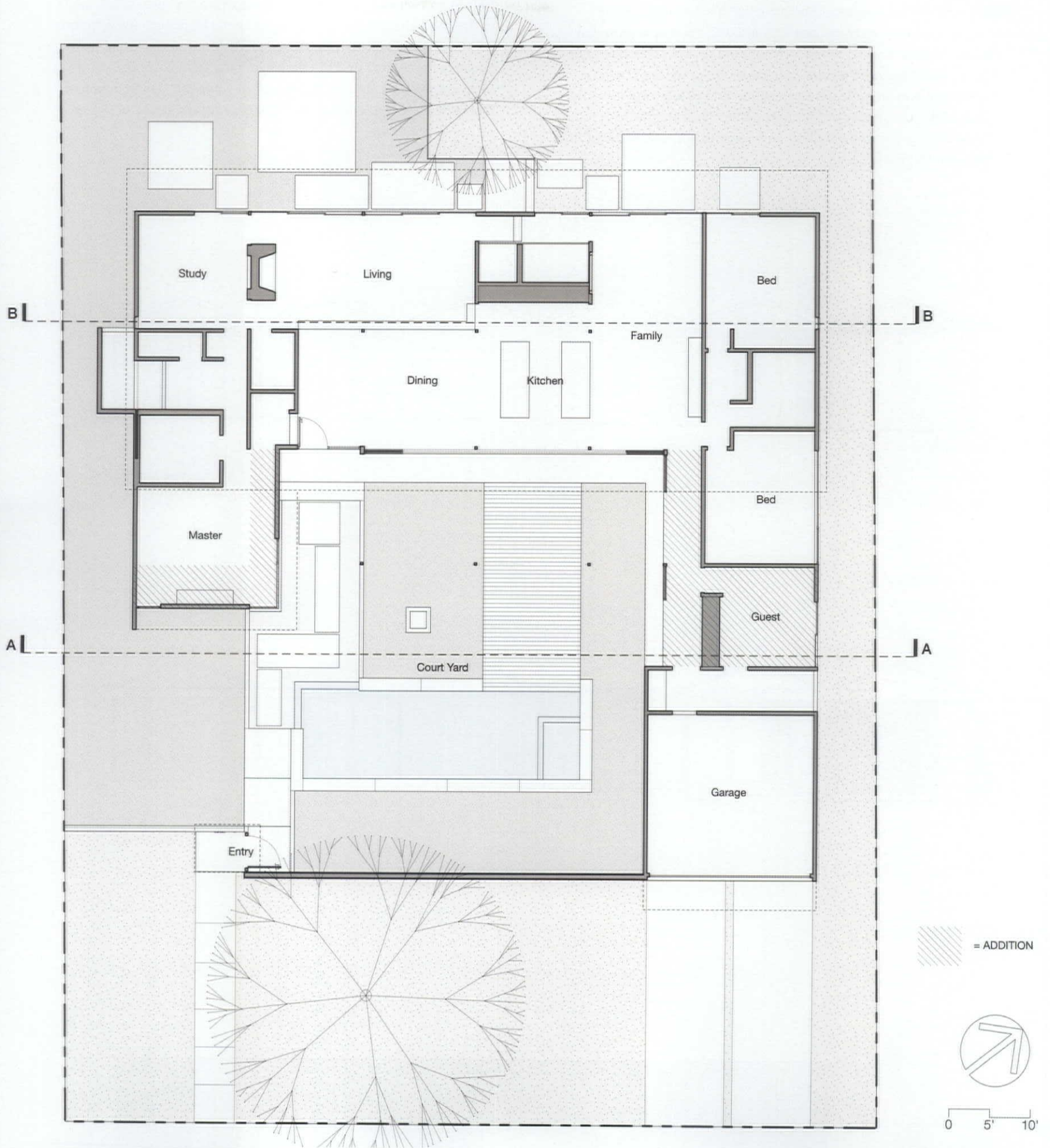








Pierre Koenig: Original Site Plan



Robert Sweet: New Site Plan

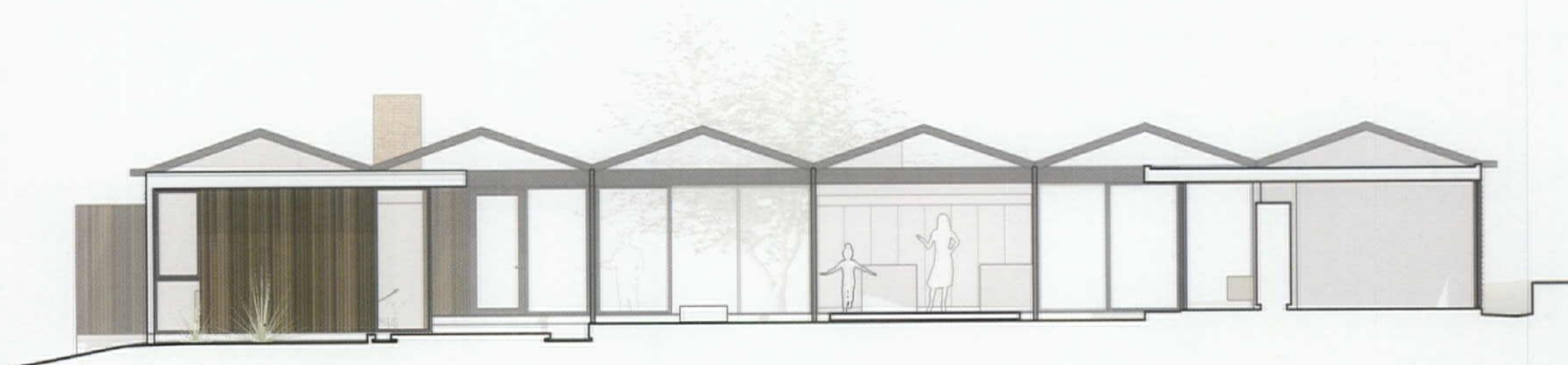
This hopeful conjuring was not an inevitable fate for the Henbest-Birkett house. It began its existence as one of Pierre Koenig's lesser works. When it went up onto the drafting table, the young architect already had achieved his notoriety as the designer of Case Study Houses #21 and #22; his status amongst the Los Angeles greats, those to whom the region owes its image of color and style, was secure. He was in the process of being awarded an Assistant Professor position and of laboring towards tenure at the University of Southern California's architecture school. He was engaged in the detailing and construction of several of his other well-known projects.

All indications are that the Henbest-Birkett house held, for Koenig, a different sort of significance. It was one of two residences, very much alike, that he prepared between 1965 and 1972 for Harold and Martha Henbest on two separate, but proximate, plots in Rancho Palos Verdes. Either because the Henbest's were friends and he wanted to minimize the publicity brought to them or because he appreciated the endeavor as a strict commission, any archived documentation of a descriptive backstory is limited to a few cursory ledger entries identifying dates and times of phone calls and meetings.



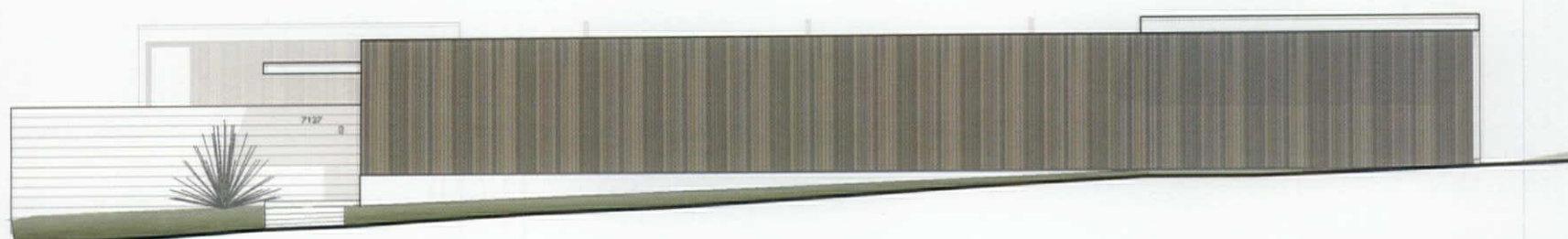
Section BB

0 5' 10'



Section AA

0 5' 10'



Street Elevation

0 5' 10'





Even if his attention was divided, Pierre Koenig clearly took the design opportunity to make incremental advances on his research agenda. A long-term advocate, to the point of seeming exclusivity, of steel structure, he appears to have compromised in the wood framing of the Henbest-Birkett house. Given that Koenig, since he was a student, had eschewed the use of timber as archaic and wasteful, the selection presents, at least, a potential conflict. Planning records reveal, however, that the project was just as much a contributor to his lifelong campaign to innovate with building materials as those in the rest of his portfolio. The house, in actuality, was a call for the consideration of a new industry development, of micro-laminates or engineered lumber, as a viable option within an expanded palette of alternative open-plan construction approaches.

Another of Koenig's signature responses to the boom in post-war suburban housing and the accompanying ideals of social betterment was the thorough integrating of inhabitation and environment. As he described the notion in reference to his most acclaimed work, the paradigmatic Stahl house, he once declared: "All my statements are not inward . . . I look outward and the people inside are projected outward to whatever is around them. That's my attitude towards . . . building." This condition is manifested, substantially if latently, in the Henbest-Birkett house.

