Eden

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Above: Van Keppel-Green furniture is used indoors and outdoors at the Palm Springs residence of Edgar and Liliane Kaufmann. Richard Neutra, architect. 1949 photo by Julius Shulman photographer. © J. Paul Getty Trust. Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles (2004.R.10).

Eden

JOURNAL OF THE CALIFORNIA GARDEN & LANDSCAPE HISTORY SOCIETY

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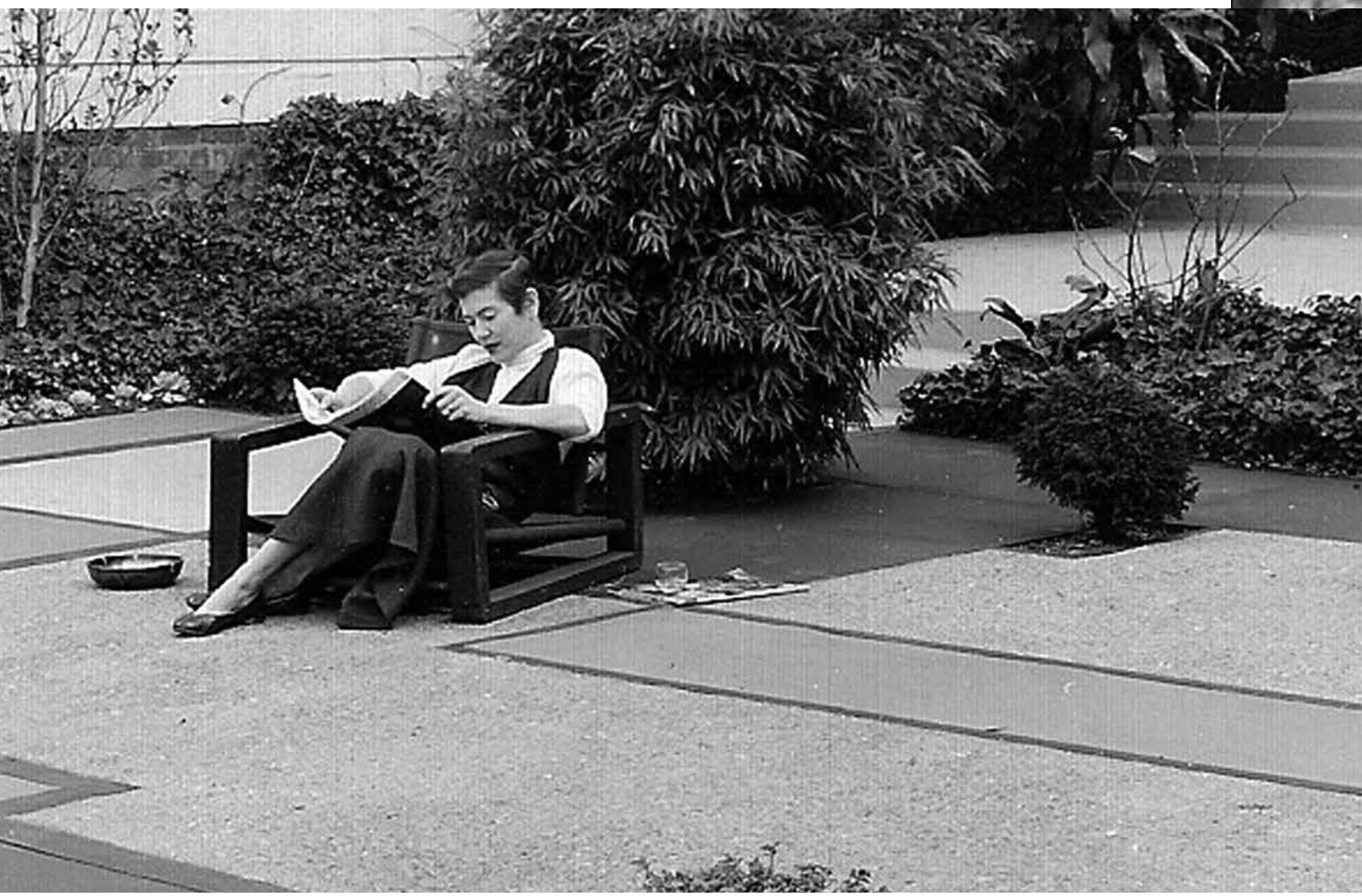
Above: Patio of Dickinson Residence, Pasadena, 1941. Lawrence Test and Woodbridge Dickinson, Jr., architects, James C. Rose, landscape architect. Furniture by Van Keppel-Green in one of their earliest commissions. This important landscape represents the only known California work of landscape architect James C. Rose, who traveled to California with Christopher Tunnard in 1940-41. Julius Shulman photographer. © J. Paul Getty Trust. Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles (2004.R.10).

THE COOL OUTSIDE

JC MILLER



When someone or something is described as *Cool*, what does that mean?

The Merriam Webster dictionary currently provides seven distinct definitions for the word with six nuances of meaning. These range from the physical sensation of moderate cold to a situation that is free of tension, and through the terms "fashionable" and "hip." While normally a useful reference, in this instance the dictionary is not especially helpful. When writing their introduction to "American Cool," the catalog that accompanied an exhibition of photographs at the National Portrait Gallery, Joel Dinerstein and co-curator Frank Goodyear suggested that certain individuals who bring innovation and virtuosity while projecting style, charisma, and confidence are *Cool*.[1] That seems closer to what we are after.

