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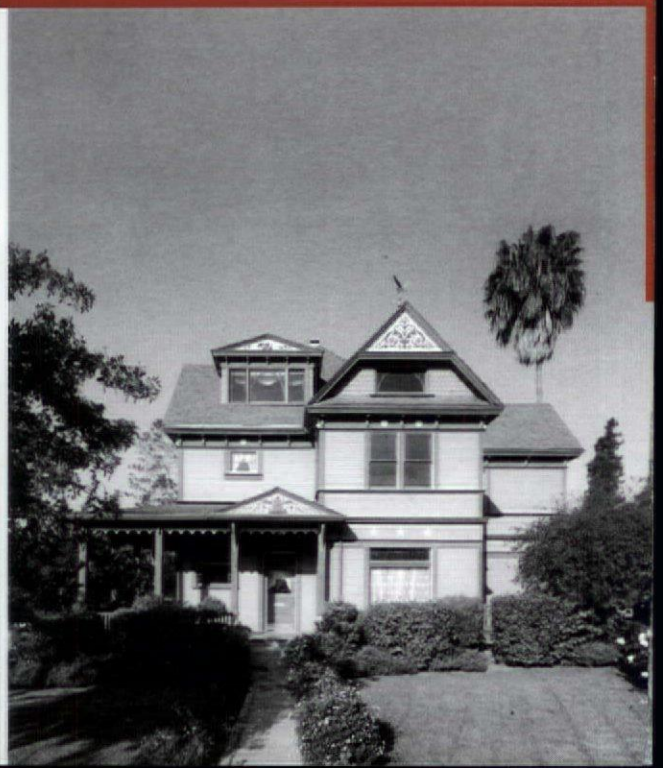
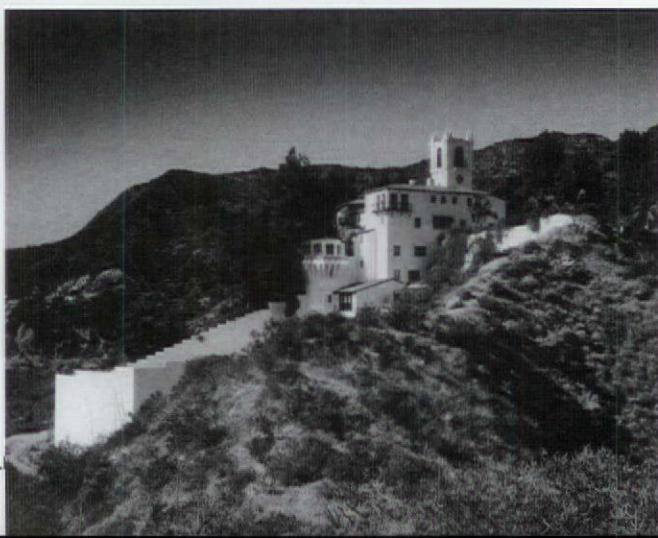
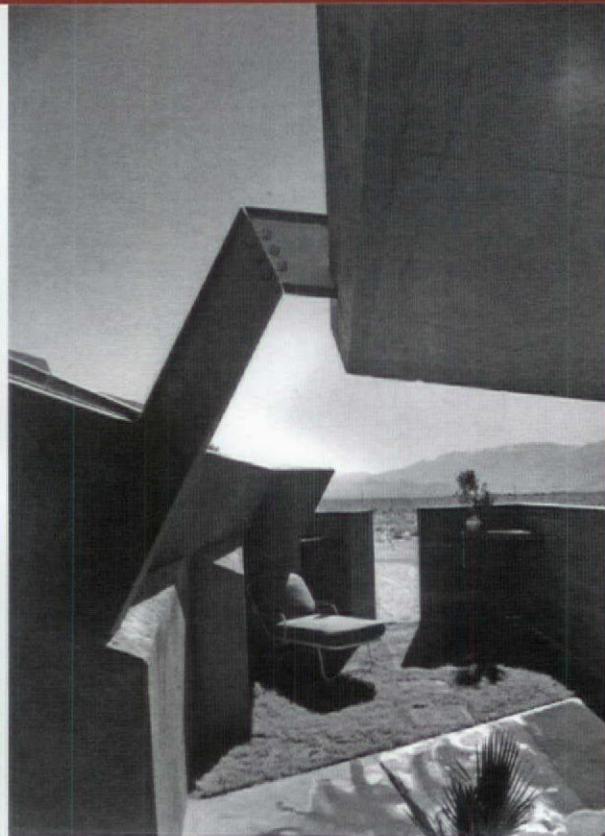
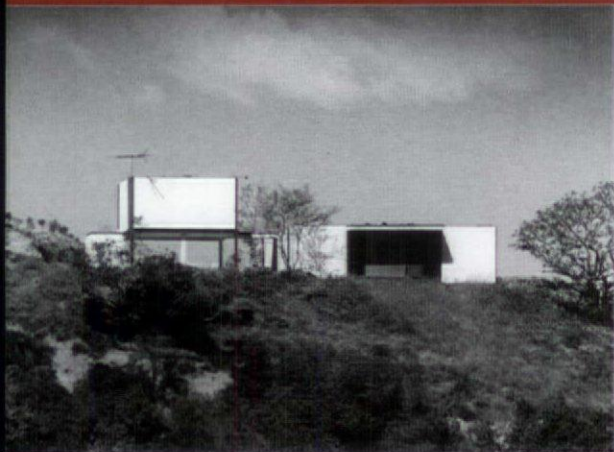
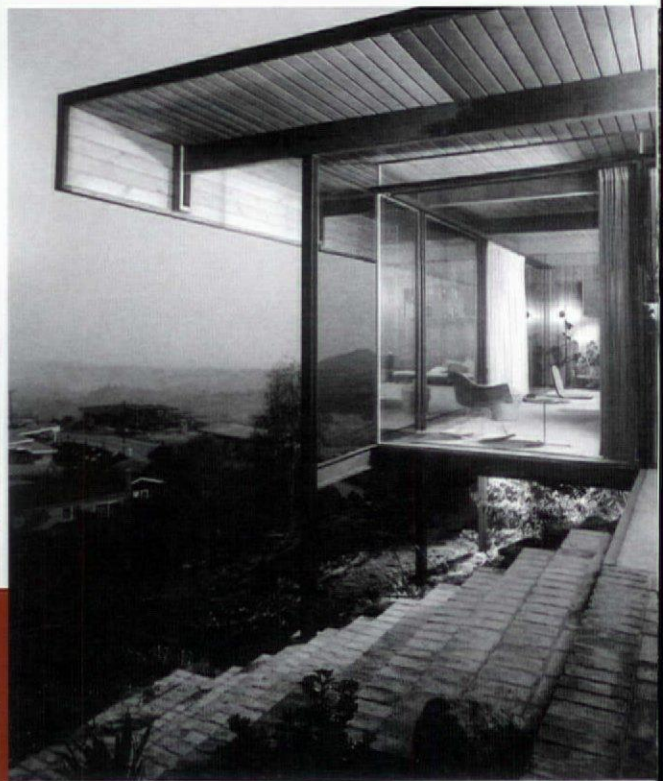
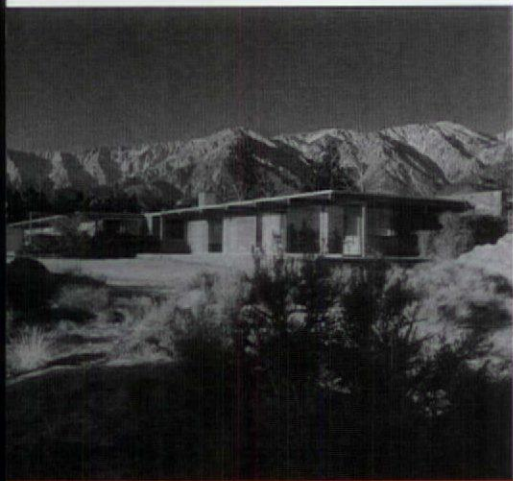
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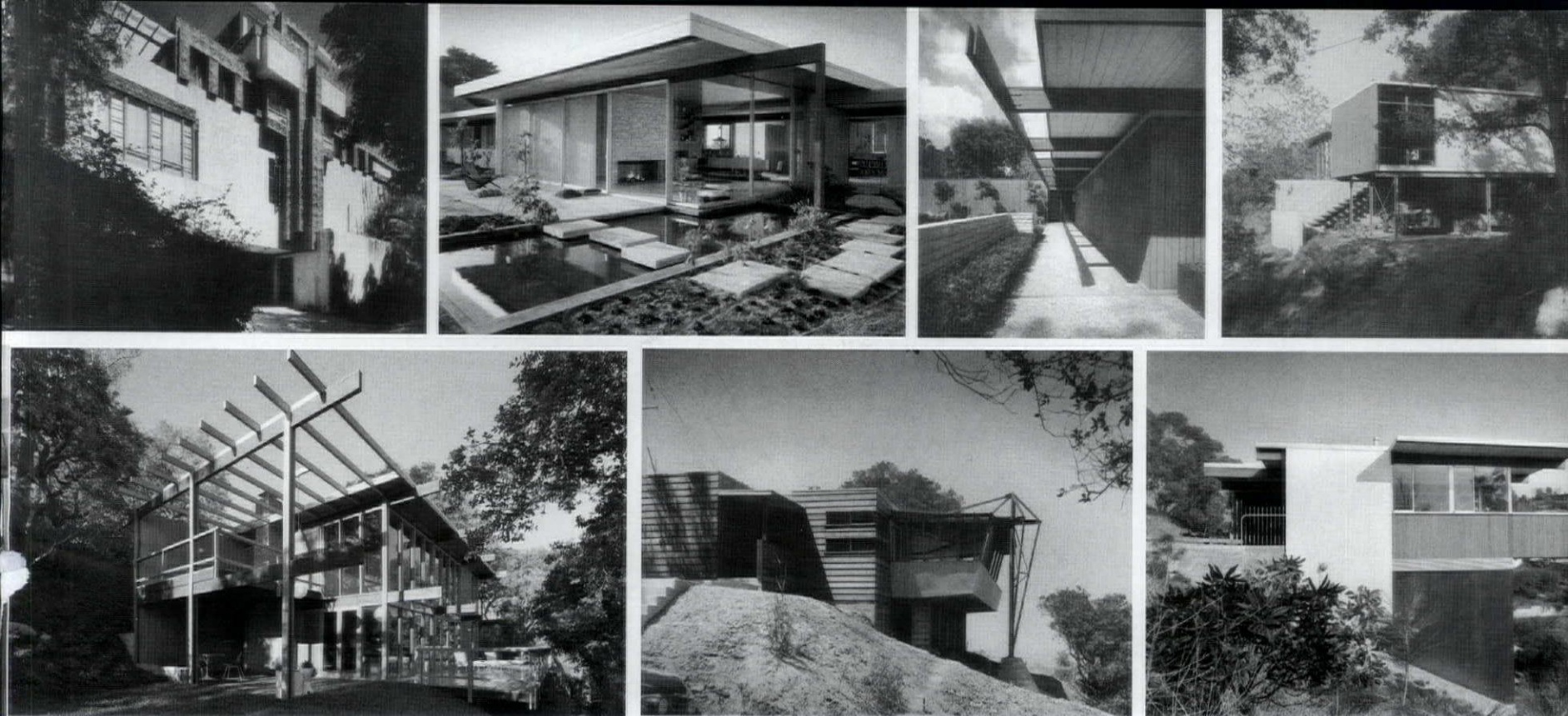


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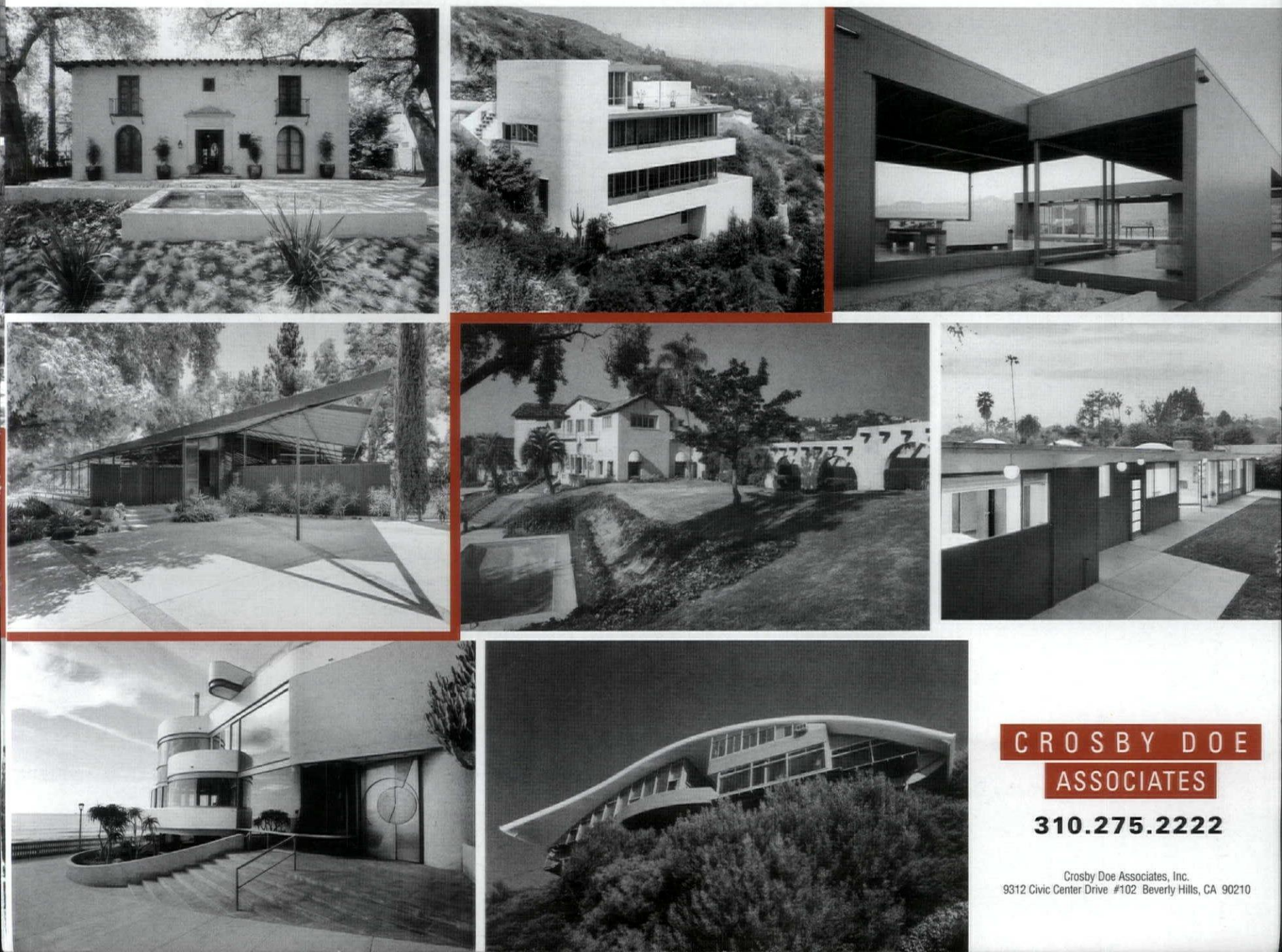
TEMPLE OF STEEL

Daphne Residence - Craig Ellwood, Designer





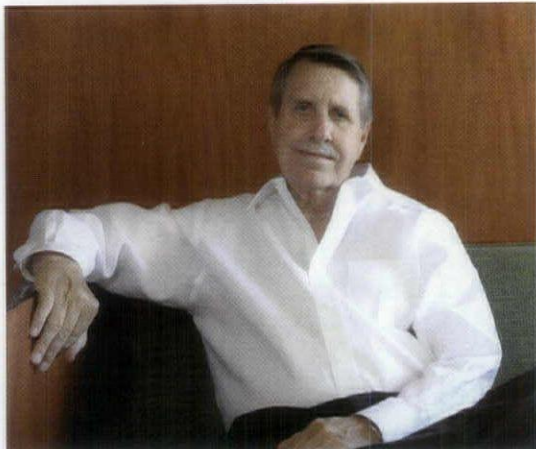
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EDITOR'S NOTE

OUR BRAVE NEW WORLD?

Over the years I have been lucky enough to have represented many of the greatest works of residential architecture in Southern California—Frank Lloyd Wright's Millard House, Lloyd Wright's Taggart House, Richard Neutra's Singleton House, John Lautner's Silvertop and Carling House, Harwell Hamilton Harris's English House, among so many others. These properties provide some of the most unique and inspiring lifestyles our region has to offer. Yet when the building inspectors come during the sale to advise the buyer, more often than not they will miss the magic of these homes, and gravely point out items that are merely "not to code." It may be the size of a door, the rise of a step, the height of a railing (or lack thereof), the span of a beam, the height of a ceiling, or a myriad of other random issues. Never mind that the property in question has served the owners well for a lifetime. Or that these great properties with their non-conforming elements are living proof that many of today's code requirements are unnecessary and overly restrictive. So I find myself asking this question: Are creativity and individuality being legislated out of existence? In the realm of the architecture of the single family house this may well be the case – and even more so when it comes to multi-family housing. It seems that as our culture has grown and become more complex, government has increasingly micro-managed (through so-called "Planning" and "Building and Safety" Departments) how an architect, architectural team and engineer finds a solution to relevant issues. Zoning, building, plumbing, mechanical and electrical codes, State energy and disabled access regulations—all these things have fallen under the jurisdiction and control of state and local laws for construction and maintenance of residential buildings. And for the most part, that creates a one-size-fits-all government standard. Which flies in the face of the very nature of architectural ingenuity, dictating hundreds if not thousands of details as to how a house or building must be built, and what material it must be built of.

Though creative inspiration is the spark that gives any great work of architecture its timelessness, beauty, and utility, today's building mandates have become so restrictive that they more often than not add to the destruction of the very "quality of life" issues they are meant to preserve. Just look at how many houses built in this century, even expensive ones, are bland and boring. Mind numbing conformity has become the norm. If we are to once again break through to new concepts for building and living, the architect and the engineer must be freed from the tyranny of the building codes. They must once again assert their rightful place, and become the decision makers in regard to their creations, rather than the bureaucrats. I am not saying that all regulation is a bad thing. Much of it is necessary and appropriate. But when the architect, engineer, owner, and their insurance companies are willing to stand by new concepts, materials, designs, or exceptions, their decisions should prevail. In an era where in other countries whole houses are being 3D printed, the freedom to experiment, and try new ideas, even if mistakes may occur, must be encouraged rather than ignored. As you turn the pages of this issue of architectureforsale.com, *Quarterly*, it is worth noting that many of the properties offered here could not be built today: They are prohibited by some code.

Crosby Doe

Contributors

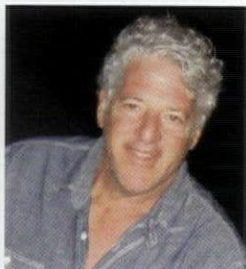
ANDREA HUNTER DIETZ

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.



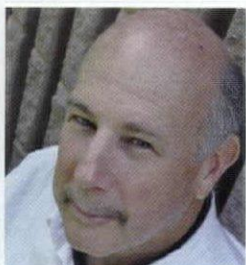
MARK MORRISON

Mark Morrison is an L.A.-based writer/editor who covers entertainment, lifestyle trends, food and wine, travel and real estate. As the West Coast Editor of *Time Inc.*'s popular celebrity lifestyle monthly, *InStyle*, he procured most of the Hollywood homes that were photographed and written about during his 15-year run. He personally reported on dozens of houses, including Kevin Costner's Nichols Canyon compound, John Travolta and Kelly Preston's Brentwood estate, Rob Lowe's Santa Barbara ranch house, Heidi Klum and Seal's Costa Careyes hideaway and Melanie Griffith and Antonio Banderas' 1920s Hancock Park manse by Gordon Kaufmann. He has also written for *Travel + Leisure*, *The Hollywood Reporter*, *Rolling Stone*, *Los Angeles magazine*, *Wine Spectator* and *Sunset*, among others.



ALAN HESS

Architect and historian Alan Hess is author of nineteen books on Modern architecture and urbanism in the mid-twentieth century; his subjects include John Lautner, Oscar Niemeyer, Frank Lloyd Wright, the Ranch House, Google architecture, Las Vegas, and Palm Springs. He is the architecture critic of the *San Jose Mercury News*, a contributor to *The Architects Newspaper*, grant recipient from the Graham Foundation for Advanced Studies in the Fine Arts, and a National Arts Journalism Program Fellow. He's received the Honor Award from the National Trust for Historic Preservation, and the President's Award from the Los Angeles Conservancy for three decades of work in preserving Modern architecture. He is currently writing a history of Modern Architecture in California.



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 "Nor-CalMod: 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).



CORY BUCKNER

Cory Buckner is a practicing architect and writer. She was awarded the 2002 Los Angeles Preservation Award for preservation of the original Mutual Housing Association houses in Crestwood Hills. She is author of "A. Quincy Jones and Crestwood Hills: The Chronicle of a Modern Utopia."



CAMERON CAROTHERS

Cameron Carothers has specialized in photographing architecture and interiors for over 20 years. His work has appeared in numerous publications including *Architectural Record*, *Interiors and Sources*, *The L.A. Times*, *The Wall Street Journal* and *People Magazine*. He has a BFA in photography from Art Center College of Design and enjoys serving as adjunct faculty for his Alma Mater. Cameron is based in Los Angeles.



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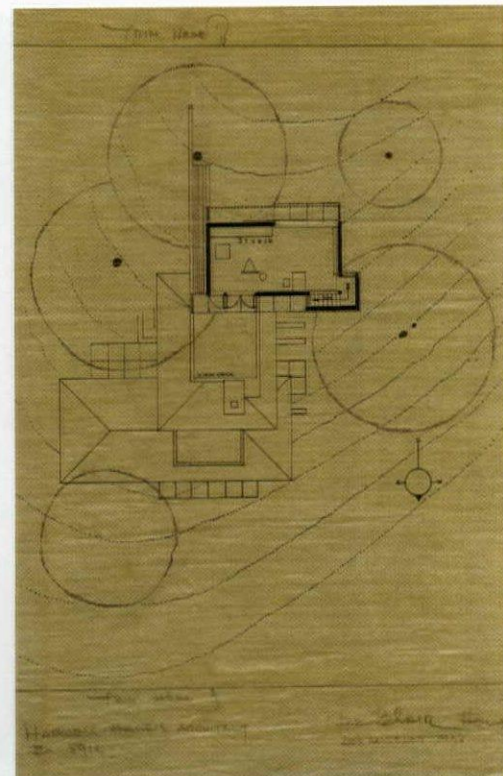
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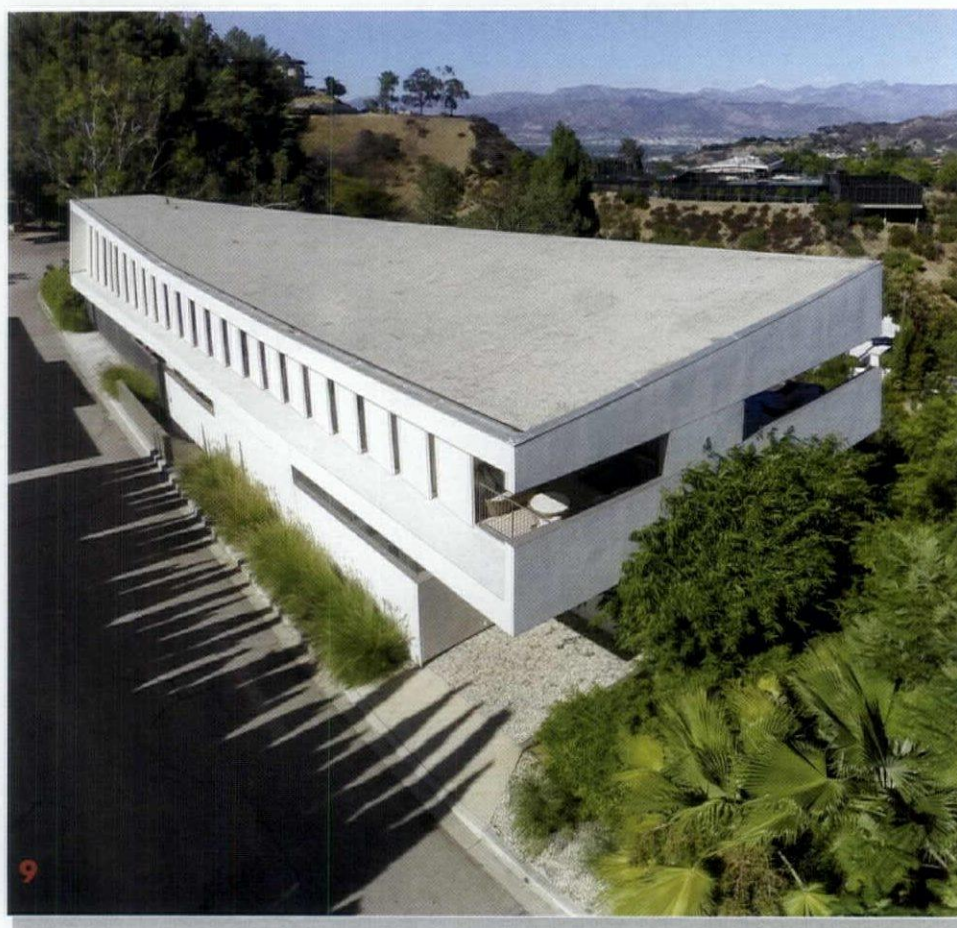
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A DOUBLE - LOADED MASTERPIECE

THE CAVERHILL RESIDENCE, 2008.

Dwell Home Tour-goers were mesmerized by the Caverhill House. Here's why they got lost, and found themselves, in this vortex of 'principled opposites.'

By Andrea Dietz



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REDISCOVERING ROBERT FINKELOR, ARCHITECT:

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THE DAPHNE RESIDENCE, 1961

Craig Ellwood used the leading edge of industrial materials to build an 'architecture of nobility.' The Daphne Residence is the result.