Achieving such encompassing inclusivity on a tight suburban lot, in Rancho Palos Verdes, was no mild proposition. The neighborhood

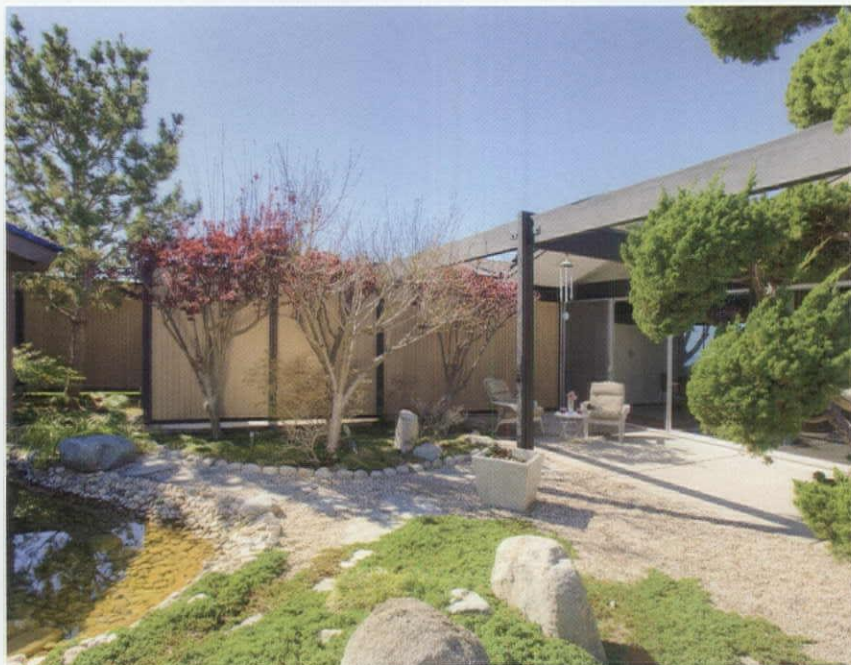


is a portion of the former Bixby estate acquired for a development through a syndicate headed by Frank A. Vanderlip, Senior. It derived its initial character under the 1914 to 1931 masterplanning direction and "rancho" style guides of the Olmsted Brothers and their affiliates. Between Vanderlip's Italianate-village mandate and the distinguished landscape architecture firm's City Beautiful standards, the peninsula was to become an exemplar of aesthetic engineering. But, the project faltered with the Crash of 1929 and gradually gave way to looser patterns of development.

By the time Koenig was submitting blueprints for permits to the local regulators, the restrictions imposing "organic unity" and enforced by the area's Home Association and Art Jury had relaxed considerably under community pressure. The tenor, though, set by the biases and tastes of the preceding decades undoubtedly juxtaposed starkly against the bold ideas for an exposed and Modern house.

Still, something of Koenig's presentation of designing from the human out, of employing architecture to reach into and embrace the expanse beyond, must have resonated with the approving committees. The Henbest-Birkett residence remains, as one of its only "glass" houses, a Rancho Palos Verdes anomaly.





Historic Photos By: Scott Mayoral

The Henbest-Birkett house, a comparatively modest and stayed Pierre Koenig manifestation, could not compete, perhaps, with his more stunningly polished and situated works. After it was finished, it faded into fifty-years of a remote family narrative. Still, in its coming-to-be, it posited a radical contextual intervention. This challenge, then, or its raw coded prompt, lay dormant, intrinsic to the project's DNA, waiting for the off chance to reinvigorate a living debate.

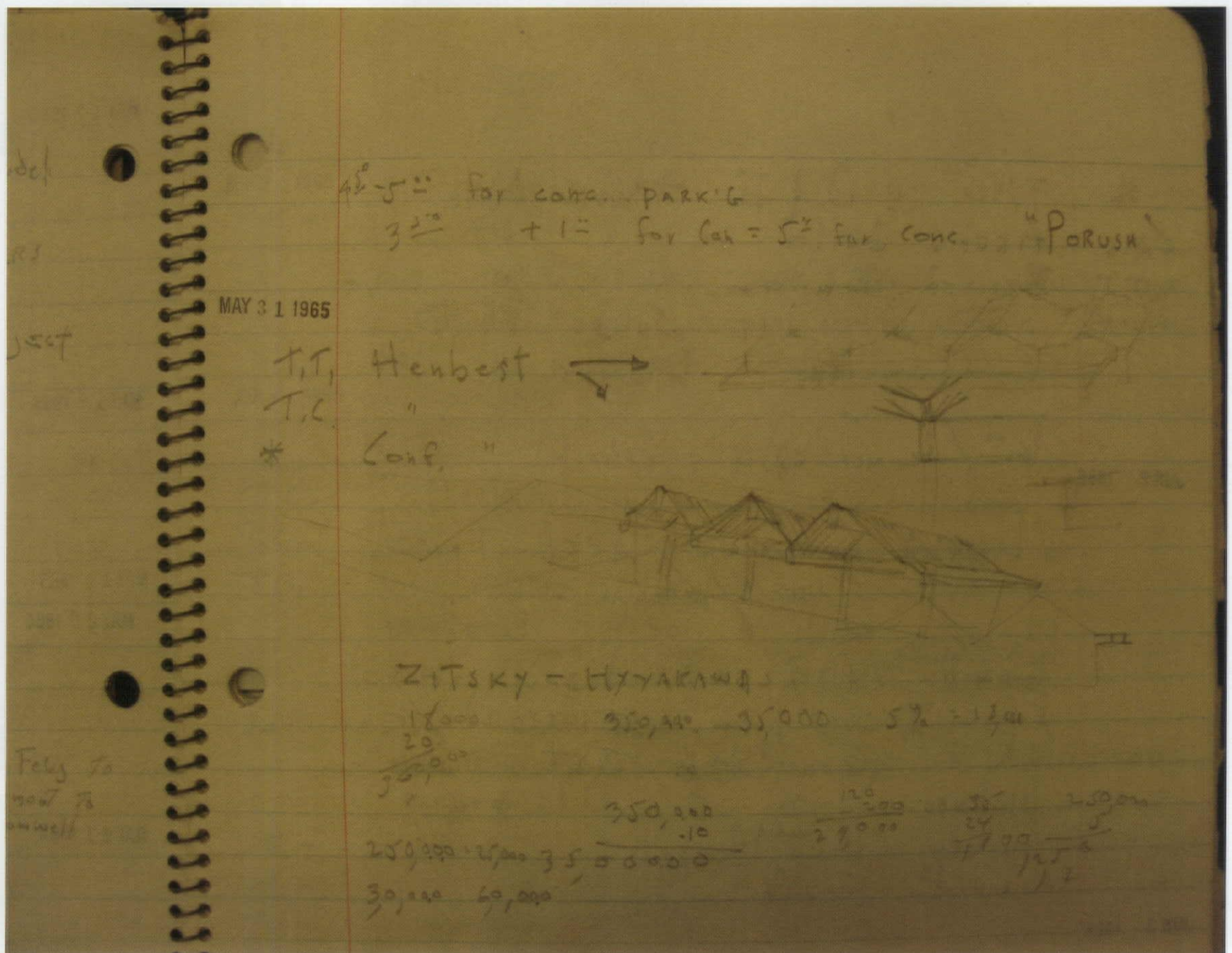
Fast-forward to 2011, the combination of the Henbest-Birkett house's minor historical role and its almost-but-not-quite realization of Koenig's talents positioned it for an unanticipated elevation. As Robert Sweet, the designer who would go on to reinterpret the property, explained: "We were fortunate that it was not one of Pierre Koenig's better or well-known houses. It had all of the privilege without all of the pressure."

The Henbest-Birkett house and Robert Sweet, alike, were the gut finds of the residence's current stewards, Stephen and Elizabeth Birkett. A tour entrepreneur and Mid-Century Modern design and

furniture enthusiast with a keen eye for promise, Stephen Birkett tells a serendipitous tale of treasure found and championed, of happenstance encounters with a young man on a construction site, and of an enthusiastic partnership in the unveiling of an undervalued gem.

Robert Sweet, the principal of a Redondo Beach design-build studio, moved to Los Angeles from the Midwest in pursuit of the California style. He worked for a series of boutique firms, but longing to start his own thing, he purchased property and developed a home for himself – on a high-traffic street. The building, which performed as a billboard, was what attracted Birkett to Sweet and was where the Henbest-Birkett house's second life began.

For Sweet, who long had admired Pierre Koenig, the opportunity that Birkett offered him to engage his mentor's work was irresistible – and humbling. Acutely conscientious of honoring and being true to the integrity of the original project, he immersed himself in Koenig's legacy, studying the files at the Getty Research Institute, securing a private tour of the Stahl house, and even meeting with



Koenig's Notebook -

©J.Paul Getty Trust. Research library at the Getty Research Institute.

Koenig's wife and son. He understood that his responsibility to the house and to its new occupants was mutual; and he did the homework to mediate the two.

Sweet's informed and refreshed set of eyes alone, however, cannot be granted sole credit for the Henbest-Birkett house's coming-into-its-own. Societal changes, the leveling of household hierarchies, the evolved role of the kitchen in entertaining, an increased comfort with the casual and the behind-the-scenes, enabled a reconfiguration once likely perceived as gauche. Increased spanning capacities within structural systems, then, supported these openings-up and upon.

Together, though, Sweet and time have crafted a Henbest-Birkett property almost more Koenig than Koenig. An overgrown garden has become a new pool, matching Koenig's original, but never built, specifications. Where brush and trees once stopped short the vantage, there is a sweeping lookout over Catalina and its sea surrounds. All impediments to sightlines through the house - egress partitions, suspended cabinets, and solar fins - are removed.