Legendary jazz saxophonist Lester Young is credited with establishing the modern

Opposite: Lean and inspired by modern art, the gardens of postwar California were often *Cool*. Chinn Garden - San Francisco, CA 1951, photographer unknown, Source: Collection of the Author

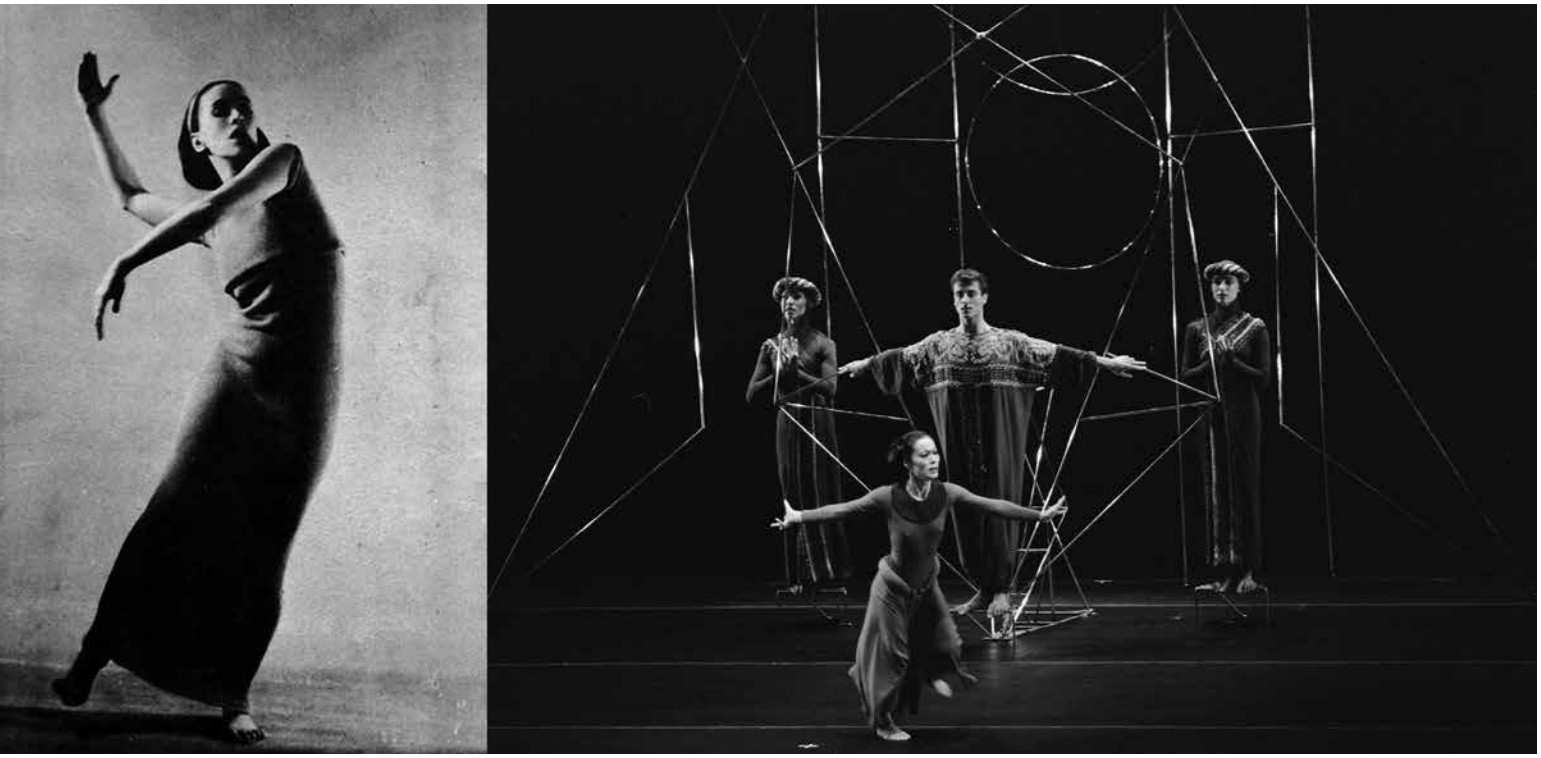
Above: The beat poetry of Jack Kerouac and the jazz music of Miles Davis introduced the American public to the concept of *Cool*

meaning and usage of the word "cool." In the original context, the jazz music scene of the late 1940s, to be *Coo*l meant being relaxed in one's environment despite oppressive social forces such as racism and social injustice.[2] Miles Davis, whose 1949-50 recordings for Capitol Records were released in 1957 under the title "Birth of the Cool," brought the term to the attention of a broader audience. Davis was in the vanguard of a generation of jazz musicians who went beyond big-band swing to create Bebop, an experimental, energetic, and highly personal virtuosic style. The genius of a Bebop instrumental solo begins with departure from the rhythmic bassline, soaring improvisation that takes the music to unexpected heights with eventual return to the basic structure that has been continued uninterrupted by the other musicians. This innovation shifted jazz away from music for dance performed by big bands in large venues to small group or individual performances in intimately scaled nightclubs for an attentive and knowledgeable audience. With this shift the *Cool* emerged as a form of uniquely American presentation and stoicism, manifested first in jazz music, but also found in film noir, Beat literature, and abstract expressionist painting in the early 1950s. Through the creative output of these early innovators, a generation of Americans were introduced to *Cool*.

There are reciprocal influences within creative circles and through these the concept of *Cool* moves beyond the realm of musicians, writers, and painters to be picked up and explored by other mid-century creatives, including graphic designers, architects, and landscape architects. Today we might call this the viral transmission model for information spread. In this transition, the *Coo*l with its fundamental embrace of experimentalism became linked to other ideas prevalent in design thinking at the time, including architectural modernism, innovation in materials, and cross-disciplinary collaboration. The *Cool* was an emerging concept ideally suited to the changing, experimental, and rapidly expanding built environment in postwar California.

In the decades following World War II, the urban population of California grew by nearly fifty percent every ten years—the state was growing faster than any other in the nation.[3] The World War II home front effort brought industrial production to California's coastal cities. Workers attracted to wartime industry and thousands of returning veterans discharged at California ports who chose to remain, transformed the state permanently. This boom in growth was nourished by post-war industrial expansion, high-paying jobs, home mortgages supported by the Federal Housing Authority and education opportunities on the GI-Bill. In southern California, Hollywood, in particular, provided employment and a safe haven for artists and creatives who had fled the war in Europe, who carried with them the tenets of international modernism.[4] The most pronounced growth occurred on the edges of existing urban areas, generating suburbs on what had previously been agricultural land. It was the building opportunities spurred on by the concurrent population and economic boom in these newly made communities that allowed *Cool* to go outside.

Outdoor space closely associated with the home that invited occupancy and activity is one of the defining characteristics of postwar landscape design. This concept



Above: The sets that sculptor Isamu Noguchi designed for dancer/ choreographer Martha Graham epitomized the collaborative and experimental spirit of fine art in the postwar era.