By Pierluigi Serraino

Photographs by Scott Mayoral

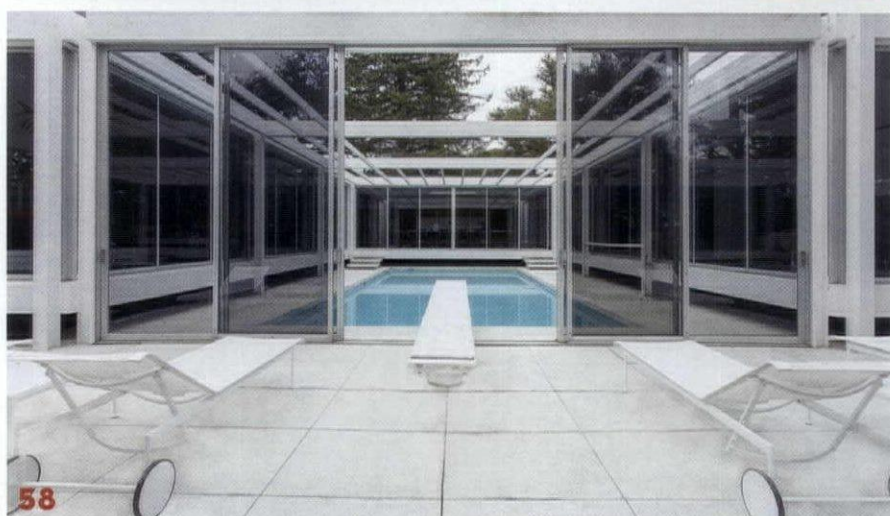
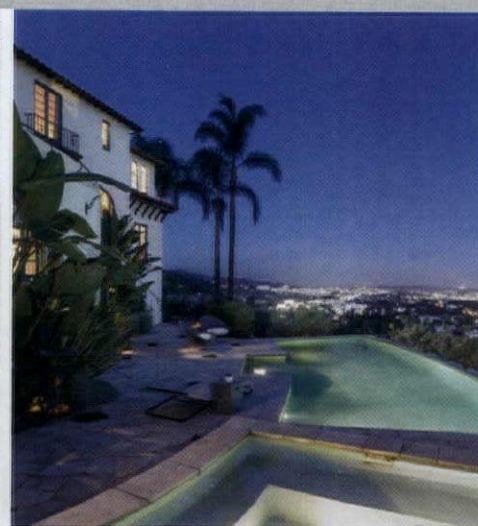
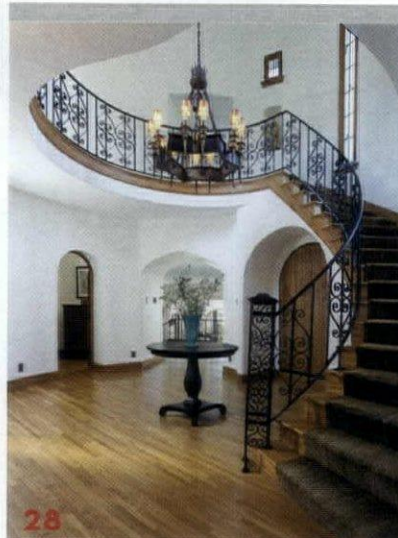
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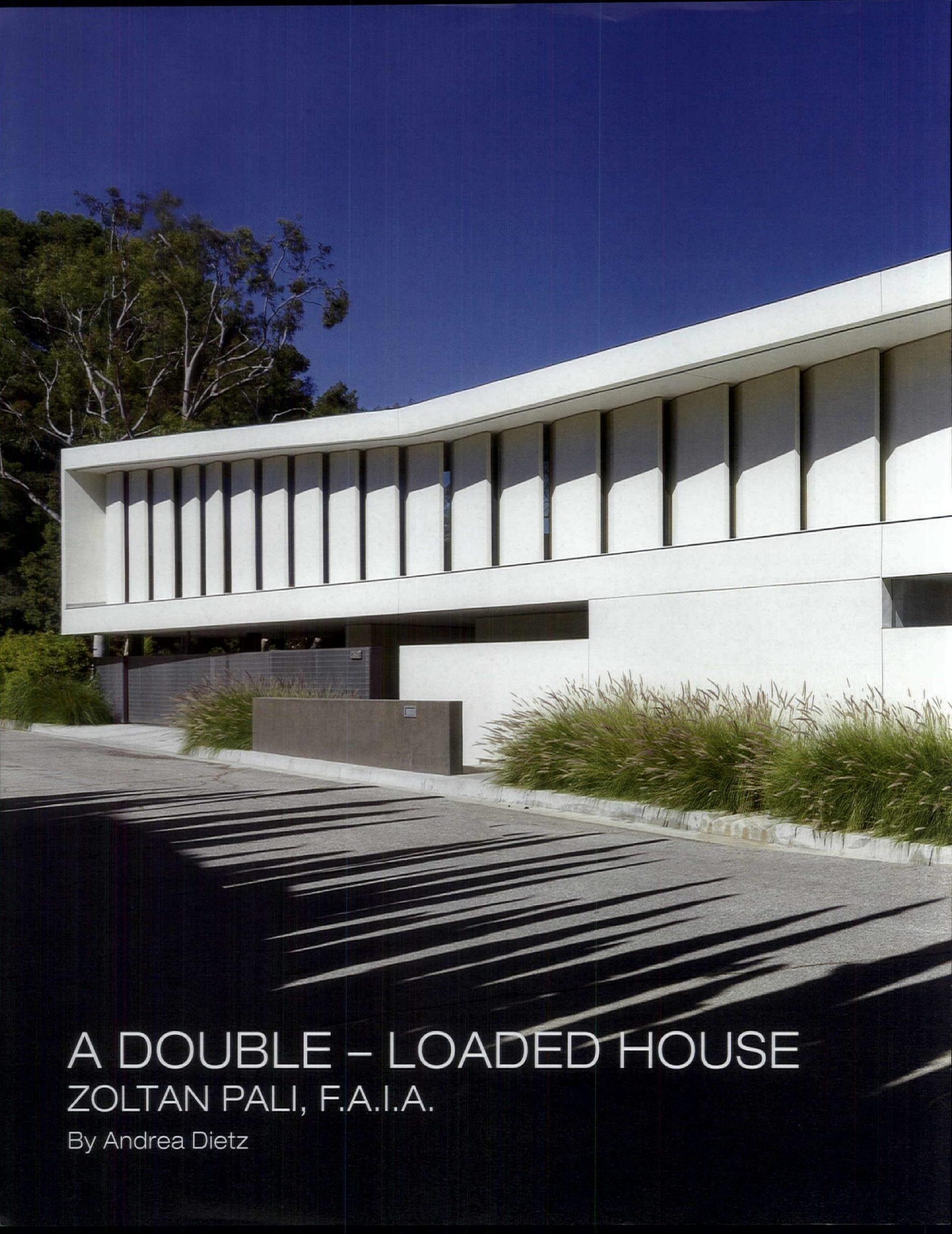
JONES HOUSE #1

DESIGNED BY A. QUINCY JONES & RUTH SCHNEIDER

When it came to his first house, A. Quincy Jones took the many challenges as opportunities. His brilliant career may have been the most lasting thing to come of it.

By Cory Buckner





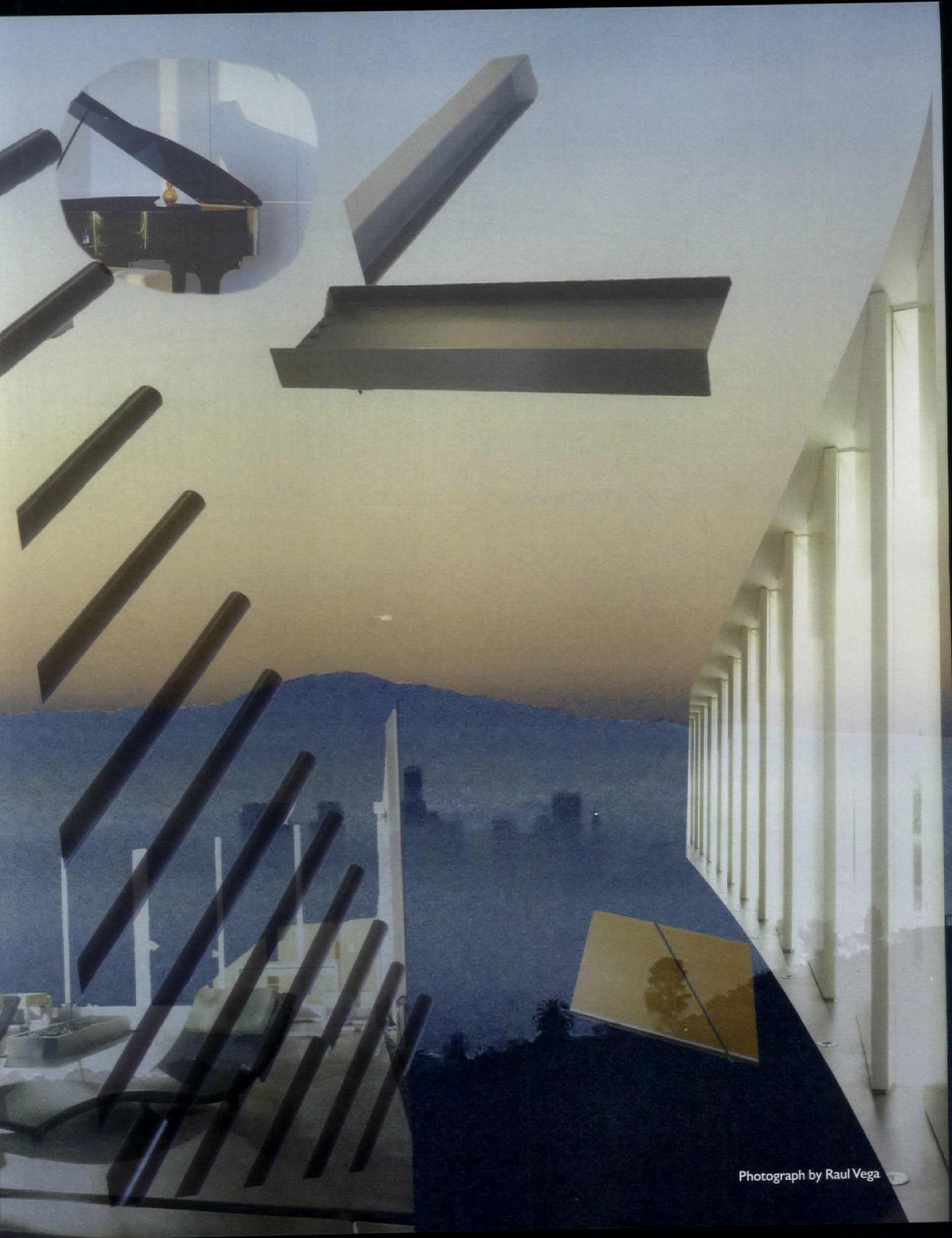
A DOUBLE – LOADED HOUSE

ZOLTAN PALI, F.A.I.A.

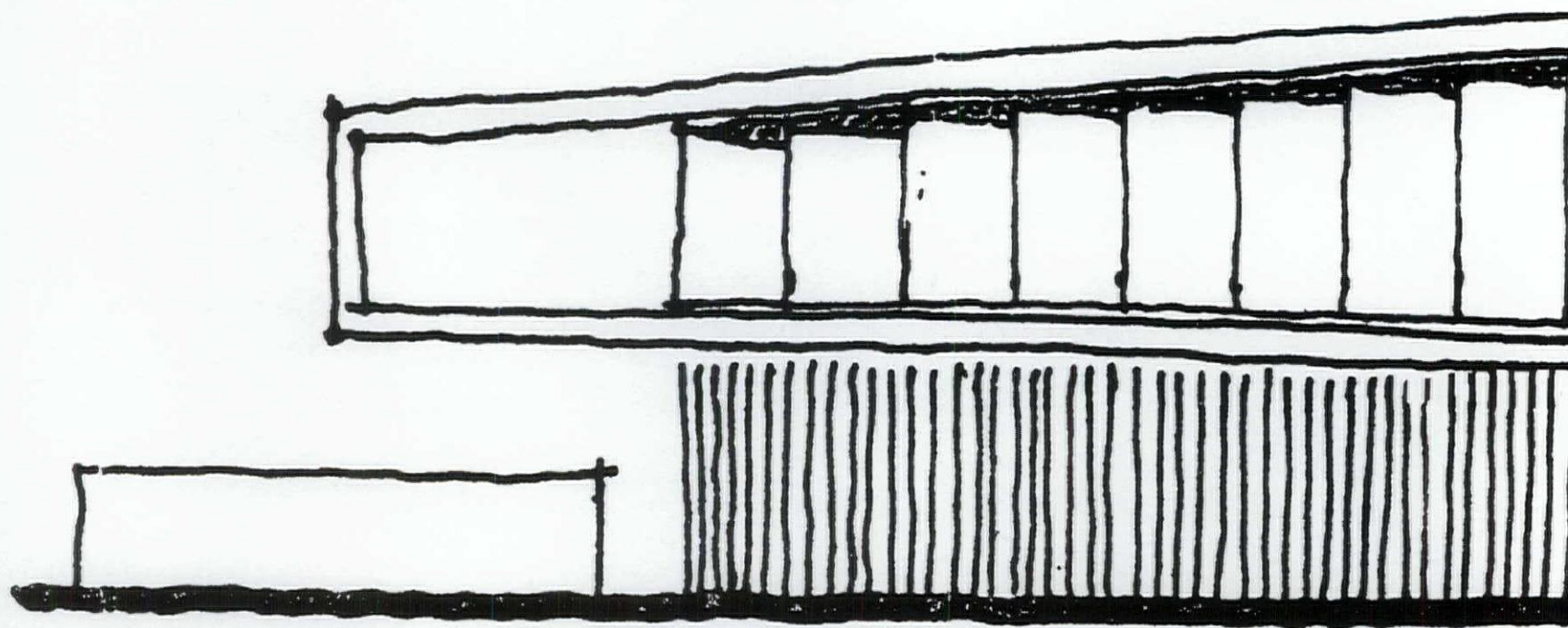
By Andrea Dietz







Photograph by Raul Vega



"They just wouldn't leave."

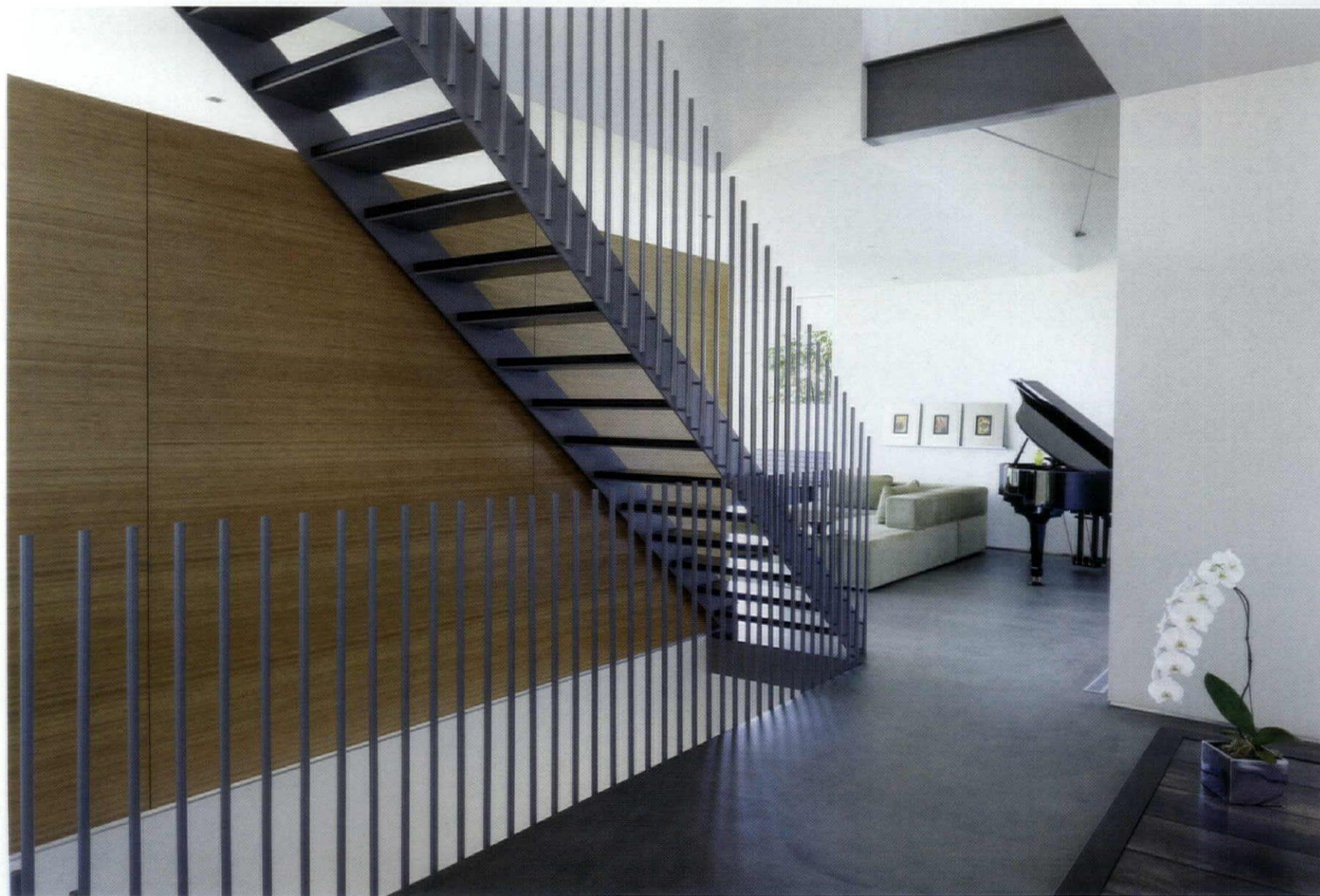
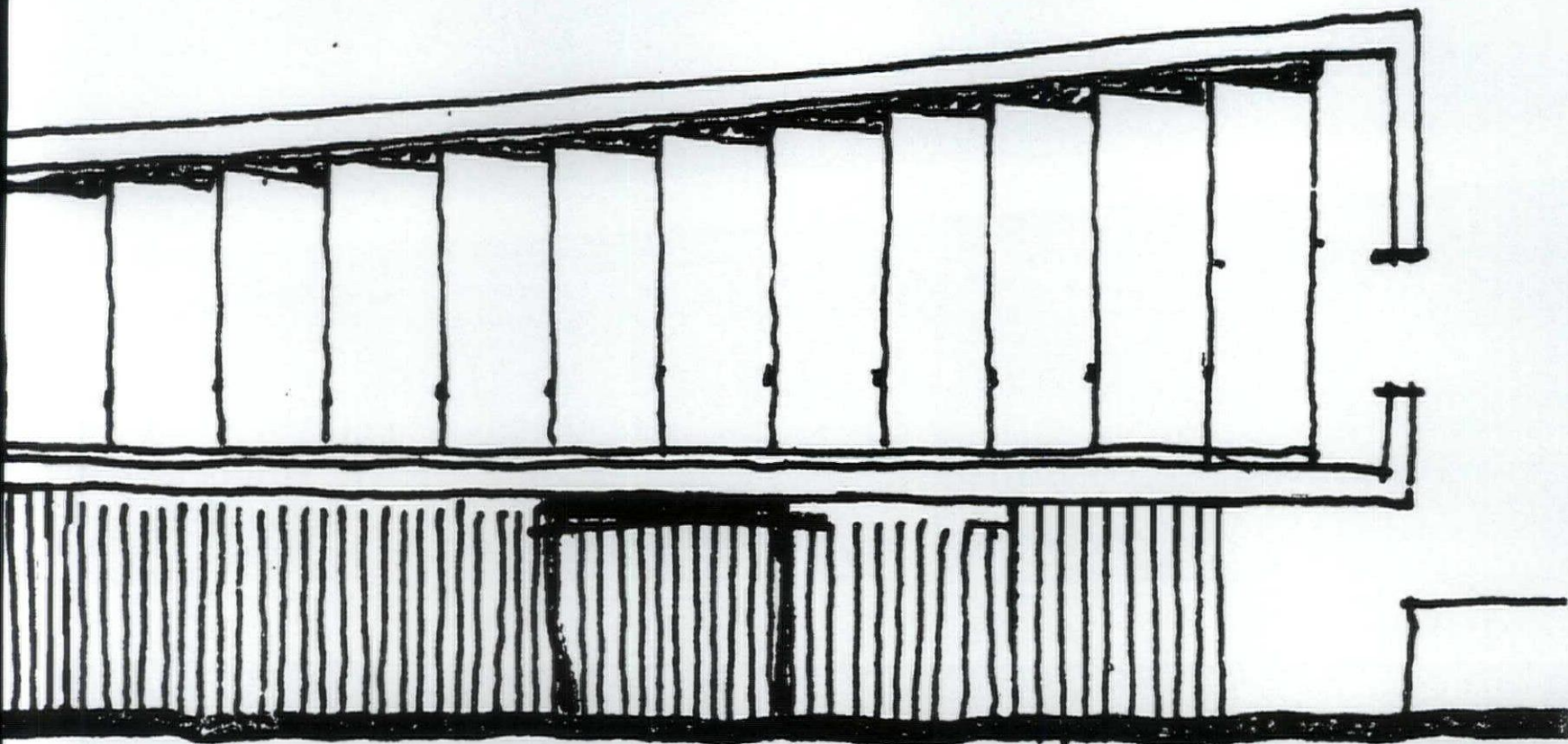
In 2010, participants of a Dwell Home Tour overstayed their visit to Beverly Hills's Caverhill House. Entranced, mesmerized, they lost themselves to what Don Caverhill, the homeowner, describes as the house vortex – the tendency of the property to lull its occupants both into and out of place. The grab of the house is unexpected. It moves with a slow creep, smoldering from a curbside first impression and flash photo-op into an afterimage burn. With longer exposure, the hook permeates deeper still, settling bodily in, until, inexplicably, hours are passed and the sale – of attraction and intrigue – is complete.

The sneaky magnetism and sly capture of the Caverhill House is, perhaps, its umbrella characteristic. Its architecture, presented through clear and rational form, is deceptively simple. It dons the appearance of a horizontal bar building – a skewed, linear box frame in-filled by a parade of billboard-like baffles. The primary street volume seemingly levitates over its ground staging, visually cantilevered from a pedestal and distanced from its supports through a series of subtle offsets and material shifts. It comes across as an almost graphic, a stark white wedge that jumps off of its scenic page and packs a punch of contrast. This directness, however, is misleading. The clean, photogenic lines mask a complex of experience and intent.

It is through these hidden depths that the power of the Caverhill House's mysteriously evolving allure is explained. After all, minimalism, a tenet to which the 2008 Studio Pali Fekete architects (SPF:a) design subscribes, is assumed to be straightforward. Here, though, it acts more like shorthand for a lengthy text. Given the precision with which the composition introduces itself, awakening to this nuance is both perplexing and wondrous.

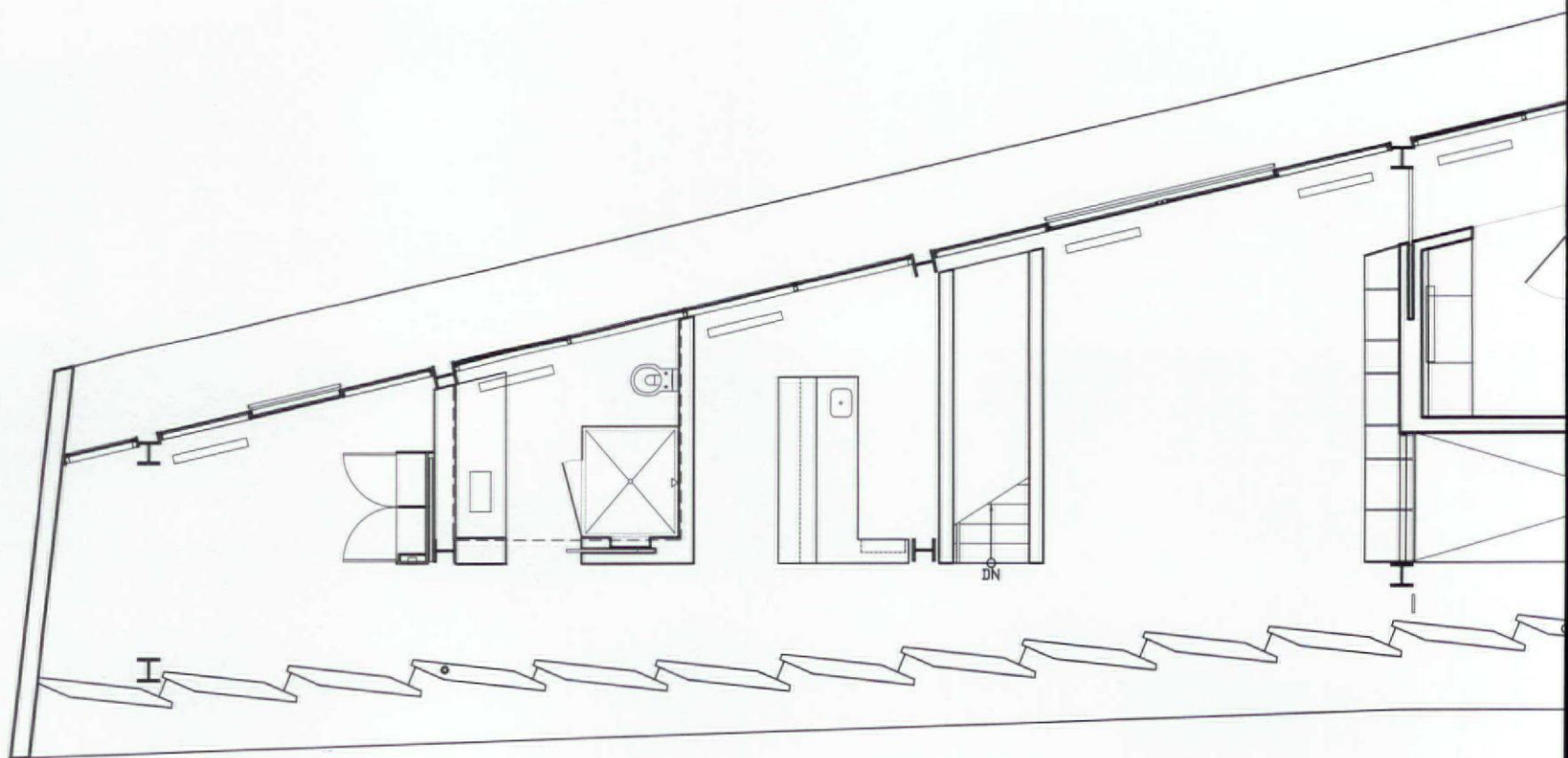
The intricacies of the residence emanate from two sources – its deftly configured physique and the narratives around which it came to be. The house is a series of illusions and allusions. As object, it plays with appreciations of flat and deep, heavy and light, big and small, route and destination. As idea, it is an overlay of metaphors, personalities, and prescriptions.

It sits on an acrobatic site, straddling a ridge that splits Los Angeles into its poles – mountains to the east, water to the west. Through its positioning, its perceived two-dimensionality expands as its signature screen façade draws and focuses the rays of the setting sun and its outline structure becomes a channel or lens for its backdrop. The house, herein, is revealed as device, a camera or window for viewing its surrounds. These same features, sliced away from the earth by an open-air garage passage, also tease, with their hovering, the precariousness of the hillside. The defiance of gravity is, of course, a foil – for both mass and scale. Beneath the evident airy of the surface levels, the house digs soundly in and down; a single flying story is actually three embedded in a cradling yard. All of these discoveries are built-in, satisfying conceptional ideals for an environment of carefully crafted and cumulative approach, of gradual unveilings.









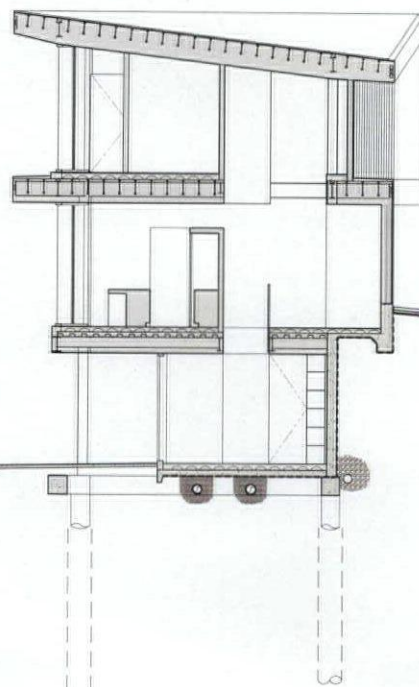
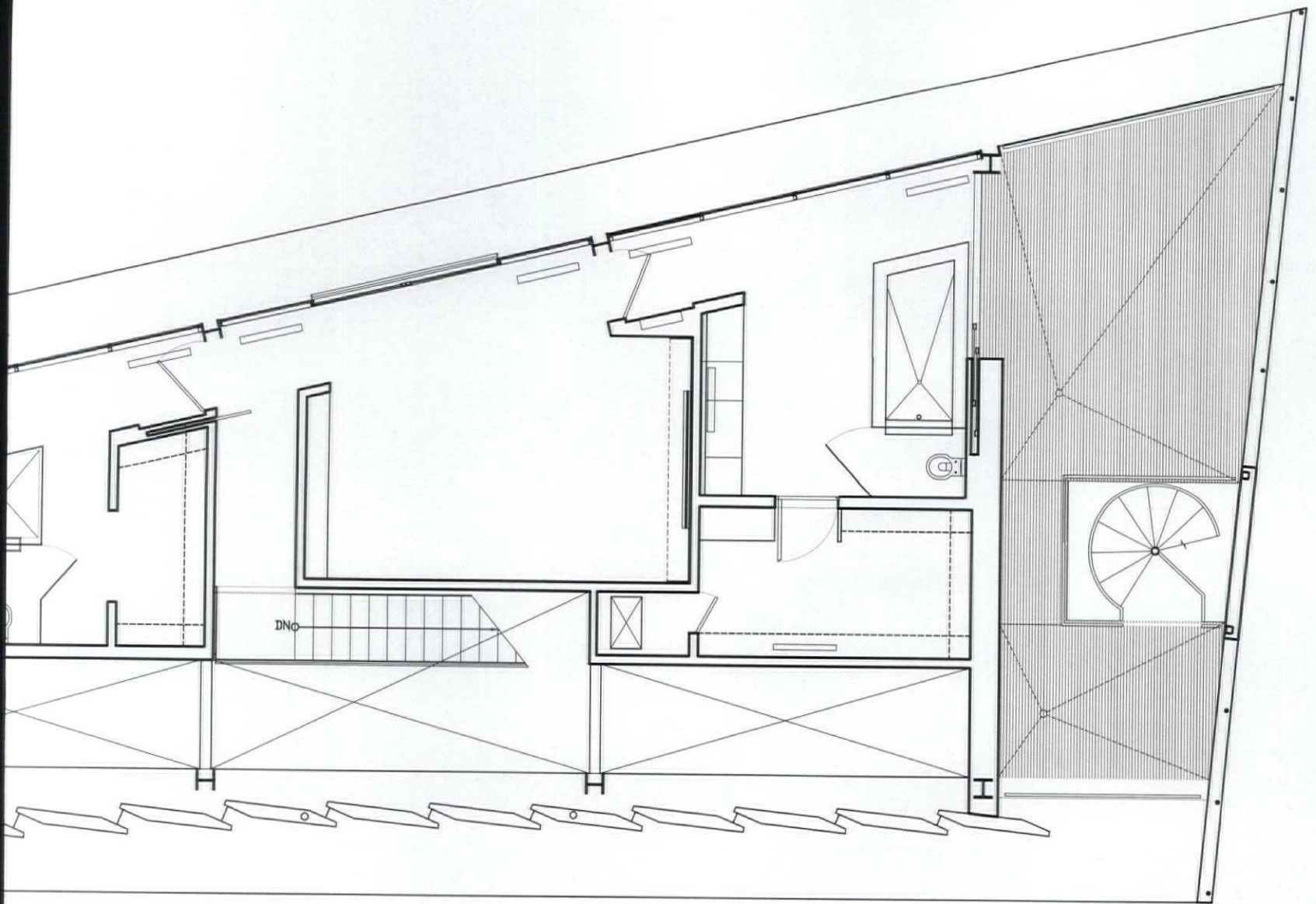
The origin tale of the Caverhill House also has its reductive and elaborate versions. In stereotypical architectural fashion, it all (sort of) comes back to a doodle on a scrap of paper. "When Zoltan [Pali] slid his sketch across the table towards me, his hands were shaking," Don Caverhill describes. "He was nervous that I wouldn't like it." Instead, Caverhill was so enamored that the drawing became a project hunt. It was convincing enough that everything was measured against it and intuitive enough to posit a development quandary – pitting impulse and purity against process and reality. The leftover envelope, then, not unlike the end product it inspired, is emblematic, a guise for otherwise extensive negotiations and seasonings.