The master bedroom and its services are expanded; the shower in the master bath actually walks outdoors onto a secluded side patio. The infill towards the once detached-garage gives the northern bedrooms space to stretch and a diaphanous corridor to promenade. And, it's all accomplished without revising the diagram, while retaining the language of the founding finishes and fixtures.

Many, of course, would consider touching a Pierre Koenig house at all an extreme act. Indeed, when construction on the alterations first began, neighbors, panicked by the disappearance of the glass envelope and the presence of a Bobcat loader, grabbed Stephen Birkett - Koenig monograph in-hand - and pleaded with him not to destroy a cultural monument. He calmly elucidated his scheme - justified the cleaning and upgrading of the sliding doors, the clearing of vegetation - and pledged: "I can assure you, we are not tearing the house down."



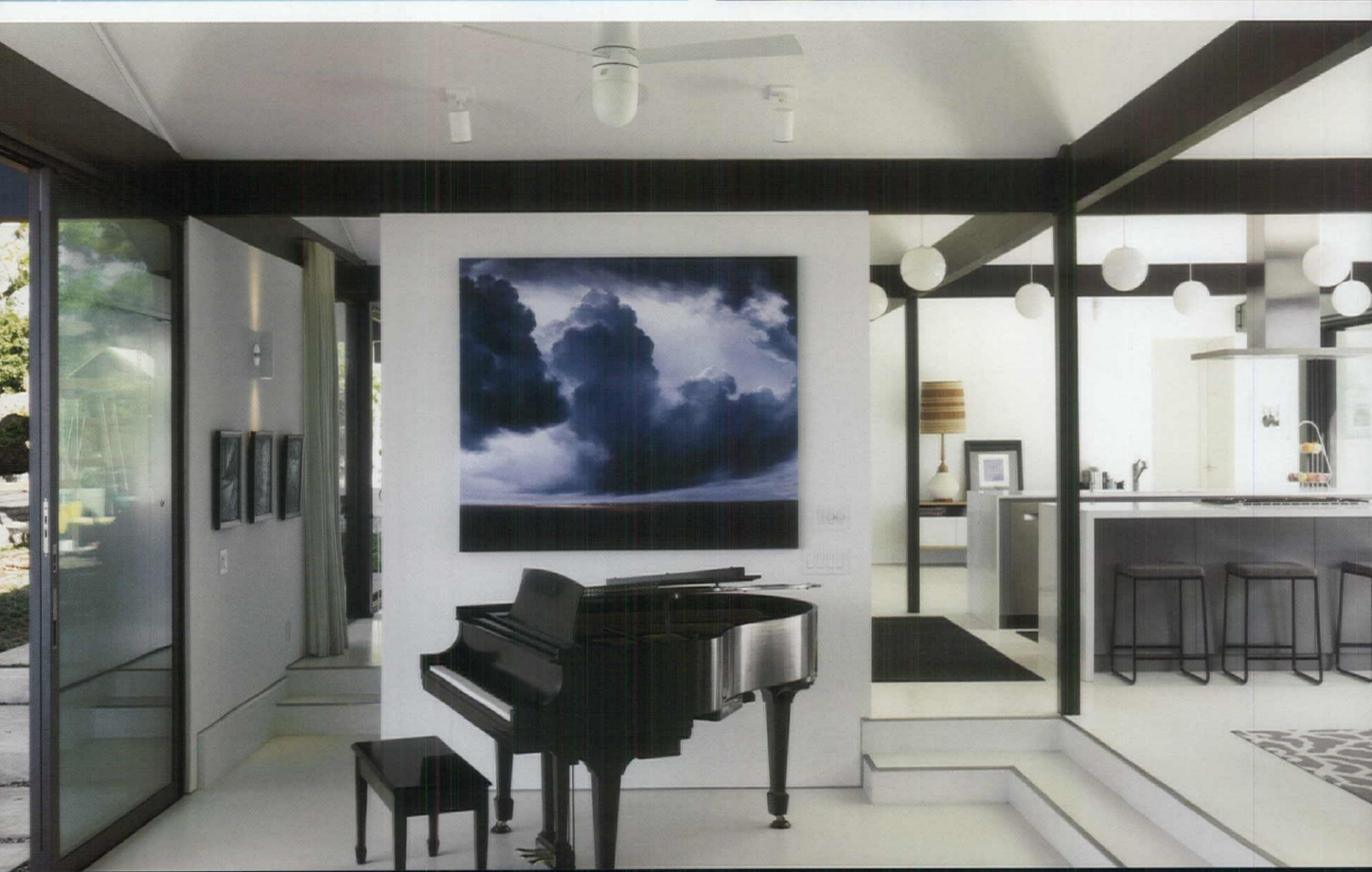
The Henbest-Birkett house may begin to suggest a renewed platform for exploring the relations between expectations for lifestyle, building, land, and climate. But its real revolutionary current rests, precisely, within its response to the passage of time. Decisions to adapt or congeal, the subjects of active debate in preservation circles, take on exponentially increasing complexity as the products of Modernism succumb to age. A movement for the new and temporal does not go quietly into the old and the permanent.

There are those, in turn, who have come to espouse creativity as critical to the reading and manipulating of history. For Jorge Otero-Pailos, a leading representative of this thinking, "pollution is our most important product as a Modern civilization"; to write over the dirt and flaw of the ages with the tools of conservation is just as substantial an erasure as with those of refashioning. So long as an architecture's originating motives and principles are continuously pursued, the conversation with that which came before remains true. The staging of evolution, in this bias, is prioritized over the freezing of a fixed moment.

With a debt owed to its slow maturation, the Henbest-Birkett house, then, sets its first precedent as a rare example of a landmark from one era in a compelling dialog with the present. Through it, Pierre Koenig and Robert Sweet are talking; yesterday and today are talking. And, all of this talking might just be a cue to keep talking – that, and to pause before dismissing the featureless or fortified walls along the asphalt routes of those wheel-crawling holiday jaunts.









Bibliography

Birkett, Stephen (owner). 17 January 2015 interview. Rancho Palos Verdes.

Gates, Thomas P. "The Palos Verdes Ranch Project: Olmsted Brothers' Design Development for a Picturesque Los Angeles Suburban Community of the 1920's." Kent State University: Architronic, 1997.

Jackson, Neil. Pierre Koenig 1925 – 2004: Living with Steel. Hong Kong: Taschen, 2007.

Jensen, Andrew (RPV planner). 04 February 2015 interview. Phone.

Koenig, Pierre. Papers and Drawings. Los Angeles: Getty Research Institute, 03 February 2015 archive visit.

Otero-Pailos, Jorge. "The Ethics of Dust (2009)." www.vimeo.com/5745305. 05 February 2015 website access.

Sweet, Robert (architect). 22 January 2015 interview. Phone.

Principle Photography by Cameron Carothers



7127 Crest Road – Rancho Palos Verdes, California



Details & Information at: henbest-birkett.com



Walter M. Cecil

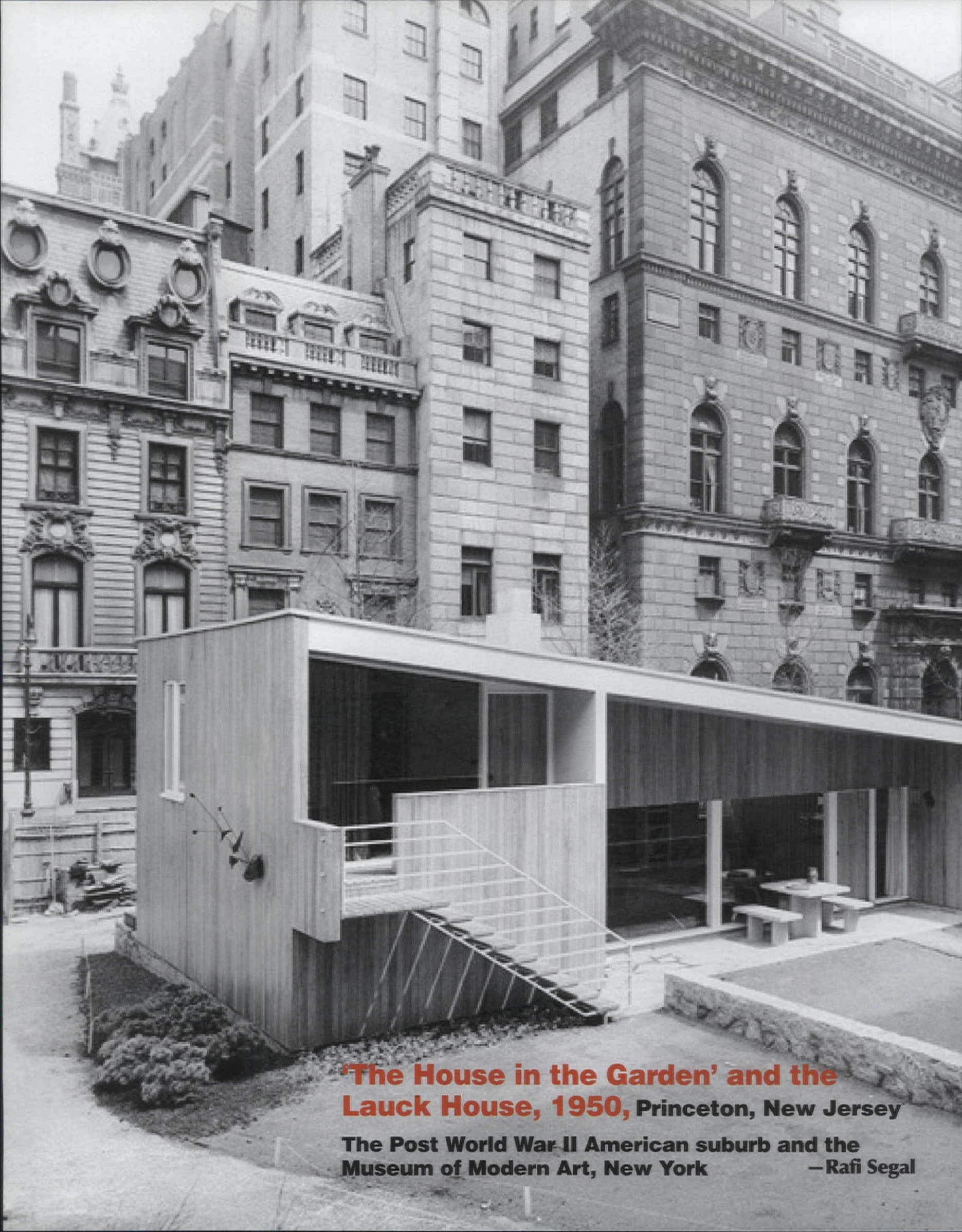
Fine Oriental Rugs

Acquisition, Appraisal and Consulting since 1971.