Opposite, top: Eckbo Royston & Williams plan for garden show exhibit featuring sculpture by Jacques Schnier. Marin Art & Garden Show-Ross, CA 1947 Source: Collection of the Author

Opposite, bottom: Working with ALCOA, the Aluminum Company of America, Garrett Eckbo developed a garden that demonstrated how a material developed in wartime might be used in a residential setting. Aloca Forecast Garden - Los Angeles, CA 1957, photographer unknown, Source: UC Berkeley College of Environmental Design Archive

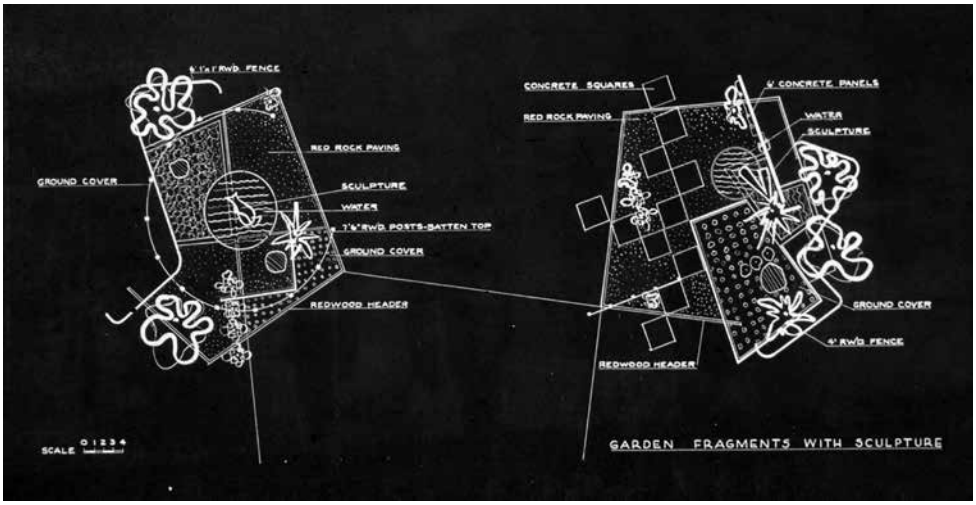
became synonymous with California and the modern good life in the popular imagination. Eichler Homes was unquestionably at the forefront of mid-twentieth-century developers who brought this idea to the public in an affordable and accessible way. Joseph Eichler developed 11,000 homes in California between 1951–1964.[5] At the height of his success in 1955, he commissioned a steel frame demonstration house, christened the X-100, from a team of experts led by well-known modern architects A. Quincy Jones and Frederick E. Emmons. The garden setting for the X-100 was designed by progressive designer Maggie Baylis and her husband landscape architect Doug Baylis.

The X-100 garden took full advantage of the benign climate and frequent sunny days characteristic of San Mateo California where it is situated. Every room of the house allows for direct access to the garden through sliding glass doors. Responding to the architecture, the Baylis team provided patios and extended the dynamic circular pattern from the interior terrazzo floor into the garden as a generous pebble-surfaced concrete pool deck. This design strategy was reciprocated inside the home where lush vegetation was grown in floor level planters integrated into the terrazzo pattern. This intentional blurring of indoor and outdoor was one of many aspects of the X-100 that elevated it to *Cool*.

The swimming pool that is the focal point of the west side of the home was also *Cool*. In keeping with the experimental nature of the X-100 and the developer's goal for affordability, the pool was fashioned from kits provided by Delair Pools, an innovative postwar company that marketed directly to Baby Boom households. The vinyl-lined in-ground kits they produced were touted as an affordable alternative to concrete and plaster pools. This approach was not a commercial or technical success until it later morphed into above-ground "doughboy" style pools that can still be found today. The figure-eight shape of the X-100 pool was achieved by experimentation characteristic of the *Cool*. Available only as rectangles or circles, two circular kits were joined together asymmetrically to accommodate the complex pool deck pattern.

Beyond the modern home, *Cool* could be found outside in shining new schools, shopping centers, downtown high rises, and "memorial parks" built throughout California in the decades following World War II. By the close of the 1950's, it was possible to move through the *Cool* outside from cradle to grave. The gardens that Geraldine Knight Scott created for the Daphne Funeral Home on Church Street in San Francisco might be one of the final stops on that journey.

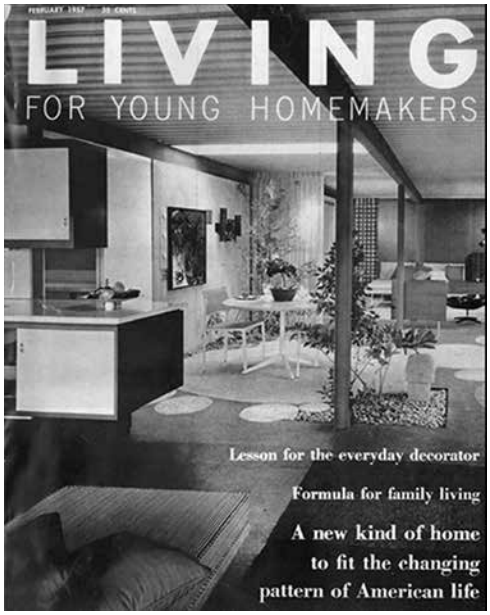
Described as the first modernist mortuary in the United States when it opened in late 1953, the Daphne Funeral Home represented state-of-the-art mortuary practice. The modern building was the work of Jones and Emmons, the same architectural design team that collaborated on Eichler's X-100 later in the decade.[6] Large expanses of glass and stacked volumes clad in redwood and brick disassociated the building from traditional funerary architecture. The

