

spring 2004

atomic ranch

MIDCENTURY MARVELS



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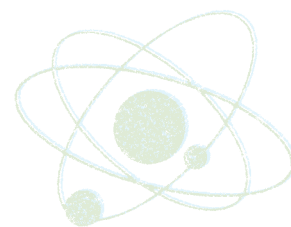
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atomicranch™

MIDCENTURY MARVELS

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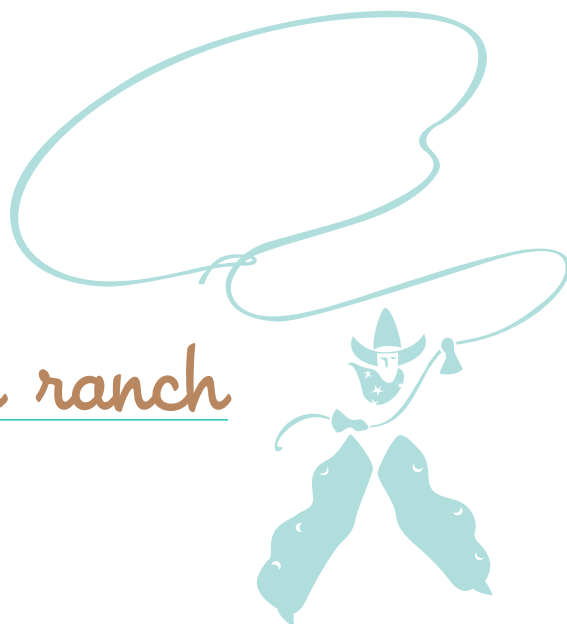
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cover

The back yard of Chris Burusco's Glendale, Calif., home strikes a dramatic note with its mix of manicured and wild plantings.



meanwhile... *back at the ranch*



So, what is an “atomic ranch” and why are we launching this magazine? We hope that the juxtaposition of the seemingly staid, ubiquitous ranch house and the naive 1950s enthusiasm for the bright technological future—atomic-powered cars, stay-prest clothing and GE’s all-electric home—helps describe our subject. Simply put, we feel that this potentially tasteful and fun home is vastly underrepresented in the magazine field, and that they and their owners deserve and want a forum to share accomplishments, learn from others and find affordable solutions for stylish living.

Home ownership remains one of the enduring American dreams. No matter what style of home you are lucky enough to own, you will begin to fall in love with it and want to care for it, understand its history and give it what it needs to either reach or regain greatness. There are plenty of magazines that address these issues for other types of houses, but Atomic Ranch concentrates on the millions of homes built after World War II—the midcentury marvels.

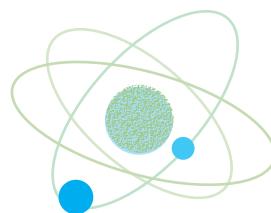
Imagine the optimism of that era. Our parents and grandparents suffered through a crushing depression, endured wartime misery at home and abroad, and through tremendous effort, helped save the world. Coming back to loved ones, they were given the opportunity to build new lives, and a home of one’s own was the tangible symbol of that accomplishment. Into this bright future stepped the lowly ranch house with its modern construction and materials, which would shelter that heroic generation—and now us.

Atomic Ranch celebrates those dreams: together we will discover some remarkable, affordable tract houses with innovative interiors and furnishings—and the people who now happily live in these underappreciated but eminently praiseworthy homes.

Jim Brown
Publisher



Most recent available photo of our publisher.



modernwisdom

* We agree that postwar houses will be the next generation of lost architecture unless we get the word out. To do our bit, we just purchased a 1954 custom ranch house a mile away from a bungalow we own. We acquired the Mills Act authorization on our bungalow and will be keeping it as a historically preserved rental.

Our ranch house was built by a local dentist and remained in the family after his death in 1989. It has all its bones intact and will make for a wonderful new project for my husband and me. The master bath is larger than my bungalow bedroom, and the new master bedroom alone measures 17' x 19'.

I can't tell you how cool it is that Atomic Ranch is on the same page as us!

Jennifer Harrison
Anaheim, Calif.

The Mills Act is a California incentive program that offers property-tax reductions for owners who preserve and restore their homes according to state and federal guidelines. For more info, visit www.ohp.parks.ca.gov. - ar editor

* In the 21st century, the cultural landscape of the 1950s and '60s is showing up on the radar screen of preservation. This modern heritage has been lambasted by historic preservationists for decades. Preservation was good because

it emphasized the pedestrian scale, the ornamental and the beautiful. Modern architecture was bad because it was built for the automobile age and was filled with vast, blank expanses of concrete.

But historic preservationists need to rethink how they define their values. Each age has its positive and negative attributes, just as different cultures have aspects that we revere and abhor. We must keep in mind that just as biases exist in the study of culture—a term referred to as “cultural relativism”—bias can also exist with historic periods.

Europeans use the term “heritage conservation” instead of historic preservation. These words are in fact a better reflection of preservation activities; we are not simply preserving artifacts, we are preserving our heritage in an effort to communicate its lessons to future generations. They are a reflection of how we got to where we are today, and they have significant value.

Suburbia is the next frontier of historic preservation. We need to understand the cultural values and significance of post-World War II communities like Levittown. Moreover, a proactive approach to the preservation of these communities needs to be addressed. What are the character-defining features of suburban landscapes and ranch homes? How do we best go about preserving these features? How do we address issues of postmodern infill? What do we keep and what do we allow to be demolished?

The challenge of preserving the mid-century cultural heritage will be a fruitful

one for the field of historic preservation. It will result in a refining of ideas and the discarding of others. It will make us reconsider the elements of significance from earlier periods, and the ways in which preservationists address and adapt to the issue of modernism will be a testament to the continued relevance and importance of historic preservation. It is a challenge that I think we can meet if we are willing to learn, understand and change.

Jeremy Wells
Philadelphia, Penn.

* I have over 250 people on my Eichler enthusiasts mailing list that have identified themselves as wanting to own a Joseph Eichler-built home. Midcentury modern is just real big right now; I think your magazine will be a huge hit.

Stephanie Raffel, broker
Orange, Calif.

Write us at editor@atomic-ranch.com or send a note to Atomic Ranch, 917 Summit Drive, South Pasadena, CA 91030. We'll print the good ones.