Caverhill has been collecting beautiful spaces all of his life. From his teenage interest in significant buildings as perfect spots with which to beguile first dates, to his longstanding hobby of picture clipping from architecture magazines, to his developer-lender career ambitions to bring creativity to everyday constructions, he has cultivated an eye for design. "I find good details, good interiors all of the time. But, a truly good envelope is rare," he explains. "When I came across Zoltan's Stone Canyon house – with its lean muscle and its disappearing foundation, I jumped." The 2003 SPF:a Oshry House had met Caverhill's elusive criteria for external harmony; he made immediate arrangements to engage the architect for his own dream home.

Still, it took awhile before Zoltan Pali understood what Caverhill was after. "He took me out for drinks several times before calling me up and announcing: I've got a curveball for you," Pali muses. What Caverhill wanted, though – a place to love and live in – appealed to Pali. "At the time, everyone was building for the market, to flip... I prefer to design for someone."

Pali founded SPF:a with his wife Judit Fekete in 1990. Though their work is typologically diverse, spanning the Wallis Annenberg Center for the Performing Arts to the Somis Hay Barn, they have garnered the most attention from their residences. Pali prickles a little bit at this designation. "I don't want to be typecast... I don't want to repeat myself. I can't even bring myself to resurrect unused schemes." Pali sees his stance as a motivator – to always improve and grow. "I have this notion that I'm going to be good one day. The last project is never it. So, maybe it's the next one."

The Caverhill House, then, really spins out of the pull-and-push dynamic of two perfectionists, a unique architect-client relationship. After courting Pali, Caverhill entrusted the architect with a meticulous list of expectations and limitations for replacing his existing house. The new abode, nuts and bolts, should accommodate four bedrooms – one a guest suite, one a master suite with a double bath and powder room.



Section







Bathrooms and closets must cluster together. The street level is reserved for gathering only; bedrooms are sanctuaries and require up or down stairwell separation from the main floor. Hallways are not allowed. The structure should be both solid, built of steel, and slim, a low impact injection open to its stunning setting. Intimacy, not grandeur, is the atmospheric goal; double-heights are to be treated as climaxes or avoided as cavernous. And, above all else, quality, from faucets to mechanics, is not to be compromised. "I imagined something simultaneously classic and futurist, a Cotswold cottage for 2075," Caverhill says of his instructions.

Caverhill analogizes the house with abandon. He likens it to the calligraphic stroke of a Japanese symbol – an elegant release that, through the barest means, conveys emotion and soul. He calls it a Swiss watch – a streamlined and fine-tuned tool uncompromising in its aesthetic and its operation. He sees in it a concentration of his life's defining, if paradoxical, values. With equal conviction, he interchanges his advocacy for the whimsical and the rigorous, the messy and the pristine. Caverhill, also a musician of some renown, reconciles these extremes in a concept akin to the ostinato, or repetitive backbone of a song. If cogent, such a baseline facilitates the funk, is the underpinning of legendary music . . . and, in turn, of a noteworthy existence.

Pali sympathizes with this conflation of principled opposites. Through his early years working for Jerrold Lomax, a former associate of Craig Ellwood and a respected Los Angeles designer in his own right, he was instilled with a stubborn allegiance to the coincident lucidity and poetry of modernist architecture. For him, the containers in which the clumsiness of life plays out, should step away from the mayhem and, instead, act as counterpoints of calm.





Caverhill and Pali's shared enthusiasms lent them the stamina necessary to get through an irregularly prolonged project timeline. The two began their serious conversations in 2003; the house was finished in 2008. At the initiation, the economy was climbing into peak boom. Contractors enjoyed the luxury of being able to turn down work deemed negligible. The house had to earn, in a radically competitive climate, its constructability merit through scope and involvement. Over the course of the design, approvals, and building processes, item costs would skyrocket, sometimes overnight. The house was caught in the crunch, perpetually readapting to new financial conditions.

The house also encountered its fair share of red tape. It maneuvered a series of city code, height-limit and setback, misinterpretations. The advanced technologies that it incorporates – a climate controlling AirFloor, a comprehensive home automation system, its specialty finishes and fixtures – confounded permitting officials. Tellingly, though, it also slid through its housing association review, a typically wrenching oversight hurdle, with only minor dings against skylights in the roof. Again, the integrity of the Caverhill House stands out – this time, for its resilience.

Caverhill attributes the house's win-over charm, at least in part, to its balance of honed proportions. He and Pali both lament the current trend in residential oversizing. They diagnose today's obsession with the grandiose and vacuous as a profound disconnect from the humane. The Caverhill House challenges such ideas of scale, demonstrating dualities of comfort and liberty in the selfsame ingredients. Each zone, because there are no conventional rooms, is an ensemble of anchors that hold and apertures that release. The effect is a sense of eddies and nooks in a landscape.

The plan, a string arrangement of this pocketed, but continuous space, is seamless and uncomplicated. Narrow to the north, wide to south, it is laid out to flow, encouraging easy and conspicuous circulation. The path, always on a mission, diverts its traversers to the eastern view. At entry, it beelines perpendicular to the mass, cutting out to a balcony overlook. Through a slip to the side, it merges dining, cooking, and lounging – interior and exterior – into a long veranda. A balustraded module of stacked stairs, coupled with kitchen disguised as bamboo wardrobe, establishes a sculptural hub and links the main communal floor with the more private levels above and below. Down leads to a quintessentially southern California entertainment patio with fire pit and hot tub. The route, then, is flanked by two minor bedroom suites and terminates in an embrace of chaparral and eucalyptus. Up carries into the main sleeping quarters and the two peak moments of place.

The magic of the Caverhill House is distilled in the far ends of its elevated, suspended volume. Past the blond paneled alcove and frosted prisms of the master bed and baths, the floor spills out to a bookmatched deck. Within the open mouth of a near-impossible ceiling overhang and upturned platform, a pair of contiguous patios lays bare the architectural agenda. The funnel-like porch curates the sweep of Los Angeles, exaggerating the optic impact by distinguishing the planar of the house from the vast and various textures of the valley below.



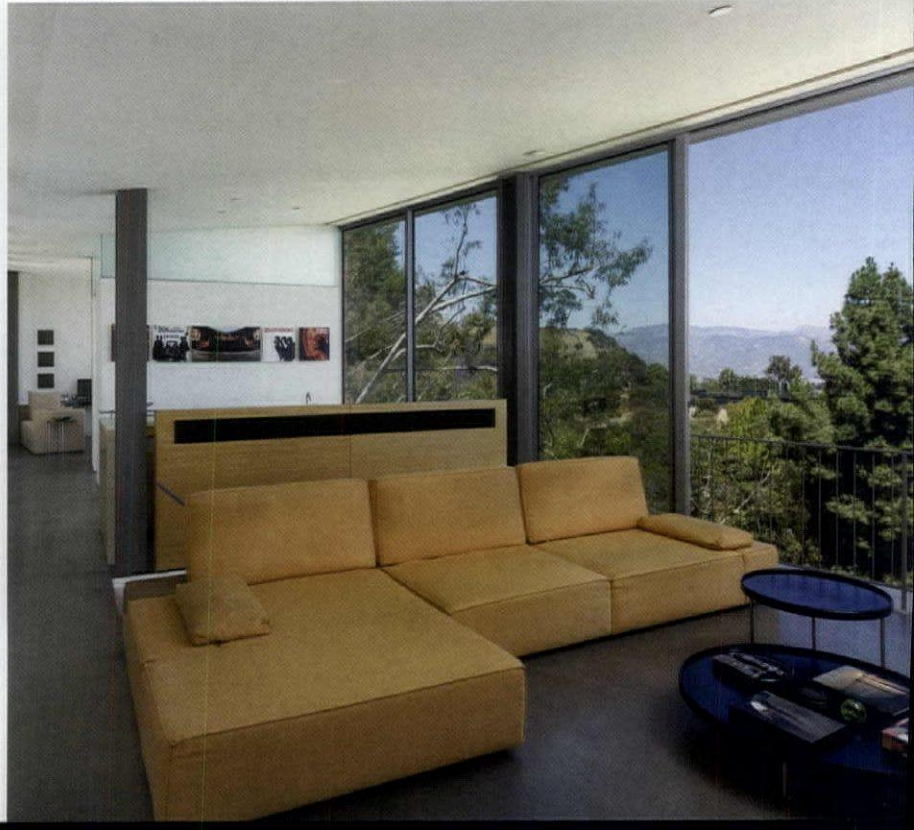


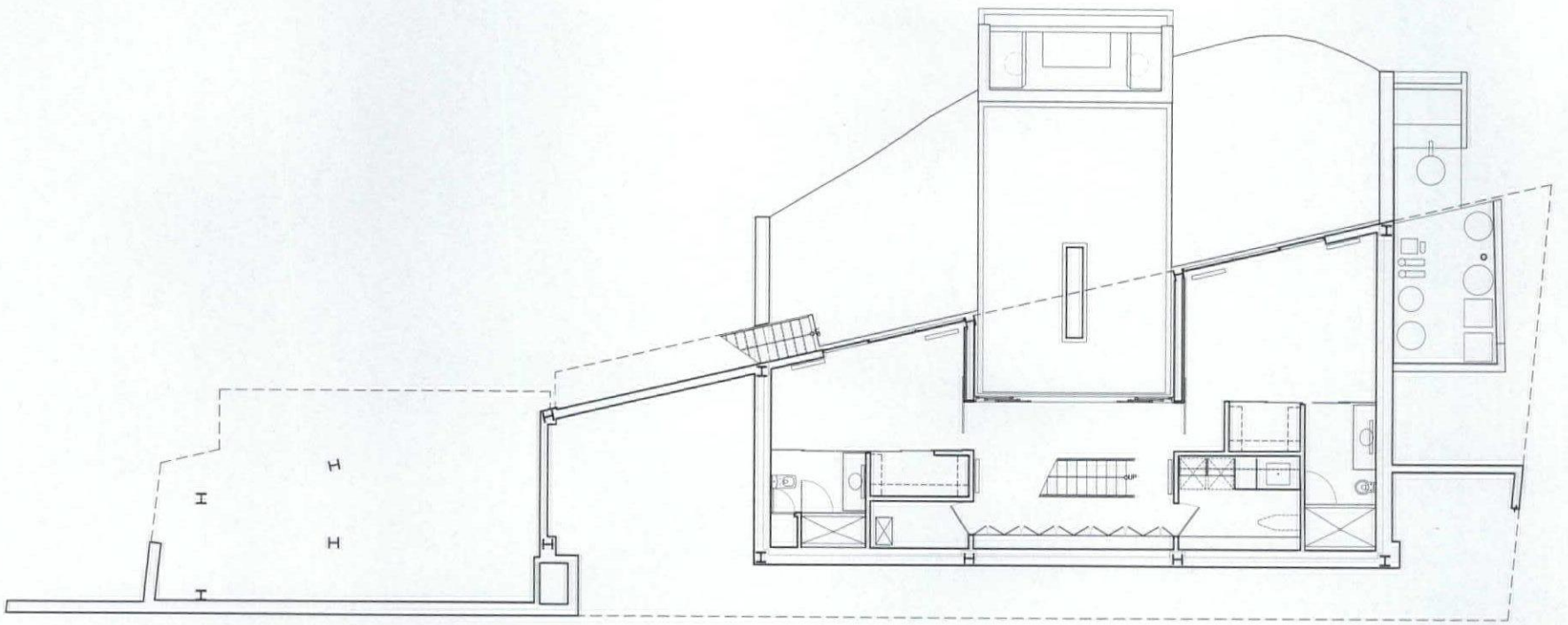


That vantage, though, is obvious, a full-immersion confrontation with the already given scene. In the other direction, the antechamber to the guest suite or media room is a manipulation and more stealth marvel. It is the vanishing point for the perspectival structure. From its center, space splays out along the 1250-foot corridor through the eastern curtain wall to the Hollywood Hills and the Angeles National Forest and, to the west, past the shade panel slits to the Pacific Ocean. The vista, however, is not necessarily one of the tangible, but rather of time. The fins from the elevation refract the roving beams of the sun, bouncing them off of the oblique angles of the paint-blached facets into rhythmic patterns on the internal surfaces. Over the course of the day, the juxtaposition of direct and indirect illumination divides the spread of atmosphere into parallel hazes with alternating blue and orange, purple and yellow hues.

"I don't like to lead with this," Caverhill says. "But, there's some sort of special, transportive power in this house . . . It conveys the same sense of peace as a wilderness vacation escape. Except, it's in Los Angeles, surrounded by four million people."

In the light den, the Caverhill House does take over. It uses Los Angeles, siphoning its improvisations through a primed canvas and extracting its other-worldliness. The house plays the imagery and projections of the city, providing the conductive figure for a riff of call-and-response with the ambient inputs. As color and shadow bend and stretch over geometries and comingle in cadence with the boogie-woogie beats of an overhead sound-system melody, the inanimate comes to life. Nothing is as it first appeared to be; it's all double-loaded – an enticing front with an embodied surprise for those patient, or delayed, enough to explore.







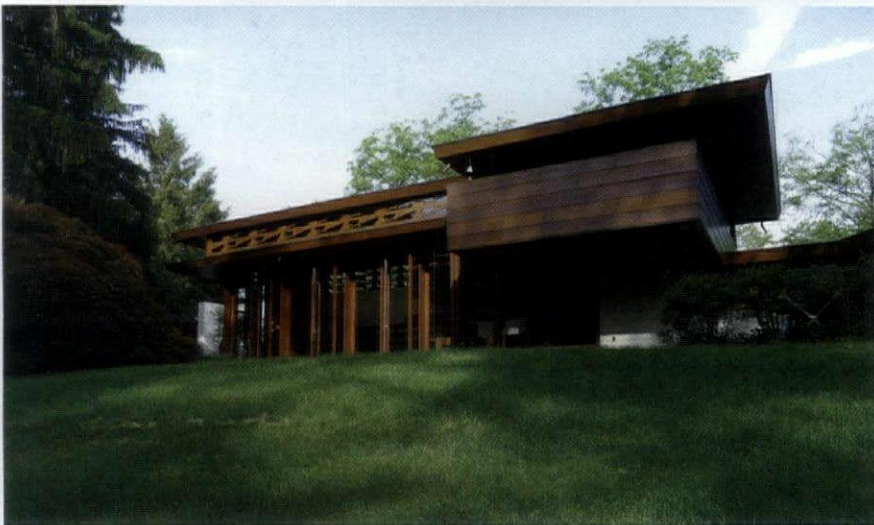
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Details & Information at: CaverhillResidence.com



FRANK LLOYD WRIGHT BUILDING CONSERVANCY SEE WRIGHT. SAVE WRIGHT.



Frank Lloyd Wright's Bachman-Wilson House (1954) in its original location in Millstone, New Jersey.
Photos © 2015 TarantinoSTUDIO

The Frank Lloyd Wright Building Conservancy is the only organization focused exclusively on the preservation and maintenance of the remaining structures designed by Frank Lloyd Wright. The Conservancy owns no Wright buildings but strives to protect them all. Since its formation in 1989, the Conservancy has led efforts to save many Wright buildings that otherwise would have been lost forever.

With its annual five-day conference and year-round special events in unique destinations, the Conservancy provides the opportunity to explore the richness of Wright's architecture through the first-hand experience of buildings rarely open to the public. **Join us next spring for Out and About Wright: Arkansas, April 15-17, 2016**, when the Conservancy will partner with Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art in Bentonville for an educational symposium and tour of Frank Lloyd Wright's 1954 Bachman-Wilson House, which has been reconstructed on the 120-acre grounds of the Moshe Safdie designed museum after flooding forced relocation of the house from its original location in Millstone, New Jersey.

We will also tour the work of Wright apprentice and AIA Gold Medal winner E. Fay Jones.

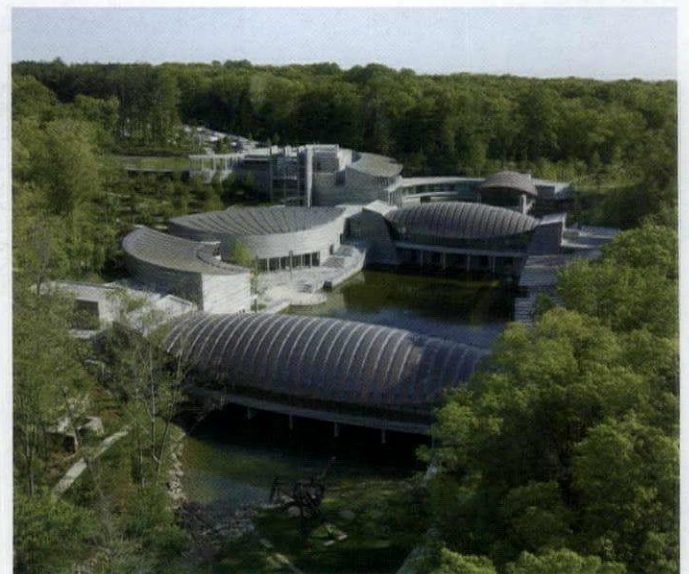
Event Registration will begin in January.

Join the Frank Lloyd Wright Building Conservancy today to take part in this event and more throughout the year!

Savewright.org



Thorncrow Chapel, Eureka Springs, Arkansas, designed by E. Fay Jones. Photos by Randall Connaughton



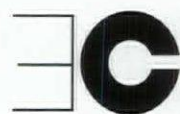
Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art, designed by Safdie Architects; photography by Timothy Hursley. Courtesy of Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art, Bentonville, Arkansas.



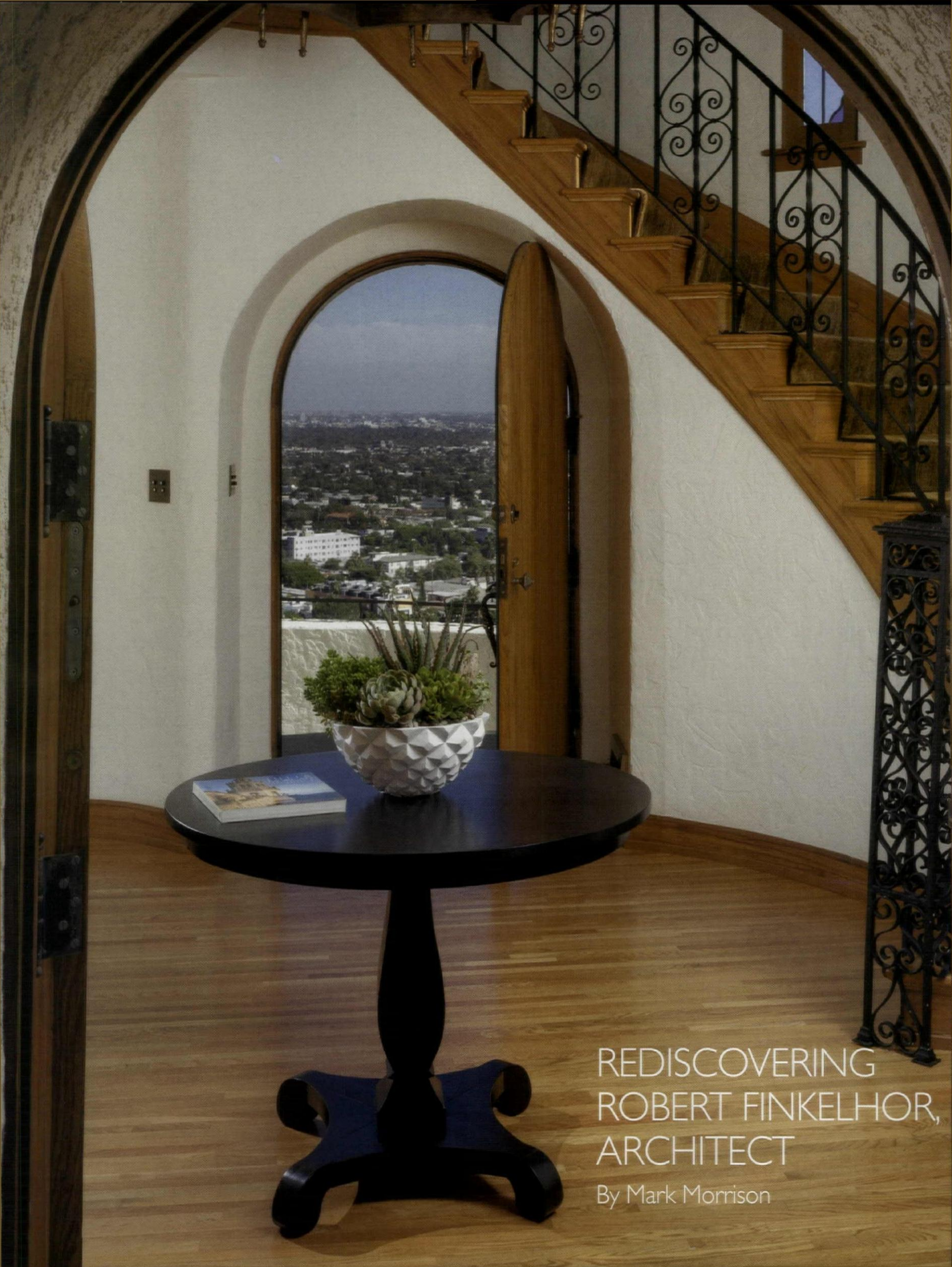
Pedro E. Guerrero (1917-2012). David Wright House, Exterior, Phoenix, AZ, 1952. Frank Lloyd Wright, Architect. Silver Gelatin Print.

PEDRO GUERRERO

at EDWARD CELLA ART & ARCHITECTURE



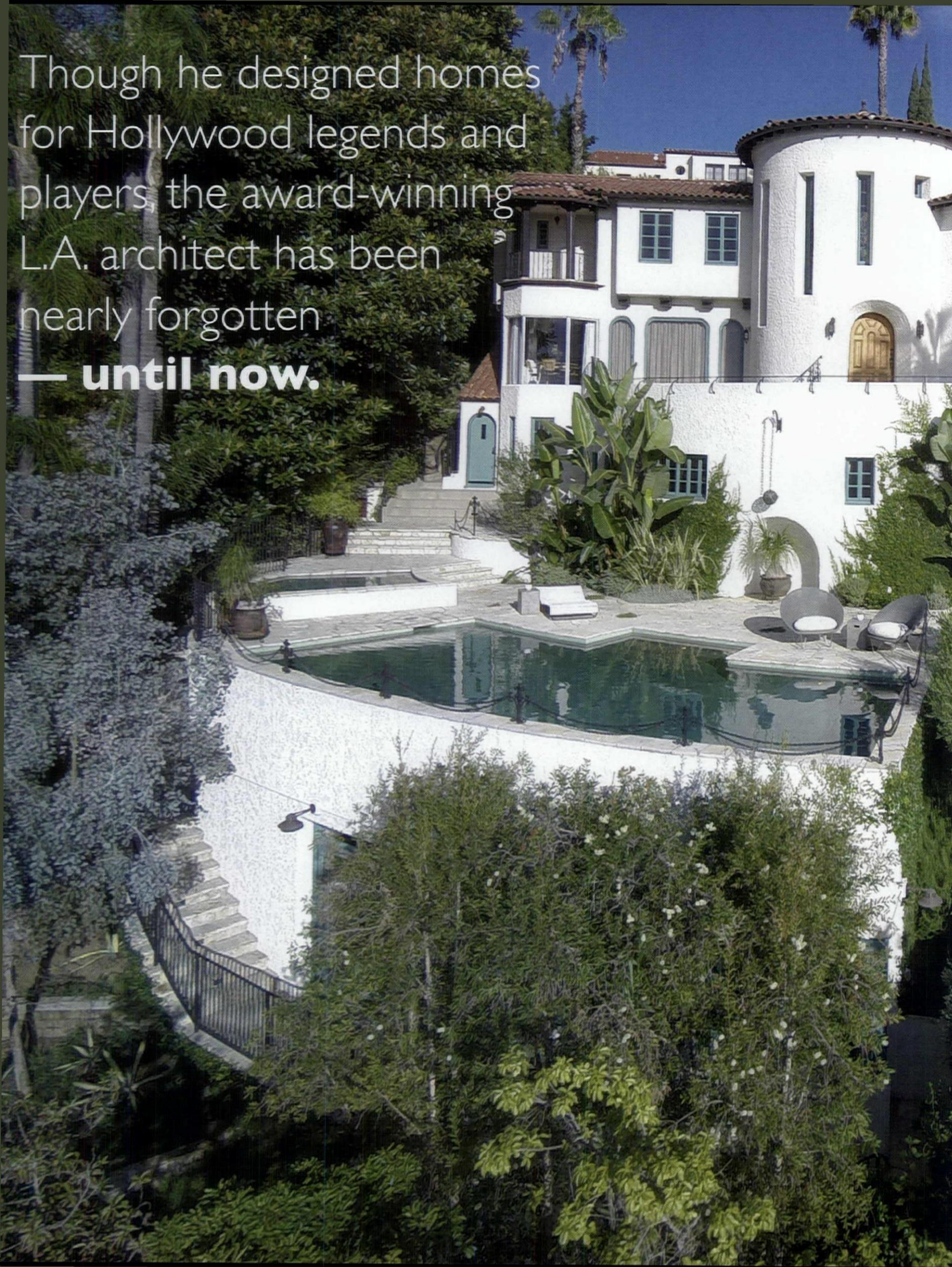
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REDISCOVERING
ROBERT FINKELHOR,
ARCHITECT

By Mark Morrison

Though he designed homes
for Hollywood legends and
players, the award-winning
L.A. architect has been
nearly forgotten
— **until now.**





At first glance, the stately Spanish Revival home on this winding West Hollywood road doesn't look like much. The white stucco Mediterranean sits low on a hillside above Sunset Strip, half-hidden behind wrought-iron railing, its top floor and red-tile roof poking into sight above the front walk. Surrounded by flashier, sleeker, grander homes, this 1926 relic would be easy to overlook. But walk down a flight of concrete stairs to a cozy courtyard for a closer peek at its two-story turret entry, deep-set arching doorway, ornamental iron work, upstairs balcony with French doors and breathtaking skyline-to-coastline views, and you know you are in the presence of something special.

"It is a little unassuming from the street," admits its current owner, architectural historian, preservationist and writer Beth Harris. "But the contrast between that and the experience when you go through it is kind of nice. It creates a bit of a surprise when you walk in the front door and immediately look out the back and there's a sweeping view of Los Angeles. That's part of its appeal."



Indeed. Here on this steep slope above Sunset Boulevard, the three-story, four-bedroom, three-and-a-half bath house seems to cling to the hillside—an otherwise seemingly standard-issue Mediterranean that Harris bought in 2008 and restored in 2009 to reflect the dreamy romanticism of the post-war 1920s and the fancy-free escapism of the Hollywood dream machine.