walter.cecil@ethnographica.com

(415) 370-5450

Antique Ferraghan Sarouk
North Central Persia
4'5" x 6'6"



**'The House in the Garden' and the
Lauck House, 1950, Princeton, New Jersey**

**The Post World War II American suburb and the
Museum of Modern Art, New York**

—Rafi Segal

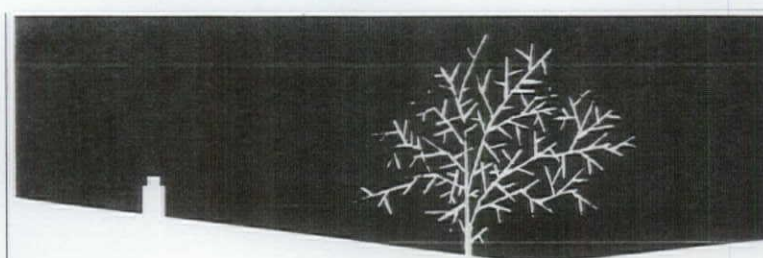


MARCELL BARBERS

The decade following World War II witnessed an explosion of new housing in the United States. The American suburb was being reimagined and extensively built for the commuter family. Mass-produced and prefabricated model homes, such as those by Levitt & Sons and the Lustron Company also became popular as viable and affordable solutions to how Americans should live. In light of the public interest in the new suburban home, and following a tradition of museums displaying full-size architecture in their outdoor sculpture garden, the Museum of Modern Art in New York launched the House in the Garden exhibition in 1948. Initiated by Philip Johnson and Peter Blake, this exhibition aimed to open a full scale demonstration house to public viewing, not necessarily to compete with the mass-produced house but rather to introduce "a custom-built, architect-designed solution for a middle-income family."¹ The Museum's then newly established Department of Architecture and Design (a result of the 1949 merging of the Museum's Department of Architecture and Department of Industrial Design) sought to promote modern design in America by demonstrating "how much good living and good design can be purchased for how many dollars."²

Marcel Breuer was chosen as the first architect to design such a house. He seemed a perfect fit for the task since he was both engaged in industrial design of furniture, for which he first became famous, but he was also an accomplished architect who worked mostly on single family houses. The exhibition drew record-crowds in the summer of 1949 and as Barry Bergdoll recently noted remains one of the most influential of all exhibitions mounted by the museum in over 75 years of exhibiting architecture.³

After the exhibition ended the house was bought by the Rockefeller family, disassembled and reconstructed in their estate in Pocatino, New York where it was used as a guesthouse. The well-preserved state of the house at the Rockefeller estate aided in the renovation and restoration of the Princeton Lauck House.



The House in the Museum Garden
Marcel Breuer, Architect

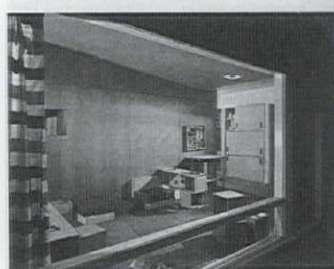


Museum of Modern Art, New York
Entrance: 4 West 54 Street



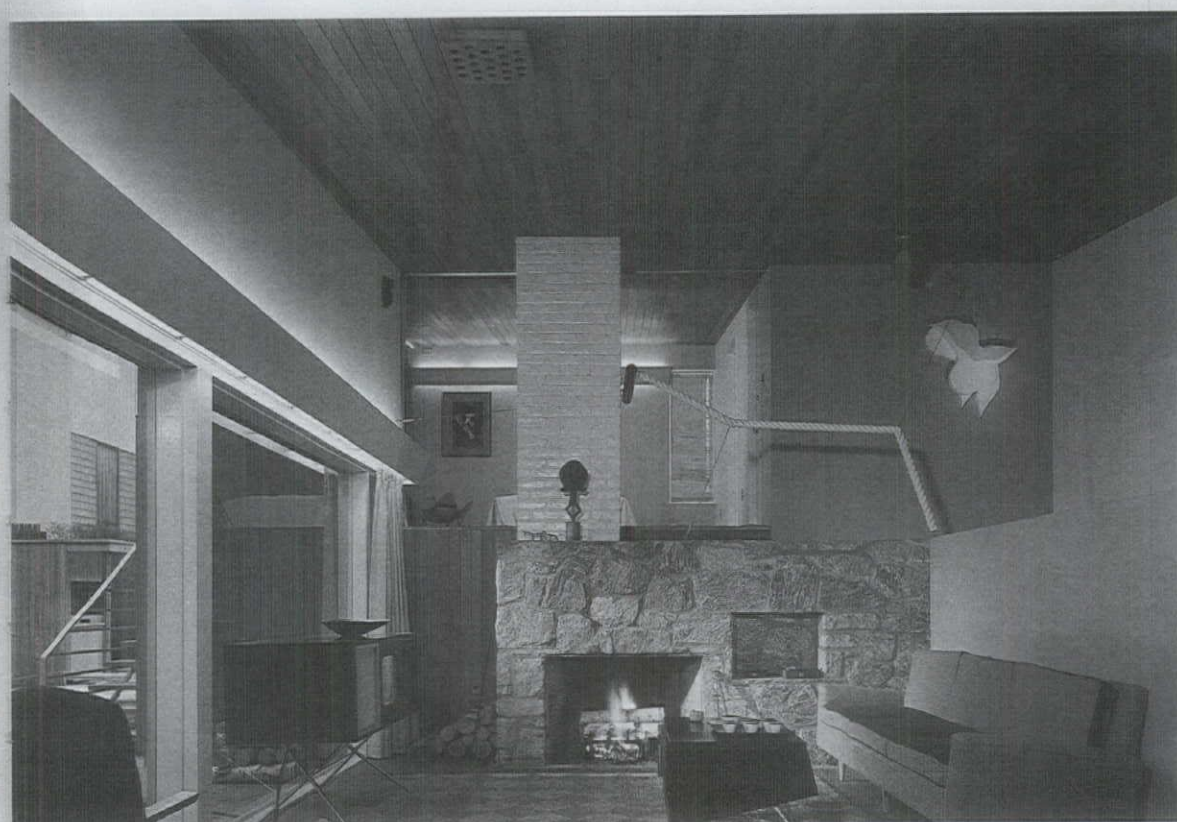
Admission: 35 cents Daily 12 to 7, Sunday 1 to 7