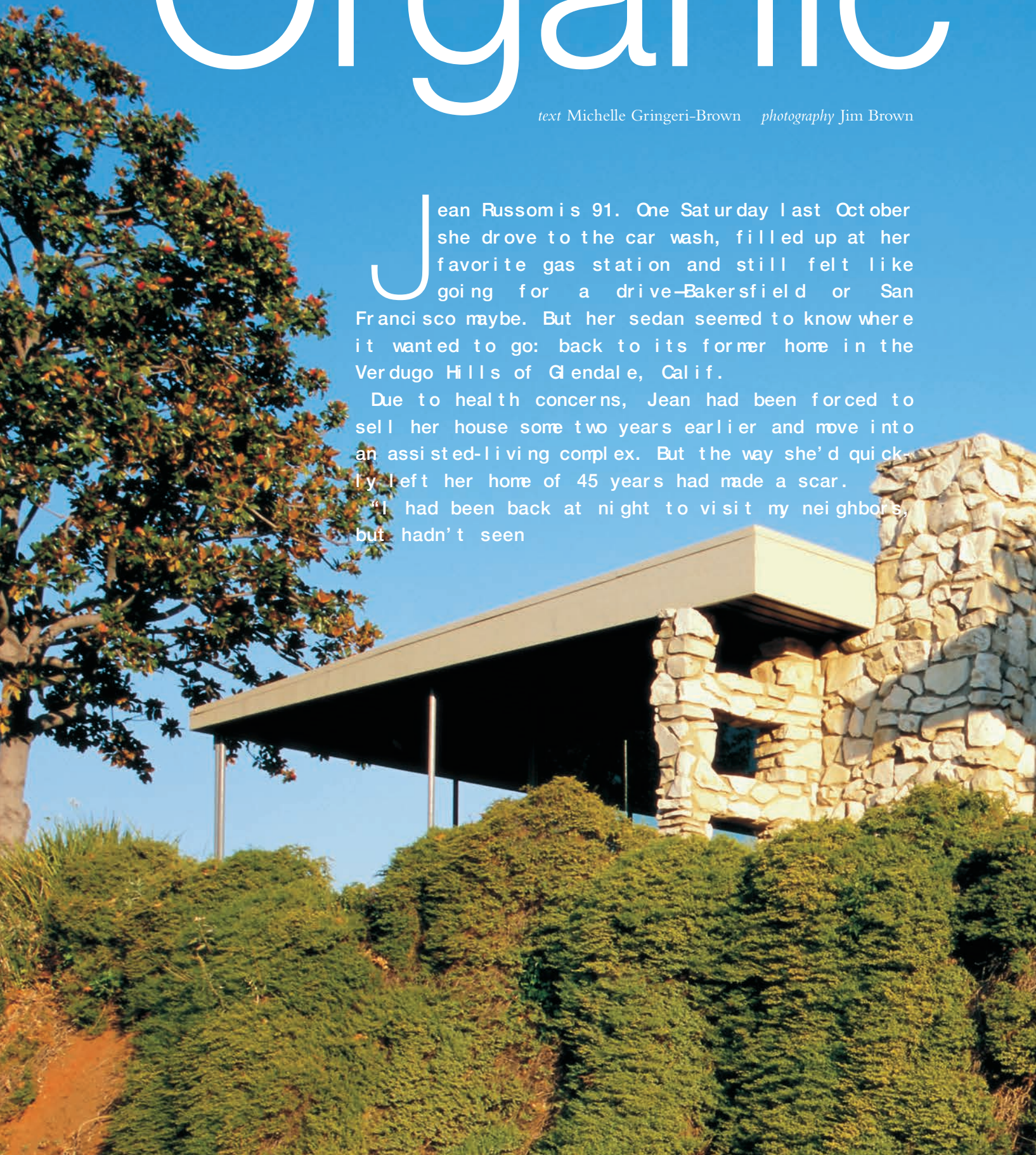
Organic

text Michelle Gringeri-Brown *photography* Jim Brown

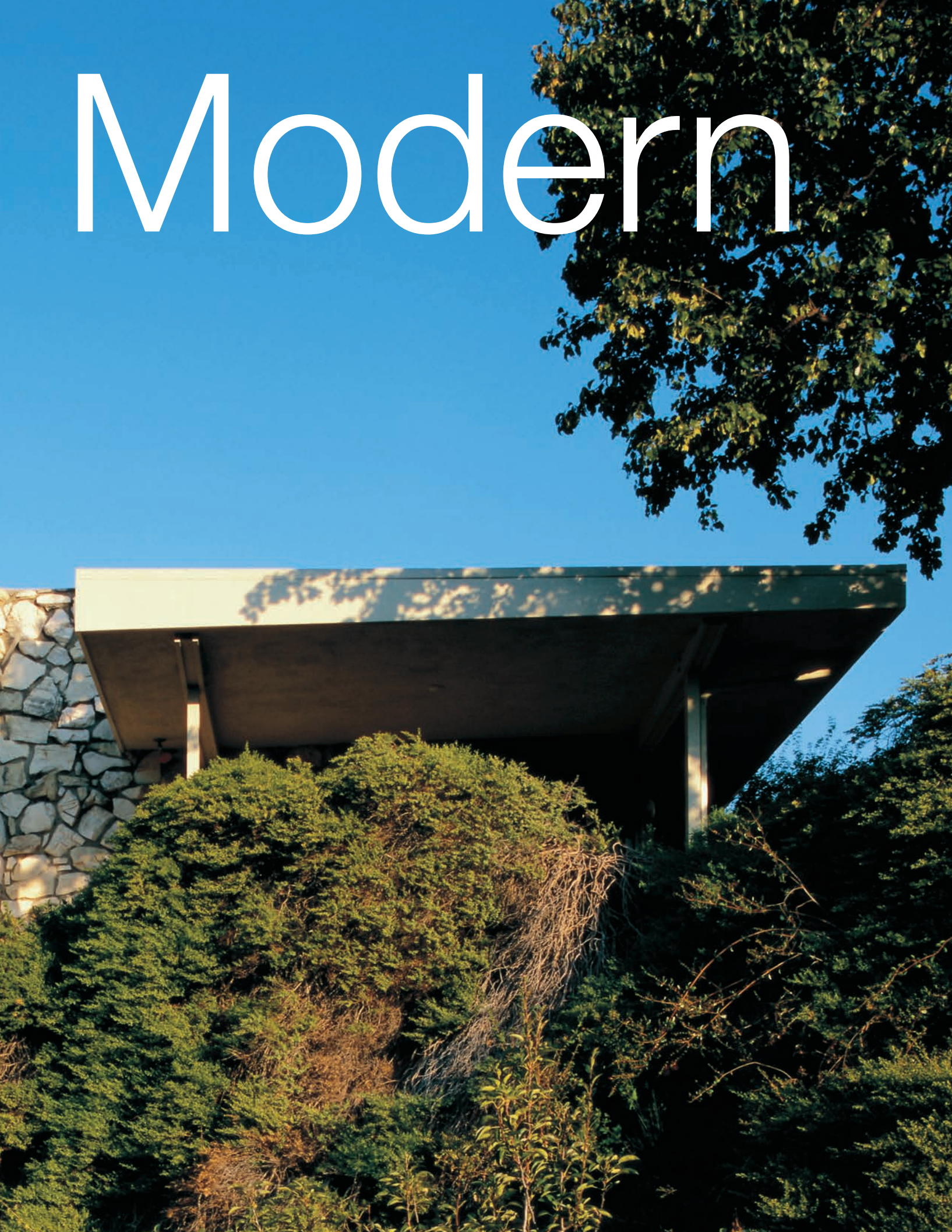
Jean Russom is 91. One Saturday last October she drove to the car wash, filled up at her favorite gas station and still felt like going for a drive—Bakersfield or San Francisco maybe. But her sedan seemed to know where it wanted to go: back to its former home in the Verdugo Hills of Glendale, Calif.

Due to health concerns, Jean had been forced to sell her house some two years earlier and move into an assisted-living complex. But the way she'd quickly left her home of 45 years had made a scar.

"I had been back at night to visit my neighbors, but hadn't seen



Modern



The strong linear lines, massive fireplace chimney, board-and-batten siding and views from the front clear through to the back yard are typical of era homes.

the house since I sold it to Chris,” she says, referring to the 33-year-old lawyer who lives there today. “Now I have such a wonderful picture in my mind of how it looks—it’s unbelievable. I came away just ecstatic and have total closure about selling.”

Chris Burusco was equally thrilled with the purchase. “I knew I wanted a ’50s modern house—one with a flat roof, glass walls, a carport in front—” he says, “and it took about six months of looking at unattractive properties to find one. Most were 1970s stucco boxes or ’50s ranch houses without all the bells and whistles I wanted. This one was described as ‘walls of glass, floor-to-ceiling fireplace and wood ceilings’; I thought it was another instance in which the realtors had embellished, but it was the real deal. It was a diamond in the rough.”

A Half Century Ago

A ceramist and a hand weaver, Jean enlisted the help of her artist friend Wayne Long when she and her husband, Alan Dailey, decided to build a home in the mid-’50s. Every Tuesday for about a year, she, Alan and Wayne, along with architect Clair Earl and landscape architect Art Barton, met to determine the particulars of the custom house.

Wayne’s ideas included a Palos Verdes stone fireplace, different colors for each of the sliding doors in the kitchen and carport cabinets, tinted and polished concrete floors throughout the house, radiant heating in the living room and patio flooring, and a built-in stereo speaker in the hallway to the bedrooms. It was the dream house for a couple who had gotten divorces in order to be together, the “big love affair of all time,” in Jean’s words.

“We moved in January of 1955; by August Alan was dead,” she says.

In the years after Alan’s death, Jean wasn’t up to making any decisions about the house. During this period, an interior decorator friend took over and made sweeping changes that included draperies on the floor-to-ceiling windows, wallpaper and other modifications that “Wayne would have been horrified by,” she says. “The decorator did everything opposite to what was done in the first place and I was in no emotional condition to argue. My talents lay in other directions, I guess, and it got into a mess. I’m so glad that it’s put back to where it should be now.”

Midcentury enthusiast Chris Burusco is the person respon-







The Soleil 70 "Swamis" T-shirt on homeowner Chris Burusco and the well-used condition of the Saarinen kitchen table epitomize his unpretentious approach to living modern.



sible for that metamorphosis.

Unsullied

When Chris toured the home, the living room still had tie-back curtains, gold shag carpeting and lots of traditional furniture. The kitchen was pink with pink plaid wallpaper. “Jean took great care of the house over the years,” he says, “but I think as modern became less popular, the interiors were changed to a more traditional and feminine look.”