"It was a pre-modern period," says Harris, who ought to know—twenty years ago, she (along with her then-husband) hired young L.A. architects Leo Marmol and Ron Radziner to help them bring Richard Neutra's iconic, but neglected, Kaufmann House in Palm Springs back to life (which was so painstakingly executed and subsequently widely published that it put the sleepy desert community back on the map as a mecca for mid-century modern aficionados and sun worshippers alike). The couple went on to renovate modern homes by Morphosis in Hermosa Beach, Carlton Winslow Jr. in Palos Verdes, William Lescaze in New York; Harris also spent the past three years restoring a 1947 concrete block house by John Churchill in Martha's Vineyard and owns a vintage Donald Wexler-designed condo in Palm Springs.



"There hasn't been as much written on the romantic architects of the '20s and '30s as on the modern architects," Harris says. "But the overriding desire [in that decade] was for historicism and romanticism. And I would posit that a lot of that was driven by the film industry. People wanted to live these sort of fantasy lifestyles on a daily basis. If you look at Paul Williams' body of work, there's a whole variety of revivalist styles. Architects had to work in these different genres — whether a Normandy tower in the Hollywood Hills or Smoketree Ranch in Palm Springs."

At the time, Los Angeles was exploding in every direction. Between 1920 and 1930, the population had grown from 576,673 to more than 1.2 million, creating a historic boom for Southern California real estate.

In 1924, in the midst of it all, a young architect named Robert Finkelhor, who was born in Jeanette, Pennsylvania in 1898 and received his degree from the school of architecture at Carnegie Institute of Technology (now Carnegie Mellon University), moved to L.A. and worked for local builder Paul C. Whitice. Records from 1925 show that a 10-room house in the hills above the nascent Sunset Strip was proposed by Finkelhor and Whitice for a cost of \$21,000. The owner's name was G. W. Price.



Marc Wannamaker/Bison Archive
MARWYCK 1937 – Barbara Stanwyck Residence
Devonshire St., Northridge, CA

Little is known about any of these men. But it's clear that Finkelhor, like Paul Williams (who designed homes for the rich and famous, including Frank Sinatra, Lucille Ball and Desi Arnaz, Cary Grant, Groucho Marx and Humphrey Bogart), was soon working for himself in a variety of styles ranging from American Colonial to Mediterranean Revival, commonly incorporating motifs such as stone veneer walls, false half timbering, multiple gabled rooflines and wood shake roofs.

Over the ensuing years, four of his homes were featured in *Architectural Digest*—including residences for such Hollywood players as screenwriter Norman Krasna (who penned such popular films as *“White Christmas”* with Bing Crosby and *“Let’s Make Love”* with Marilyn Monroe) and producer David L. Loew, who along with twin brother Arthur was the son of MGM founder Marcus Loew, and who resigned from the board of directors of Loew’s Inc. to form various production companies with director Stanley Kramer and actor John Garfield.

Finkelhor also designed an estate on Mapleton Drive in Holmby Hills for MGM executive Hunt Stromberg that was inspired by an English farmhouse (1932); a home for Harpo Marx at 701 N. Canon Drive in Beverly Hills (1938) and a Cape Cod-style residence in Bel-Air for MGM writer Irving Brecher (1941). Other homes designed as English country estates included the residence of motion picture executive Henry Ginsberg at 918 Whittier Drive in Beverly Hills, and an 18-room showplace across the street from Harris’ West Hollywood house that was once home to Liberace.

Marc Wannamaker/Bison Archives
Bob Hope Residence
Moorpark St. – Toluca Lake, CA



Marc Wannamaker/Bison Archive
MARWYCK 1937 – Barbara Stanwyck Residence
Devonshire St., Northridge, CA

Curiously, Finkelhor is also listed as an architect for Alan Ladd’s Los Feliz home, though he seems to share credit with the more famous Gerard Colcord on the house (meanwhile, an April 1950 *House Beautiful* article about Ladd’s kitchen names Finkelhor as architect).

Perhaps most auspiciously, Finkelhor designed the storied Bob Hope estate built in 1939 in suburban Toluca Lake. Most recently, the late comedy legend’s rambling 15,000-square-foot mansion on 5.21-acre property with one-hole golf course has been on the market for \$12 million—reduced from \$23 million. Yet again, the architect often credited for the classic Hollywood home is architect-to-the-stars John Elgin Woolf, who reportedly only redesigned the living room in his signature Hollywood Regency style during the 1950s.





Marc Wannamaker/Bison Archive Bob Hope Residence / Moorpark St. – Toluca Lake, CA

This kind of specious reporting seems to have plagued Finkelhor's career. Another instance of such credit-robbing involves a pair of stellar 1937 commissions — adjacent San Fernando Valley properties for Barbara Stanwyck and Zeppo Marx — and this time sources credit the design to the more prestigious Paul Williams. Stanwyck, who was then riding high following her first Oscar nomination for *"Stella Dallas,"* had become business partners with her then-agent Zeppo Marx, who had dropped out of the Marx Brothers movies in 1933 to pursue careers as an engineer and theatrical agent.

Together, they turned 130 prime acres in Northridge into a ranch for breeding, boarding and training thoroughbred horses. They aptly named it "Marwyck" and each commissioned Finkelhor to build large Hollywood-style ranch houses on adjoining 10-acre parcels at the northern edge of the horse property. Built on a knoll overlooking the 130-acre horse ranch, Stanwyck's 6,500-square-foot two-story stone-veneer home with a multiple gabled roofline had five bedrooms, eight bathrooms, four fireplaces, a three-car garage, tennis court and large swimming pool.

But in 1940, after marrying Robert Taylor, she sold her share in Marwyck to Marx and sold the house to comic character actor Jack Oakie who renamed it Oakridge. Though the surrounding neighborhood has since been developed, the Stanwyck-Oakie house remains there today on 9.47 acres with restoration plans in progress. And while Finkelhor's name is listed as architect of record on the original building permit filed with the City of Los Angeles, Mrs. Oakie had the property declared a historic monument in 1990 when she was a widow, naming the ever-popular Williams as architect. Which seems to have stuck.

It is suspected that Williams may have created designs for proposed renovations and additions to the property. Friends of Oakridge, a volunteer group that helps manage the property, which is officially controlled by the L.A. City Recreation and Parks Department, has tried to verify the home's actual architectural pedigree — without success. Since Finkelhor had no children, there was no family to protect his legacy. And after he died in 1957, his widow moved to Europe. So the residence remains the subject of a historic preservation dispute, its provenance shrouded in mystery — not unlike Finkelhor himself.

Despite his low profile today, the architect was once the winner of the Beaux Arts Award, a yearly prize given by the Beaux Arts Institute of Design honoring fine examples of architectural work done in traditional styles. Leo Marmol, like most modern architects, had never heard of Finkelhor before Harris again reached out to him and Radziner to help her complete the renovation of her hillside home.

"The corollary [to Finkelhor] is Paul Williams," he says. "They were both working with a socialite client base in a number of stylistic languages — they didn't focus on one particular period. And a lot of that I'm sure came from the client. He was open to their particular desire — if they wanted a Spanish Mediterranean home, they would get it. But, for whatever reasons, Finkelhor didn't have that kind of [lasting] impact on the architectural hierarchy [like Williams]."



First Floor Office



Second Floor Living Room

8440 Harold Way, Los Angeles, California 90069

1st Floor



Floor Plan by at 323-928-2241. Information deemed reliable but not guaranteed.

8440 Harold Way, Los Angeles, California 90069

2nd Floor



Yet, his work is equally refined. Step through the front doorway into the majestic rotunda of the hillside Mediterranean and you are instantly transported to another time — the sweeping stairway, the original wrought iron railing and hexagonal chandelier, the archways and wooden moldings, the strips of stained glass window with touches of purple, gold and white that flood the entry with light, the domed ceiling and gracious wraparound landing above.

The elegance and allure does not stop there. Picture windows with the original old glass frame 180-degree views of the L.A. basin. "On a clear day you can see from the ocean and Palos Verdes to downtown, the Griffith Observatory and the mountains that run along Claremont," says Harris. On the east side of the 4,332 square-foot house, on both stories — i.e., in the spacious living room and huge master bedroom — Finkelhor created adjacent step-down sunrooms with picture windows framing dramatic views on three sides (Harris used one as an office and one as a library). "You sit in those little rooms and it's like [being in] a little fish bowl hanging on top of the world. [The windows are] also a good way to get really great ventilation."

"It's a very effective use of the hillside," Marmol says of Finkelhor's overall design. "All of the major rooms have a great relationship to the view, which is extremely powerful. That is its greatest strength. It is a very vertical house but it took a very modern planning perspective. And the house is low enough on the hillside that you really feel a part of the city — you feel like you're in the city even though you're hovering above it. You're not way up high, you're down a bit so you feel more connected to the city."

Also, despite the power of its setting, the house is still modest in scale — which is another part of its appeal. According to Harris, Finkelhor designed it as a guest house for a larger estate house that sat at the base of the hill where the Andaz Hotel is today; the space in between was presumably gardens with a pathway connecting the two properties.

"Clearly what he did was maximize the views and create interesting spaces," she says. "The ceilings are coved, nothing's particularly typical. And even though the spaces are large, they have a kind of intimacy."

One of the other key things that sold Harris on the house was that "it was amazingly intact." After years of tackling major restorations elsewhere, she needed a break; by contrast, she considers her main challenges here to have involved mostly "minor stuff." For instance, though more than a dozen wrought-iron sconces once graced the walls, there were only four hanging; but she found the rest in the basement, had them reconditioned, rewired and re-installed. For added authenticity, she replaced plastic light switches with vintage push button plates. And she brought back the original oak floors, removing Saltillo tiles that covered certain areas, replacing or restoring wood as needed.





Outside, she also removed Saltillo tiles on the front courtyard and back terrace and opted for patterned concrete which she deemed truer to Mediterranean style. She wrapped the entire house in gardens so you see less of the neighbors while capturing all of the view. But the most dramatic change she made was adding a stunning city-view swimming pool (designed by William Kopelk of Palm Springs), which meant sinking 13 steel pylons into the hillside, extending the terrace, and shoring up the foundation. It was then Marmol Radziner's job to design a music room beneath the pool and integrated the entire addition into the hillside.

"Our main role was the swimming pool [addition] and garden," says Marmol. "We executed the design — just because Beth asked us to do it." Reconsidering the Finkelhor property now, he says, "There's elegance, drama, and more than anything, it's very smart from a planning perspective. I was surprised and not surprised when Beth bought it. Surprised because it's so traditional, knowing Beth. But not surprised in that it's just a good house."

Which echoes Harris' sentiments exactly. "My philosophy has always been I just want a good house," she says. "Style is not as important to me as quality and livability. There are a lot of windows and openness between the rooms. It flows really well and still has that beautiful courtyard. I loved the way it cascaded down the side of the hill. All of the qualities that you might like about a modern house exist in this house."

And no house could have a better friend than Harris, whose commitment to any renovation project is absolute. When she discovered that a closet that had been added in the master bedroom was hiding a transom window, there was no doubt in her mind which was more important: she knocked out the closet. "I would rather get rid of my clothes than not have an extra window," she says. "I wanted to see the house as it was originally built."

Somewhere, hopefully, Finkelhor is smiling.



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HARWELL HAMILTON HARRIS, F.A.I.A.

Mary & Lee Blair House, 1939

By Alan Hess

The ultimate emblem of America's mid-twentieth century love affair with modernism may not be the iconic 1949 Eames fiberglass chair or the indoor-outdoor Eichler tract houses of the early 1950s. It was arguably Walt Disney Studio's adoption of a stylized modern aesthetic in its popular animated movies *Cinderella* (1950), *Alice in Wonderland* (1951) and *Peter Pan* (1953) — a far cry from the traditional Old World fairy tale look of *Snow White* and *Pinocchio* in the 1930s. And it was a female artist — Mary Blair (1911-1978)—who helped Walt Disney plot that new direction. So, fittingly, the 1939 house that noted Los Angeles architect Harwell Hamilton Harris (1903-1990) designed for Mary and her husband Lee (1911-1993) is equally significant.

The Blairs were not only modern artists, they lived modern at a time when the modernist movement in Southern California was at its most fertile and prolific. Mary's watercolor, gouache or collage

paintings defined the mood and look of Disney's new films with stylized shapes, biomorphic forms and bold fields of vibrant color that were drawn from the era's modern art forms, from cubism to surrealism. Her confident, colorful compositions rank with the work of modern graphic designers like Alexander Girard, Alvin Lustig and Ray Eames, and they seem to anticipate David Hockney. "Walt said that I knew about colors he had never heard of before," Mary once said. At a time when women in the animation industry were mostly relegated to inking cells at low wages, she was one of Walt Disney's favorite artists.

The house Harris designed for the Blairs embodied that emerging spirit of modernism in California. Tucked on a small hillside street overlooking the San Fernando Valley near Cahuenga Pass, the design was at the frontier of modern architecture when Rudolph Schindler, John Lautner, Gregory Ain and Richard Neutra



(Harris' former boss) were taking modern architecture in new creative directions beyond the International Style. But over the years, the house had been added to, original windows removed, and new coats of paint added—until it was restored to virtually original condition by designer David Brudnicki.

Brudnicki and his team quickly realized the high quality of Harris' original design and committed themselves to honoring his architectural concept and the results do justice to an excellent design. Some decisions were easier; scraping away layers of paint or peering behind hinges, they were able to determine the original soft gray-green color of the wood trim. The living room's original wood and glass doors had been replaced, but with repairs most of them could still be used — even though they had been stored outside for fifty years!



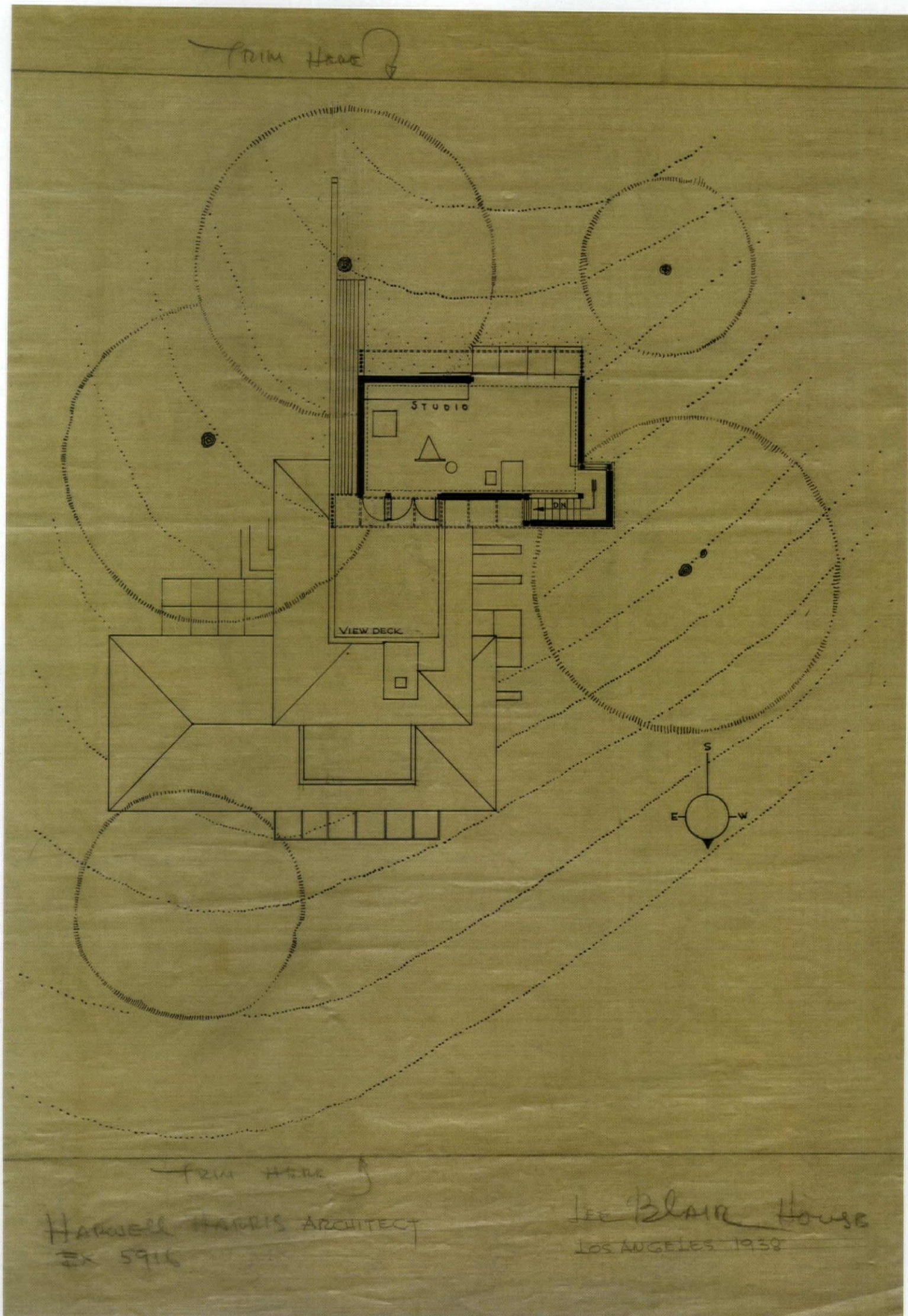


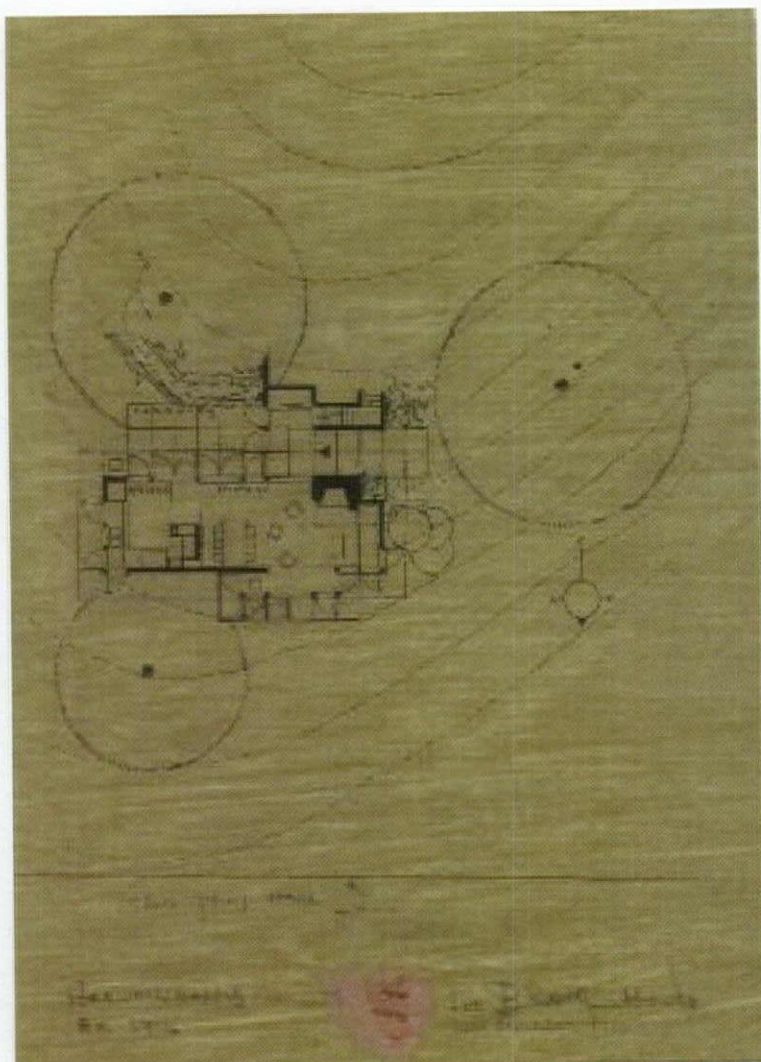
In other cases, the original details were not as easy to determine, but Brudnicki reports that the design itself helped them. Harris used a regular module for the structure, so Brudnicki and his contractor Ray Wright could follow the logic of the structure in returning the house to its original state. Wright kept a close lookout for original construction details, such as the pattern of nails (not glue) on paneling, or the use of mitered corners. Restoration plumber Ryan Soniat went out of his way to find the original American Standard handles for the bathroom fixtures, and replated an original nickel light fixture. Brudnicki discovered another way to confirm their decisions: They found that when anything non-original was taken off, the house just looked better.

One historic detail they could confirm: Lee Blair helped build the house himself. Behind walls they found written notes that said "Mr. Blair hammer here" to guide him. With an architect of Harris' caliber, there was always a reason for each detail of the plan. His creative genius at this early point in his career can now be fully appreciated. Though the house was published in *Architectural Forum* and *House Beautiful* when new, it is not widely known. Likewise, Harris is also not as widely known as he deserves to be. Restored, the Blair house shows off the rich range of sources and ideas the architect drew upon, and his own creativity in pushing those ideas to new places.



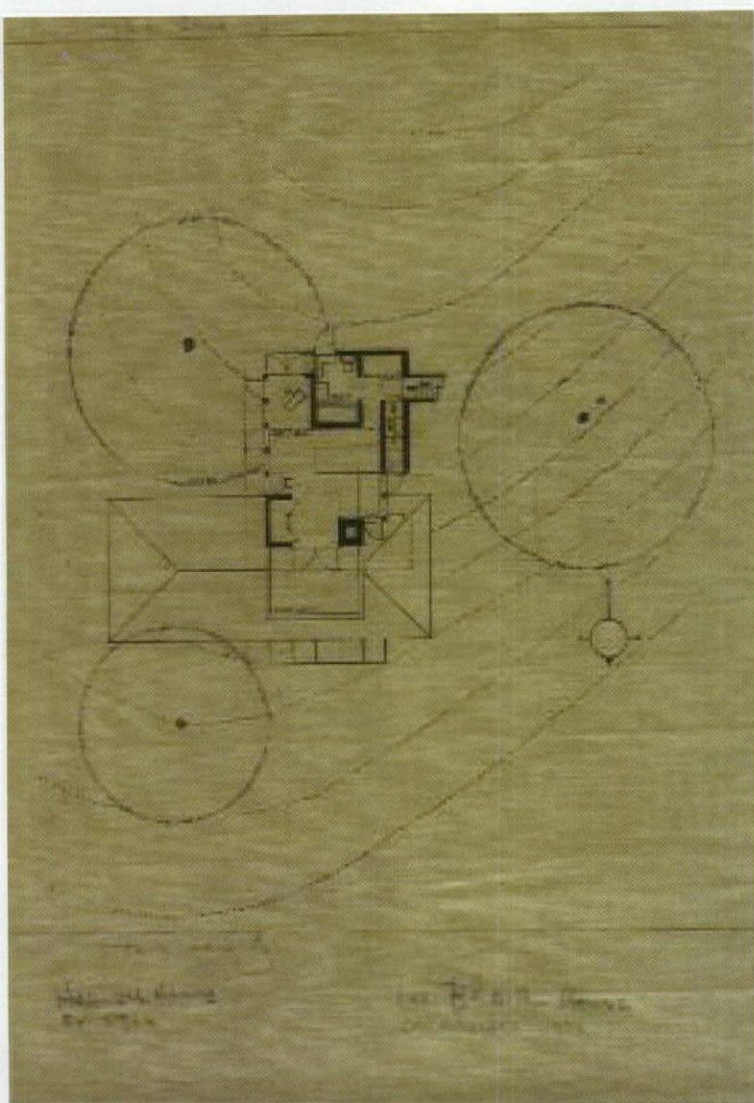
© The Estate of Mary Blair / Lee Blair at home.





Harris had two huge advantages in becoming a modern architect in California. First, he is a native, born in the rich agricultural town of Redlands and he understood the region's climate, landscape, and its forward-thinking people. Second, his first job as an architect (he had studied sculpture at L.A.'s seminal Chouinard Institute of Art) was in the office of Richard Neutra, possibly the best place to learn about modern architecture at a time when the architecture schools were still teaching Beaux Arts Classicism. In his own work, Harris quickly melded his knowledge of the place and culture with his knowledge of new materials and forms. The Blair house is convincing evidence.

The Blairs were a working couple whose clients included various animation studios and advertising agencies. And when possible, they devoted time to their real love—their own fine art painting. Both were part of the California School of painting which included figures such as Phil Dike, Millard Sheets, and Charles Payzant. So the one-bedroom house Harris designed for them was a perfect fit for their simple lifestyle. And the steep hillside site the house was built on helped determine its design as much as anything else. Too steep to carve out a flat building pad, the site caused Harris to stack the three levels one atop the other, taking advantage of the spatial play suggested by this arrangement. The first floor was for entertaining friends; it featured the living room, dining area and kitchen. The zig-zagging staircase leads to the one bedroom and bathroom. Another set of stairs leads to a spacious studio. Each level has its own private outdoor space. Harris crafted each floor – and its distinct function – to take advantage of the light, ventilation, expansive views of the San Fernando Valley, and easy access to the wooded hillside. Though the house is not large, Harris makes the space functional and flexible with built-in furniture and movable wall dividers.







no 1.

Sappinich

A later owner added a mechanized funicular to get from the street-level garage up to the front door, but the Blairs used a switchback path up the hill. Twin front doors are made of ribbed glass, so that even before entering, visitors can see the natural light, filtered through the trees, that fills the house. The living room and dining area are one space – but this is not the undefined "universal space" of Mies van der Rohe's version of modernism. Harris mixes window walls with solid walls clad in unpainted plywood as well as built-in furniture to maximize the use of the space. To the left, the brick fireplace is an abstract sculpture in itself. A built-in couch and side table next to it create a corner that feels safe and cozy. To one side, a floor-to-ceiling glass bay, cantilevered over the hillside, expands the view out to the canyon. On the other side is another wall of glass that looks out to an intimate but spacious patio and the wooded hillside beyond. This glass wall unites the living/entertaining area into a single indoor-outdoor room.

© The Estate of Mary Blair / Self Portrait by Lee Blair / Oil on Canvas



© The Estate of Mary Blair / Mary Blair - Picnic in Palos Verdes / Oil on Canvas by Lee Blair

by Harwell Harris, Los Angeles designer,
Artistic as this bedroom is, it is designed to

F-2

fit a four room house in the Los Angeles Hills built on three levels. In the picture the mirrors on the wardrobe reflect the arrangement of the twin beds. This mirror arrangement is in three panels to cover the wardrobe, two of which open as doors to make a three way fashion mirror. The matting at the base is for ventilation.

In this small \$5,000 home, the bedroom (behind the camera) opens onto a terrace over the living rooms. On the far side of the bedroom another ground terrace gives the sleepers a fresh morning view.

The walls and cabinet work are of light Philippine wood - bayot. The carpets are Chinese grass matting. The doors and window rails are painted a warm vegetable green to disappear against the oak trees outside the window.

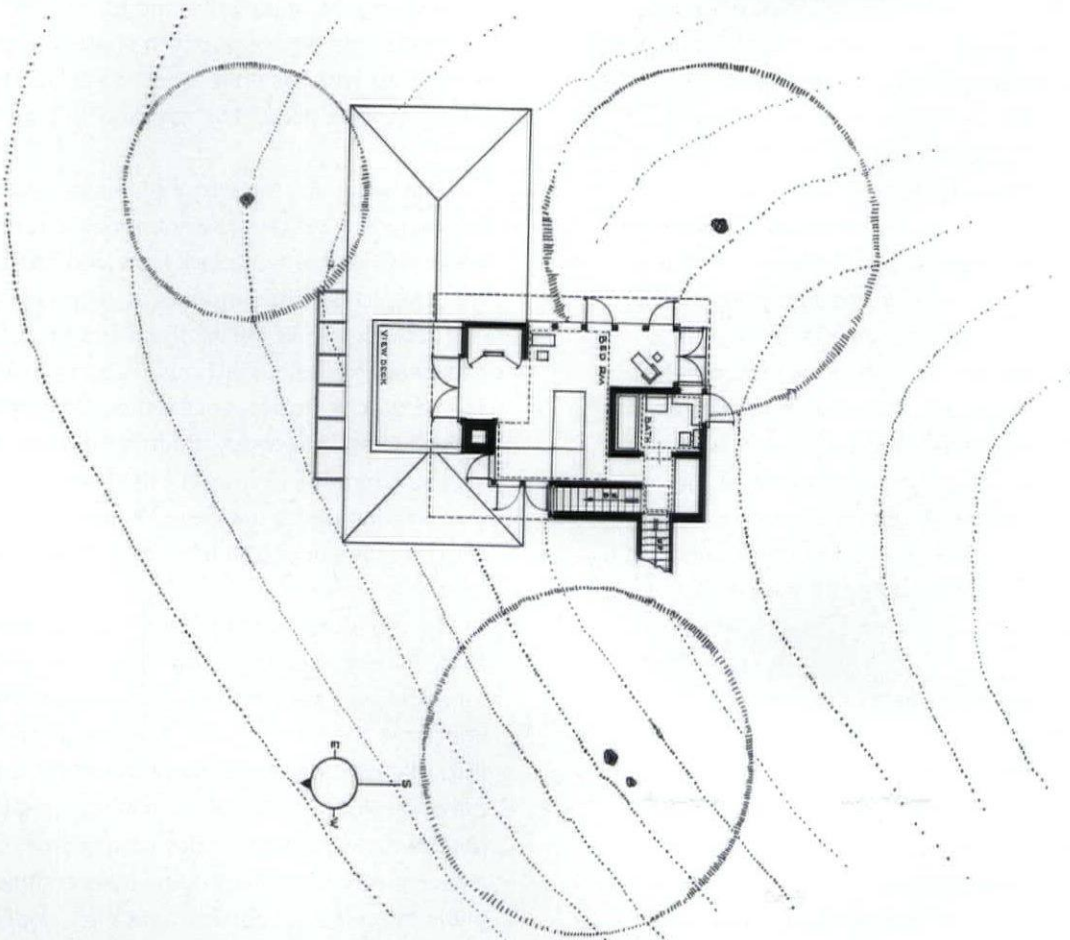
Greenish gold sailcloth curtains form a background ~~view~~ for the dark warm green upholstery on the chair.