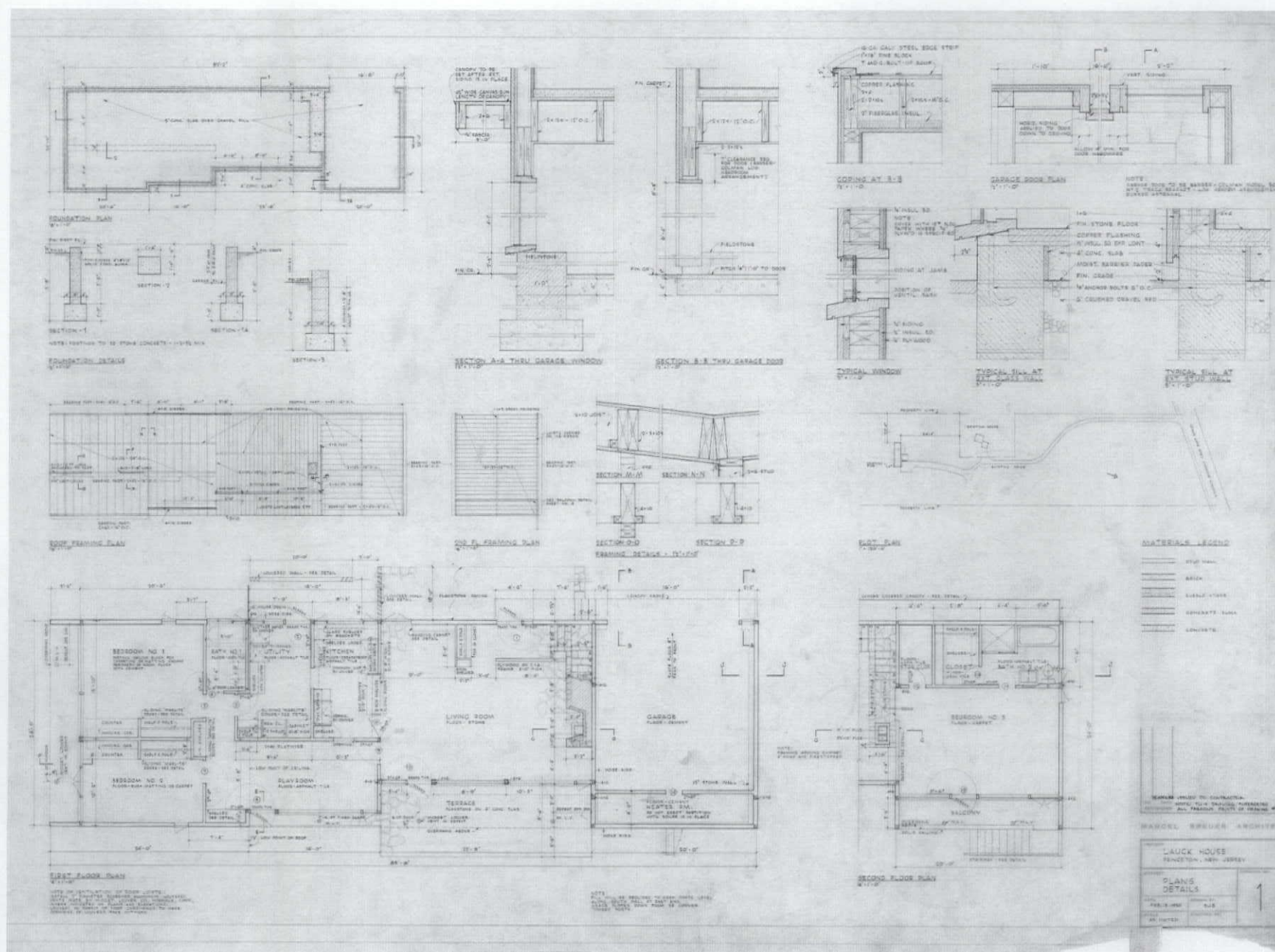
MOMA Open House Invitation



House in the Museum Garden, play-niche (the small shutter in the
or wall provided the only visual link with the kitchen)

Living-room, view towards the bedroom (one of Breuer's ticket
booths to the exhibition can be seen through the window at left)





Lauck Original Plans

THE ARCHITECT

Marcel Breuer is considered one of the twentieth century's most innovative designers. Born in 1902 in Pecs, Hungary, Breuer originally sought to become a painter or sculptor. At eighteen he was awarded a scholarship to study at the Academy of Fine Art in Vienna, but following a few 'unhappy' weeks, as he would later refer to them, he enrolled to the famous Bauhaus school in Weimar Germany, under the direction of Walter Gropius. Breuer spent most of his time building furniture at the school's workshop. Breuer's breakthrough as a designer came at the early age of twenty-three with the design of the world's first chair made entirely of tubular steel, later known as the Wassily chair. He later designed the cantilever chair, both of which became icons of modern interior design. In the context of the Bauhaus these designs were much discussed as examples of its new orientation away from arts and crafts and towards a unity of art and technology.

In 1928 Breuer moved to Berlin to open his own architectural office, right next to his friend and supporter Gropius. The times were difficult and Breuer spent most of his time working on entries for major competitions while making a living by marketing his metal furniture and designing interiors for wealthy art lovers. Breuer first

established his reputation as an architect upon completion of the Harnischmacher House in Wiesbaden in 1932, a house notable for its contrasting materials and distinctive interiors. In 1935 he moved to London with the help of Gropius, and continued to design furniture in plywood and interiors, along with a few residential buildings and exhibition pavilions.

In 1937, Breuer accepted an invitation from Walter Gropius to join the faculty of the Graduate School of Design at Harvard University to teach architecture, and he moved to the United States. Among his students were Edward Larrabee Barnes, Ulrich Franzen, Philip Johnson, I. M. Pei, and Paul Rudolph. In the same year, Breuer formed a partnership with Gropius in Cambridge, Massachusetts, which lasted until 1941. Their firm was engaged primarily in the design of private homes. In 1946, Breuer moved to New York City, where he established an office. The number of his commissions began to grow slowly, and it was during this time that he constructed his own notable residence in New Canaan, Connecticut.

Breuer's architectural reputation was greatly enhanced when in 1948 he was commissioned by the Museum of Modern Art to design the full-scale exhibition house in the garden. The interim report on the exhibition explains the museum's decision: "The Department feels

that Mr. Breuer's name ranks next to those of Le Corbusier, Wright and Mies van der Rohe, to whom we have already given exhibitions. Fortunately, Mr. Breuer has spent a great deal of time working on the problem of the small house."⁴

Breuer soon became famous for his custom-built houses. Arnt Cobbers calls him "the master of 'informal living,' the ideal of the American interior design at that time: close to nature, uncomplicated, within a family circle. Marcel Breuer proved that Modernism and comfortable surroundings were not necessarily contradictions. His houses were suited for families with children, functional and still 'stylish', sometimes even glamorous."⁵

In 1953, Breuer's career further expanded internationally when he was commissioned, in collaboration with Pier Luigi Nervi and Bernard Zehruss, to design the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) World Headquarters in Paris.

Between 1963 and 1964, Breuer began work on what is perhaps his best-known project, the Whitney Museum of American Art, in New York City. He also established an office in Paris and expanded his New York one, by then Marcel Breuer and Associates, which continued for the next twenty years to receive many diverse and important commissions both in the United States and abroad, among them the Department of Housing and Urban Development Headquarters Building (Washington, D.C.), the IBM Corporation (La Gaude, France), the Baldegg Convent (Lucerne, Switzerland), Bryn Mawr School for Girls (Baltimore, Maryland), the Australian Embassy (Paris, France), and the State University of New York Engineering Complex (Buffalo). Throughout this time, he continued to design several private residences that bear witness to his masterful handling of materials and intuitive sense of proportion, form and space.

By 1976, Breuer's health had declined and he retired from practice. He died on July 1, 1981, in New York City.







THE CLIENT

From the 1930s, Gerold M. Lauck was president of N.W. Ayer & Son, one of America's first advertising agencies. The company profited immensely from its marketing campaign for De Beers to promote diamond sales in the United States, for which the now-famous slogan, "A Diamond is Forever," was coined; this success enabled Lauck to finance the building of a house for his son's family on a portion of his 12 acre lot.

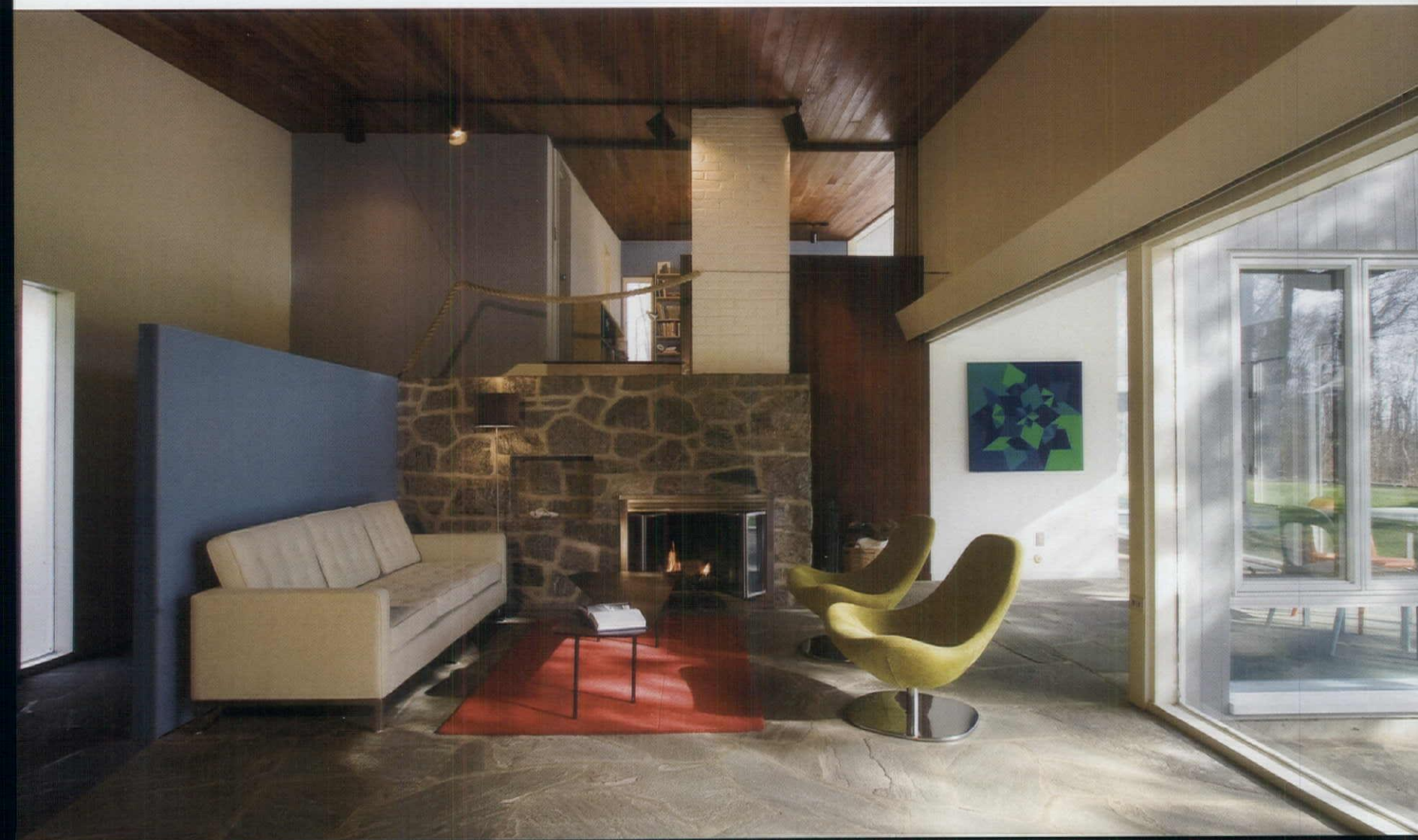
In a letter dated January 11, 1950, Mr. Lauck outlined the conditions under which he would like to commission a house from Breuer. He wrote that his son and daughter-in-law wanted a Breuer house, specifically the one displayed at the Museum of Modern Art. Among the specifics and particular requirements they desired, he included an 8' longer version of the MoMA house to enable a two-car garage, a 'mirrored' orientation of the MoMA house due to the particular site access, and interior changes in the pantry and kitchen. Mr. Lauck also asked that Breuer not build another version of this house within a ten-mile radius from Nassau Hall, Princeton, New Jersey, explaining that his son, as any client, would expect an architect-designed house to be "personal and exclusively his."⁶ Though an unusual request, it is not unsurprising: as an advertising professional, Lauck was attentive to the significance of representations.