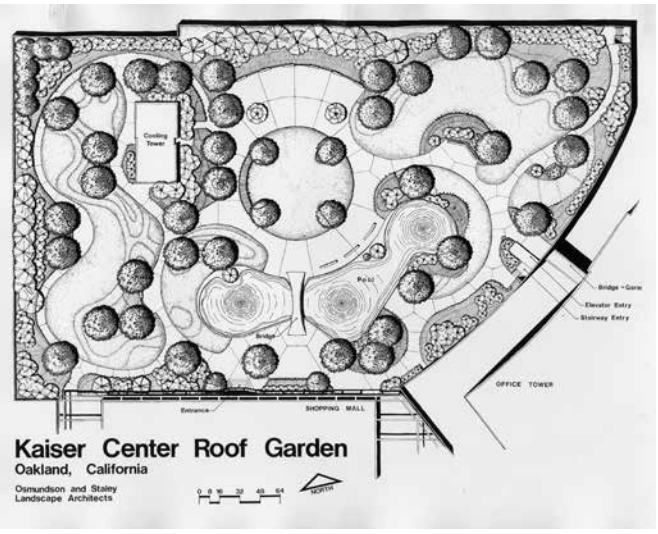


structure did not include a chapel, although plans for an expansion to include one were drawn. Scott's design for the outdoor spaces also eschewed historic references and religious iconography. As a buffer to the busy urban neighborhood and nearby Market Street, she planted the perimeter of the property with a combination of broadleaf and coniferous evergreens set in a generous swath of Algerian ivy. Enclosed patios adjacent to the viewing rooms and offices within the building were elegant and restrained with rectilinear planting areas and decking reminiscent of an ***engawa***, the plank exterior walkway found in traditional Japanese architecture. Scott's plant palette relied on evergreen foliage plants with few flowers. The enclosure and deceptively simple details combined to make these small gardens into places that allowed one to stay ***Cool***, despite circumstances of personal sadness.

As even a casual viewer of the television drama "Mad Men" will attest, the ***Coo***l found its way into the American business office early in the 1950s. Furniture manufacturers that originated in the first decades of the twentieth-century, including now famous companies such as Herman Miller, Knoll, and Steelcase, turned their attention and production lines to modern furniture for the office in the years after World War II. The fictional advertising executives portrayed in "Mad Men" spent a lot of time staring out the glass walls of their swank offices, but there was no way for all that ***Coo***l to get outside. In the real world, that changed with the construction of the new headquarters building for Kaiser Industries in Oakland, California.

When the Kaiser garden opened in 1960 it was described as the first "true" postwar rooftop garden in the United States.[7] It was designed by the landscape architect Ted Osmundson and his firm, Osmundson and Staley. Considerable coordination was required with the building's architects, Welton Beckett Associates. For example, large trees were carefully craned into place over structural columns that ran through the parking garage into the building's basement. Osmundson disguised the regularity of the tree planting with curving walkways, biomorphic planting areas and a reflecting pool punctuated by fountains. Perhaps inspired by Garrett Eckbo's garden for ALCOA, Osmundson incorporated materials





Top row: It was often the growing suburbs of midcentury California where the *Cool* might be found outside. Eichler X-100, San Mateo, CA 1957, photographers unknown. Courtesy Eichler Network / CA Modern Magazine

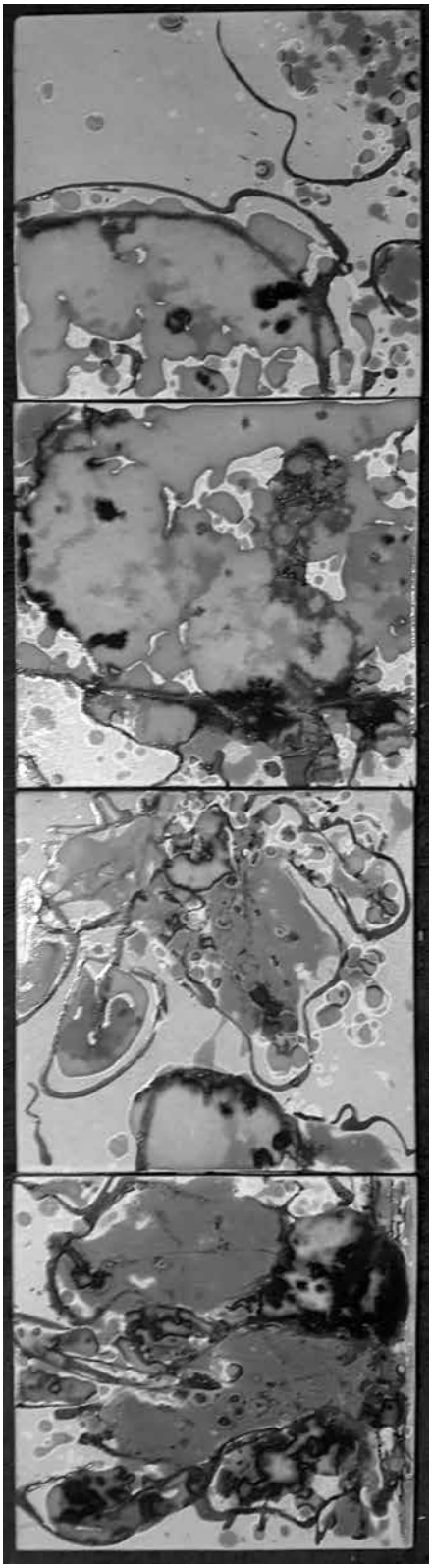
Bottom: The workplace also offered opportunities for landscape *Cool* on your lunch break. Kaiser Center Roof Garden, Oakland, CA 1959, photographer unknown, Source: UC Berkeley College of Environmental Design Archives

Opposite, left: Still photo from film – "Mitchell Park" by Eckbo Royston & Williams, 1961 Mitchell Park - Palo Alto, CA 1956, Source: UC Berkeley College of Environmental Design Archives

Opposite, right: An "Outdoor Painting" by Edith Heath. The *Cool* went beyond the landscape design to include art and furniture specifically for the garden. Tile Mural by Edith Heath – mid 1950s, photographer JC Miller, Source: Collection of the Author

made by Kaiser Industry subsidiaries into the garden including colored concrete and aggregates from Permanente Cement Company and aluminum details supplied by Kaiser Aluminum. The result was a decidedly *Cool* place to spend the lunch hour whether you were an office worker enjoying a brown bag lunch on a sleek concrete bench or an executive downing a martini or three in the rooftop restaurant.

The X-100, ALCOA Forecast Garden, Daphne Funeral Home, and the Kaiser Center Roof Garden were all part of a dynamic moment in the Golden State's history. These projects and many others developed in California in the postwar decades are the focus of an upcoming exhibition. The Marin Art and Garden Center in Ross, California will host ***Cool Outside***, an exploration of the distinct, and certainly ***Cool***, approach to the design of outdoor spaces, furnishings, and garden art that evolved across California in the 1950s and early 1960s.