Light beige spreads blend with the floor, while the zebra fabric on the bayot wood dressing stool adds glamour to the room.

Plain Home



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Harris' subtle and logical decorative touches should also be noted: The movable French doors frame a solid piece of glass, while the fixed frames at the corners are divided into five horizontal panels to create a lively contrasting rhythm. At the other end of the living room, two solid walls clad in unpainted plywood panels define the dining area. Depending on how informal the hosts want to be, the kitchen beyond can be left open to view or shut off with a large two-panel folding door that matches the plywood, creating a seamless wood wall. The space is not large, but there is no sense of being cramped. Well-trained in modern principles, Harris makes the space itself the architecture; the walls and ceilings subtly shape it. The architect absorbed the lessons of his friend Frank Lloyd Wright: windows always turn the corner to break the boxy feel of traditional architecture; glass walls extend the living space to the outside; the ceiling height rises or lowers to suggest expansiveness or intimacy; a dropped soffit over the built-in sofa increases its intimate feel and hides indirect lighting (a relatively new idea in 1939) to reflect softly off the white Celotex ceiling (also a new product).

Harris clearly grasped the logical aspect of modernism. The house is a complex of many interlocking systems: Structure, walls, mechanical systems, openings for ventilation, sources of light (both natural and artificial), and so on. Like Rudolph Schindler (another Southern California architect and European ex-pat he knew and admired), Harris' design draws its art from revealing that complexity, rather than disguising it behind a

false simplicity. So the structure is exposed in the four-by-four wood posts along the glass walls and embedded in the solid walls. He celebrates them throughout the house by painting them gray-green to contrast with the light-toned walls and then emphasizing them with a delicate decorative reveal of thin wood moldings.

Compact stairs lead from the entry vestibule to the master bedroom. The visitor may not notice it at first, but a high window floods the stair with natural light from the side. It washes the walls to pick up different tints in the paint color and gradations in the shadows. As artists, the Blairs must have appreciated the ever-changing light. The house is a three dimensional work of art. The master bedroom repeats the themes of the living room, but reconfigured for privacy. Built-in furniture has the efficiency of a ship's stateroom. The roof of the lower floor becomes a private deck looking out to the view – while glass French doors let you step directly out onto the hill on the other side.

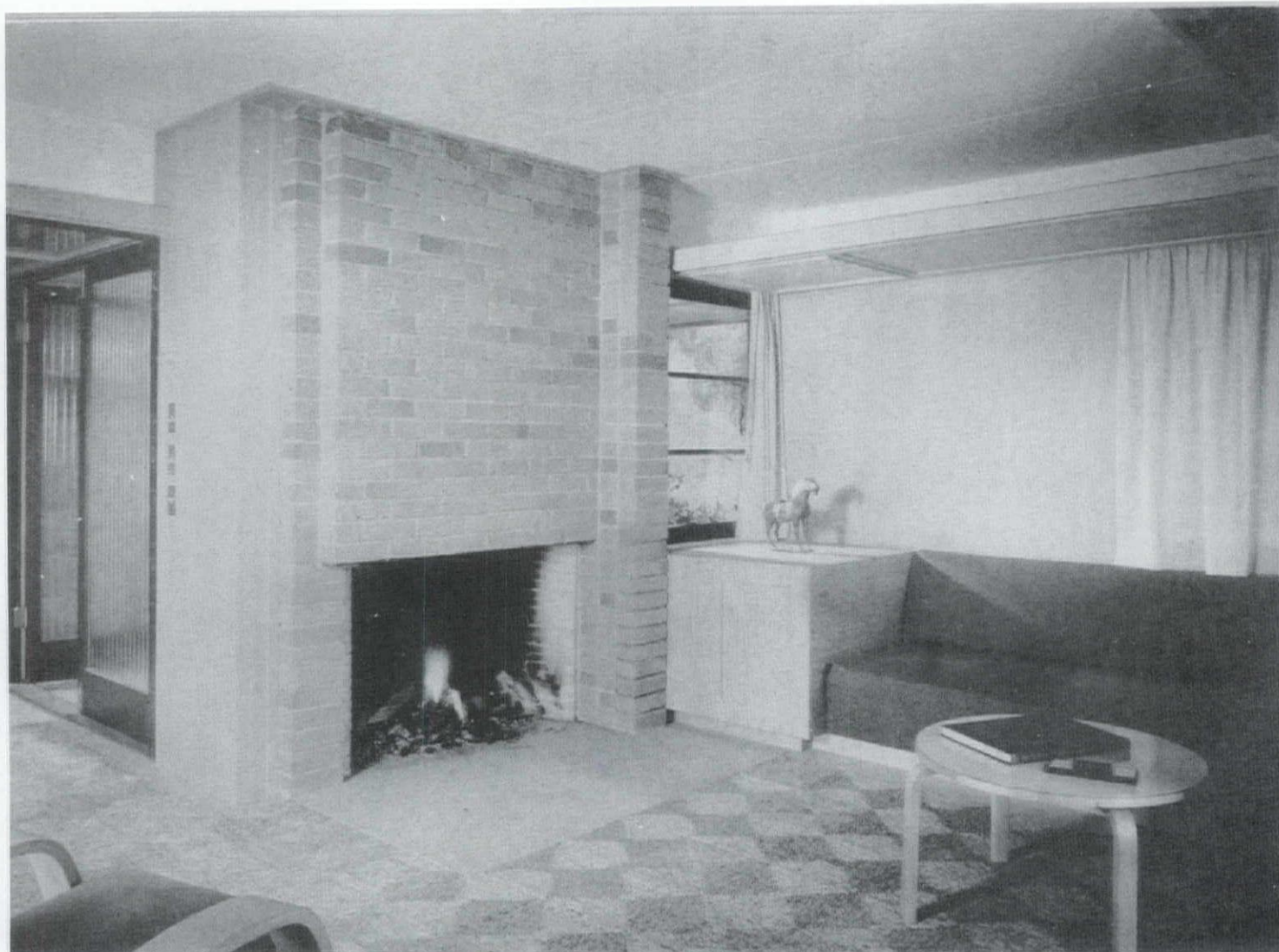
Up one more flight of steps is the spacious studio where Mary Blair worked at her drafting table, with a built-in counter for supply drawers and a sink. A sloped ceiling catches northern light from the high clerestory windows and reflects it evenly through the room – the room is a machine for painting in. Like the other floors, a deck allowed Mary and Lee to enjoy the panoramic view of the Valley on one side. On the other side, a twelve-foot-long glass door slides completely off its opening to invite them to step outside onto the wooded knoll.



It was in this studio that Mary created many of her designs between 1939 and the mid – 1940s. Many were influenced by the 1941 South American excursion lead by Walt and Lillian Disney for the Blairs and several other studio artists. The native folk art and brilliant colors Mary discovered there became a major influence on her artwork. And even the intrusion of World War II didn't disrupt her work—though it changed her base of operations.

During the war, Lee was stationed near Washington, D.C., and after, he established himself in New York as a TV commercial and industrial film producer. The couple moved from their hillside home by Harris to a house (also modern) in the Long Island suburb of Great Neck. Their two children arrived in 1946 and 1950, but Mary remained a career woman ahead of her times, commuting by plane to Burbank to work on different projects for Disney through the years. She also worked with advertising agencies in New York, wrote children's books, and designed the sets for a Duke Ellington mini-opera at Radio City Music Hall. Walt Disney always kept a lookout for projects suited to Mary's talents; of these, her best known is undoubtedly the design for the Pepsi-Cola and UNICEF pavilion at the 1964 New York World's Fair. It proved so popular that Uncle Walt moved the whole ride featuring hundreds of international doll-like children back to Disneyland where it became universally known as "It's a Small World."

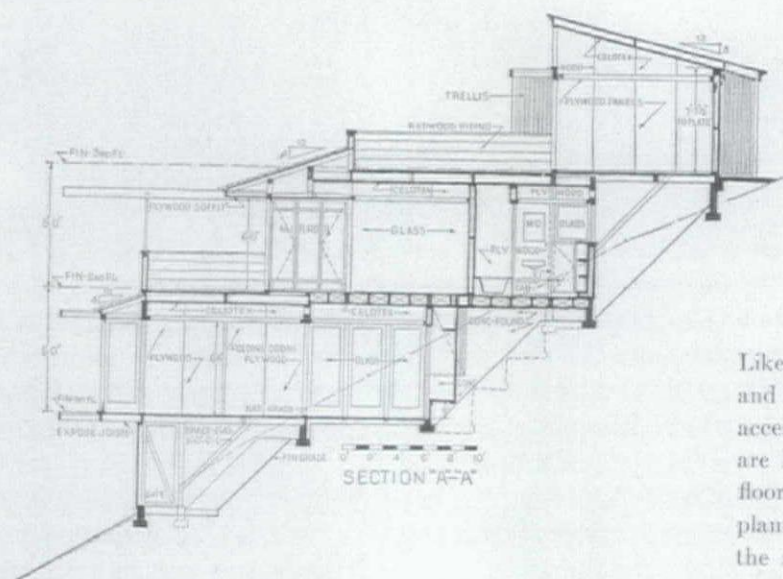




LIVING ROOM

Fred R. Dopprich

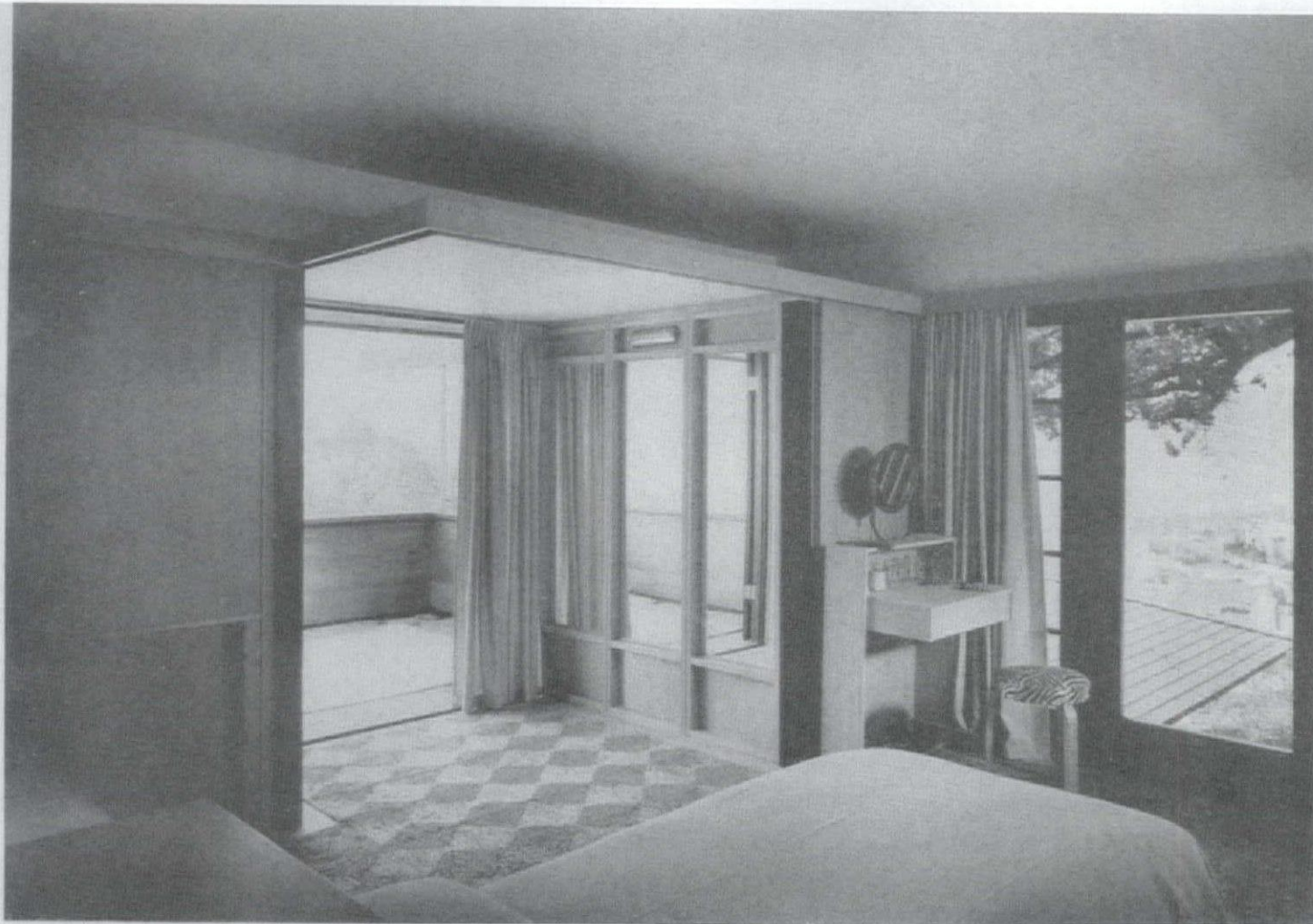
HARWELL HAMILTON HARRIS, DESIGNER



Like the Hawk house, this plan is small and compact, and fits a steeply sloping site. In this instance, however, access is from the low side of the lot, and living rooms are located in the conventional fashion on the ground floor. Through the use of an L-shaped first floor, the plan has been opened up both to the north view and to the south, despite the fact that upper floors are built into the hill. Minimum accommodations have been expanded to include a studio at the top of the house in a scheme for living evidently as delightful as it is unusual.

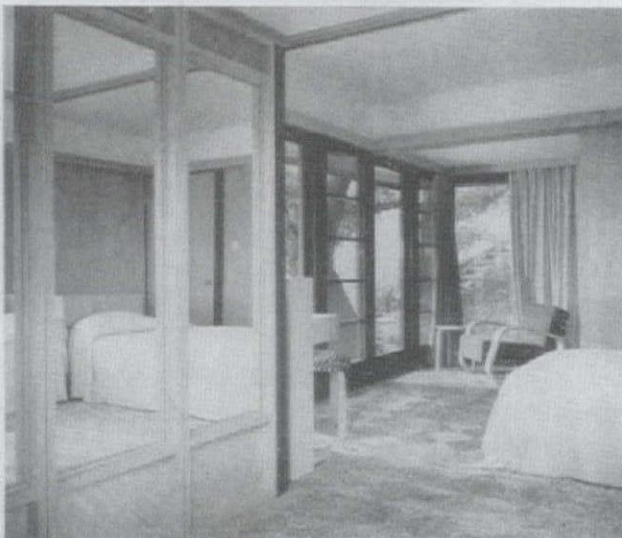
MARCH 1940

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BEDROOM



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The interiors set a new standard of excellence for a small house. Without the use of expensive materials, and with waste space reduced to the minimum, a charming effect has been produced which may well be the envy of many whose houses cost several times as much.

M A R C H 1 9 4 0



Today, the restored Blair house reminds us of the extraordinary range of creative design that Southern California generated in the mid twentieth century. Harwell Harris was part of it, and well aware of other architects' work. The Blair house's wide overhangs and horizontal redwood boards with thin battens echo Frank Lloyd Wright. The contrast of large transparent walls with opaque walls defining specific functions (like the dining area) reflect the geometries of Neutra houses. The design's intricate three – dimensional interlocking of space, structure, form and function recall Schindler's originality. Going back to an even earlier period, the house's thoughtful redwood construction acknowledges the Craftsman designs of Charles and Henry Greene at a time when the brothers from Pasadena had been mostly forgotten; it was Harris' wife Jean Murray Bangs who rediscovered their work and brought their contributions back to the attention of the architectural community – and Harris.

The design, however, is unmistakably Harris' own creative vision. The similarities simply remind us of the fertility of the region's rapidly evolving architecture. Harris and his colleagues all responded to key aspects of Southern California: the benign climate, the hillside sites, the panoramic views, the casual lifestyle that drew people there. He understood Californians' lack of pretension and used natural, newly invented, and inexpensive materials like plywood, Celotex, woven grass carpets, and grass cloth fabric on sliding doors (echoing Harris' interest in Japanese

architecture) – he used them simply, yet with as much care as if they were luxurious materials. Harris built on what went before and took it further.

Placed alongside the work of John Lautner, Lloyd Wright, Gregory Ain, and A. Quincy Jones from the same year, the Blair house demonstrates the astonishing range of ideas that constitute modernism in California. It even appears to be prescient about the future of California architecture: In the top floor studio's shed roof you can see the revolutionary shed roofs to be popularized by Moore, Lyndon, Turnbull and Whitaker at Sea Ranch 30 years later. In this design, however, the clients added a unique dimension. The Blairs were Southern Californians who had painted every aspect of the region, from the cliffs overlooking the ocean beaches to the slums of Bunker Hill to the Okie migrant camps of the Depression years. They chose their house's site for its peaceful rural beauty, and yet it was just minutes from the animation studios for which they worked, on the leading edge of popular technology and culture. The delightful and surprising quality of light captured throughout the house as the sun moves across the sky would not be lost on these artists. The way Harris overlaps three dimensional space is as freshly modern as the way Mary Blair used cubist concepts to flatten traditional Renaissance perspective in her paintings. Her work links Disney's mass audience modernism with high art culture without diminishing either.



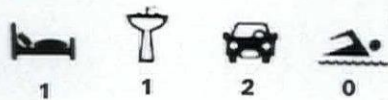


The Blair House provided this creative couple with the peace and light they needed to do their work, as well as a setting for the social camaraderie in their full lives. And it shows Harris building confidently on the community of ideas of California design. Unlike the stripped-down minimalism that would dominate Southern California design a decade later, Harris never shies away from decorative touches. The subtlety of the brick fireplace design, the asymmetrical placement of the china cabinet door in the dining room, the repeated motif of horizontal frames on the glass wall panels – each is integral to the design. Though long forgotten, today this beautiful design restores a missing link in the evolution of Southern California Modern architecture.





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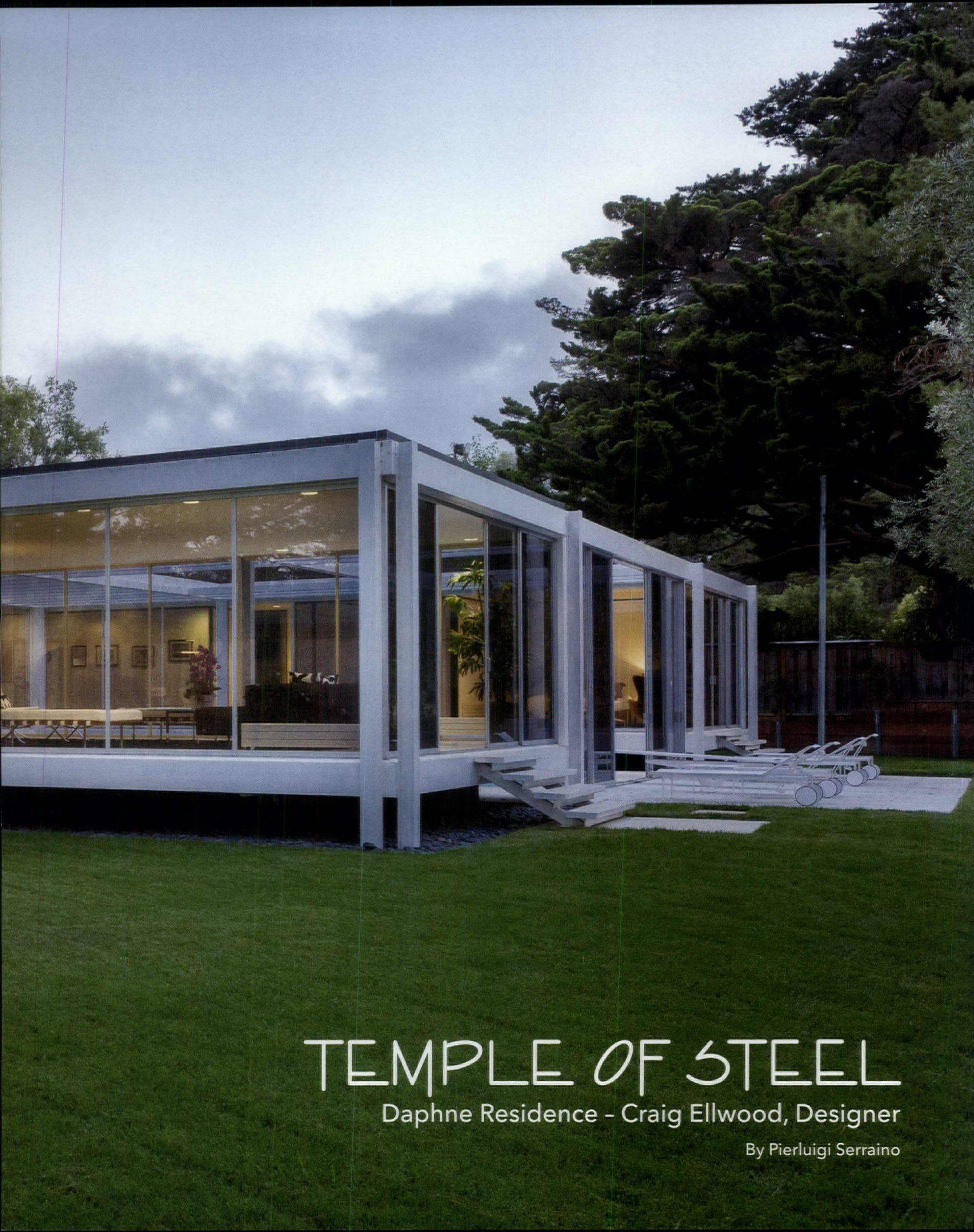
The steel frame house stands to California Modernism as the Palladian villa stands to the High Renaissance. If the Rotunda in Vicenza, Italy, is the archetype of the latter, the Daphne Residence in Hillsborough, California may well be the prime example of the former.



Completed in 1961, this single family house designed by noted designer Craig Ellwood (1922-1992) today is as pristine as it was when first finished. Its grand presence is felt upon arrival from Madrone Place. Raised on 32 steel columns, it floats majestically on a small half acre site facing a golf-course on its north side. Each zone of this project has a specific functional and symbolic role. Approaching the front door alone is a ritual of uncommon refinement. Due to the confined nature of the narrow lot, the car is parked a few feet away from the main structure in a detached carport. From there a crescendo of discoveries builds up to an interior climax utterly undetectable while getting closer to the entry despite the stated transparency of this volume.

That industrial technology is a cornerstone of Craig Ellwood's architecture is a known fact, and in the design expression of the Daphne Residence that reference is even more obvious. What is less so is the inherent classicism of its layout and massing. Steel is a mighty material with superior load-bearing capacities. It affords

long spans, has negligible deflection, and retains its form virtually forever. Adopting it entails opening the project's interiors – whether a house or a commercial structure- to its immediate environment. Nature and light become active agents of change in the architecture experience. Furthermore steel design typically relies on modular construction, prefabrication, and fast assembly- three critical traits of modern architecture. The Daphne Residence has all that (the steel frame was erected in just three days), but there is much more to it than either a story of technological exquisiteness or judicious adherence to a particular artistic movement. Resting on a flat site, the utilitarian association tied to the steel cage is in this project willfully purged to be replaced with a design statement of lyrical purity. This is an architecture of nobility; a place of still contemplation and nurturing silence. The mystical dimension of its interiors is unmistakably there and inescapable. Its stillness is awe-generating and emotionally impactful; its aristocratic sophistication memorable throughout the ages.



TEMPLE OF STEEL

Daphne Residence - Craig Ellwood, Designer

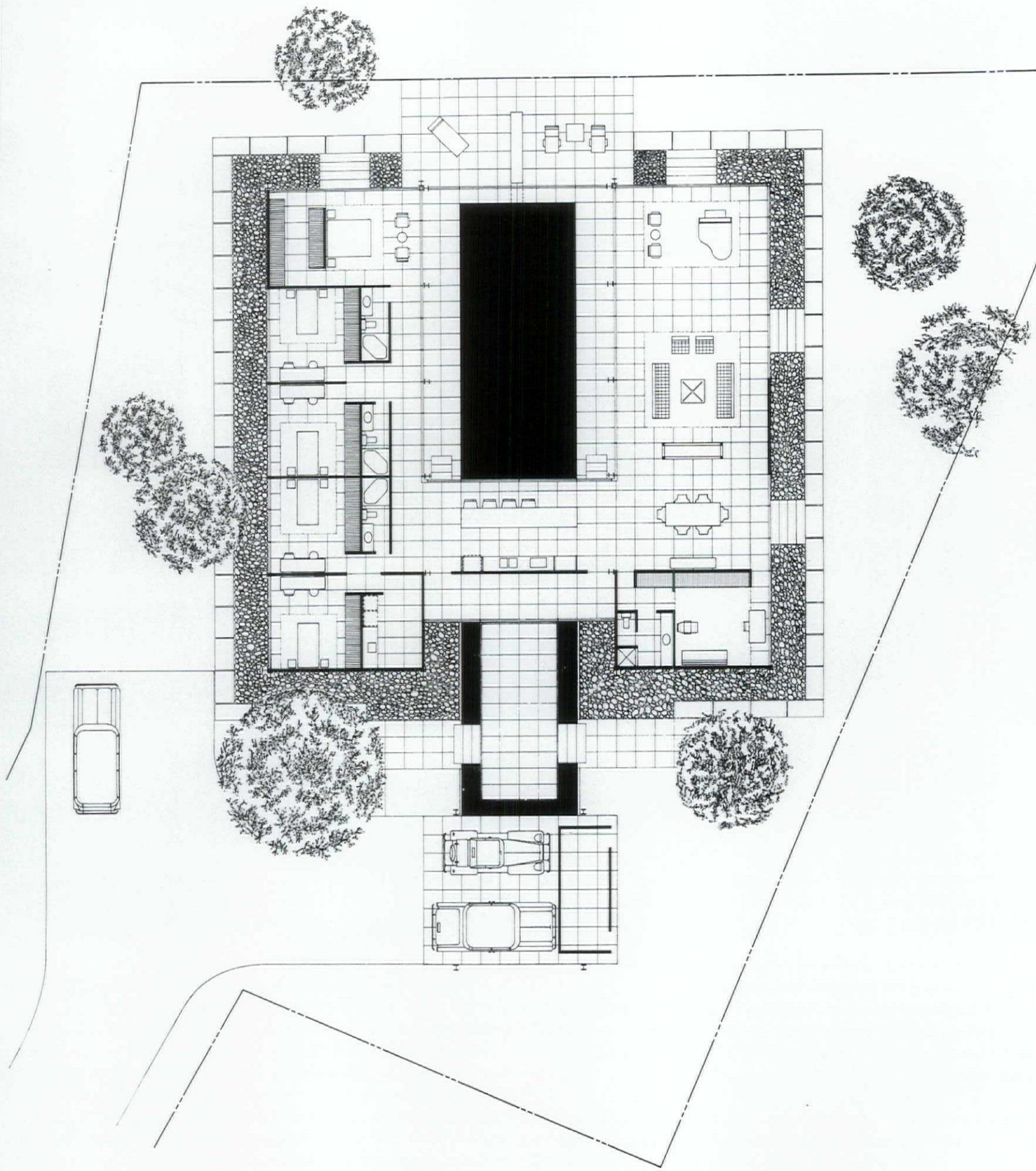
By Pierluigi Serraino



With the structural columns pulled out of the building enclosure, the eye is caught into a rhythm of mathematical sequencing that is as enthralling as it is logical. The California light does the rest. Each reveal, each joint, each fastening punctuates the building skin as the sun travels its path showcasing the unparalleled elegance of its construction.