Lauck's letter to Breuer included a fee agreement and served as the contract for the project. In the conclusion to the letter, he wrote, "I have somewhat greater than usual consideration for the rights of artists and we all consider you a very great one. Therefore, I believe a gentlemen's agreement, as explained in this letter, should be all that is necessary between us."⁷

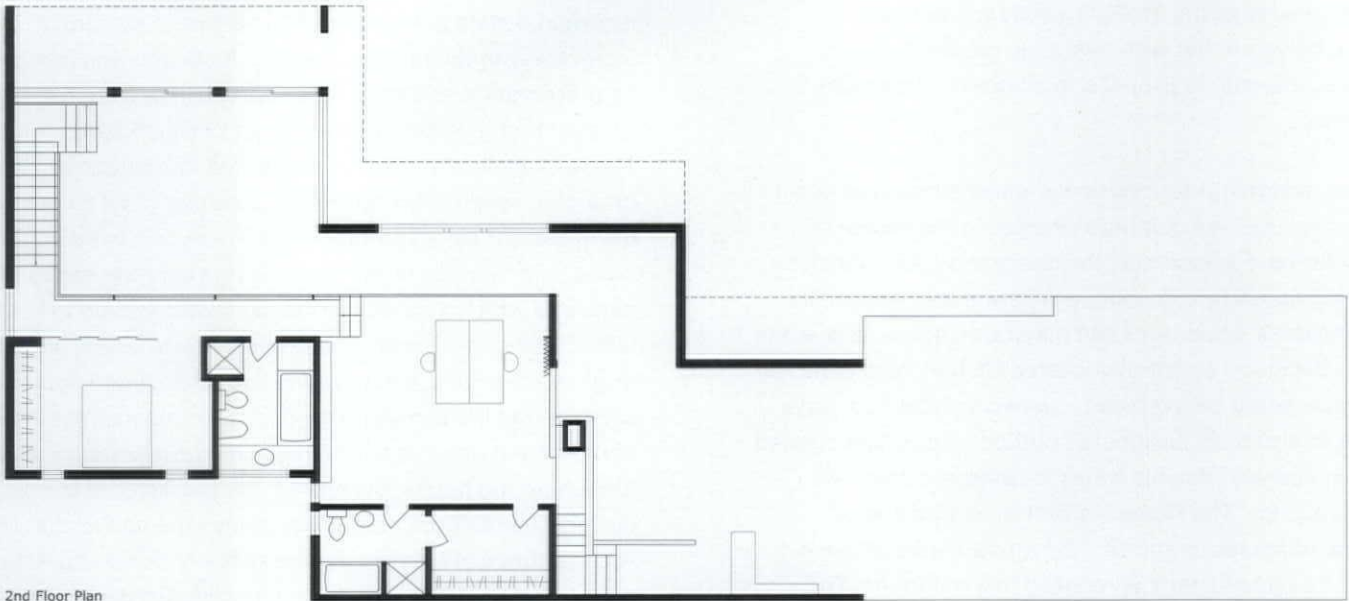
Lauck's property was a long stretch of land off of what was known then as Lincoln Highway, the historic Old Post Road, south of Princeton towards Lawrenceville (currently named Lawrenceville Road or US Route 206). The new house was to be sited down the gently sloping terrain, toward the south end of the lot behind Lauck's own house, requiring the driveway to be extended further into the property.

In 1950, Gerold Lauck Jr. and his family moved into the new Breuer house. Like his father, Gerold Lauck Jr. also worked as an ad-man at N. W. Ayers & Sons, and commuted daily to either its New York City or Philadelphia offices to work on television commercials. Gerold Lauck Jr.'s son Tony was six years old at the time. As an only child, Tony recalls feeling like he had his own quarters in the house: enjoying the use of the playroom near the kitchen in assembling electric train sets, and later playing piano. His parents used the gallery space above the garage as their bedroom, and they designated the large bedroom next to his as a guestroom, where his maternal grandmother often stayed. The Lauck house furniture included Knoll sofas, Breuer dining chairs and his design for a reclining plywood chair, and a love seat. His parents often hosted cocktail parties and bridge games for his father's colleagues, who, as he recalls, seemed like "characters you would recognize from the current TV series, "Mad Men."⁸

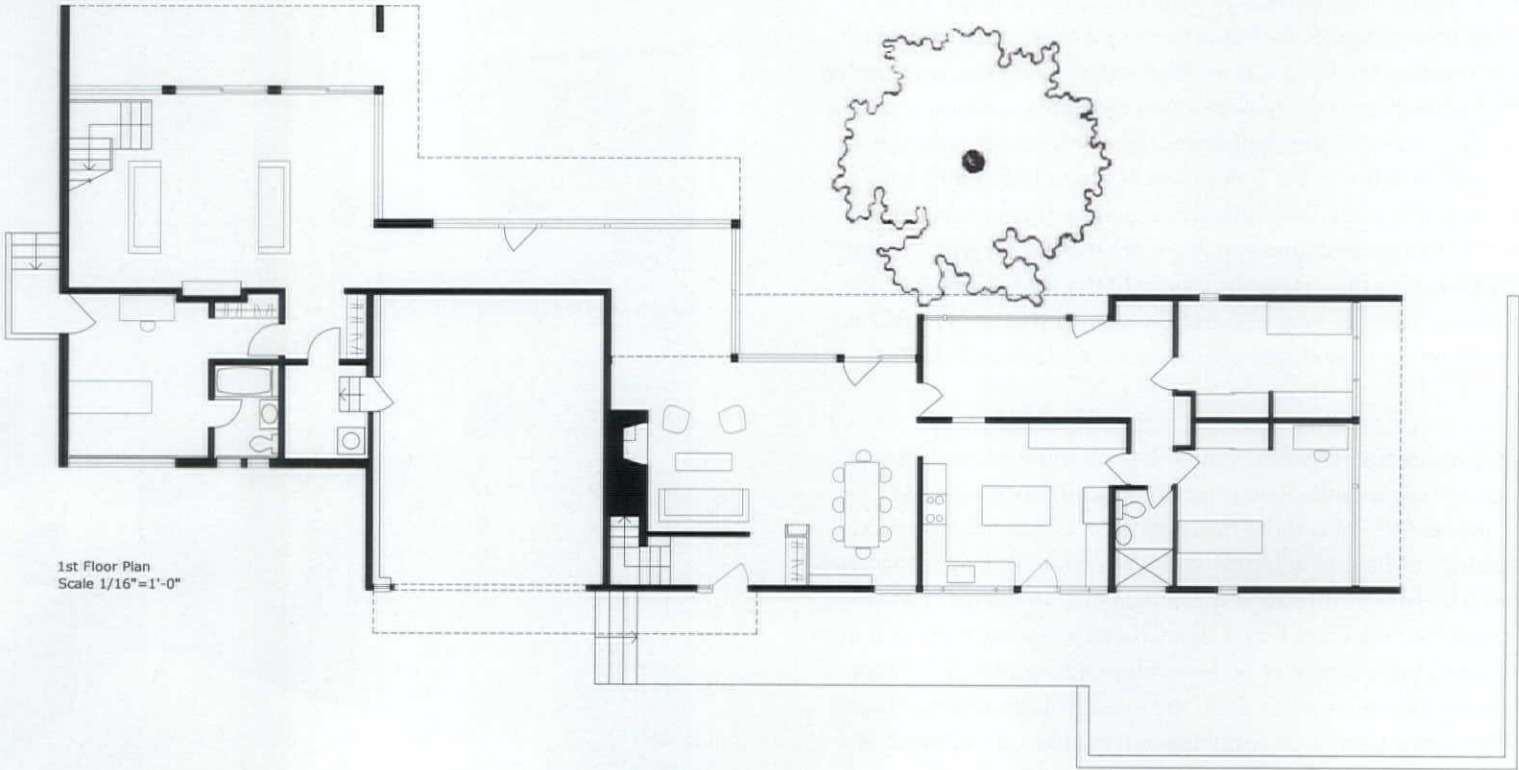
Later on, the property was subdivided and the Breuer house was allotted four acres of the land. In the late 1970s after Tony's mother passed away, his father sold the estate, remarried, and retired in Florida. The house remains to this day completely secluded in its wooded setting at the very end of the long driveway.