Cool Outside, an exhibition curated by the author, will be on display at the Marin Art & Garden Center from June 20 through August 22, 2021. The show highlights the dynamic community of designers, craftspeople, architects, and landscape designers who collaborated and interacted in California at midcentury – Thomas Church, Garret Eckbo, Geraldine Knight-Scott, Robert Royston, Edith Heath, Doug and Maggie Baylis, and Luther Conover among others. Photographs and drawings as well as models of now iconic midcentury gardens and landscapes drawn from the collections of the University of California Berkeley College of Environmental Design Archives will be on display. Period films, also from the College of Environmental Design Archives will be available. Garden furniture, pottery, and art will supplement the graphic displays.

Marin Art and Garden Center
30 Sir Francis Drake Blvd
Ross, CA 94957
Www.Marin garden.org

Cool Outside exhibition hours:
In the Studio June 20 - August 22
Thursdays, Fridays, Saturdays 10am-4pm
Sundays 12-4pm

Endnotes

[1] *American Cool*, Joel Dinerstein and Frank H. Goodyear III, Prestel, 2014, 11-12.

[2] *American Cool: Constructing a Twentieth-Century Emotional Style*, Peter N. Stearns, New York University Press, 1994, 7.

[3] *The San Francisco Bay Area: A Metropolis in Perspective*, 2nd ed., Mel Scott, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1985, 250–251.

[4] *American Cool: Constructing a Twentieth-Century Emotional Style*, 23.

[5] *Eichler: Modernism Rebuilds the American Dream*, Paul Adamson and Marty Arbunich, Gibbs Smith, 2002, 8-10.

[6] "The Frank Lloyd Wright Mortuary That Wasn't," Andrew Dudley, *San Francisco Chronicle*, May 3, 2012.

[7] *Kaiser Center Roof Garden*, Jess Hamilton, SAH Archipedia, eds. Gabrielle Esperdy and Karen Kingsley: http://sah-archipedia.org/buildings/CA-01-001-8012

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Martin Friedman. Catalog for an exhibition of the same name
Publisher: Walker Art Center, Minneapolis, MN, 1978

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Roof Gardens: History, Design, and Construction, Theodore Osmundson,
1st ed. New York: W.W. Norton, 1999

OUTSIDE **IN**

VAN KEPPEL-GREEN: THE ORIGINS OF MODERN INDOOR-OUTDOOR DESIGN

ERIC HAEBERLI AND **STEVEN KEYLON**

The work of Hendrik Van Keppel and Taylor Green was elegant enough to be used inside the home, as well as on the patio. On the left, the #960 console has adjustable folding steel tube legs with two redwood planks. After adjusting the legs and moving the lower plank to the top, that same console serves double-duty as the dining table. Steel and redwood #844 chairs and #903 stools, along with the steel rod #990 candelabra, complete the setting inside. Outside is Van Keppel-Green's iconic steel and yacht cord #803 "sun chaise" lounge. Fox Residence, 1949. Julius Shulman photographer. © J. Paul Getty Trust. Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles (2004.R.10).

Above: Because of their close relationship with *Arts & Architecture* editor John Entenza, Van Keppel-Green furniture was prominently featured at several Case Study Houses. Seen here are the #801 lounge chair and #800 ottoman, #905 low round table. In the background are the #804 strap steel chair and #903 "table bench." Case Study House #16, Beverly Hills, 1947. Rodney Walker, architect. Julius Shulman photographer. © J. Paul Getty Trust. Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles (2004.R.10).

Opposite: Designers Hendrik Van Keppel, left, and Taylor Green, right, with the steel tube frames of their #805 dining chairs, 1949. Photograph courtesy Nick Cann.

The year is 1951. It is a warm and clear July evening in Santa Monica Canyon. Native plants grow on the dusty, arid slopes: hot pink, trumpet-shaped mallow, orange California poppies, fragrant sage, and deer weed with its delicate yellow flowers. The pulsating red sun setting on the ocean's horizon slips beneath the sea. The surrounding hills quickly change color from vibrant orange to deep purple and then dark blue.

The guests are arriving for cocktails, their cars parked on empty Amalfi Drive. There is the exotic Tucker Torpedo, a chartreuse fin-tailed Cadillac Series 62 convertible, the mile-long Figoni & Falaschi Delahaye 135 MS 'Narval,' and even the futuristic *L'Oeuf Electrique*. Men come in pairs and are dressed in light tropical-weight suits; women in "New Look" cinched-waist dresses, some in Katherine Hepburn-inspired pantsuits. In contrast to the rustic cottages that hug the hillsides of this enclave of gay artists and intellectuals and European-born Hollywood actors, writers, and directors, we find a newly-built, low-slung post-and-beam house. The house is a modern, radical departure from the traditional Tudor, New England Colonial, and Spanish Colonial Revival houses down the hill on the flatlands. The façade along Sumac Lane has no windows, just a set of double doors, affording its residents complete privacy. The guests anticipate being ushered into an entry hall or living room. However, beyond the double doors is a large, indoor-outdoor room. In the center of the ceiling, an enormous oculus is open to the evening sky, and below it a massive split-leaf philodendron grows in a circular planting bed, a mirror image of the cutout above. All the rooms open onto this landscaped entry.

The guests mingle for a moment in this somewhat startling space that blurs the distinction between inside and out. Then they move into the living room. Walls of glass are slid open to the warm breeze, the ocean in the distance beyond the patio and swimming pool. Here, the furniture is even more shocking. No wood or overstuffed upholstery is to be seen. Instead, both inside and out, it is made of slim steel tube, enameled grapefruit yellow, lobster red, and jet black. Chair seats and backs are wrapped with thin white cotton yacht cord or rat-

Above, left: This early example of a flat steel frame wrapped in yacht cord is similar to the first chair Hendrik Van Keppel had manufactured in San Francisco around 1937. The chairs and table are seen at the Georgi Residence in Laguna Beach, designed by architect Boyd Georgi in 1941, one of Van Keppel's earliest commissions. The home was featured in *Sunset* Magazine in 1942. Julius Shulman photographer. © J. Paul Getty Trust. Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles (2004.R.10).

Above, right: Hendrick Van Keppel, seen at center in sweater vest, was the president of the Santa Rosa Junior College Art Club, 1934.

Above, bottom: Taylor Green's 1937 University of California yearbook graduation photo.