Ellwood wrote: *"... great architecture is primarily technique, and therefore a building must clearly reflect the order- the discipline – the measurable aspects of its being."* Order here is a spiritual affair. The aspirations of his designer are recorded in this luxurious artwork to be inhabited and internalize. Being a spatial absolute, this architecture remains self-contained, surrounded by an aura of necessity and inevitability. In modern architecture steel became white with the Farnsworth House, in Plano, Illinois, by Mies van der Rohe completed in 1951. Dark grey was the default color of the manufactured steel sections and much of the imagery of steel architecture share that manufacturing origin, evocative of steel mills

located in the Rust Belt. Turning that material into white sanitized it and, even more, aestheticized it. Ever since Mies' masterpiece painting the steel frame white has become an option among modernist hardliners and amateurs alike. For Ellwood the Daphne Residence was the first white steel house, although not the first building. The ideological appeal of Mies had become irresistible by his own admission and decisively informed his output from the late 1950s on, where the quotations of the source became at times a little too literal. But while the Miesian tribute is unapologetic, open, and unambiguous both in the tectonic principles and philosophical attitude, Ellwood took a qualitative leap in situating the abstracted space of Mies to the California condition. There are but a handful of residential designs the German master did for Northern California – all towers – and all left on paper. And even in the United States the residential examples – built and unbuilt – the venerable architect designed are confined to a few areas chiefly around Illinois and the Northeast. Ellwood took upon himself the challenge of landing the universal prototype of Mies' architectural cosmology





The body of water marks on the ground the underlying axis determining the internal arrangement of the house and makes a majestic space out of that symmetry. It penetrates the square along a central spine and extend out to become the plane from where the entry pavilion reposes. That extension alone is first as well in Ellwood's design idiom: it is as paramount as a plastic object as the interior pool. While there are multiple steps to access the garden on two additional sides of the house, the rise on both sides of the elevated platform from the ground plane to the plane of the dwelling is a metaphorical threshold and invitation to become part of a world of immaculate rigor. Its formal distinction is magnified against the natural background filled with grown trees and long branches casting shadow patterns of kaleidoscopic beauty. Upon stepping beyond the glazed front door, a mute long wall with two openings at each end still affords privacy. Only upon walking along a right along does the full magnitude of the interior void reveals itself.

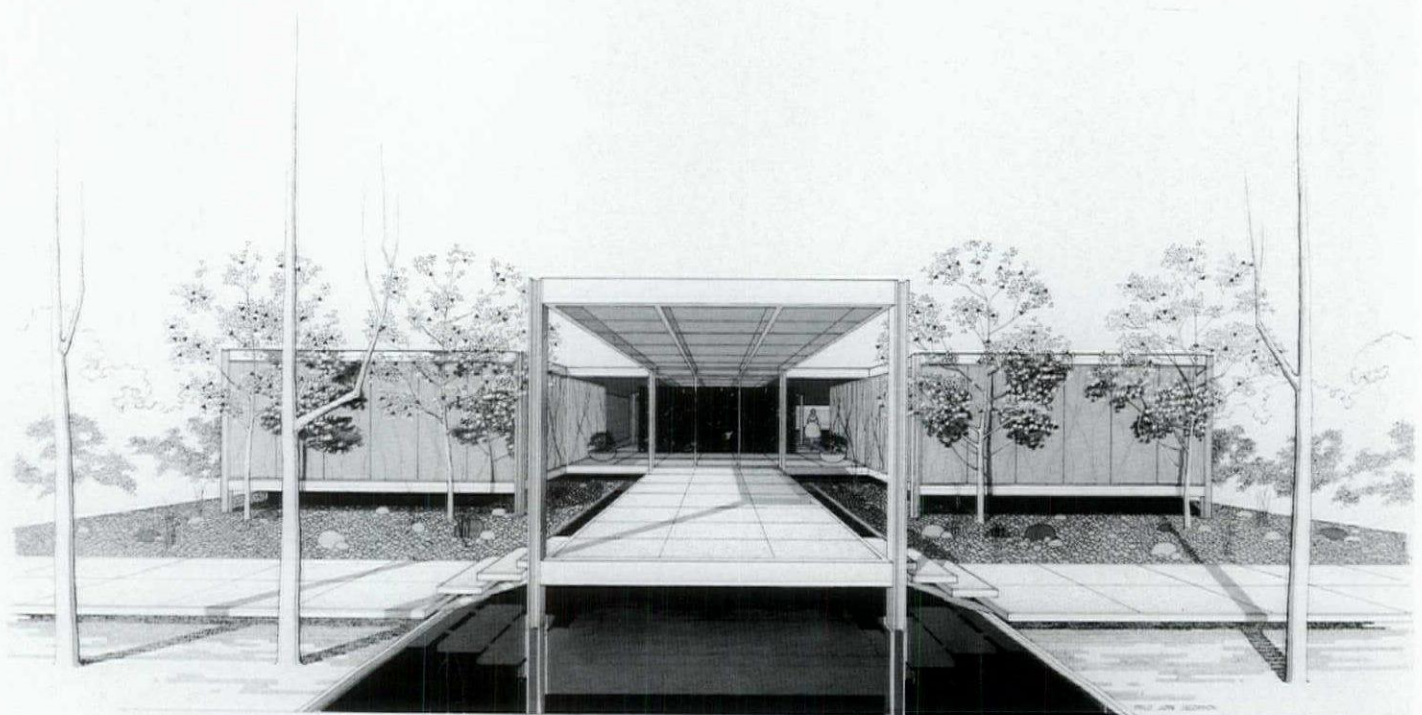
Pools are standard amenities in Southern California architecture, modern and traditional alike. Much less so, though, in Northern California where the climate is temperate and outdoor living is a more measured experience. But in the Daphne Residence the pool, effectively indoor even if uncovered, is the true centerpiece, a focus never fully inhabitable unless in the water, with the eye level

matching that of the ground. The presence of the pool is everywhere to be felt once inside, but invisible coming from the access road. That the pool is an interior amenity is the result of sliders closing off that area of the house from the nearby golf course.

The water plane brings further order and lightness to this architecture. Reflections reach the glazed surfaces and trigger mirroring effects of powerful luminosity in its interiors. The position of the pool presents an ambiguity of plan interpretation both when looking at the drawings and when experiencing the space: is this a square-box with a deep incision to bring light and water into the center of the house? Are these two glazed bars connected with a bridge going over the water? Maybe an H-plan? Or a binocular composition? In all cases, the perception is of a closed system of spaces. The steel columns mark each corner making clear that the glass box is neither eroded nor questioned. As abstract as it is, there is never loss of orientation as users and visitors navigate inside, its organizational principles legible at first sight. Once in the house, Ellwood's determination to create a total work of architecture, consistent with his embrace of Mies van der Rohe's design philosophy, is fully realized. With that objective in mind, the office designed all the interiors and the garden, thus retaining complete control of the design and execution of the project.







DAPHNE RESIDENCE
HILLSBOROUGH CALIFORNIA
CRAIG ELLWOOD ASSOCIATES



MORLEY BAER

The articulation of the building skin is meticulously calibrated to make the load bearing role of the structure clear and the non-structural nature of the infill panels legible in the architecture. Pentelic white marble and white plaster characterize the exterior opaque surfaces, recessed 7 inches behind the columns. The limited color palette of grey glass (replaced today with clear glass) and the ubiquitous whiteness of the enclosure leaves no room for any textural effect. By showcasing the machine precision of its building components, Ellwood suspended the sense of time in experiencing the space. Just like in other projects by the same designer, the Rosen House in West Los Angeles being the closest example, the structure sits on an island of pebbles – imported from Mexico for their dark color and texture – varying from 2 to 6 inches in diameter. The floor is concrete slab on stilts and cantilevers 3 feet beyond its footing to produce the deep shadow further dematerializing the glass box.

In contrast with the even treatment of the exterior, its interior offers a detailed articulation of its functions grasped all at once everywhere within the house boundaries.

They are a textbook case of how extensive the floor-to-ceiling approach to both finishes, doors and windows opening can be followed. All the walking surfaces are white terrazzo, giving a sense of flow and continuity throughout. Walnut infill panels are the only planes where the organic imagery of wood is displayed. Everywhere else, technology, spaciousness, lightness, and uncluttered void promote a soothing response not unlike a Japanese traditional house. The zoning diagram is as intelligible as exterior volume. An entire wing is devoted to the sleeping quarters- master bedroom suite at one end facing the golf course followed by an enfilade of bedrooms. The kitchen is directly in axis with the pool and right behind wall facing the vestibule at the entrance. The open plan was selected for the public wing located at the opposite side. A fireplace built out of solid tubular steel sections provide a permeable separation between living and dining areas with a small portion of the floor area devoted to a studio closed with a plastered partition. Each view is meaningful, each corner controlled, each space intentional with neither leaks nor slippages in the precise location of each element.





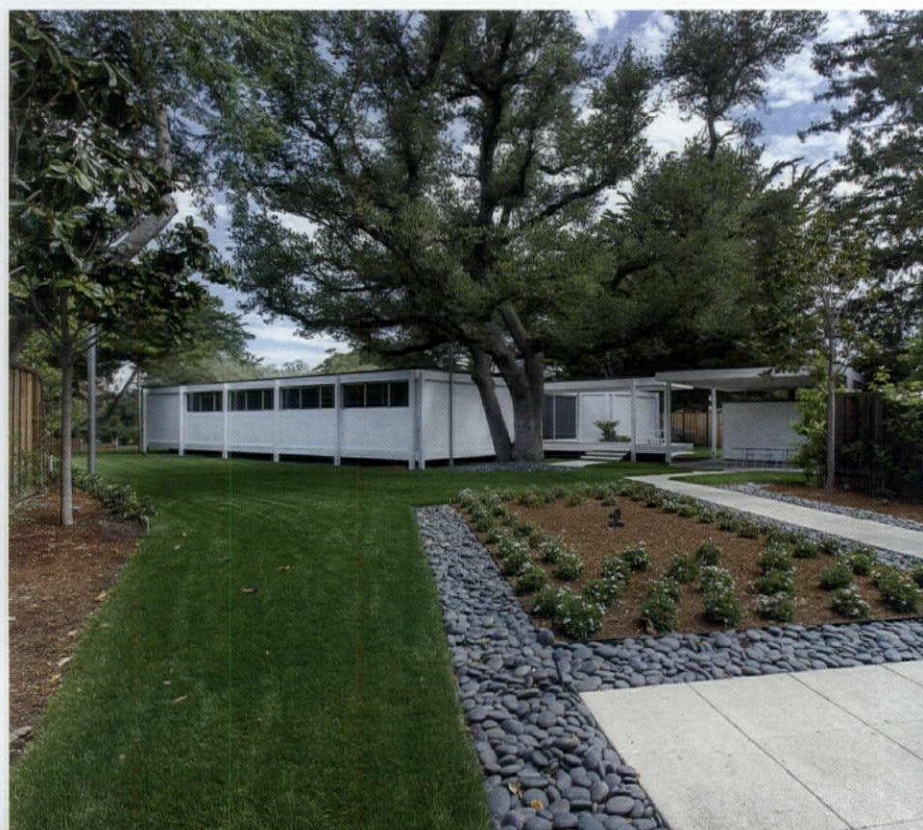


To many, it will come as a surprise that this was a family residence, under the same ownership for more about 50 years. Here the Daphnes raised four daughters – noticeable the absence of railing around the pool ordinarily prescribed for safety – and performed the routines of daily life. And the fact that the house did not undergo any alteration beyond basic maintenance is testimony of the felicitous union of two visionaries – Nicholas Daphne, the patron/client, and Craig Ellwood, the designer. Two willful individuals with similar convictions about what architecture can do to enhance the human condition.

Daphne was a wealthy undertaker with a passion for modern architecture. He was familiar with the Case Study House program and he personally visited some of Ellwood's residences as part of that initiative. In the Bay Area his name is associated with the Daphne Funeral Parlor, a project initially commissioned to and

designed by by Frank Lloyd Wright, but eventually planned and executed by Los Angeles architect A.Q. Jones of Jones & Emmons in the Castro district in San Francisco.

That building, opened in 1953, was at the center of a bitter controversy in the late 1990s between preservationists' desire to rescue the structure from being bulldozed and developers' interests in maximizing the value of the land due to changed market conditions and make room for housing units. In the end the latter won and the mortuary was demolished in 2000. But the fate was much more favorable for Daphne's own residence. An enlightened second owner bought the property from the family in 2010, understood the value of Ellwood's design and committed significant resources to upgrade the building systems as well as refinishing surfaces worn out by use, all this in the spirit of bringing the house back to its original glamour.





The meteoric ascent of Craig Ellwood in the elite group of the modernists took place in less than 10 years. Introduced to modern architecture while apprenticing in a contractor's firm bidding on houses by Richard Neutra, Raphael Soriano, and Charles Eames, he understood the expressive potential of steel construction transcending technology to a transformational experience filled with mysticism. He opened his office in 1948 and slowly found a voice in the rising chorus of post-war architects in the region. He made a name for himself through the Case-Study House program, where he designed three steel frame residences- #16, #17, and #18- in Los Angeles. Legendary critic Esther McCoy saw in him a leading voice of his generation. An important professional ally in the firm from 1953 till 1962 was Jerry Lomax (1927-2014), who is credited as the designer-in-charge of a number of key projects, the Daphne Residence among them. This was a golden period in this key figure of California Modernism. It is during this time in fact that the Smith House in West Los Angeles, the Hunt House in Malibu, and the South Bay Bank in Manhattan Beach, three landmark buildings in Ellwood's trajectory, were produced while the association with Lomax was most creative. It is unclear where Ellwood's hand ends and Lomax's starts. Furthermore when they parted ways each personality gave a distinctive imprint different from each other in their subsequent work.

To his credit, Ellwood remained true to the same course for his entire career, where the ramifications of steel constructions were explored, expanded, and resolved in a variety of building types. And it is a curious fact that for a designer steeped into an approach to architecture design based on the invariants of the industrial world, all his output is in California. Under the southern sun, Ellwood's work exudes Apollonian beauty, not unlike a Greek temple bathed by Mediterranean light. They stand in aristocratic isolation against the landscape, unmarred by urban blight and secure in the ordering principles underlying their very making.

Mies van der Rohe said: *"Success is just the by-product of good, simple, and honest work. And this simple and honest work, I think, is the essence of civilization."* If that is true, the Daphne Residence is one paradigmatic example of the essence of 20th century civilization.



20 Madrone Place – Hillsborough, California



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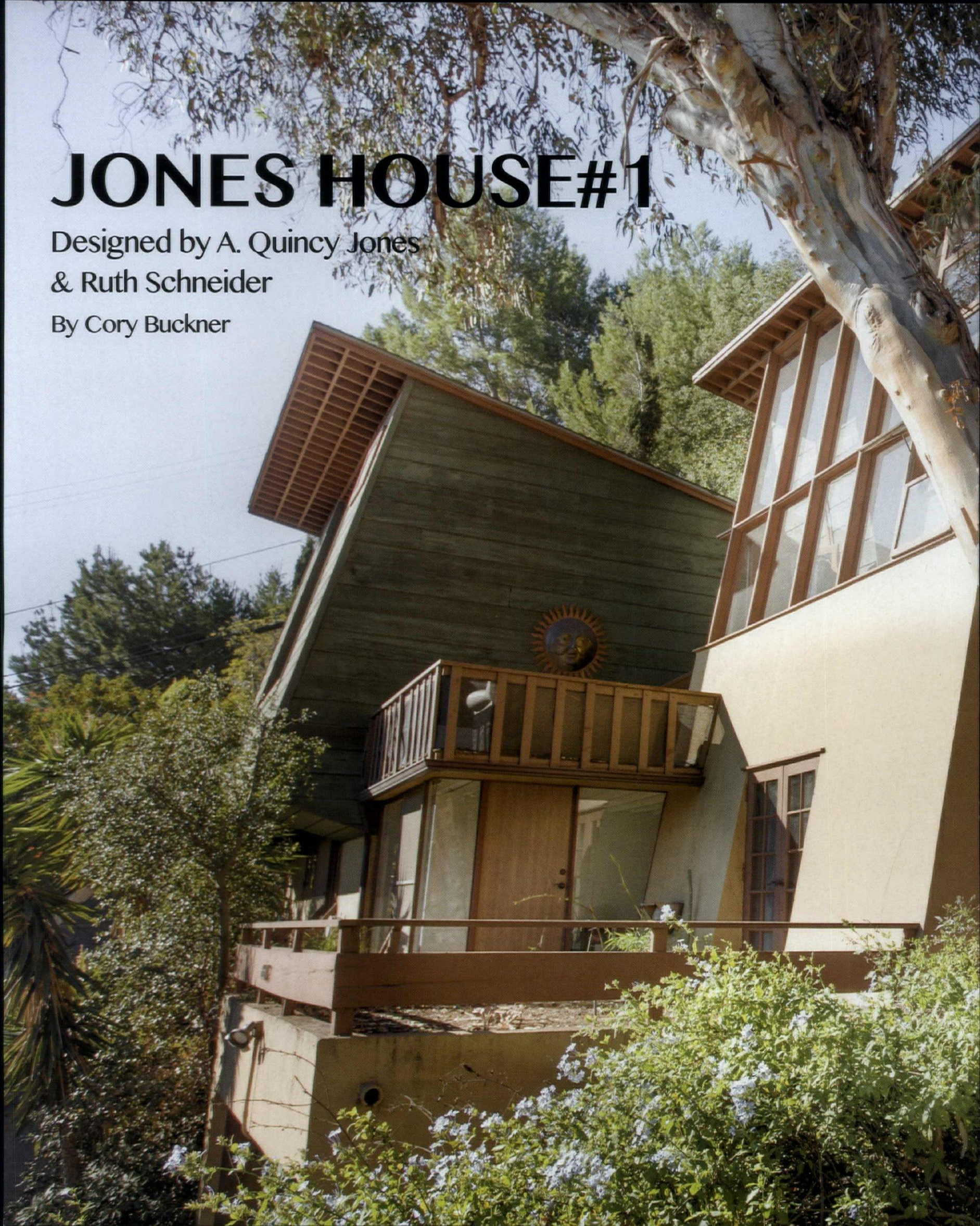
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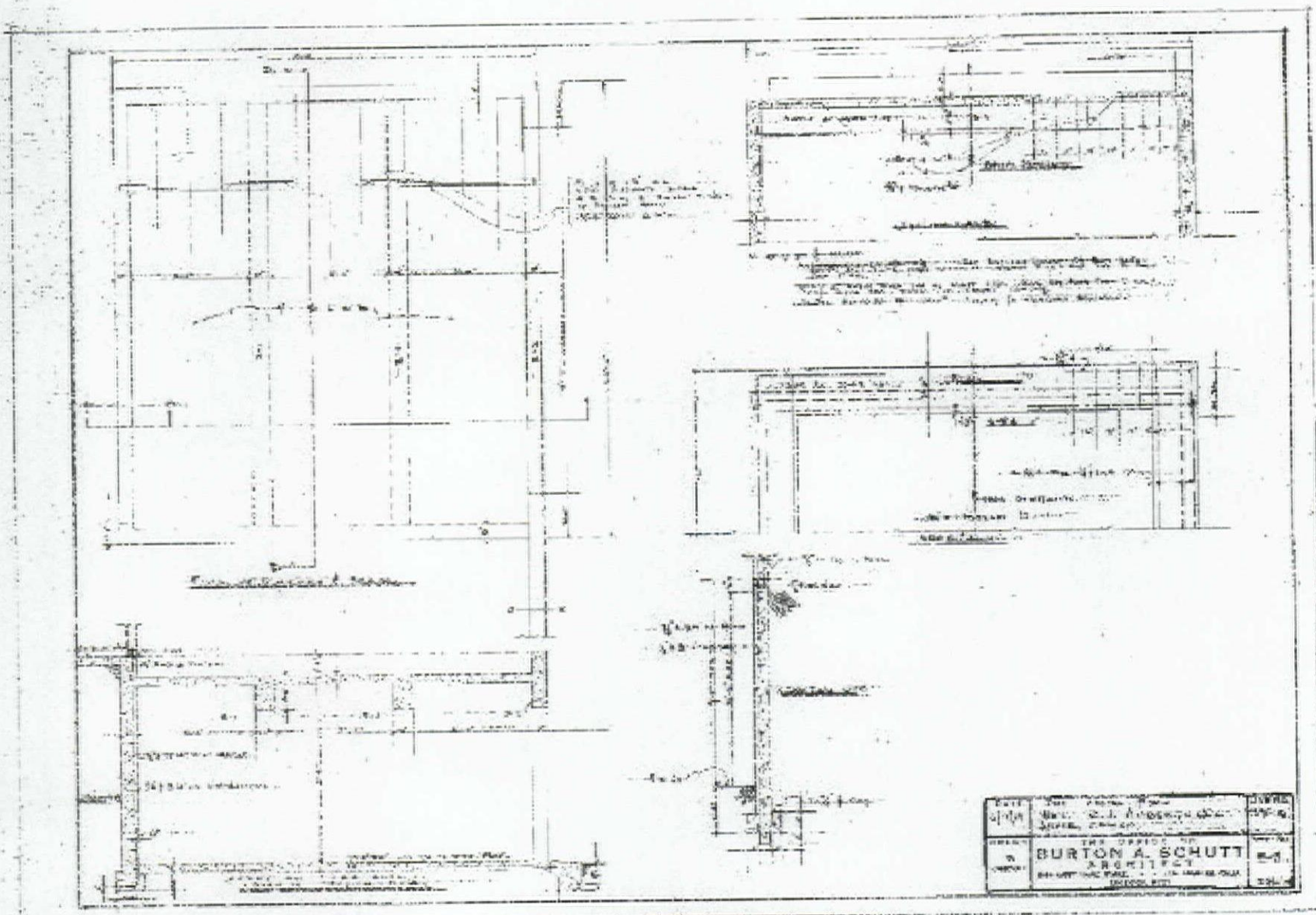
JONES HOUSE#1

Designed by A. Quincy Jones
& Ruth Schneider

By Cory Buckner







A. Quincy Jones: Floor Plans and Elevations

In 1936, A. Quincy Jones relocated from Seattle to Los Angeles with his girlfriend and fellow student Ruth Schneider, seeking out the mecca of experimental modern architecture. At the University of Washington, Jones and Schneider, as well as fellow students Minoru Yamasaki and Roland Terry, had been greatly influenced by their professor Lionel Pries, a skilled artist and architect. Several students boarded at the Pries house, including Jones, where weekly soirees were held to discuss books or to listen to Pries regaling the group with stories of his worldly travels. While teaching the Beaux-Arts approach to architecture for the first two years, Pries also encouraged students to respond to emerging, experimental vocabularies in architecture as long as they followed the basic foundation course. The remaining three years students were encouraged to be creative, expressing each problem on their own terms. This unique education produced some of the finest modern architects of the time.

Not only the climate in Southern California but also the progressive political thought created a stimulating atmosphere for a young population of architects eager to experiment in materials and forms. Irving Gill's 1916 Dodge House, Frank Lloyd Wright's Barnsdale House, several of Richard Neutra's houses including his own VDL House, and Rudolf Schindler's King's Road, Lovell Beach and the Howe House, were all standing when Jones and Schneider arrived.

One can only imagine the excitement of seeing these structures, newly constructed, all different in their expression of modern architecture.

Schneider and Jones married in 1937 and soon both landed jobs as interns to architects; Jones worked first for Douglas Honnald from 1936 to 1937 and Schneider and Jones worked for Burton A. Schutt from 1937 to 1939. Both architecture firms were highly regarded as modernist design firms. This creative atmosphere soon filled Jones and Schneider with a desire to express their own design skills and build a house of their own. After a brief search, the couple found a lot within their budget but also considered unbuildable. Located in Laurel Canyon on the southeastern slope of Lookout Mountain, the steep lot presented a challenge but the architects were not deterred. Jones and Schneider spent hours designing their dream house while obtaining the soils reports needed to prove the property buildable.

The architects came up with a practical plan to afford the construction since their meager \$35-per-week salary was hardly conducive for creating a grand residence. They conceived of two structures side-by-side, separated by several feet but sharing a large deck, one of which would serve as a rental property and the other as their home.



8661 Nash Getty Julius Shulman Photos

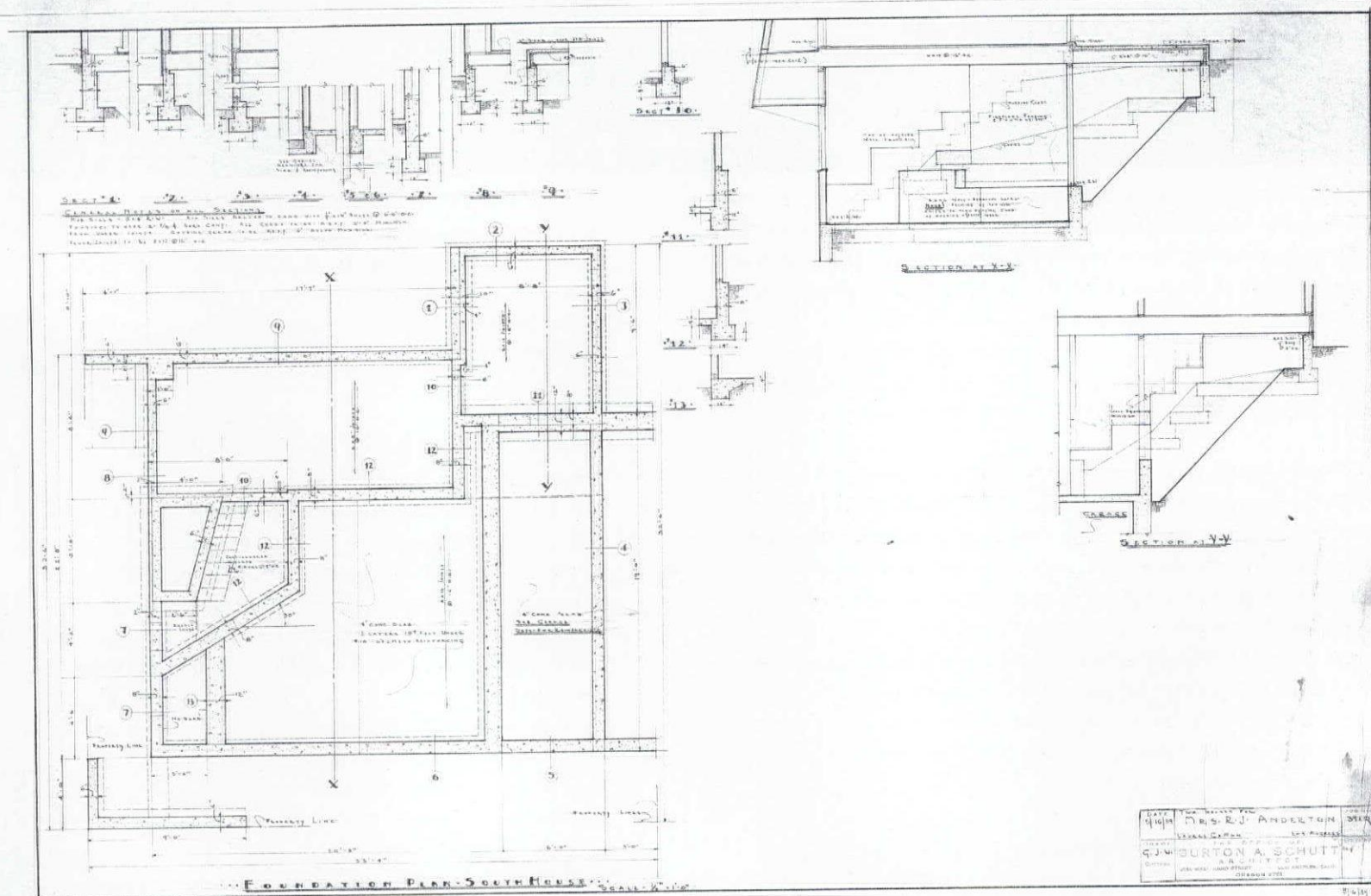
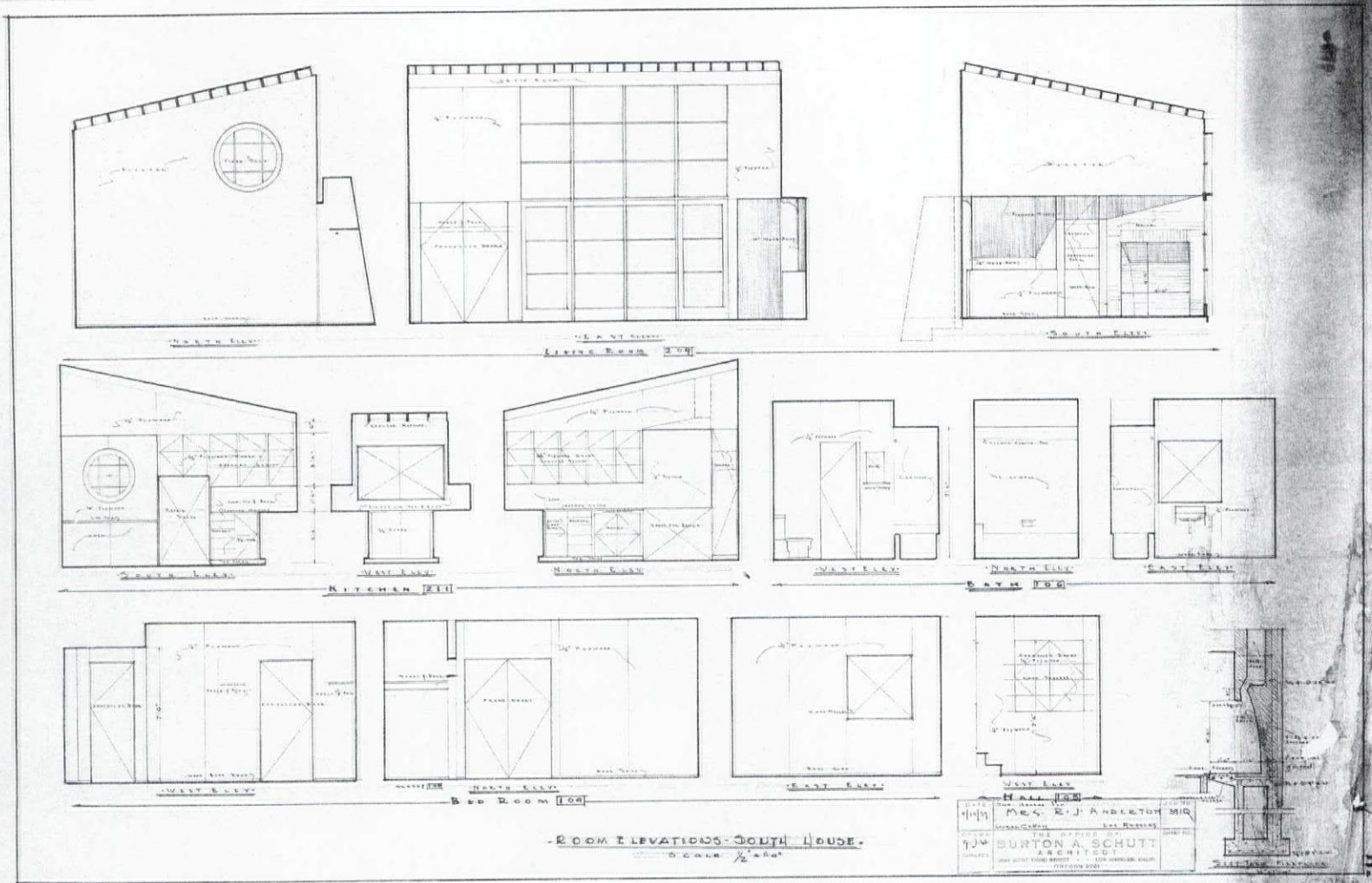
Carved out of the hillside, the structures rise out of the ground on a base of concrete, which supports both structures and contains the garage on one side. The upper floors seem to float off the base with two very distinct structures faced in redwood with walls of glass. One structure cants forward at the top and the other originally canted in the opposite direction, creating an active dialog between the two. The panoramic view east toward Los Angeles is the focal point of both the rental unit and the house structure.