Other than replacement tile in one of the two baths, changing a bathtub to a walk-in shower and fluorescent overhead lights in most of the rooms, the house was largely original. In its 1,885 square feet are three bedrooms; a large, angular living room with a pass-through bar to the compact kitchen and dining area; and entry and bedroom halls. The en suite master bath is authentic right down to its linoleum tile floor.

Chris had the carpet taken up, the concrete floors sealed and cork squares put down that look as if they are original. The project was fiscally daunting, though. “The first bid from a local flooring company was for \$24,000,” he remembers. “But a tile guy who installed cork floors in one of the Pasadena Showcase houses said he’d do it for about a third of that cost.” Except for the slate floor in the entryway and the tiled baths, there is now cork throughout the house.

Coming from a shared condo in Santa Monica, Chris wasn’t wallowing in midcentury furnishings. He did own a high-school friend’s tan leather Eames lounge chair and ottoman that he’d lusted after for years, a couple of Danish modern pieces and four Herman Miller Eames DAR shell chairs with original bases that were stored in his grandmother’s garage. Joining them is a newly minted Warren Platner coffee table in the living room in front of an affordable Modernica case-study-series couch, and a floor lamp from Artemide. (Chris reminds us that Platner was responsible for the interior and lighting of Windows on the World, the restaurant in the former World Trade Center.) A Jens Risom chair is a particular favorite, as is his Saarinen dining room table, which proudly bears the dings of a previous owner’s daily use. A Mies van der Rohe Barcelona chair is on his wish list for the future.

The stained-glass window was designed by neighbor Bob Brown, who lives in an Earl-designed home, too.



The kitchen/dining area, opposite, still has its original features.

“You can’t change much,” Chris Burusco notes, explaining that the existing cabinetry precluded installing a Sub Zero fridge. “If you want a high-tech kitchen this isn’t the place for it. A lot of people want to redo everything and erase history; if you don’t like this kind of home, don’t buy one.”



"Some of my friends buy modern furniture on eBay and they appear to get good deals. But for really great items, today's prices are pretty high," he comments.

Wild at Heart

The Whiting Woods enclave of 170 homes, where the hilltop house stands, has an abundance of live oaks and sycamores as well as wildlife. "The privacy, the wonderful feeling in that canyon was so evident the first time we saw it," Jean remembers. "Living there, I'd walk outside and there was nobody but me and the deer and the squirrels and the possums and the raccoons. There was a tame coyote that my third husband, Jerry Russom, would throw chicken parts to; we called him Chico. Raccoons would come to the door at night and I'd feed them Nilla Wafers and they'd come into the house. One time when I couldn't get the cookies because of a supermarket strike, I thought, 'By God, I'll just make some.' I took my vanilla wafers outside proudly, held one out, the raccoon took it, smelled it, put it down and walked away. Isn't that a hell of a thing?" she laughs.

The chaparral-covered hills aren't the place for fussy, wildfire-fodder plantings. Jean had fallen in love with succulents, and the yard and a greenhouse were devoted to their culture by the time Chris bought the property. He removed the greenhouse to open up the view of the house as you arrive, but shared Jean's fondness for succulents. He chose landscape designer Kathleen Ferguson to craft a new plan that would complement the house after seeing her work at a Gregory Ain house in Mar Vista.



"Four things I told Kathleen I wanted were low water, low maintenance, succulents and to retain the existing Japanese elements," he says. "She just sort of got it."

Kathleen has a degree in ornamental horticulture with a design background from Otis Parsons, the same art school that Jean Russom and her friend Wayne Long hailed from. Kathleen typifies her landscapes as having minimal, clean lines, lots of mass plantings and ecologically sensitive, drought-tolerant materials.

"I wanted the landscape to frame the house from certain angles, but also have the house frame the landscape—a kind of push and pull," she says. "Because of the setting, in one moment you look down and there's all this native chaparral, then we've put in this manicured lawn. The same with the architecture: because of the way the roof extends over the patio areas, the architecture is sometimes bleeding into the landscape, but from another angle, you'll see that the landscape pushes in—at the entry, the plantings go under the roof and up to the front door.

"It was so important to create the right balance, too," she continues. "I wanted to keep some history and not rip out the succulents, but still have it seem like a new, fresh garden. I also knew that Chris is somewhat of a preservationist, so I had to be sensitive to that as well. The blue slate



In the back garden, Kathleen Ferguson removed geraniums that had overtaken the succulent beds, installed dozens of new specimens, moved boulders around, put in a fescue lawn and even changed the large, chunky gravel to a custom-blend mix. A fountain near the front entry door complements the existing Japanese maple and new plantings of false aralia and acorus grass. The landscaping was only four months old when photographed.



in the entryway will probably always be there, so I wanted to figure out how to make that work with the outdoor area; that was why I incorporated blue pebbles outside. I had to try to make it a whole package.”

Chris and his bullmastiff/chocolate Labrador, Bruno, love to sit on the generously shaded back patio or enjoy the various areas of the garden Kathleen created. “When it’s really hot I have the air conditioning on,” Chris says, “but the second I can open the house I do. There’s an amazing breeze when you have the kitchen and the living room doors open; with the air flow and the view it’s like you’re away camping.

“And this house is a great entertaining house,” he notes, explaining about his Fourth of July parties that take advantage of a great view of the local fireworks show. “This is an organic modern house, which I prefer to the industrial modern look.”

But Jean has the last word: “The decor and the yard are so different from anything I ever



The Clair Earl–designed living room is all jutting angles and interesting finishes. The rear garden has a 190-degree view of the San Gabriel Valley on clear days. An X chair designed by Andy Hackman, along with a coordinating table and ottoman, is at home on the large patio.

home page

Westchester, Calif.

Our humble home was built in the 1940s by builder Silas Nowell. Nowell was a master plasterer and this house has many charming details, such as arched doorways, intricate plaster craftsmanship near the ceilings and beautiful textures on the walls. We were happy to find an unremodeled house with so many of its original details. It feels solid and grounded, and overnight guests often say they have never slept better than when in our home.

Laura & Andy Milton

Des Moines, Iowa

We have lived in our Lustron Home for 12 years. About 2,500 Lustrons were built between 1946 and 1950 in the Midwest and East. A typical floor plan is around 1,000 square feet, with two bedrooms, a dining room, living room, kitchen and one bath. Their distinctive features include radiant heating in the ceiling, plenty of built-ins for storage, and walls, roofs, doors and cabinets all made of porcelain enamel on steel. The first thing visitors do is rap their knuckles on a wall to confirm that it's really steel. We love living in a collectible house, and the fact that it has its own serial number makes it that much more personal.

Michael & Stephanie O'Neal

Anaheim, Calif.

Our 1957 Ford Country Sedan looks right at home in front of our ranch house. We are stripping the wallpaper that was everywhere and finally have a room big enough to show off our four-piece vinyl couch. It has a really great kitchen with the original G.E. stove and a breakfast area that fits our '50s dinette set perfectly. With the just-bought Heywood-Wakefield furniture in the dining room, it's starting to seem like it's ours.

Dan & Jennifer Harrison



Westchester, Calif.



Des Moines, Iowa



P

H



Anaheim, Calif.

BEACHY, FUNKY

Ranch

A couple works to honor their home's '50s design while solving kitchen, fireplace and window issues.

text Bromley Davenport *photography* Jim Brown

“W

hen we first walked in, we couldn't believe how open it was, how much light came in,” says Jeff Brown of his Hermosa Beach, Calif., postwar ranch house. “It was south facing and seemed very welcoming.”

“It was a simple floor plan, too,” adds Susan Savelle Brown. “A lot of houses we'd seen were broken up and didn't make sense. This one had a good flow to it, plus I love the midcentury look. Our house is kind of funky, yet beachy at the same time. It's perfect.”

The 1,140-square-foot house, which the couple bought in 1999, has hardwood floors, three bedrooms, two baths and an open living/dining/kitchen area with a sliding glass door leading to the back yard. The 50' x 100' lot was especially appealing, since many Southern California beach communities are notorious for their tiny lots and cheek-by-jowl housing. No rowdy beer-drinking beach boys or jockeying for parking spaces in front of their home.

Six blocks from the ocean, the Hermosa Valley neighborhood has three streets in a row all with postwar houses built by the same developer. Their home cost \$15,000 in 1954, and an identical model up the street went for \$500 more because of its view. A 1957 *Daily Breeze* newspaper article touted, “New homes, modern apartments and handsome beach cottages, with an





emphasis on modern, outdoor living, have replaced many of Hermosa's older structures." For most residents—like the four original owners who still live on the block and the across-the-street neighbor who bought his boyhood home—that appeal never wore off.