Opposite: Hendrik Van Keppel at the Boyd Georgi-designed home in Laguna Beach in 1941. Julius Shulman photographer. © J. Paul Getty Trust. Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles (2004.R.10).

tan; tables have tops of perforated steel or textured obscure glass. Black-painted steel sconces mounted to the white walls inside flicker with white candles, as do candelabras both indoors and out. Not a single lightbulb is in sight. Locally-made, large hand-thrown ceramic planters artfully placed inside and on the patio nurture cacti, succulents, philodendrons, and citrus trees, their flowers perfuming the luxuriant air.

Here, the furnishings and accessories shed excess ornamentation—stripped down to the essentials, this is functional design—and, boy, is it beautiful! What is this called? It's Van Keppel-Green. Let us meet the hosts, Hendrik Van Keppel and Taylor Green, owners of the first indoor/outdoor furniture design and manufacturing company. Though they are operating out of a single shop in Beverly Hills, they have achieved worldwide recognition. This home is their laboratory, showcasing their new concept of living—connecting the indoors to the outdoors with just one type of furnishings and accessories.[1]

SONS OF CALIFORNIA: HENDRIK VAN KEPPEL AND TAYLOR GREEN

The man who would become the dashing and influential Beverly Hills industrial designer Hendrik Van Keppel came from humble roots. He was born John Henry Van Keppel, Jr. ("Jack"), on November 10, 1914, on a farm in the small town of Forestville, California, sixty-five miles north of San Francisco. A second-generation Californian, he was born to John Henry and Clara Van Keppel. The family had been established in the region since 1867 when his Dutch-born grandfather bought twenty-seven acres of wine grapes.[2] He grew up on a thirty-acre farm (on what is now Van Keppel Road), which also grew grapes and plums. During the Great Depression, his parents sold these to bootleggers for making wine and spirits. As his younger sister Virginia fondly recalled, "the sound of tractors in the fields was the sound of spring and the cycle of new life begun each year."[3]

About Van Keppel, Virginia said, "he always had a wonderful sense of humor. He always saw the light side of things. He was very, very popular and very fun to be around."[4] With little interest in farming but showing an artistic bent and aptitude from an early age, the young boy started to make art and furniture. According to Virginia, "he was very interested in shop and building things… into carving things and very interested in art." When Van Keppel was around fourteen years old, "he made a chair out of just scrap things around, it was very wonderful."[5]

After graduating high school, Van Keppel attended local colleges, including Pacific Union College and Santa Rosa Junior College, where he studied art and design and acted in plays. In the mid-1930s, he moved to San Francisco, where he was apprenticed to German-born architect and interior designer Fritz Eldon Baldauf, who had a shop at 210 Post Street.[6] During his three years with Baldauf, he served as draftsman and installer.[7]

Around this time, Van Keppel had an idea for a chair design. For the prototype, he hired a blacksmith to fabricate the wrought iron frame. He went to the Embarcadero to find the right gauge of white cotton yacht cord from a maritime supply house. This highly original chair had a frame of flat strap iron painted black, with the seat and back of white cotton yacht cord, which Van Keppel wrapped himself. [8] Its elegant sculptural form and proportions, simple materials, and durable practicality were innovations. The chair would become the catalyst for Van Keppel's idea of a new way of living: furniture with an easy informality—equally beautiful and comfortable in the living room or on the patio. His contemporary furniture would possess the quality of timelessness. He was about to start a revolution in California indoor-outdoor living.

In 1938, he began working two blocks away, at 442 Post Street, for Frederick G. Bruns, who represented the high-end drapery

and upholstery fabric manufacturer Johnson & Faulkner. The showroom, which had been previously to-the-trade only, was opened to the public, so the charming and charismatic Van Keppel was hired to manage the gallery. That same year, Bruns put Van Keppel in charge of opening a Los Angeles branch of Johnson & Faulkner at West 8th and Flower Streets. Van Keppel moved to Los Angeles to manage that store, changing his name to Hendrik, his grandfather's name.[9]

Shortly after moving to Los Angeles, Van Keppel met Taylor Green. As Van Keppel's sister recalls, Green spotted the handsome Van Keppel driving a Cord, a highly innovative and sporty car of the time. Green was so intrigued he struck up a conversation. They soon were romantically involved and moved into an apartment together.

Taylor Pasley Green was also a second-generation Californian, born in Long Beach on October 12, 1914, to Thomas and Lena Green. Like Hendrik Van Keppel, Green's father was also a farmer. After World War I, though, with a real estate boom unfolding in Southern California, Thomas Green became a real estate broker. He began buying, restoring, and flipping houses in the San Gabriel Valley. The entire family became involved, and Taylor Green learned to work with his hands from an early age. It was at this time, according to his younger brother Fred, that Green began designing things, starting with the kitchens and bathrooms of these houses. To earn extra money, the brothers would scavenge for broken bicycles, restore, and then sell them, as Fred would later recall.[10] After graduating from Alhambra High School in 1932, Green briefly attended Pasadena Junior College before going on to UC Berkeley, where he majored in English Literature. After getting his Bachelor of Arts degree, he went to UCLA to work on his master's degree in education, later reflecting that he was "looking for the best techniques of education to foster a better way of living here in America."[11] From 1937-38, just as Europe was about to go to war, Green took an eight-month bicycling trip through France and Germany. While there, he absorbed all he could about the culture, and in particular, became interested in the architecture and furniture, which he found impressive, later recalling that even in 1937, "good modern design was available for the masses in Europe in furniture and radio cabinets, while we in America were still clinging to the traditional designs of another age."[12] Upon his return to Los Angeles, he began teaching and continued to teach until he met Van Keppel.[13] But his true desire was to create art, not to teach.[14] "It was soon apparent that Taylor's thinking along educational lines for better techniques perfectly matched Hendrik's ideas of modern design for better living."[15]

JOHN ENTENZA AND ARTS & ARCHITECTURE MAGAZINE; HENDRIK VAN KEPPEL STORE OPENS

Van Keppel-Green could easily have remained regional designers if it were not for their close friendship with the influential gay editor of *California Arts & Architecture* magazine, John Entenza. They were all part of a group of creative young men with an "open secret." Supportive of one another's creative endeavors, they proselytized "the importance of domestic space" and would become persuasive tastemakers for California modernism. In the article "Queering California Modernism: Architectural Figurations and Media Exposure of Gay Domesticity in the Roosevelt Era," the authors use John Entenza and his Harwell Hamilton-Harris-designed house in Santa Monica Canyon (1938) as an example of architecture that was "built for a single gay man and functioned as a public screen that protected his private life:"[16]

> In the late 1930s, dominant social, cultural and legal institutions, such as marriage, compelled queer people not only to perform closeted identities in public but also to remain invisible in the supposed safety of their homes. It became the place of expression and self-repression for those who wanted to stand out but whose same-sex orientation and

Above, left: "Garden Fantasy" was an exhibition at the Raymond and Raymond Gallery in Pasadena in June 1941. Hendrik Van Keppel's work was showcased in a setting designed by landscape architect Edward Huntsman-Trout. Seen here are the #801 lounge chair with steel tube frame wrapped in white yacht cord. and the #900 low rectangular steel-framed table with obscure glass top and yacht cord-wrapped lower shelf. Photograph from the June 1941 issue of *California Arts & Architecture*.