The influence of Japanese architecture is apparent in the use of the horizontal wood siding and the way the structure blends into the hillside. Jones was influenced by Japanese architecture at a very early age during years spent on his grandparent's farm, which neighbored the Kobata Nursery. The Kobatas were a close-knit family with an acute attention to detail and a drive for excellence. This was Jones' first introduction into the Japanese sensibility that was to influence him throughout his career. Jones and Schneider selected a hewn timber to act as the support post at both staircase areas recalling an element often seen in traditional Japanese architecture.

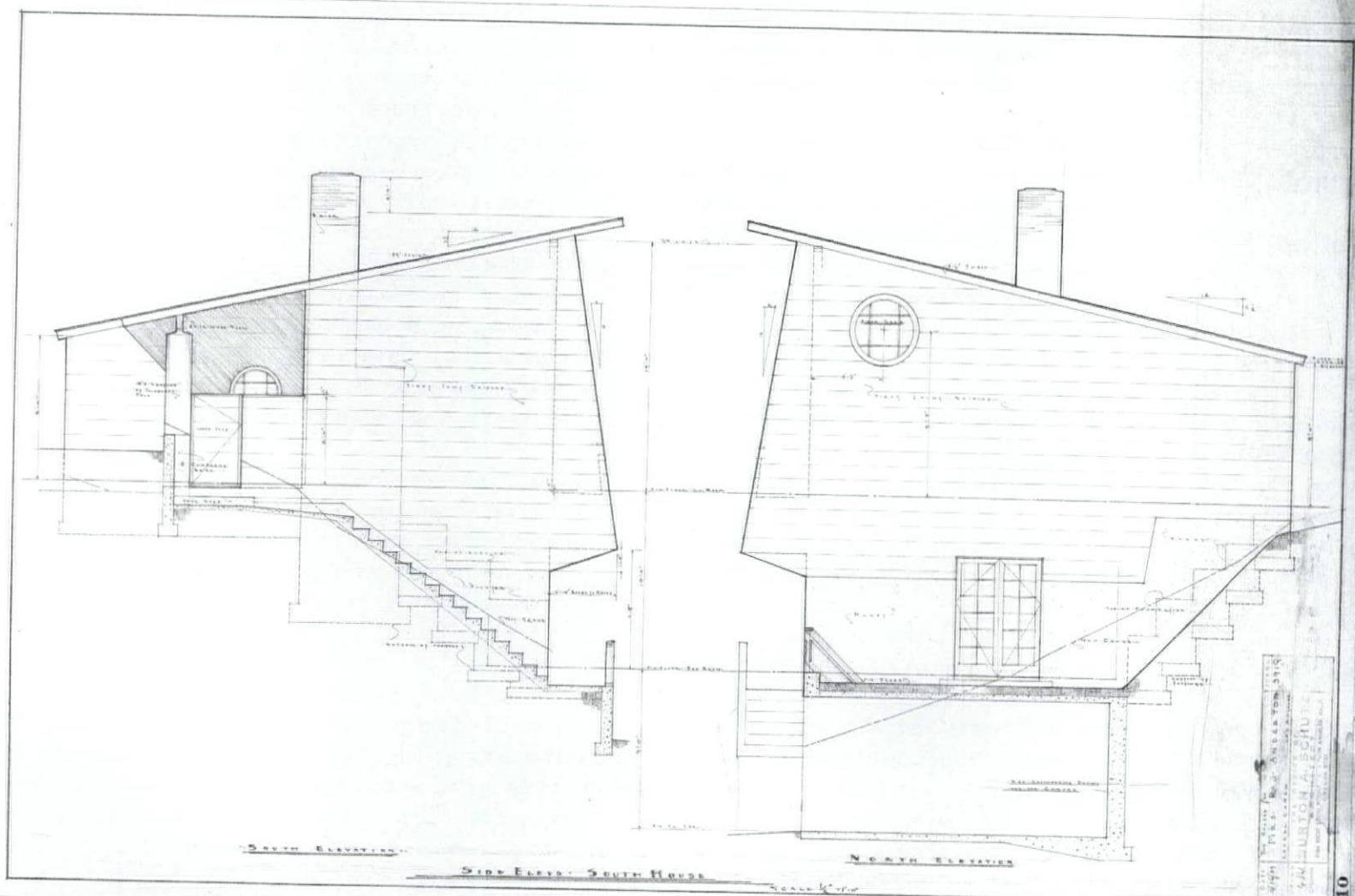
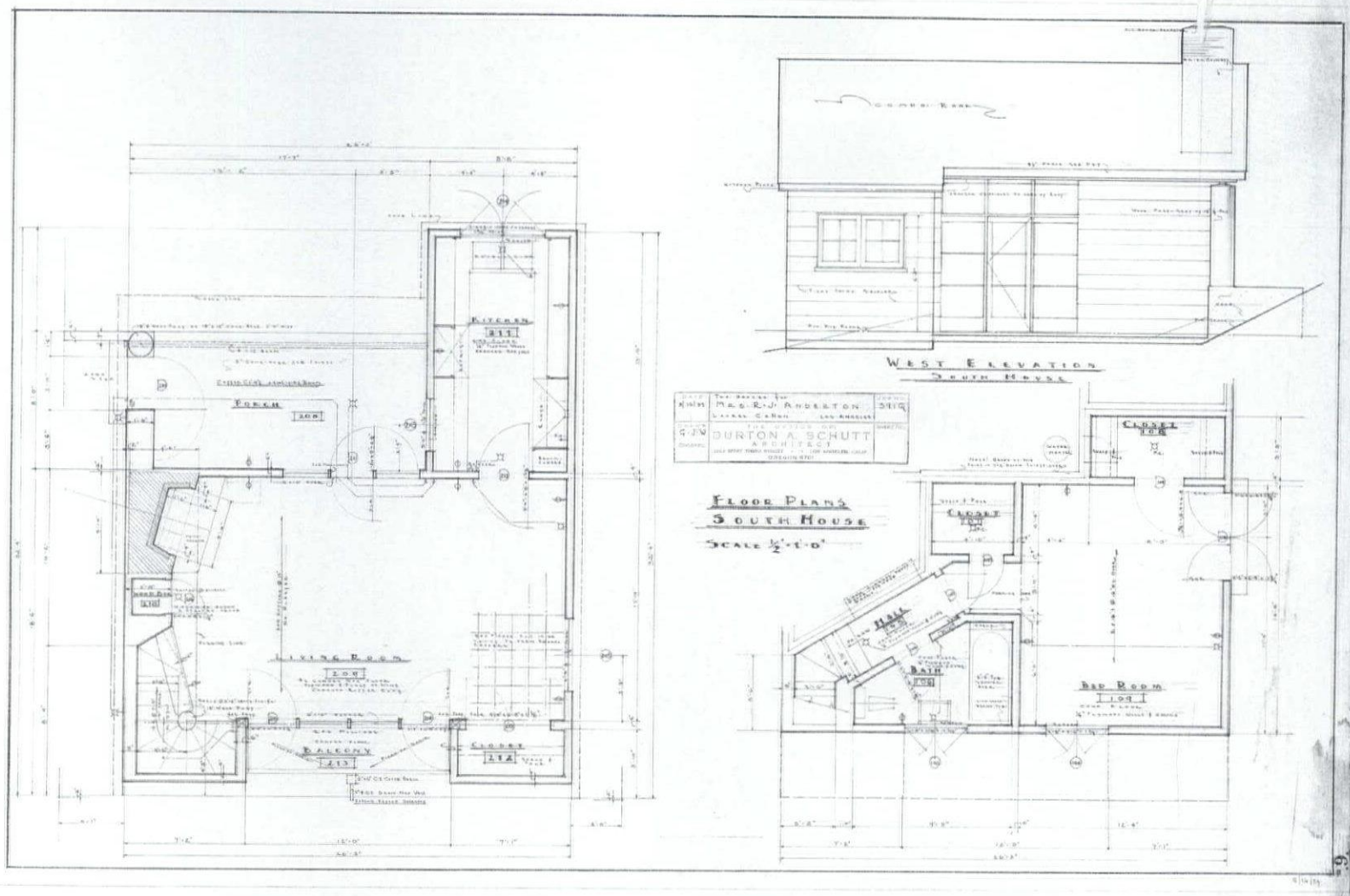
Building two separate structures proved ideal in a way the two would not have been able to imagine. Both Jones and Schneider sat for the architecture exams in 1942. Jones passed and received

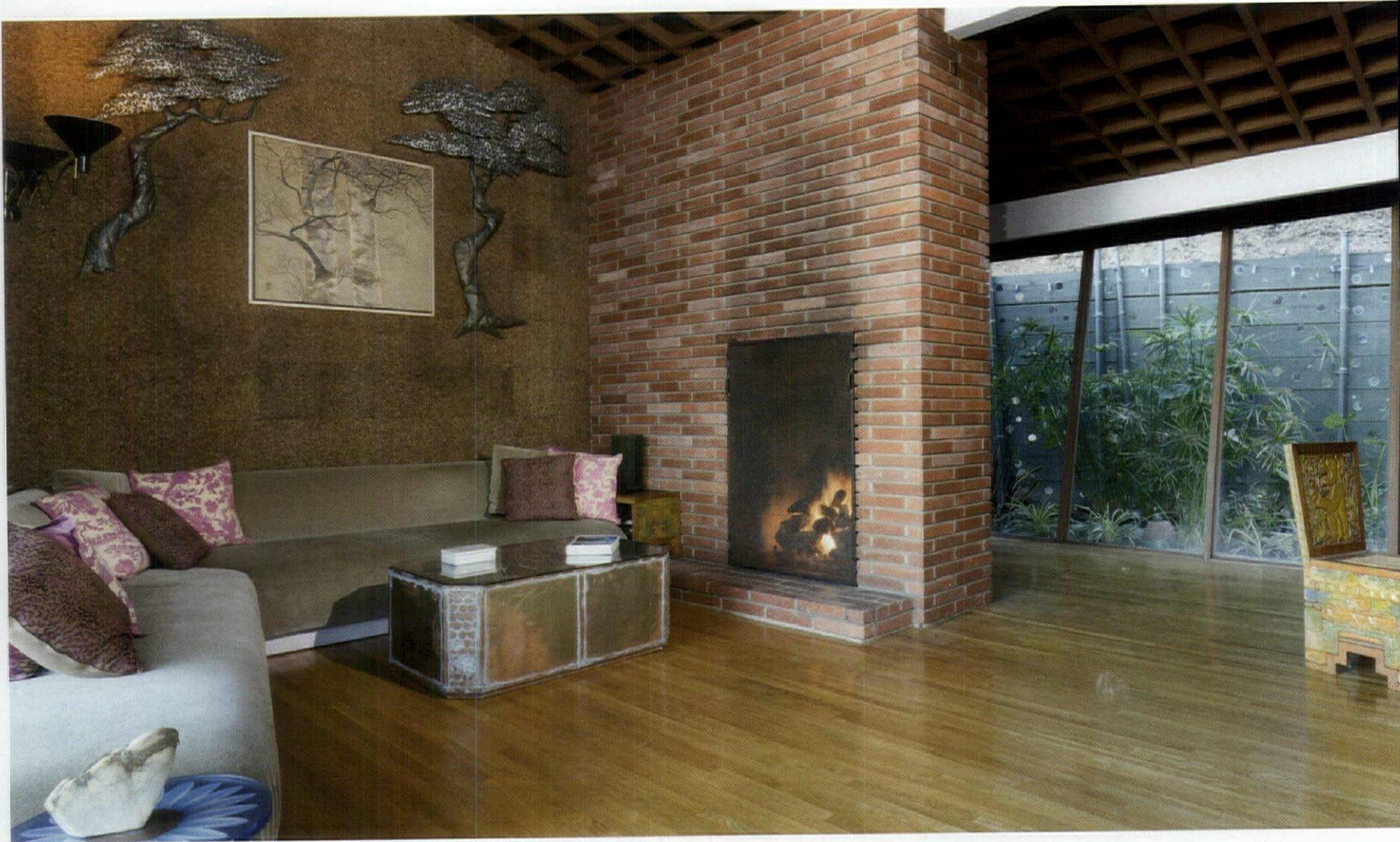
his certification but Schneider did not. The marriage was not able to survive this unequal standing and ended the same year as Jones' certification. It was also the same year Jones entered military service and served as a lieutenant commander in the Pacific on the aircraft carrier Lexington.

Jones married Anne Bruce Austin in 1943. While in the service, Jones designed the remodel of the Laurel Canyon structures. The structure to the south, which served as the rental property, became his office with several drafting stations for future employees. The over-scaled brick fireplace in the rental unit became part of the drafting room. At the same time, the other structure to the north was remodeled. The deck at the front of the house was incorporated into the living area. The dramatic bookcase that reflects the same angle of the canted exterior wall hides the structural support. The original glass wall was removed and a window wall added inline with the canted form creating a dramatic view window to the city lights beyond. Canted glass became an element in many of Jones' future designs since angled glass will not reflect the interior space at night as vertical glass does, freeing the eye to see the nightscape beyond the perimeter.



A. Quincy Jones: Floor Plans and Elevations





As Elaine Sewell Jones, Jones' third wife, liked to recall, Jones opened his office the day of his discharge from the Navy and had his first client by the end of the day. That was to be the beginning of a productive career that spanned thirty-four years until his death in 1979.

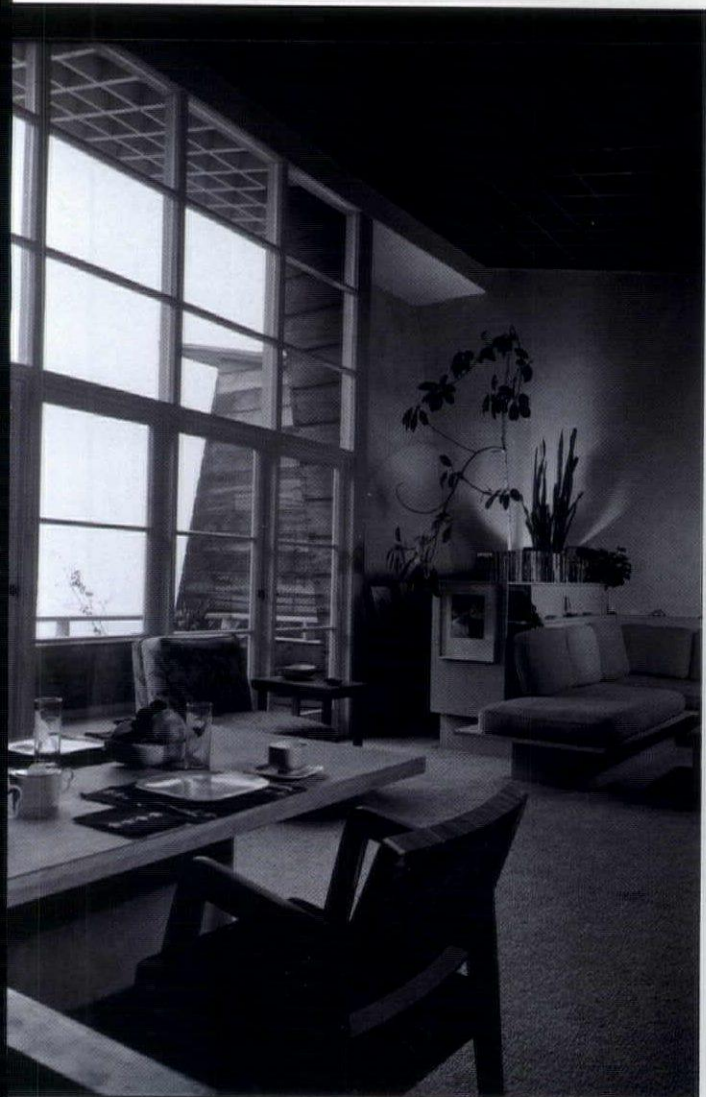
There are many features in the Jones House #1 that were springboards for elements seen throughout Jones' career. The roof rafters at sixteen feet-on-center run the length of the sloping roof and are left exposed. This was the beginning of Jones' interest in exposing building structure and material. The later housing projects he designed typically have exposed post-and-beam structures and exposed finish materials. Since a certain amount of blocking between rafters was necessary and the designers felt that most ceilings were too dull, they devised a richly painted egg-crate effect for the rafters and blocking, which carries through to the outside overhangs. It was Jones' first coffered ceiling, an element he would use many times during his career. Jones used this element for his second house with Anne, the Jones House #2, a steel house built in the Crestwood Hills area of Los Angeles. The egg crate construction made of wood is used as a skylight area, creating a warm juxtaposition with the steel construction.

Often turning the egg-crate on its side to create a screen, Jones used this element on the Nordlinger Residence #1, Palm Springs Town and Country Restaurant in Palm Springs, and the Bel Air Garden Apartments. It's interesting to note that the client, Nina Anderton, owner of the Bel Air Gardens, was also the person from which Jones bought the Nash Drive lot. That initial purchase became a profitable one for Jones, leading to commissions including several additions to the Anderton home in Los Angeles, a confectionary shop in Santa Monica, and several referrals with Anderton's friends. The egg-crate idea morphed into the waffle design or the air-distribution flow system

that Jones developed with a grant from the Public Health Research (HEW) to present to hospitals. He believed this system would provide a clean and efficient way to accommodate change, something mandatory in a hospital environment. The system of floor ducts makes it possible to punch into the concrete flooring to reach vaults running in eight directions. Lines for utilities or communications can be inserted and run in any of the directions. The air-floor system eliminated the need for dropped ceilings to conceal mechanical runs and reduce the typical floor-to-floor height. While the system was not adopted for hospitals, Jones did implement it with the Annenberg School of Communication at the University of Southern California and the Graduate Research Library at the University of Hawaii, Manoa Campus, Honolulu, allowing the user to make changes in the sub-floor connections for media equipment or utilities.

The sofa Jones designed for the living portion of the Jones House #1 expressed Jones' interest in built-ins. Part of the modernist aesthetic was to keep furniture to a minimum, easily achieved with built-ins, which Jones designed throughout his career. One sofa unit removed from one of Jones' designs is currently owned by the Los Angeles Museum of Art.

When put into the context of other modern residential structures designed in the late thirties, the Jones House #1 stands as a completely unique structure. The two architects do not appear to have been influenced by current styles but chose to design to their own program and to address the site specifically. Their creative solution is to be admired and respected. It is a small structure with a large vision.



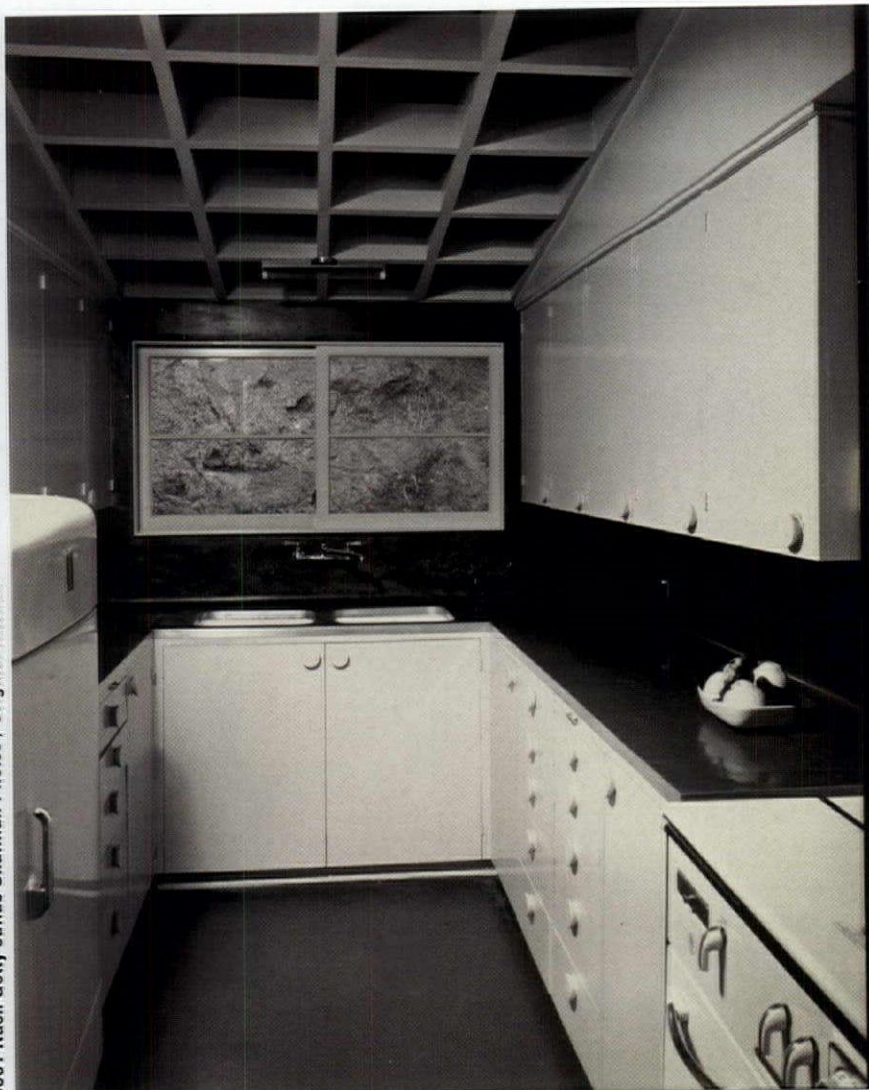
8661 Nash Getty Julius Shulman Photos / Living-dining area before Jones remodel

8661 Nash Getty Julius Shulman Photos / Living-dining area after Jones remodel

8661 Nash Getty Julius Shulman Photos / Living area before Jones remodel



8661 Nash Getty Julius Shulman Photos / Original Kitchen



8661 Nash Getty Julius Shulman Photos / Living Area after Jones remodel





8661 Nash Drive – Los Angeles, California



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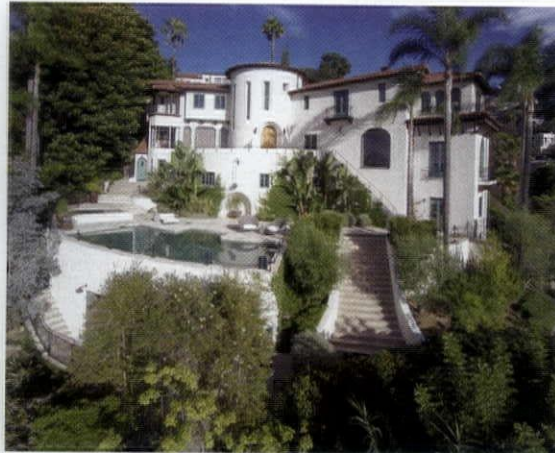
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Craig Ellwood, Design
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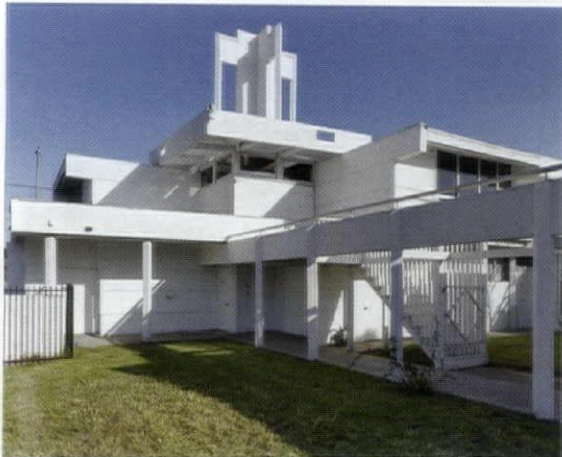
#1092
Los Angeles, CA

Robert Finkelhor, Architect
\$5,950,000



#1027
Pasadena, CA

Arthur & Alfred Heineman, Architects
\$4,980,000



#1060
Compton, Los Angeles - CA

R.M. Schindler, Architect, 1944
\$1,490,000



#1047
Genova, Italy

Gino Coppede, Architect
\$4,900,000



#1094 A. Quincy Jones & Ruth Schindler, Designer/Builder
Laurel Canyon, Los Angeles - CA
\$1,400,000



#1077
Washington DC

Leon Brown & Thomas Wright, F.A.I.A.
\$1,899,000



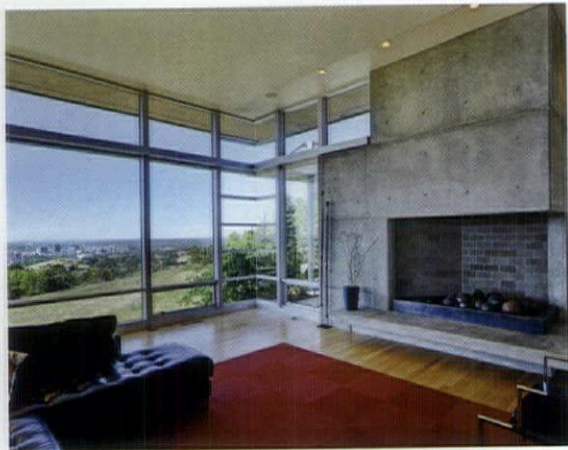
#1035
Meadowbrook, PA

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

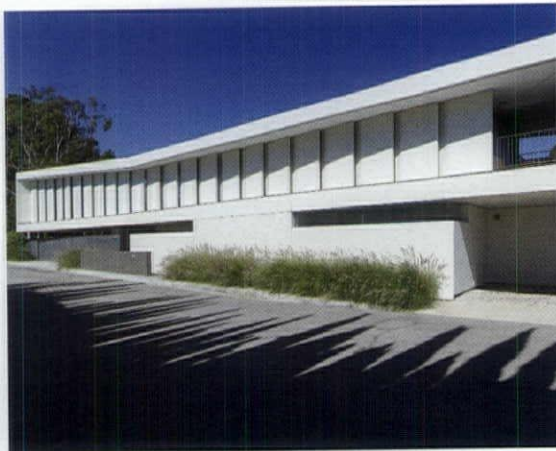


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Fontainebleau, near Paris

1970s Design Residence
FR \$1,100,000



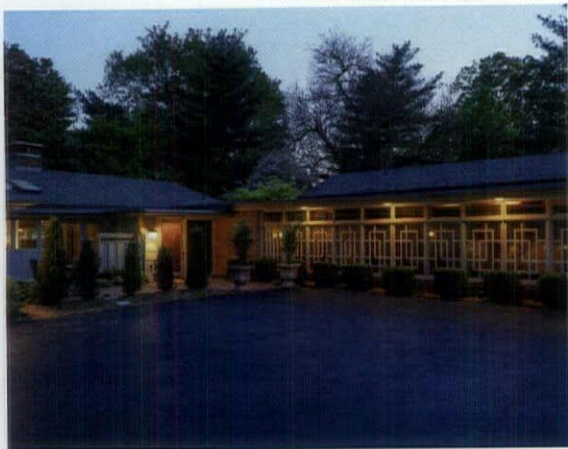
#980
Boise, ID
J.T. Glancey, G. Rockwell & Associates
\$2,150,000