"The previous owner had a good vision," Susan says of the landscape designer who sold them the house. "It was weird: when we walked in, all of her furniture was in our colors—a lot of it was 'us.' I knew where every piece of our furniture would go."

KITCHEN ISSUES

"The house needed a lot of work, and it still does," Jeff notes. In the open galley kitchen, the orange-and-yellow vinyl floor had a large rip in it, a drawer was missing from the built-in cabinetry and the couple didn't much care for the brown-and-yellow original counter tile that was shy a couple of pieces. Plus, one bath had peach-color tile. They opted to tone down the colors by having the tile epoxy coated in white.

"That was a Band-Aid, so it wouldn't be so much of an eyesore," says Jeff, an apartment property manager. He located several tiles that were the right size but the wrong color for the counter; now that they are resurfaced, the entire counter looks to be original white tile. "We wanted to save our money to do a proper kitchen remodel," he explains.

"There's a 10-year life expectancy on these coatings," Susan notes, "and it's starting to show a little bit of wear after two years, but I think we're getting our percentage."

The couple's planned kitchen renovation will stay within the footprint of the current space—roughly 9 x 14—but a redundant back door may be sealed to free up more room. "There's no dishwasher, there's a lack of counter space for preparing meals and a real lack of storage," Jeff says. "We'll need to be inventive. It will never be a big kitchen, but we need to make the best use of what we have."

"I think I want a kitchen that leans toward period style," Susan muses. "The house has such great potential that we want to better it and not go too high end."

OTHER CONCERNS

Although they both grew up in ranch-era houses, they have different reactions to the blank facade this style typically presents to the street. “The curb appeal sucks,” Jeff declares. “All you see is the garage, a little bathroom window and a rectangular bedroom window in a stucco wall. And people aren’t sure where they should walk in with the entry down the side of the house. Often I wonder what we could do to make it more inviting in front—more like our great back yard.”

“I like the privacy factor,” Susan, an Air New Zealand advertising manager counters. “My house feels like a resort to me. The intimacy and privacy make me feel like I’m away on vacation. Coming home to me means escaping and relaxing.”

The Browns stripped the large casement and clerestory windows in the living and dining room of vertical blinds and painted the interior walls yellow and sage green. “When it rains you can hear it hitting the roof,” Jeff notes, “and when it gets windy or cold you feel it inside, but that’s just something we deal with because we like everything else so much.”

Number two on the couple’s wish list is replacing their deteriorating aluminum windows, but they’ve been frustrated with the lack of appropriate choices. “We need something that’s of the period, and I don’t mind spending more money to do it right,” Jeff says.

The Browns are hoping to find energy-efficient windows, but reached a dead end in their search. “We’ve priced the window project twice,” Susan notes, “and have backed off because we don’t want crappy vinyl ones. We have great windows now, so I want to make sure we find quality replacements that fit the house.”

She would also like to cover the dark brick fireplace in stucco or white brick, but Jeff isn’t sure about those material choices yet. “I think we could make a major upgrade in this living room,” she enthuses. “The color is a little heavy, so I’d like to lighten up the living room even more. And I don’t know what to do with the cove at the top; if we fill it in it would look a lot cleaner.”

Midcentury design consultant Bryan Forward, of Forward Design Group based in Carlsbad, Calif., has some creative solutions for the Browns’ window and fireplace dilemmas.



Susan and Jeff travel often and their home showcases art from the greater South Pacific region. “I’m in New Zealand a lot for my job with Air New Zealand,” Susan says. “It has a lot of mid-20th-century architecture with a Polynesian or Maori flair to it. I’ve picked up masks and other pieces from the Solomon Islands, Fiji, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, Indonesia and Hawaii over the years.”



The Browns and their black Labrador, Seven. The aluminum casement windows pretty much erase the distinction between inside and out at this home.





Their ranch house fed Susan's interest in modern architecture, and she looks to books on California builder Joseph Eichler for ideas to translate into her own home. Friends and family also started her collecting '50s cocktail shakers. "They remind me of [rec-room] bars in Michigan where I'm from," she says. "I've always liked tacky, retro, goofy kinds of things."



"Aluminum windows are as midcentury as flat roofs, built-in cabinetry and radiant heating," he writes us. "A technology derived from wartime industry, aluminum windows helped modern architecture achieve its sleek lines while allowing homeowners to enjoy lightweight windows without the problems associated with wood—warping, repainting, reglazing, etc. While they were aesthetically pleasing and lived up to their original promise of 'better living through new technology,' aluminum windows made 45 to 50 years ago were still a new product, and today many are drafty, flimsy and do not work as well as we would like."

"Fear not. There are several manufacturers who make great aluminum window products, including some companies that were producing them 50 years ago. The windows are sturdier and feature energy-saving double-pane glass and countless other features never imagined in the 1950s; best of all, they have the same look as the originals. Manufacturers that produce quality aluminum windows include International Window and Windowmaster."

"In retrofitting new aluminum windows, find a reputable contractor with plenty of experience in window installation. Steer clear of companies that sell simple one-step window replacement products offered in volume in the remodeling world. A successful retrofit of original aluminum windows will require some repair to the house siding and interior Sheetrock or plaster around the windows. Also, keep in mind that new window dimensions are slightly smaller than their period counterparts, so your contractor will have to compensate accordingly."

Turning to the fireplace issue, Forward suggests a range of options, two of which preserve the original rough-finish brick.

"The fireplace is a very important component in the home, and as such, should be a place that you are content with, both in appearance and performance. In a room with so many windows that is bathed in natural light and painted in light colors, the fireplace gets lost in the middle as you are 'blinded' from

being able to focus on its features. (Ever try to make out the hood emblem of a car facing you with its headlights on?) Here are several suggestions to make the fireplace more enjoyable and have higher prominence in the room":

INEXPENSIVE

"Paint the walls on both sides of the fireplace a darker color, which would keep you from having such a dark element drowning in bright colors. The room has so much light already that the addition of a darker wall to work with the fireplace would not detract from the overall vibrancy of the room. A more useful mantel can be achieved by having a carpenter construct a large slab-type mantel from dimensional lumber or plywood, and affixing it to the existing niche; I would use oak or birch to go with your flooring and overall design theme."

MODERATE

"Using Sheetrock to mimic a plaster fireplace with a built-in mantel would be a fairly inexpensive way to create a brand-new look for the fireplace, while giving you an opportunity to preserve the brick for later restoration. One of the hot topics concerning midcentury homes today is preserving what is there for future generations. While saving an undesired brick fireplace today doesn't seem to make sense, think of what must have happened to early Craftsman-era fireplaces whose owners didn't like the look. We wouldn't dare think of demolishing a Batchelder tile fireplace today, so we should think ahead when we work on these homes."

"In this scenario, drywall could be attached carefully to the fireplace through the mortar, leaving the brick intact. With the seams taped, then a hand application of Thinset to mimic a hand-troweled plaster finish—perfection! The surface could then be painted to match the adjacent walls and as a blank canvas, could serve as a location to display an important painting."

EXPENSIVE

"For the most dramatic and permanent change, the fireplace could be faced either with natural stone or a cultured-stone veneer in a color that would suit the room. There are dozens of choices available in every earth tone imaginable. This choice would give you the opportunity to employ a wood or stone mantel that would be set right into the stone veneer over the existing fireplace. While this choice would not allow for easy salvage of the brick for future generations, it may be just the ticket to make your fireplace the center of your home. For cultured veneer products, I recommend Eldorado Stone Corp."

Architect Brian Collins-Friedrichs of SkB Architects LLC in Seattle offered some additional options for both the fireplace and window issues:

LESS EXPENSIVE

"The easiest and most cost-effective way of modifying the Browns' fireplace would be to skim coat the entire fireplace with a cementitious plaster," Collins-Friedrichs writes. "The plaster can be integrally colored, and there are several surface textures available. Venetian plaster is smooth and visually modeled, or basic plaster can be raked with a trowel to add texture and give a more 'hand-crafted,' less-rigid look. The Venetian plaster is more expensive because it requires a skilled, artful craftsman."

MODERATE

"Our firm has skinned several fireplaces with 1/8"-thick blackened steel plate with exposed fasteners. This gets a more monolithic feel for the fireplace feature but does not achieve the goal of lightening it. One variation would be to use brushed aluminum sheet metal, which would be more in keeping with the era and bring in the material used in the windows."