Above, right: In the foreground, the patio of *Arts & Architecture* editor John Entenza's Case Study House #9, with the Eames Residence (Case Study House #8) in the distance. The landscape for the shared residences was designed by landscape architect Jay A. Gooch. Julius Shulman photographer. © J. Paul Getty Trust. Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles (2004.R.10).

Opposite: In this iconic photograph of the newly-built Kaufmann Desert House in Palm Springs, designed by Richard Neutra, photographer Julius Shulman asked Liliane Kaufmann to lounge on a cushion to block the glare of the pool light. Prominently placed in the foreground are Van Keppel-Green's steel and yacht cord chaises and table. Julius Shulman photographer. © J. Paul Getty Trust. Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles (2004.R.10).

> homosocial intimacy fell beyond the limits of normativity. Thanks to the power denoted by architecture's materiality and the meanings connoted by its spatiality, for some privileged gay men who could afford it, 'home was a way' to both 'fit in' and 'be different.'[17]

Throughout the 1930s, *California Arts & Architecture* (which had both architects and landscape architects on its advisory board) regularly promoted California modernism in architecture, landscape architecture, and interior design on its pages, alongside more traditional work. After Entenza became the editor-in-chief with the February 1940 issue, he made it his goal to turn the magazine into one that focused entirely on modern design.[18] Because the magazine had international influence, he soon dropped "California" from the masthead, bringing in graphic artist Alvin Lustig to give the magazine a new look.

Around 1939, while still managing the Johnson & Faulkner fabric showroom, Van Keppel modified his prototype chair. He changed the design from a relatively heavy flat strap iron to more gracefully slender strap steel. He also designed a new low lounge chair and ottoman. This chair frame was created using tubular gas pipe. Bob Brown of Pasadena (who later founded the firm Brown-Jordan) fabricated these early examples for Van Keppel. This elegant, sculptural frame, which was again hand-wrapped in white cotton yacht cord, proved timeless and would remain in the Van Keppel-Green catalog until the company closed in 1972. This new creation made its debut in the November 1940 issue of *California Arts & Architecture*. The following June, Raymond & Raymond Galleries in Pasadena sponsored a show, "Garden Fantasy." In a landscaped patio setting designed by landscape architect Edward Huntsman-Trout, Hendrik Van Keppel's lounge chair and table were the most prominent pieces featured. Enhancing this setting were whimsical ceramics by Beatrice Wood, glassware by Dorothy Thorpe, and sculpture by Leon Saulter. Entenza ran a full-page photograph from the show in the June 1941 issue.[19]

June of 1941 was also the month Hendrik Van Keppel opened his first design studio at 9486 Dayton Way in Beverly Hills.[20] By August, he was running advertisements regularly in *California Arts & Architecture,* and the magazine would often feature his work. Though the store initially had just Van Keppel's name on the marquee, Green was a partner from the start. While Van Keppel was the principal designer, Green would cover the business side of the partnership. As Architectural Pottery owner Max Lawrence would later recall, "Hendrik was the creative person—he had a nice spirit about him—he was a spirited person. Hendrik dressed beautifully and he had a whimsical way about him." He also recalled Taylor, who he found "different. He was a nice person. He wasn't as personable as Hendrik. He was dignified. He was rather handsome."[21] In an interview done in 1951 for *Furniture Field,* Van Keppel and Green explained that they worked as a collaborative team overall. Once an idea had hatched, they "both refine, criticize and change until they arrive at the goal they accept as the finished design. They use sketches, working drawings or custom prototypes, depending on the assignment, in arriving at the final design for reproduction."[22] They also manufactured their own work. As described a few years later in *House Beautiful:*

> Hendrik Van Keppel and Taylor Green of Beverly Hills, California, work together because their tastes run parallel. Both believe unshakably in modern design; both like to design for young, not necessarily well-to-do clients. Inevitably, these facts led them to manufacture their

> own furniture. Mr. Van Keppel is a believer in undeviating simplicity, is interested in sculpture and three-dimensional forms. Mr. Green is the more critical and objective member of the team. Both men like country living—which influenced them to choose Southern California for their work—enjoying gardening and are noted for their garden furniture, especially in metal and yacht cord.[23]

The store, which showcased the custom work of Van Keppel, also offered complete interior design services and contemporary accessories, primarily by California artists. But they were not just selling furniture, fabrics, lamps, and decorative arts; they became influential leaders in trends. Elaine Jones, wife of architect A. Quincy Jones, would later recall, "Van Keppel-Green were concerned with people's needs and their design imagination solved a need—they sold a lifestyle."[24]

The advent of World War II slowed down their trajectory. In October 1941, just a few months after the Hendrik Van Keppel store opened, Green was drafted into the army and was stationed at Camp Callan, near San Diego, in an anti-aircraft unit. In 1942, Van Keppel closed the showroom for the duration of the war because of material shortages. He went to work as a draftsman in the engineering department of Douglas Aircraft.[25] He ran an all-text ad in the July 1942 issue of *California Arts & Architecture*, in which he looked forward to a postwar society that was in alignment with the modernist principles of Van Keppel and Green:

> Specifications for the future list modern design for living, and a modern philosophy for learning to live in a new world—a world suddenly small. Transportation and communication will make that point real. A modern philosophy will bring the world within focus and advance our lagging cultural and social sense to equal our progress in science. A philosophy that can visualize the range of air transport and world broadcast. A philosophy that will admit the beauty of a modern motor car or airplane or building. In that world we want to live and work. The job ahead we accept. We are filling our obligation with all our energy. As a young organization and as individuals we hope to grow up into the better planned world we are all fighting for.