#1088
Los Angeles, CA
SPF:aArchitects, Zoltan Pali, F.A.I.A.
\$8,500,000



#1095
La Canada/Flintridge, CA
Lloyd Wright, Architect
\$2,395,000



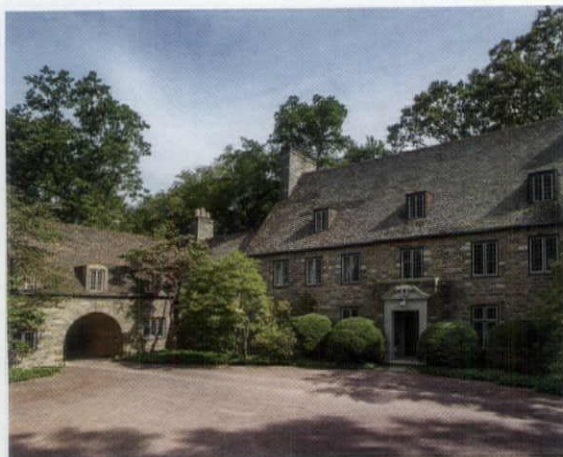
#1054
Ladue, MO
Bernoudy-Designed Residence
\$1,350,000



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



#1086
Los Angeles, CA
Harwell Hamilton Harris, F.A.I.A.
\$1,600,000



#1072
Greenwich, CT
Harrie T. Lindeberg, Architect
\$16,800,000



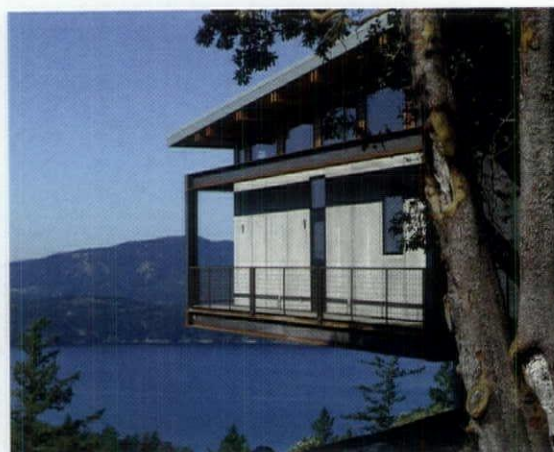
#858
Bellevue, ID
Olson Kundig Architects
\$2,750,000



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



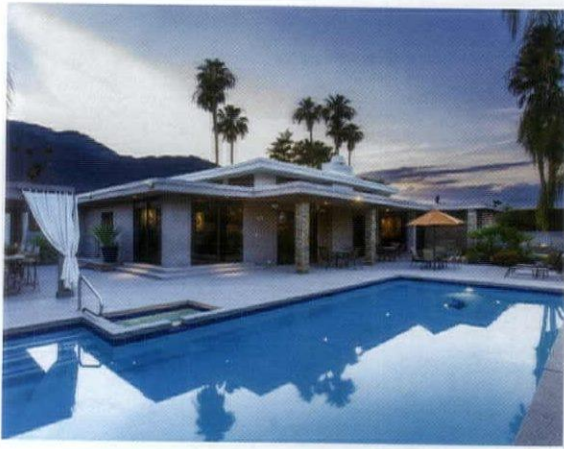
#1053
Chesterfield, MO
Ralph Fournier, Architect
\$2,000,000



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

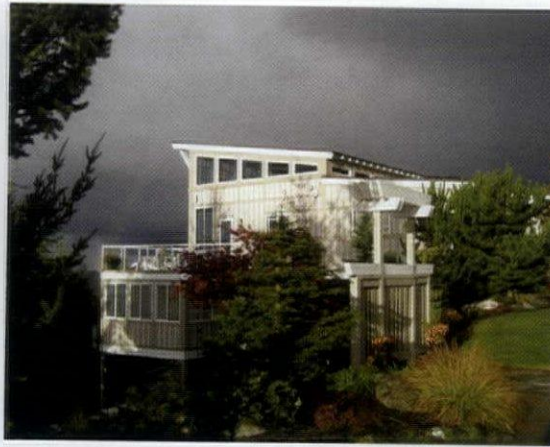


#1085
San Rafael, CA
Beverley David Thorne, Architect
\$1,850,000



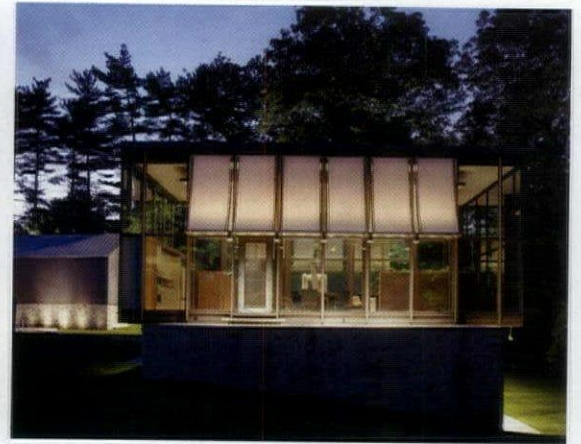
#1031
Palm Springs, CA

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



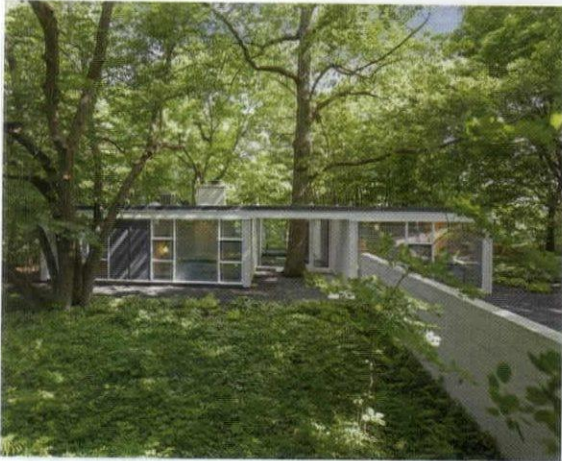
#929
Anacortes, WA

Richard T. Broderick, A.I.A.
\$1,195,000



#1078
New Canaan, CT

Phillip Johnson, Architect
\$14,000,000



#1071
Chanhassen, MN

Ralph Rapson, Architect
\$750,000



#959
Branford, FL

Valentino Agnoli, Architect
\$550,000



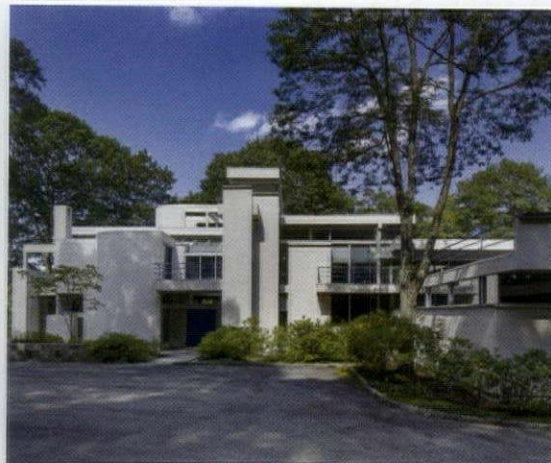
#1097
Boulder City, NV

Buff and Hensman, 1985 - 1988
\$2,950,000



#1040
Armonk, NY

Roy Johnson, Architect
\$3,500,000



#1096
Pound Ridge, NY

Vuko Tashkovich, Architect
\$4,650,000



#969
near Bordeaux, France

Pierre-Louis Martin, Architect
FR \$890,000



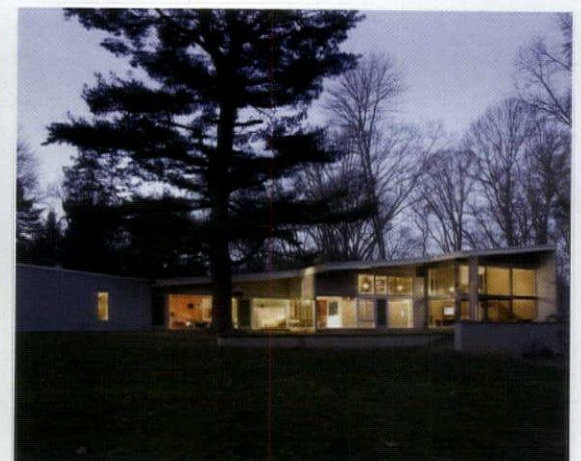
#1059
Winnetka, IL

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



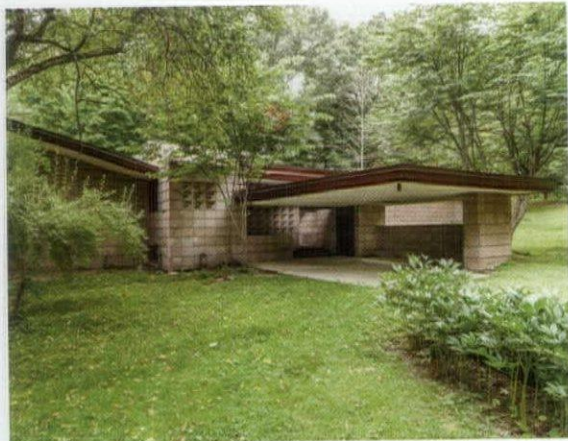
#982
Lambertville, NJ

Jules Gregory, Architect
\$899,000

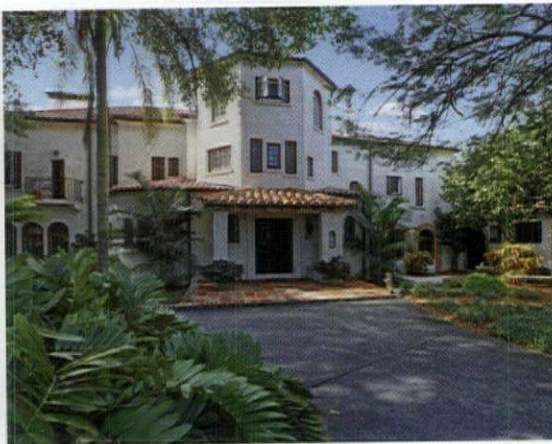


#1056
Princeton, NJ

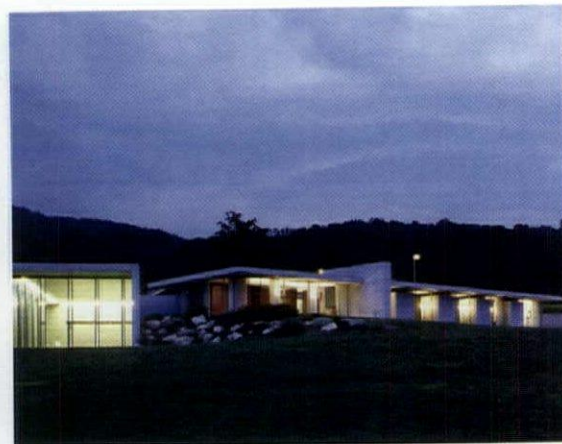
Marcel Breuer, Architect
\$2,000,000



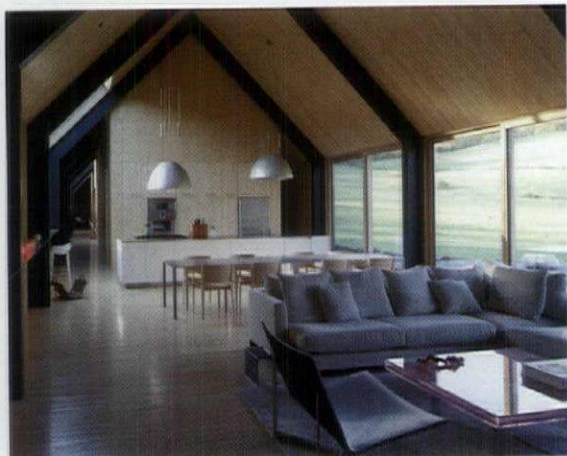
#1050 **Frank Lloyd Wright, Architect**
Galesburg, MI \$455,000



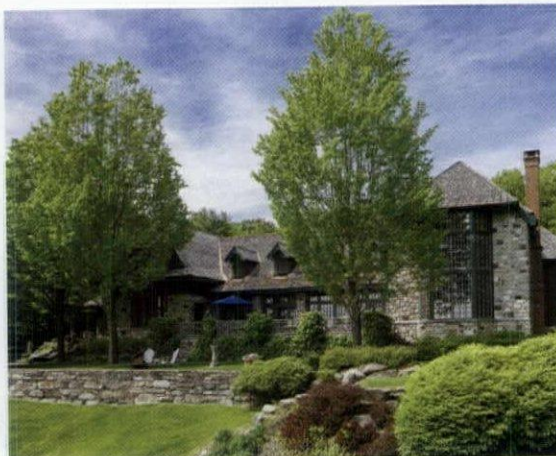
#1016 **James Yates, Architect**
Stuart, FL \$4,995,000



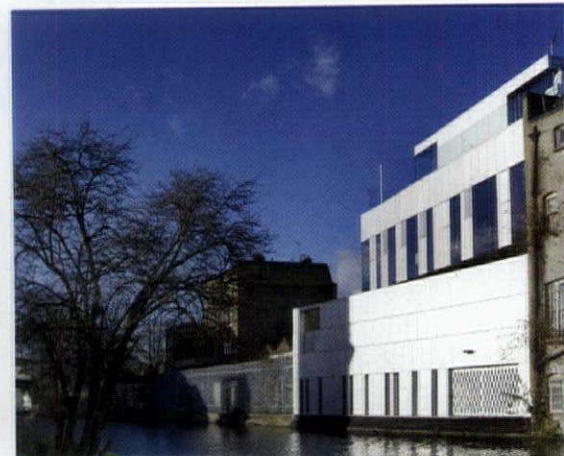
#1082 **Pierre Fauroux, Architect**
near Grenoble, France FR \$1,870,000



#1075 **Rick Joy, Architect**
Woodstock, VT \$8,750,000



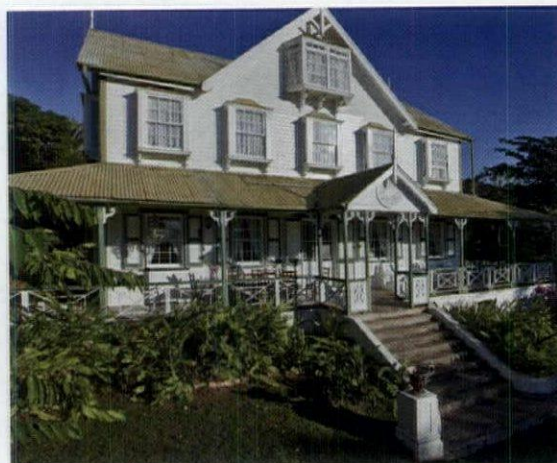
#1076 **Alan Wazenberg, Architect**
Quechee, VT \$5,750,000



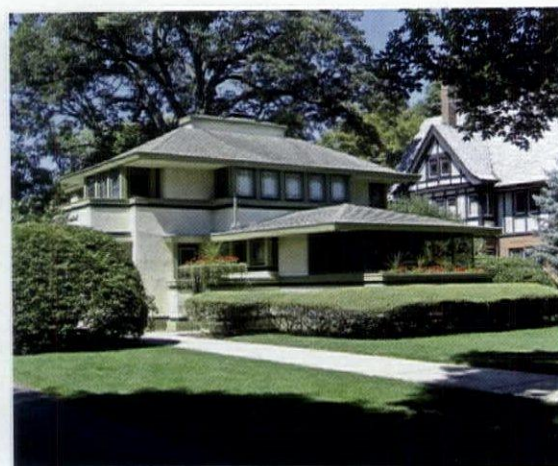
#1093 **David Adjaye, Architect**
London, UK British Pounds \$5,500,000



#1019 **Frank Lloyd Wright, Architect**
River Forest, IL \$1,550,000



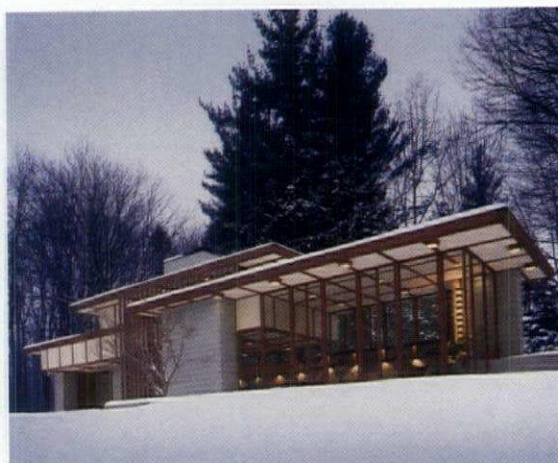
#861 **Belmont, Queen of Castries**
Saint Lucia, West Indies \$1,495,000



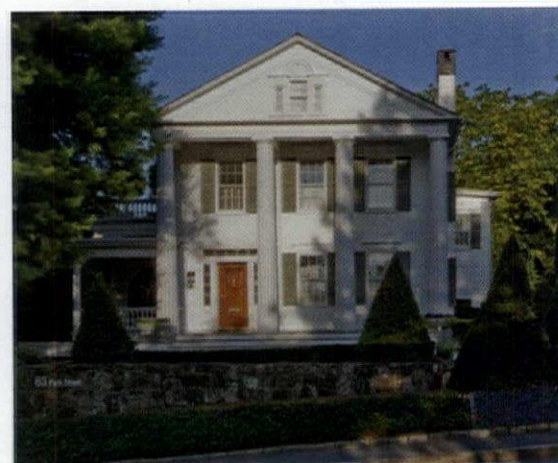
#1064 **Frank Lloyd Wright, Architect**
River Forest, IL \$1,325,000



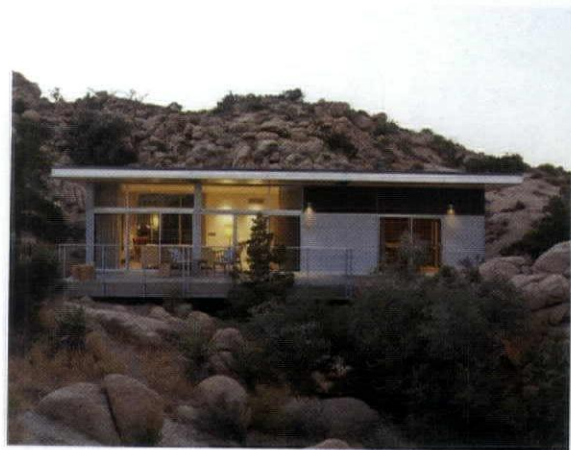
#1032 **Edward Dart, A.I.A.**
Glencoe, IL \$2,490,000



#1039 **Frank Lloyd Wright, Architect**
Willoughby Hills, OH \$1,700,000



#1062 **Richard Bergmann, F.A.I.A., ASLA**
New Canaan, CT \$3,500,000



#1041
Yucca Valley, CA
Blue Sky Building Systems
\$649,000



#1087
Darien, CT
Arthur Holden, Architect
\$2,895,000



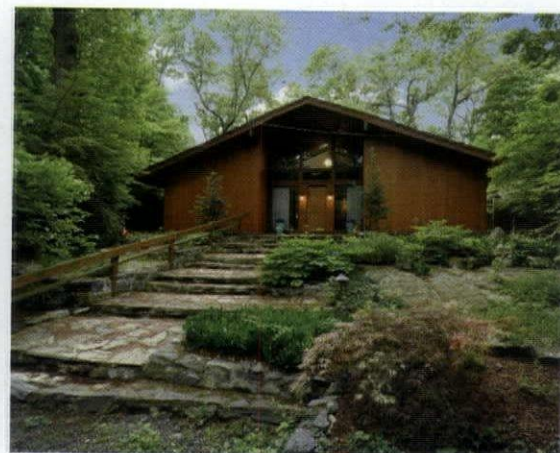
#1079
Bois-le-Roy, France
Claude Parent, Architect
FR \$1,260,000



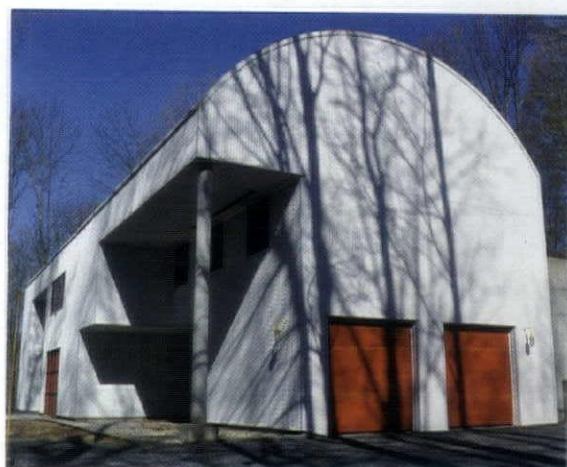
#1074
Harrison, NY
The Gemstone House
\$1,299,000



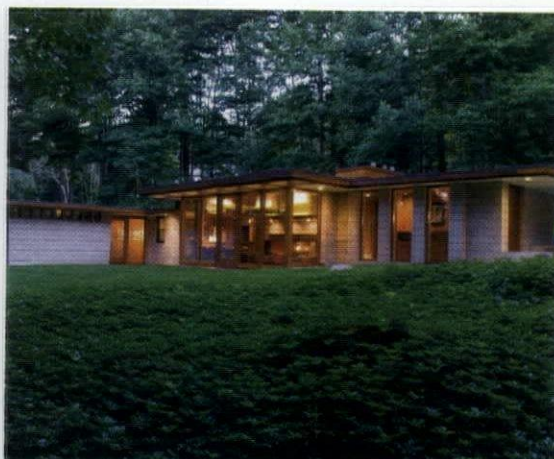
#1055
Augusta, MO
Bernoudy Treasure
\$1,175,000



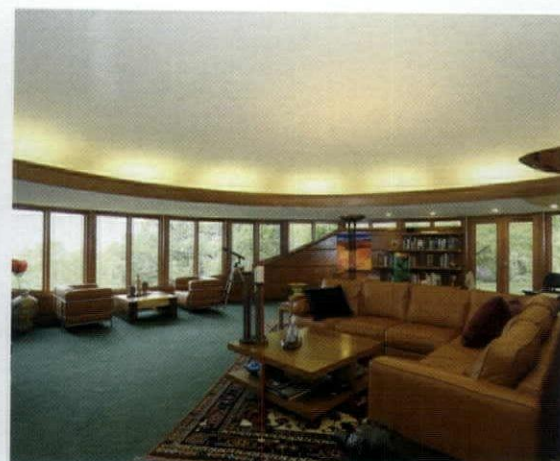
#1013
Darien, CT
Edward Durell Stone, Architect
\$1,600,000



#1098
Egremont, MA
Harvey Ingersoll Rothenberg, Architect
\$1,900,000



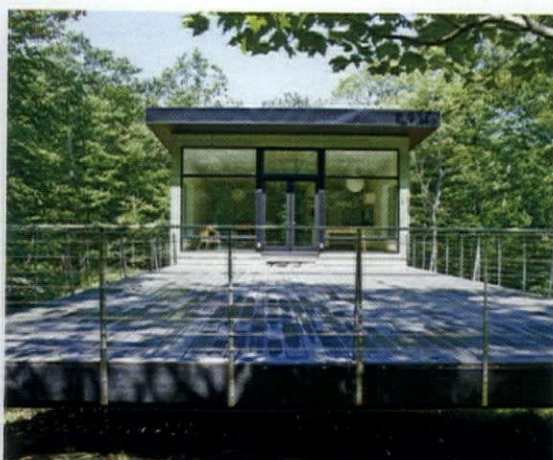
#758
Weston, CT
Allan Gelbin Design
\$1,450,000



#1091
Black Earth, WI
William Wesley Peters, Architect
\$1,900,000



#1083
near Nice, France
Bernadette Jacques, Architect
FR \$6,500,000



#950
Cold Spring, NY
River Architects
\$1,600,000



#1099
Santa Clarita, CA
Designed by Russell Johnson, Architect
\$1,350,000

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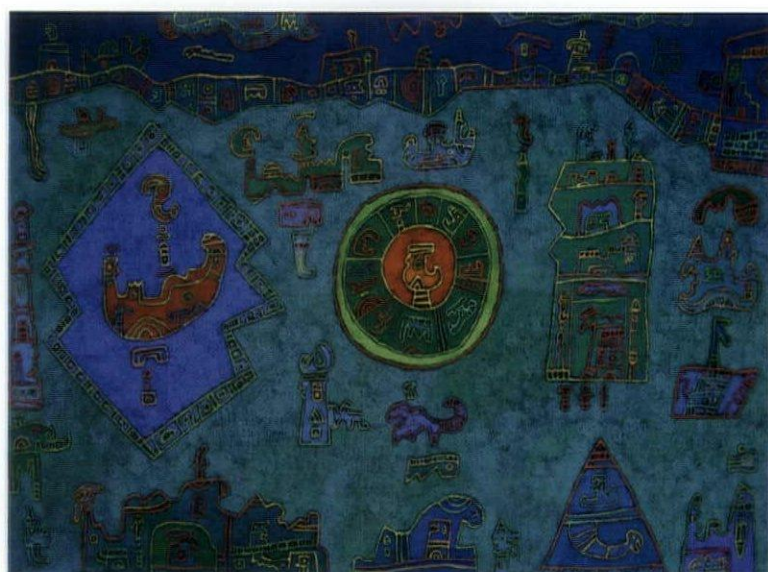
Tobey C. Moss
G A L L E R Y



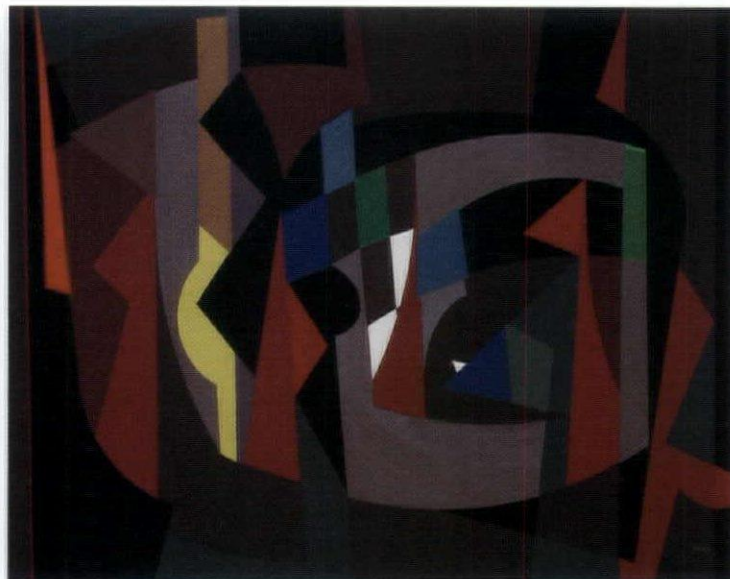
LEONARD EDMONDSON 1916 – 2002
Yellow Reward
Oil on Masonite 1950 / 23 x 29 inches



OSKAR FISCHINGER 1900 – 1967
Composition 44
Oil on Celotex / 31 1/4 x 38 3/8 inches



YNEZ JOHNSTON (b. 1920)
In Green and Blue
Oil, Encaustic on Canvas 1995 / 24 x 36 inches



JULES ENGEL 1909–2003
Big Top (Night Light)
Gouache on board 1945 / 15 1/2 x 20 1/2 inches

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