EXPENSIVE

"One last option would be to skin the existing brick with stone slab veneer. This is a somewhat 'Miesian' approach reminiscent of the Barcelona pavilion. The intent would be to stay away from stone tile, which often looks very 'applied.' Using a 1"-thick slab material, you can work with the proportions of larger pieces and the compositions of the joint lines. This approach would be clip and mortar applied to the existing brick. There are many stone options available, and selection would depend on the rest of the interior palette and local availability."

Collins-Friedrichs has two additional window manufacturers to suggest, as well.

"Milgard makes an all-aluminum window with a 1/4" polyurethane thermal break. This maintains the materiality of the original while gaining the energy efficiency of the thermal break and insulated glass. And Loewen, a Canadian company, makes an aluminum-clad wood window that can have a clear anodized finish on the exterior. The interior is fir that can be painted or left natural with a clear finish. One nice thing about this option is that Loewen also makes many fantastic matching door options that are just beautiful."

Bryan and Brian have given the Browns lots of food for thought, which should get their renovation jones going big time. "Our Realtor told us, 'Wait; the house will speak to you,' " Susan says. "She's absolutely right; we're always evolving and changing the things that we want to do."

And Jeff adds, "We really want to honor the original idea of the house." ❀

For resources, see page 59.



The living room holds some of the Browns' South Pacific art, including two contemporary vases from New Zealand on the fireplace mantel, a Fijian walking stick on the window sill and a mask from Papua New Guinea leaning on the dresser.

COOL|stuff



GLOBAL CONCEPT

Danish manufacturer BoConcept says they want to make “modern design furniture available to people all over the planet,” and from the list of countries on their website it seems like they’re halfway there. Products range from vases, tableware and textiles to storage units, sofas and beds, many of which have a wide variety of color, material and detail options to choose from.

The Nest Chair, designed by Morten Georgsen, comes in more than 60 fabrics—from classic black leather to screaming pink or vibrant orange fabric. The chair swivels 360 degrees and has a powder-coated or polished steel base. BoConcept touts their living, sleeping, dining and working furniture as “reasonably affordable”; the Nest Chair starts at \$569, depending upon upholstery choices. Browse through their products and find a BoConcept or Club8 retailer near you at www.boconcept.com, or call 800•862•5828 for a catalog.

COLLECTIBLE RANCHES

You’ll be seeing lots of eBay and antique-shop midcentury finds in these pages, but here’s one that particularly speaks to ranch house owners. Plasticville snap-together houses were marketed in the ‘50s and ‘60s for HO-gauge model railroad enthusiasts. They have attached garages, hip roofs, window awnings and come in yellow, dark green, blue and white, like this 1952 model.

The lithographs on the period boxes are at least half of the appeal, though serious collectors undoubtedly could educate us neophytes on rarity, condition and the importance of unglued pieces. What self-respecting rancher enthusiast could pass up something this charming with a price tag of \$10 to \$20? Keywords to try: “ranch house” and “Plasticville ranch.”

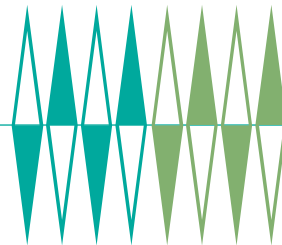


MODERN AMERICA

You don’t have to live in an Eichler home to enjoy a big, meaty tome on the forward-thinking builder’s houses. Coffee-table size, the 240-page *Eichler: Modernism Rebuilds the American Dream* puts Ernie Braun’s charming period black & white publicity photos to great use, plus shows construction details, advertising campaigns and dozens of candid photos of the principals of the firm.

Author Paul Adamson collaborated with authority Marty Arbunich on this expansive look at Joseph Eichler’s legacy, and manages to cover architectural antecedents, personal and business history, construction innovations, social context and compelling personal recollections without becoming trapped in dry academic prose. Whether you read it cover to cover, or simply flip through the photos and captions studying the furnishings, gardens and room layouts, the book is worth its \$50 price tag. From Gibbs Smith, Publisher at booksellers nationwide.

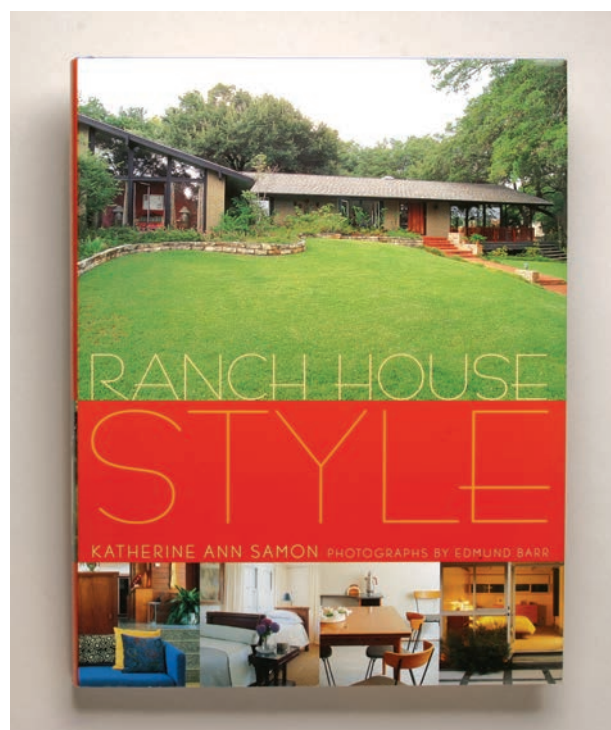




SPLICE GIRL

An interesting website for those who appreciate all kinds of design—much of it affordable—is www.9thexhibition.com out of NYC. Candy Chang's e-store has new and vintage wares—Pac-Man stickers, Marvin Gaye records, atomic clocks, postcard sets, canisters, graphic design books, luggage stickers—as well as online exhibitions to educate and entertain. Candy's motto is "Soulful objects in good form," and everything, down to the invoice and thanks-for-ordering note, is beautifully produced.

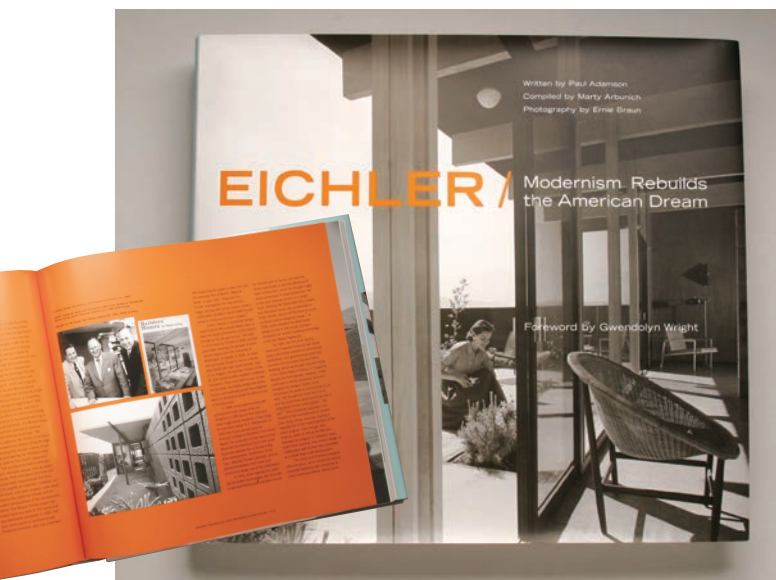
The 9th Exhibition French Bull platter comes in this "Splice" design or a dotty brown-and-cream pattern. The 14" x 8" melamine dish is dishwasher safe and a bargain at only \$15 plus shipping. There are matching plates in both styles, as well as avocado or tangerine cereal-size bowls and coordinating plastic chopsticks. Call 212•925•3635.