Current plans of Lauck house



2nd Floor Plan
Scale 1/16"=1'-0"



1st Floor Plan
Scale 1/16"=1'-0"

Entry 810

THE DESIGN

As Barry Bergdoll writes, for his design of the MoMA house "Breuer endeavored to develop a sophisticated yet viable alternative to the Cape Cod cottage model that, through Levittown and countless other developers, became the stereotypical image of the house in the suburbs after 1945."⁹ Bergdoll explains that Breuer was keenly aware of the MoMA's ability to influence popular taste and believed that with favorable media attention, his design had the potential to propel a revolution in American aesthetic preferences.

Breuer's house design introduced new organizational and design ideas that have since become common practice in the design of the single family home. For instance, the design reveals a special consideration for children by providing a separate area especially for them which includes a bedroom and playroom, a new idea at the time. Breuer also designed a centrally-located kitchen from which all activity in the house could be overseen, opened several doorways to allow passage to and from designated outdoor areas, and created a sense of open space with flexible zones for different uses. As Breuer himself explains, "The kitchen is central, controlling all activities. Kitchen, utility room and service yard are adjacent and equipped so that household work is reduced to a minimum. The utility room can double as an emergency bedroom for night sitters or occasional help."¹⁰ One can imagine the emergency bedroom becoming particularly useful in the event that one or both parents stay unexpectedly in the city for work or leisure.

The continuous glass façade of the house's southern side extends the interior outwards to the garden and captures heat during the winter days. The sense of a continued flow of space was created through its 'butterfly' profile. One section of the low-slung V-shaped roofline more than doubles the length of the other, and its greater height accommodates a second level gallery that is connected to and overlooks a double-height central space. Breuer also conceived of the house as an expandable dwelling, onto which an extra bedroom and car garage could be built to accommodate a growing family. As Breuer explained, "Special consideration is given to the children. In the first phase of the house, stairs are completely eliminated. The children's playroom has a separate entrance. In the second phase, if there are more than two children they can take over the master bedroom of the first phase and use the children's playroom as their own living room or study. They are near the living room and kitchen, easily supervised and yet they are separate."¹¹

During his design process, Breuer kept in mind several possible scenarios of how a family can organize itself in the house. He offers 'sub-centers' of activity that define certain functions while still allowing for flexibility of use and interaction. This approach was developed by Breuer through his concept of a 'bi-nuclear house' which organized separate living areas for dynamic daytime activities in one part of the house and quiet, contemplative phases of daily and nightly living in another. Both the Lauck House and the House in the Museum's Garden brought these two sides of domestic life together within a single continuous space.

The Lauck House's overall design, the use of contrasting materials, colors, finishes and details, and its relative affordability at the time contravened the popular notion of Modern Architecture as elitist, cold, white, overly abstract, and expensive.

In the mid-1980s, a new owner added an enclosed 'patio-like' space to its southwest corner, extending the slope of the roof while maintaining the form and footprint of the original design. The irregular bluestone flagging floor of the original design was continued as well onto the addition.

Work undertaken from 2008-9 restored the Lauck house to its original state and altered the southwest addition to better integrate with the original design. The house was recognized for its preservation and restoration work with a National Award granted by the Residential Architect Design Awards for 2009. The Rockefeller Foundation supported the renovation work by providing specifications for the house's original colour scheme using current color technology. Interior walls were scraped of the white paint applied in the intervening years, revealing cedar panels to which a natural wood stain was applied in keeping with the original design. The original house plans, old photos, original schedules, and hardware suppliers were sourced from archival materials, making it possible to reconstruct the entrance partition and other details. Finally, modern furniture was used to furnishing the house, preserving the character of the original design. The restored home exemplifies the notion that Modern Architecture can be visually and spatially rich using natural materials and simple details, reaffirming Breuer's own famous adage: "Modern architecture is not a style, it's an attitude."







880 Lawrenceville Road – Princeton, New Jersey



Details & Information at: architectureforsale.com/address/1056

on the market at architectureforsale.com™



#752
Pasadena, CA

Frank Lloyd Wright, Architect
\$3,950,000



#1053
Chesterfield, MO

Ralph Fournier, Architect
\$2,000,000



#1054
Ladue, MO

Bernoudy-Designed Residence
\$1,350,000



#1039
Willoughby Hills, OH

Frank Lloyd Wright, Architect
\$1,700,000



#984
Linwood, NJ

Mathias Kauten, Architect
\$449,000



#1050
Galesburg, MI

Frank Lloyd Wright, Architect
\$469,900



#967
Fontainebleau, near Paris

1970s Design Residence
\$1,276,361



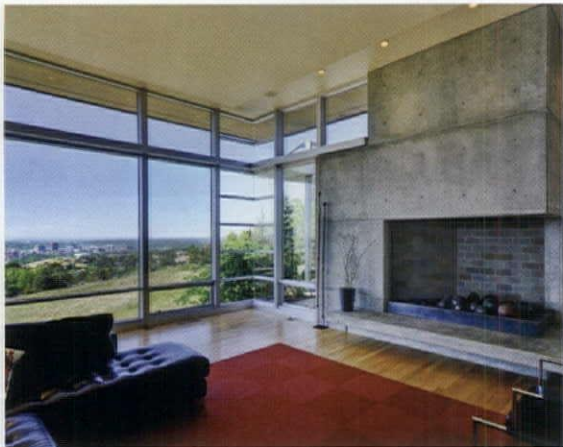
#1035
Meadowbrook, PA

Hugh Newell Jacobsen, Architect
\$1,800,000

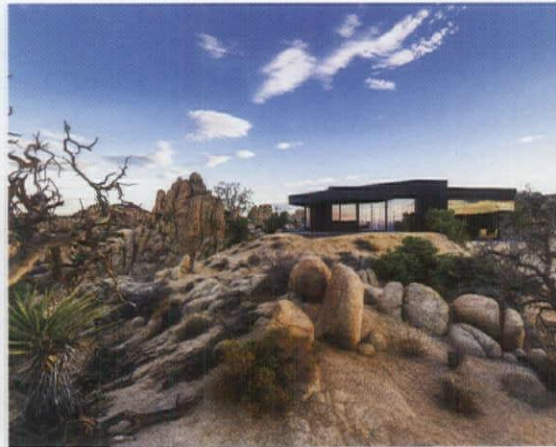


#969
near Bordeaux, France

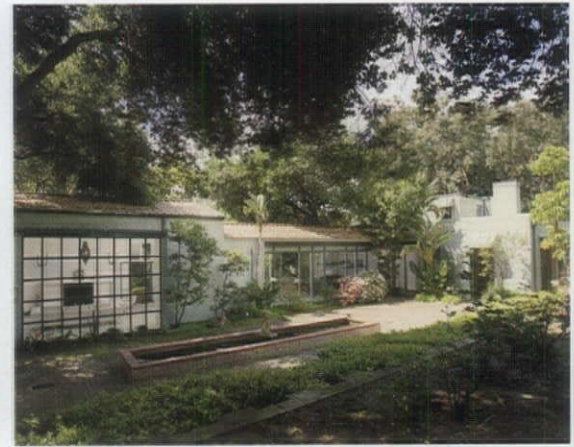
Pierre-Louis Martin, Architect
\$1,032,752



#980 J.T. Glancey, G. Rockwell & Associates
Boise, ID \$2,150,000



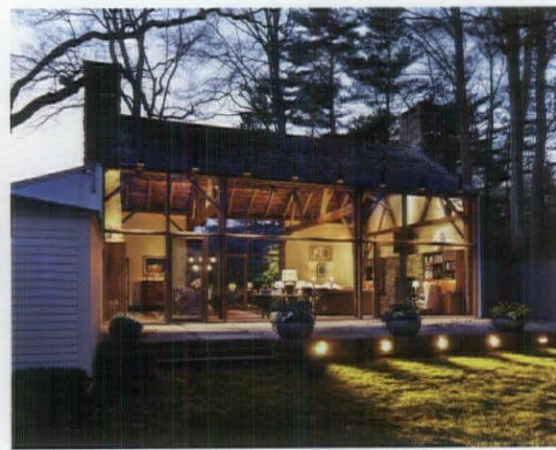
#1033 Marc Atlan Design with Oller & Pejic Architects
Yucca Valley, CA \$975,000



#784 Garrett Van Pelt, F.A.I.A.
Pasadena, CA \$1,650,000



#956 Clifford Welch, A.I.A.
Dallas, TX \$1,950,000



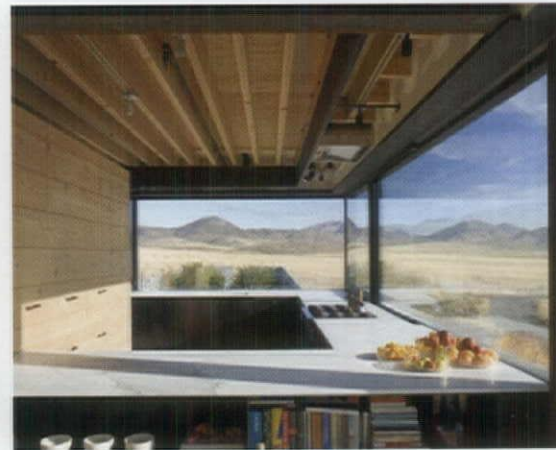
#1007 Philip Johnson, F.A.I.A.
Madison, CT \$1,950,000