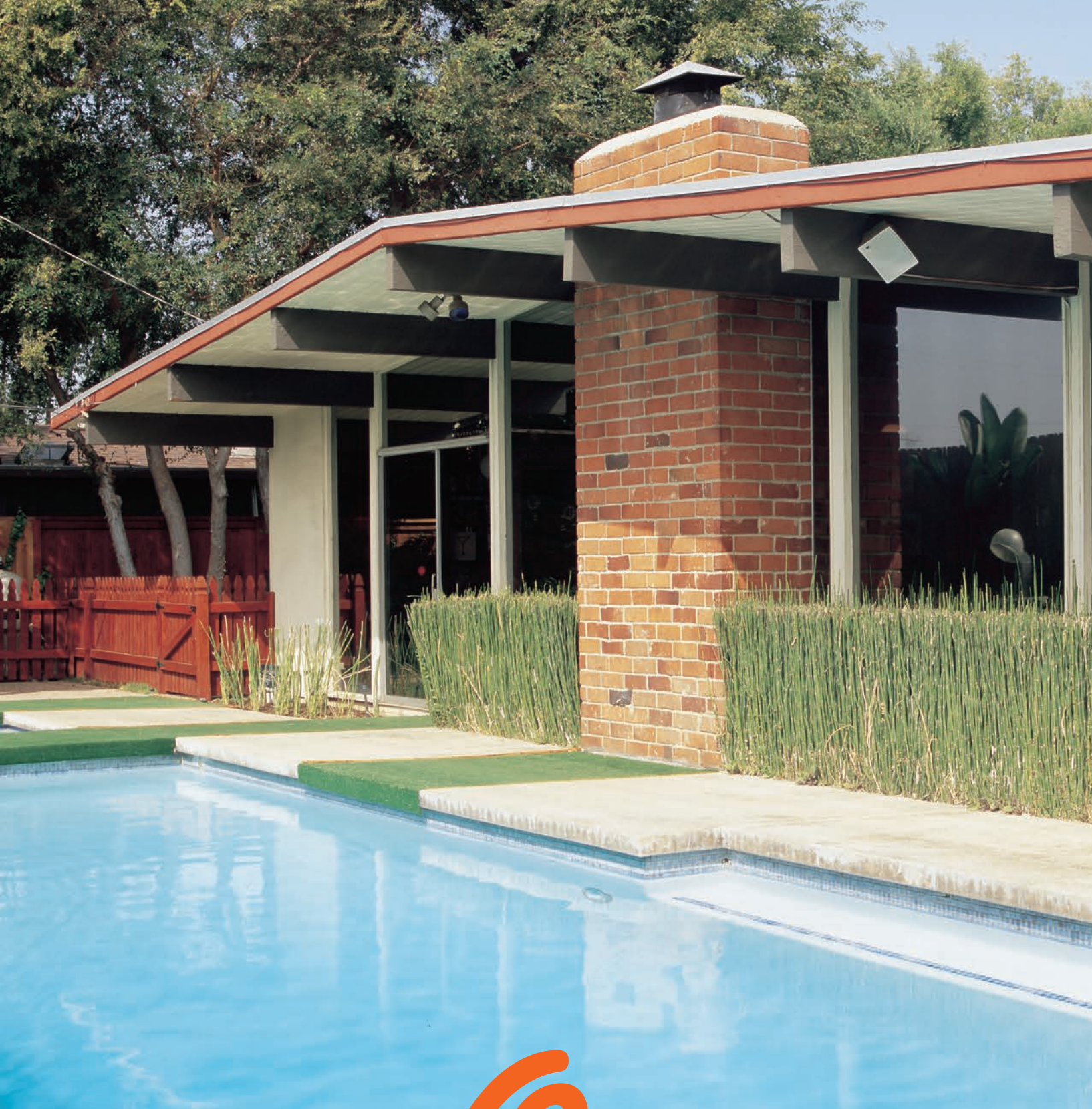


INSPIRING STYLE

Katherine Ann Samon's *Ranch House Style* is one of the few books published in recent years that addresses this underappreciated housing type. Her examples are quite catholic in their range: from a French Country-themed traditional home to a variety of modern interiors, including a tiny postwar slant-roof "surf shack" on Long Island. Samon gives an easy-to-digest overview of the architectural style's roots and addresses renovating and adding on, as well as details such as typical kitchens, fireplaces, floors and landscaping.

The 192-page book shows off Edmund Barr's attractive photography, too. While not every home screams "ranch" at first glance, it's great to get to visit so many interesting houses courtesy of the duo. *Ranch House Style* was issued by Clarkson Potter/Publishers and is available at bookstores for \$37.50.





Orange

text Michelle Gringeri-Brown *photography* Jim Brown



juice

Steve and Jenn Lewis have an appreciation for furnishings that Dirk Diggler would love. “I like things that are obnoxious but not offensive,” Steve says. “Kind of ‘Boogie Nights’ meets Laughlin, Nevada.” Their aesthetics allow for an orange resined, abalone-topped table picked up for \$10 in an Arizona thrift shop; a collection of funky ’60s and ’70s lamps in the lounge off the kitchen; an arcade-size “Cougar” darts game in the atrium; and a guest bedroom that would fit right into Disneyland’s Enchanted Tiki Room—all inside a 1962 Eichler home in the city of Orange, Calif.

“These things make me smile,” the 30-year-old videographer says. Jenn, an aspiring children’s book illustrator, expresses her enthusiasm for their home by firing up the music at night and dancing under the spinning disco ball in their atrium. This is no tasteful, neutral-palette minimalist museum by a long shot.

I Like Eich-ler

Joseph Eichler became a builder in the late ’40s, when housing for some 10 million veterans—many of whom were starting families—was a major driving force in the economy. The homes’ post-and-beam construction allowed for open floor plans and walls of glass facing private back yards, and incorporated such innovations as radiant floor heating. Eichler’s willingness to hire talented architects and devotion to quality craftsmanship and modern living resulted in houses that looked custom but were within the reach of first-time home buyers.



Almost all Eichlers are in California—350 homes in Orange, 200-plus more in Thousand Oaks and Granada Hills, 60 or so in Sacramento, and in the San Francisco Bay Area, several thousand more. Three years ago, the Society of Architectural Historians held a hugely popular tour of Orange County Eichlers, and today the homes are greatly prized.

Stephanie Raffel, an Orange real estate broker, fell in love with Eichlers in the early 1980s, despite those in the city being in a state of some disrepair. “By the late ’80s these houses gained momentum as young people—designers, artists, right-brained people—started moving in,” she says. “They were affordable back then, and the neighborhoods took on a whole new look and feel, which was long overdue.”

In 1997 she launched a website to educate people about Eichlers, provide a network of tradespeople experienced with their peculiarities and give like-minded enthusiasts a virtual meeting place to discuss all things modern.

According to Raffel, most buyers are move-up, two-income couples and some retirees who are moving down from bigger houses and have always wanted an Eichler. “Even though these houses are older and have higher maintenance, people are



looking for something with architectural style—something that's noteworthy," she says.

Lucky Lewis

With long waiting lists of people who want Eichlers, Steve Lewis lucked out. Driving through the neighborhood, he saw the For Sale sign the day it went on the market, stopped to ask the resident coming out the front door about the price, and immediately got on his cell phone to reach the Realtor. He offered the full asking price and beat out the previous bid.

"All of the homes on the street looked gorgeous and this thing looked hideous," Steve recalls. "The yard was just weeds and all of the brick had crumbled off the front; it was three different colors—it was absolutely dreadful. That's why I was so excited; I thought maybe I could afford it."

The year was 1999, and his bargain home cost \$228,000—seemingly a lot of money at the time. Of course Eichlers are commanding considerably more today.

"You're not likely to find a fixer for less than \$450,000, and prices go up to about \$580,000 for models under 2,000 square feet," Raffel says. "The price per square foot in surrounding neighborhoods





The Disneyesque guest bedroom and the green painted hallway were recent projects done by the creative couple.

isn't nearly as high as the Eichlers—they're getting a huge premium. I had four full-price offers plus backup offers for a 1,729-square-foot Eichler that sold for \$545,000—and that was all in one day."

At Steve Lewis' house, the original owners had taken good care of it but subsequent residents drained the pool, which caused the plaster to crack and cost \$7,000 to repair. They'd also constructed a solid wall around the front door where Eichlers typically have opaque glass, and marijuana was being grown in the atrium under a giant skylight. Right on schedule, after the home's one-year warranty expired, the rainy season arrived and with it roof problems. "Water was coming in through the ceiling slats and the vents; the roof was just pocketed with holes," Steve says. Amusingly, his copy of *Design for Living: Eichler Homes* got soaked.

His one regret surrounding the purchase was going with a home inspector out of the Yellow Pages when the one who'd been recommended to him was unavailable. "By tens of thousands of dollars, it was the biggest mistake I made," he says ruefully. "Everything about this house was bad: the air conditioning compressor was out, there had been a heating leak in the slab with a repair that routed the pipe on top of the floor at the base of the kitchen counter. Another leak shorted out an electrical outlet in the living room floor, which later caused a fire that Jenn caught just in time."

Steve hired John Boland to do much of the renovation work, including the front and back yards, entry reconstruction, slate flooring in the atrium and numerous other details. The house was painted inside and out, and new paneling installed in the family room off the kitchen. One day Steve visited a same-model Eichler in his neighborhood and wondered why it seemed so spacious. When he realized that the dining-room wall had floor-to-ceiling mirrors, he decided to mirror his as well. Currently the couple is finishing a bath remodel; they also installed a slot window in the hallway where Steve displays obscure '90s British rock CDs and vinyl.



Deviant Decor

While most of the renovation of the four-bedroom, two-bath house was done before Steve and Jenn met and married, the vibrant green hallway and guest quarters they call “the bamboo room” show her artistic flair.

Steve’s idea for “a moon room with a photo mural like in the old doctors’ offices” morphed when they found a continuous print of a bamboo forest and applied it to the walls, closet and door of a small guest bedroom—which can make for confusion when groggy friends attempt to find the door in the morning. Jenn saw some burlap at a fabric store and thought it would look like sleeping under a tent if they draped it on the ceiling; Steve then mounted lights above the fabric that make the room glow at night.

Their aphid-green hallway was done as a surprise for Steve while he was at work. “I painted it bright green at night and thought it looked great,” Jenn says. “The next morning I got up and thought it was so bright. But instead of painting over it all, I did the [graphic] pattern, which I like better now.”

Outside, when tile inserts on the pool deck slipped up too many swimmers, they opted to glue AstroTurf to those sections. A rusting beauty-salon hairdryer chair sits on the peninsula between the pool and spa. Inside, more eclecticism reigns.

In the dining room, a Danish-modernish shelving unit from his family with a drop-down desk sits next to a Morse Electrophonic eight-track/radio/LP player (the eight-track just stopped working) that strobes in time with the beat; overhead hangs calligraphy done by a friend that reads “goat” in Japanese. These one-of-a-kinds get equal billing with two floor lamps from IKEA. Favorite sources for treasures are Las Vegas and Palm Springs thrift stores, where Steve says whole households of vintage items appear; Out of Vogue in Fullerton, Calif., which has “amazing ’60s and ’70s stuff”; and Go-Kat-Go in Glendale, Ariz., where he found his dining table and

AstroTurf, a beauty-salon chair and hedges of horsetail are backed by a typical Eichler roofline.





In the lounge off the kitchen, lighting includes “rain” lamps, pole lamps and other tasty ‘60s and ‘70s numbers. The couch, chair and table were all found affordably in thrift stores and the like. Instead of stripping the walls, Steve Lewis elected to have this space—first called the “don’t-say-no” room before the term “family room” was coined—repaneled.



chairs, hula-girl curtain dividing the kitchen and dining room, and sputnik lamp in the hall.

“In a normal house, the bamboo room would be kind of ridiculous,” Steve admits. “Here it doesn’t seem as crazy. There’s a weird creative freedom built into the house that allows things like AstroTurf around the pool. It looks ridiculous to have a disco ball in the atrium, but it would look far more ridiculous in almost any other house.”

The (Hot and) Cold Reality

Eichler living has many pluses, but there are some tradeoffs, too. “It’s cold in winter if the radiant heating doesn’t work, and hot in summer because of all of the glass,” Steve says about the homes, which were designed without any insulation. “Companies that specialize in slab repairs come in with listening equipment and things that sense gas escaping to find leaks. Then you just roll up the carpet and they break up your floor. If you drive around the neighborhood, you’ll see rerouted pipes all over the roofs, running along the bottoms of the houses, inside of garages.”

Then there’s the Lewises’ fairly original kitchen. “I don’t mind the range being so low,” Jenn says of the cooktop peninsula that sits a good six inches lower than usual. “It’s the first kitchen I’ve ever been in where I can actually look into all of the pots, but the oven isn’t normal size—you can’t put a turkey or full-size cookie sheets in.” The digital readout on the oven no longer works, so the temperature is anyone’s guess.

“In order to get an oven that works, you have to redo the kitchen,” Steve interjects, referring to the lack of replacement appliances that fit into the cabinetry. They’d both like to keep the kitchen as authentic as plausible, but want upgraded appliances. Dirt in the tracks is another problem for the previously replaced sliding cabinet doors, and Jenn would like to change the plex-front pantry that sits in the family room adjoining the kitchen. But still she comes home from her day job at Trader Joe’s market and thoroughly enjoys cooking in her 40-year-old modern kitchen.

“If people just want a house, they could probably buy a cheaper, better house in a different





Jenn Lewis' family portrait.

Steve uses the bedroom off the atrium as his video editing suite. Franny, the couple's vizsla, assists.

neighborhood," says Steve, "but they want an Eichler home. Unlike people in the '80s who had been living in the houses for 20 years and wanted to tear down walls and paint stuff white, these people are going to a lot of effort to get the homes to what they once were. Once you've lived in a house like this, you cannot imagine living in a standard tract home."

"There are two ends to the spectrum of buyers," Realtor Stephanie Raffel adds. "People who are working diligently to restore their Eichlers and want to find one that has many of the original features like the kitchens, the Philippine mahogany, the entry aggregate—or you get the designer-types who want to improve it, bring it into the new millennium with more energy efficiency, new appliances, a reconfigured kitchen. One way or another, they're fanatics; there's nothing normal about Eichler buyers," she laughs. "And people love to find out that others who live in the houses already are just like them. They're all passionate about their homes and they know they're going to fit into the neighborhood. It's a cult." ✦

For resources, see page 59.



Not Your *Gramma's* Fair

text Josephine Goodwin
photography Jim Brown

If pig races, Ferris wheels and corn dogs say “county fair” to you, you’re partly right. But what about art installations, a Zen-themed meditation room and cultural history lessons? That’s fair game, too, if it was the 2003 L.A. County Fair.

In October 1954 *House Beautiful* ran a cover story on that year’s fair exhibition, “The Arts of Daily Living,” dedicated to Frank Lloyd Wright and forward-looking interiors. It celebrated modern design in the home and showed people how to incorporate art into their everyday life. Half a century later, the Pomona, Calif., fairgrounds celebrated the earlier event with “The ‘Living’ Room: Art as an Accessory,” featuring room vignettes designed to inspire today’s homeowners.

“There is a whole nesting thing going on right now with the popularity of HGTV and things like that,” Christy Johnson, the curator responsible for overseeing the show, says. “People are putting more emphasis on where they live and what they live with.” So to her it seemed like a good time to revisit the home design tenets that the 1954 exhibition had promoted.



House Beautiful



Artistic Roots

Millard Sheets—a Southern California artist, architect and design educator—conceived the idea for the first show, and the September 2003 exhibition fittingly took place in the Millard Sheets Gallery on the fairgrounds. Sheets was an avid art collector who lived in a 1942 flat-roof, rammed-earth home he designed in the Padua Hills area of Claremont, Calif. He organized the 1954 show to “demonstrate how beauty is created when architecture and room furnishings dovetail with perfect fit, to show examples of how personal passions can be woven into the fabric of interior design and to illustrate that useful objects can be both functional and attractive,” in the words of the exhibition catalog.

Sheets reached out to his friends in the art community of the mid-'50s for furniture, tableware, textiles, mosaic panels and other artwork for the show. Participants included Herman Miller, George Nakashima, Sam Maloof and many other artists. More than one million fairgoers saw the



Retro Room



Highlights of the fantasy '50s room included amoeba tables, Frankel lamps, a metal wall sculpture from a bank and vintage props. The phonograph/radio and the 1958 TV were real crowd pleasers. In the bar area were a Karl Benjamin abstract and two tasty numbers by "Carlo of Hollywood."

Futures Collide

Located in the Art Colony section of Pomona, the shop is described as “centrally located between Los Angeles and Palm Springs,” which makes a certain amount of sense. Co-owner Hugo Ortega started collecting back in 1980 as a hobby, and when his A. Quincy Jones–designed house in Whittier was maxed out, his brothers encouraged him to start selling the surplus.

Through word of mouth and shows, the owners have built a reputation. “Seabiscuit” used their furniture, Paul Thomas Anderson came and shopped, set designer Leslie Pope furnished “Catch Me If You Can” with their wares, and Courteney Cox Arquette and David Arquette bought things as well. Inventory changes regularly, but includes Danish modern, iconic midcentury designs, ‘60s and ‘70s plastics and one-of-a-kind pieces like the huge wall sculpture from a Santa Monica bank.

“We’re very hard on quality when we find items,” Ortega says. “My philosophy is, ‘Dude, if you’re going to sell something that’s 50 years old, it better still work.’ If it needs a tube or reupholstering in vintage material, let’s do that.

“We live in a disposable world right now,” he continues. “The quality and taste of the clothing and the cars and the furnishings back then was superior. It’s design that I could never get tired of.”