#1017 Cliff May Design
La Habra Heights, CA \$2,449,000



#1058 Frank Lloyd Wright, Architect
Highland Park, IL \$799,000



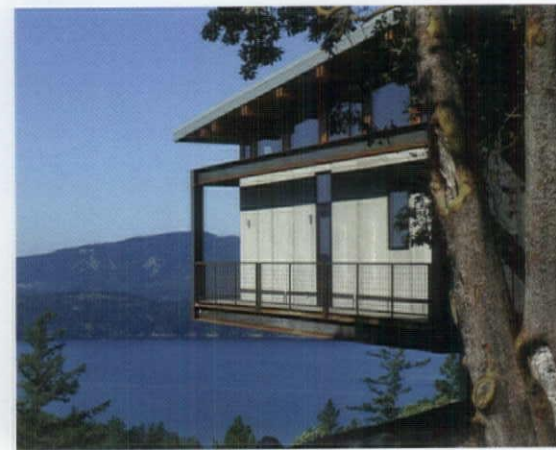
#858 Olson Kundig Architects
Bellevue, ID \$2,750,000



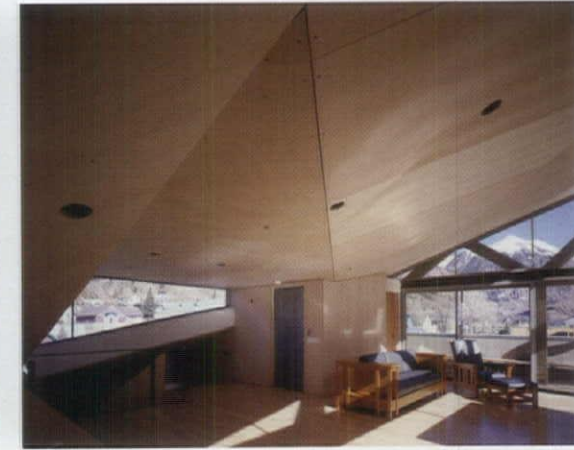
#1004 St. Croix Dome
Christiansted, Virgin Islands \$1,499,000



#1003 Tom Kundig, Architect
Seattle, WA \$3,995,000



#1012 Indigo Architecture & Design
Eastsound, WA \$2,895,000



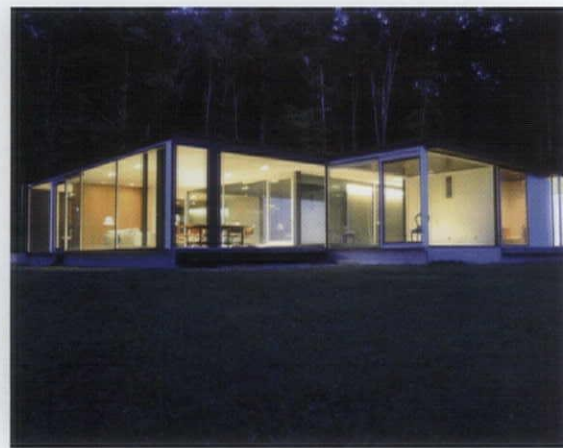
#902 Smith-Miller & Hawkinson, Architects
Telluride, CO \$4,375,000



#1001 Scott Hughes, A.I.A. Hughes-Umbanhowar Architects
Stuart, FL \$6,750,000



#929 Richard T. Broderick, A.I.A.
Anacortes, WA \$1,195,000



#1042 Michael Bell Design
Hudson Valley, NY \$1,950,000



#995 Philip Johnson, Architect
New Canaan, CT \$2,795,000



#959 Valentino Agnoli, Architect
Branford, FL \$550,000



#353 Modern Country Villa
Roxbury, CT \$4,800,000



#1040 Roy Johnson, Architect
Armonk, NY \$3,500,000



#1047 Gino Coppede, Architect
Genova, Italy \$4,900,000



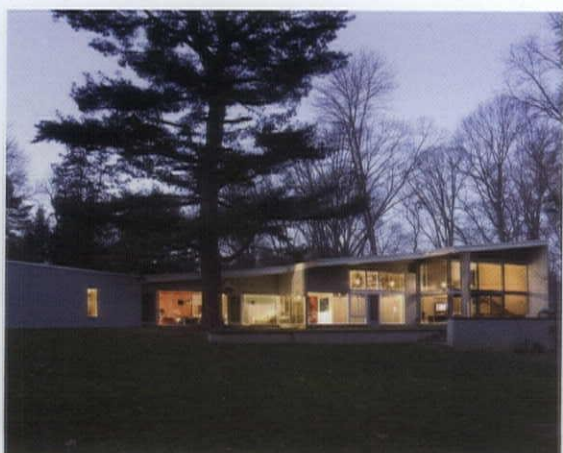
#1014 Malcolm M. Appleton, Architect
Starksboro, VT \$550,000



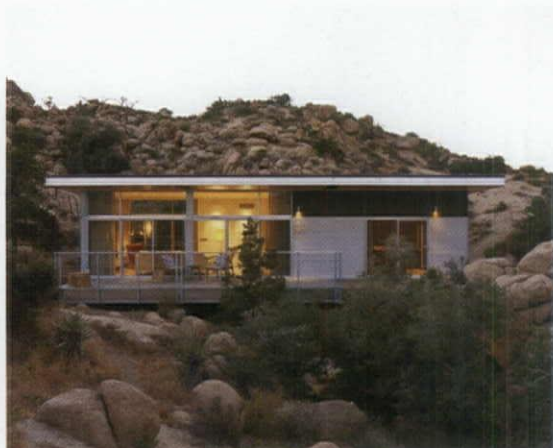
#1032 Edward Dart, A.I.A.
Glencoe, IL \$2,490,000



#987 Ulrich Franzen, Architect
New Canaan, CT \$5,500,000

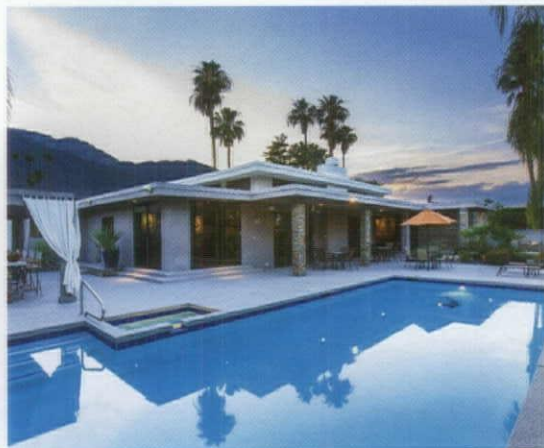


#1056 Marcel Breuer, Architect
Princeton, NJ \$2,000,000



#1041
Yucca Valley, CA

Blue Sky Building Systems
\$675,000



#1031
Palm Springs, CA

Charles Dubois, A.I.A.
\$1,069,000



#982
Lambertville, NJ

Jules Gregory, Architect
\$999,000



#1059
Winnetka, IL

Stephen Guerrant, A.I.A.
\$1,275,000



#1055
Augusta, MO

Bernoudy Treasure
\$1,175,000



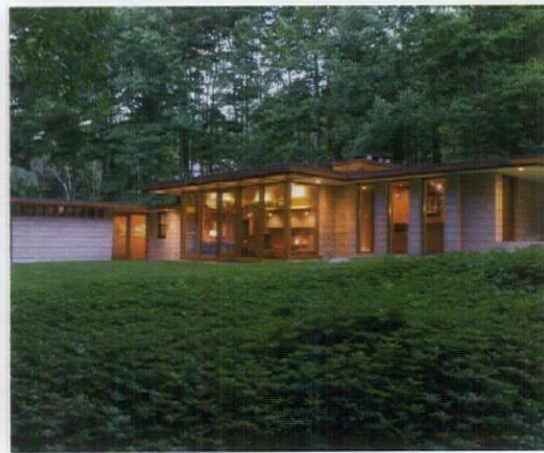
#1013
Darien, CT

Edward Durell Stone, Architect
\$1,600,000



#1030
Bryn Athyn, PA

Richard Neutra, Architect
\$5,400,000



#758
Weston, CT

Allan Gelbin Design
Call For Price



#1016
Stuart, FL

James Yates, Architect
\$4,995,000



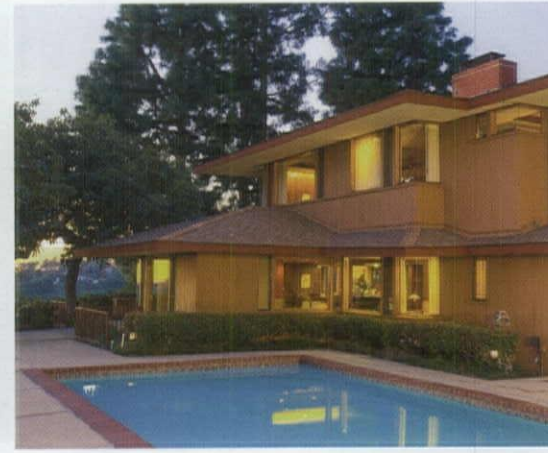
#861
Saint Lucia, West Indies

Belmont, Queen of Castries
\$1,495,000



#950
Cold Spring, NY

River Architects
\$1,600,000



#882
La Habra Heights, CA

James Delong, Architect
\$1,225,000

MODERNICA®



Case Study Ceramics

See the entire line at modernica.net

GALERIE PATRICK SEGUIN
20TH CENTURY FURNITURE & ARCHITECTURE
JEAN PROUVÉ | CHARLOTTE PERRIAND |
PIERRE JEANNERET | LE CORBUSIER | JEAN ROYÈRE
GALERIE PATRICK SEGUIN | 5, RUE DES TAILLANDIERS | 75011 PARIS |
TEL +33 1 4700 3235 | www.patrickseguin.com | info@patrickseguin.com



JEAN PROUVÉ
8x8 DEMOUNTABLE HOUSE | 1945