For resources, see page 59.



rooms, including Frank Lloyd Wright, who arrived in a limo. Also in attendance was Johnson, then 10 years old.

“I remembered that show, but was most impressed with the fountains outside,” she says. “We found a copy of the *House Beautiful* magazine—it cost \$40 on eBay—and I poured over it and thought it was a good idea [for this year].”

Of the various room vignettes created by the gallery’s staff and local interior designers, three were of particular interest to the modern enthusiast. Another, a re-creation of the 1969 living room staircase from “The Brady Bunch,” was recognizable to anyone with a TV. Turns out that staircase and the structure of the room was a riff on a Frank Lloyd Wright design.

House Beautiful

The room shown on the cover of the 1954 ladies’ magazine was closely duplicated by Sheets Gallery staffers Carol Ennis, Christian Von Martin and David Dall. Its floor plan had to be flipped due to the layout of the gallery, and the team had only the magazine photos to go by.

“The concept for the original room was that tract housing called for a different look, and because of the war, furniture was being manufactured from new materials like chrome and plastic,” explains Johnson. “Millard Sheets wanted to incorporate this new feel with original art. We put in as many original elements as we could, including artificial plants, which were used during the period.”

Particular challenges included finding carpet remnants in the right style and colors, mimicking the original aggregate wall treatment with pieces of hardboard, and coming up with economical solutions like faux painting the tables to look like terrazzo and dyeing an IKEA chair the right shade of brown. There are dozens of triangular-, diamond- and chevron-shaped elements in the *House Beautiful* re-creation; Johnson challenged visiting school kids to try to count all of the negative and positive shapes in the room.

Retro With a Vengeance

Futures Collide, a vintage furnishings store in Pomona, tackled the creation of a “1950s swingin’ pad” with much enthusiasm. “They couldn’t wait to do this,” Johnson confirms. “This room represents 1957 and includes paintings by Karl Benjamin. Look at these lamps—they are absolutely wild—people love it.”





Sheets' Home



The Sheets family lived with ancient and contemporary art in their home, including this Sam Maloof rocker, an early example of today's functional art pieces.

"We didn't want this room to look superficial," Hugo Ortega of Futures Collide says. "We wanted it to look dangerous, like a space-age, retro, Googie, atomic-bachelor pad. Most of what you see nowadays that's modern is an antiseptic, clean, Case Study-house look. Once you see too much of that, the market gets saturated and people want to see something classic but different."

Many of the items on display at the fair were from Ortega's personal collection. The couch was salvaged from the Bullocks Wilshire bridal suite and reupholstered in red mohair. A red bar with a Karl Benjamin abstract hanging next to it was from a Howard Johnson's lounge, and a Paul Frankel sideboard belongs to his brother Reuben. The genie lamp came from the Aladdin hotel in Las Vegas, where each room once had a lamp like it. Other notables are the Paul Frankel combed-wood lamps, a Charles Eames rocker, a 1959 Fonola hi-fi/radio shipped over from Italy and a 1958 Philco Predicta TV—both of which work.

Hugo and his brothers Victor, Michael and Reuben, as well as colleagues Richard McLean and Tony Mora, all worked to refine the display. "We wanted to represent the '50s the way it should have been," says Hugo. "Some people who collect modern furniture from Charles Eames to George Nakashima to Isamu Noguchi say, 'This is too kitsch, or too atomic' or whatever. But, I guarantee when they looked at our room, they said, 'This is nice!'"

The Millard Sheets Home

Next door to the *House Beautiful* tableau was a depiction of Millard and Mary Sheets' Padua Hills living room. All of the furnishings belonged to the family, including an iconic rocker from Sam Maloof, given to the couple by the artist to mark the arrival of their first grandchild.

Millard was a war correspondent for *Life* magazine and collected art from different countries. "All of the pieces were things that he loved and brought together—whether they were pre-Columbian, Asian or contemporary," Johnson explains. The exhibit staff had to re-create a few items, such as the storage unit holding the decorative screen behind the couch; they did such a good job that the Sheeteses' daughter took it for the original.

"An incredibly diverse range of people come through here and many see this as a design-house show. I've heard such comments as 'That sofa sure doesn't match that chair.' Or they may stand and laugh and remember furniture like that in their own homes. One woman figured we put the vignette together from a garage sale. Not everyone can understand the significance and importance of this room," Johnson says ruefully.

Although she wasn't innately drawn to midcentury design on a personal level, doing the research for the exhibition proved educational. "I've come to appreciate what was going on—why that look, why those materials," Johnson says. "That period is very popular now. We tend to not be so terribly interested in what our parents had, but prefer things that our grandparents had—and that's what people are harkening to now. In the midst of this time when people are seeking comfort in their homes and gravitating to a traditional, lush look, here we have very stark and retro looks going on at the same time. I think that says interesting things about us as a culture."



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Ranches rooted in kit homes

where'd you get that?

organic modern pg. 8-16

T shirt on homeowner: Soleil 70 "Swamis" by Ash Francomb; www.ashfrancomb.com.

Resources for midcentury modern furnishings: Carla, Los Angeles; 323•932•6064 **Modernica** Case Study-series couch; www.modernica.net floor lamp from **Artemide**; www.artemide.com or **Glo-Ball** by **Flos**; www.formplusfunction.com.

X chair, ottoman and table in back yard: available in 50 frame and cording colors from Andy Hackman at **California Living**, Los Angeles; 323•930•2601.

Slate and fireplace renovation: R.E. McCoy Company Floor Restoration & Finishing, Sun Valley, Calif.; 818•764•2101; also specialize in cement floors.

Landscape Design: Kathleen Ferguson Landscapes; www.kathleenferguson.com; 323•666•1665.

Concrete address sign and fountain: Khoi Vo at **Division**, Signal Hill, Calif.; 323•449•9213.

Stained Glass: Robert W. Brown Studio, Glendale, Calif.; 818•249•6784

beachy, funky ranch pg. 24-29

Midcentury Consultant: Bryan Forward, Forward Design Group, Carlsbad, Calif.; 760•533•1950; www.forwarddesigngroup.com.

Consulting Architect: Brian Collins-Friedrichs, SkB Architects, Seattle, Wash.; 206•903•0575; www.skbarchitects.com.

Aluminum Windows: International Window Corp.; www.intlwindow.com/imperial-casements.html **Windowmaster**; www.windowmasterproducts.com. **Milgard**; www.milgard.com. **Loewen**; www.loewen.com.

Stone Veneer: Eldorado Stone Corp; www.eldoradostone.com.

orange juice pg. 38-47

Contractor: John Boland, JWB Construction Services, Orange, Calif.; 714•730•8464.

Selected Furnishings: Go-Kat-Go, Glendale, Ariz.; 623•931•4926; www.go-kat-go.com **Out of Vogue**, Fullerton, Calif.; 714•879•6647; www.outofvogue.com.

Eichler home sales specialist: Stephanie Raffel, Broker/Oaktree Realtors, Orange, Calif.; 714•633•9496;

Enthusiasts' website: www.eichlersocal.com.

not your grandma's fair pg. 52-56

Futures Collide, Pomona, Calif.; 909•865•2705

my 2 cents

Join Us

We hope you enjoyed this premiere issue, and, better yet, want to subscribe to Atomic Ranch. As a start-up publication, we rely on our readers for many things.

Steering

We welcome suggestions on what's been missing in the pages of other shelter magazines. Write and tell us what you think of our first issue; please be kind.

Contributing

We need your house photos for our Home Page department. Have a boring facade? Take a shot from the back yard or send in an image of your coolest room; quality images count for a lot. Know of a home or topic that would make a good article or have a hunger to see your byline in print? While our budget may be slim right now, we are interested in stories from across the U.S. and Canada featuring midcentury, eclectic and cool traditional interiors. Send us some scouting shots and we'll talk.

Spreading the Word

Distribution and advertising are key to the success of a magazine. Do you have a favorite newsstand, coffee house or midcentury shop that should stock Atomic Ranch? Send us their address and we'll get in touch. Own a business that would fit into our editorial slant? Our ad rates are economical; give us a try. And please share this issue with like-minded friends and neighbors, or tell them about our website, www.atomic-ranch.com. You'll be glad you found us.



Michelle Gringeri-Brown
Editor

Help make upcoming issues even better—send your submissions to the publishing office address on page 3 or e-mail us at editor@atomic-ranch.com.

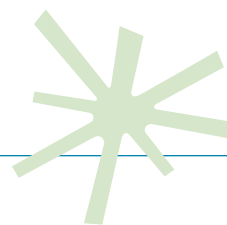
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