Van Keppel was drafted in January of 1943 into the United States Army Air Corps aviation engineers. He served until October of 1943.

In July 1944, Green was hospitalized until September, when, after nearly three years of service, he was deemed "mentally unfit to serve" and dishonorably discharged under the purview of section VIII, AR 615-360 for "sexual perversion," presumably homosexuality.[26]

CASE STUDY HOUSES AND POSTWAR POPULARITY — "A PHILOSOPHY OF MODERN DESIGN FOR BETTER LIVING"[27]

Anticipating the end of World War II, editor John Entenza announced the Case Study

Above, left: Van Keppel-Green's #874 club chair in expanded steel. Julius Shulman photographer. © J. Paul Getty Trust. Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles (2004.R.10).

Above, right: After World War II, Van Keppel-Green expanded its furniture line to include expanded steel, redwood, and rattan. Here, the classic lounge chair and ottoman have been updated with handwoven rattan in lieu of yacht cord. Also seen are the #907 square dining table, #860 host chairs (higher seats) and #864 club chairs (lower seats), all in rattan. Julius Shulman photographer. © J. Paul Getty Trust. Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles (2004.R.10).

Opposite: At the 1950 residence of Mr. and Mrs. George Marek on Fire Island, New York, the house was furnished entirely in Van Keppel-Green, both inside and out. Featured in the living room are two of their clever convertible #880 Sofa-Chaises, which are seen here as a sofa, with foam rubber cushion and two innerspring bolsters. When the bolsters are removed, it becomes a comfortable daybed. The redwood and expanded steel base is hinged, allowing the daybed to lock in an upright position to convert to a chaise. Eldredge Snyder, architect; Thomas Church, landscape architect. Photographer Maynard L. Parker, photographer. Courtesy of The Huntington Library, San Marino, California.

House program in the January 1945 issue of *Arts & Architecture*: "Because most opinion, both profound and light-headed, in terms of post war housing is nothing but speculation in the form of talk and reams of paper, it occurs to us that it might be a good idea to get down to cases and at least make a beginning in the gathering of that mass of material that must eventually result in what we know as "house—post war."

In his announcement about the program, Entenza wrote that the program's goal was for each architect to create a home "capable of duplication and in no sense being an individual performance. It is important that the best materials available be used in the best possible way in order to arrive at a good solution of each problem, which in the overall program will be general enough to be of practical assistance to the average American in search of a home in which he can afford to live."[28]

While Entenza described *Arts & Architecture* as the client, the magazine did not in fact finance construction. Shortly after the program was announced, Entenza named the first architects invited to participate. They were primarily Beaux-Arts-trained designers who had shifted capably to Modernism. These included American-born William Wurster and Sumner Spaulding, along with Europeans Richard Neutra, Eero Saarinen, and J.R. Davidson. Others were younger Modernist architects—Charles Eames and Ralph Rapson. Plans were published; however, designs that lacked clients were never actually built. Later, other architects brought proposed designs that already had clients to Entenza, and if he approved, they were included. Everyone would benefit—clients would own an innovative, well-designed contemporary house, while receiving large discounts on "merit-specified" construction materials. The homes would be furnished with the latest designs. The manufacturers of these materials and furniture provided them in exchange for advertisements and acknowledgment in the magazine. Grounds and gardens were designed by the leading landscape architects of the time. The houses were opened to the public for viewing after completion during the six- to eight-week inspection period. There was great interest in them, and according to architecture critic Esther McCoy, 368,554 people visited the six houses that were completed during the first three years of the program.[29]

The program ran intermittently from 1945 until 1966, and the houses were immortalized in Julius Shulman's iconic photographs. Entenza's own Case Study House, #9, was designed by Charles Eames and Eero Saarinen and built in Pacific Palisades. It was neighboring Case Study House #8, designed by Charles and Ray Eames as their personal residence. Because of their close friendship with Entenza, Van Keppel-Green designs featured prominently in most of the Case Study Houses.

The year 1947 would genuinely put the work of Van Keppel-Green on the map. In a groundbreaking article, Elizabeth Gordon, editor of *House Beautiful* and arguably America's primary "tastemaker," made one of

her infamous sweeping proclamations.[30] She announced that 1947 was "Design Year in the U.S.A.," observing that "for the first time since 1941, significant collections of new furniture and fabrics are for sale in shops across the U.S.A. They are marked by identifiable, vigorous, American design." With glamorous photographs taken by famed gay fashion and ballet photographer George Platt Lynes, Van Keppel-Green's full-page feature shared pages with Charles Eames, George Nelson, and Edward Wormley. Gordon urged her readers to "look at the furniture on the following pages. It is forthright. It is substantial. It is more honestly functional than any other previous important collection of American furniture."[31]

Also, in 1947, photographer Julius Shulman took perhaps his most iconic photograph, a twilight image of Liliane Kaufmann, wife of prominent Pittsburgh retailer Edgar Kaufmann, reclining near their pool in Palm Springs, with a pair of Van Keppel-Green "sun chaises" nearby. The Kaufmanns, who had previously commissioned "Fallingwater," their Frank Lloyd Wright-designed home in Pennsylvania, hired Richard Neutra to design their Palm Springs estate. Their son Edgar Kaufmann, Jr. presumably had a hand in selecting the Van Keppel-Green furniture, for that same year, he wrote about their work in *Art News* magazine, calling it "Handsome and original, combining machine efficiency with an informal, handicraft appearance. The elegance of their design is appropriate to their material."[32] He continued:

> Their design is so original, simple, and well thought through that a picture is their best praise. In these, California has produced designs at once suave and sensible, excellent enough to wander from the terrace into the study when the air becomes chill. Their lines are unforced, clear, and classically modern. Comfort is achieved without elaborate springs and padding. They are easy to clean (hose them down) and to move, and reasonably simple to store. Their pipe frames are a product of our industrial world, yet they are wrapped around with cord in a homely, hand-done way. This combination of craft and industry, good style and informality is an example of the way in which summer furniture responds to the needs of our daily lives so much more naturally than the mahogany and damask which dominates indoors.[33]

In 1948 Van Keppel-Green increased their operations, forming a corporation, expanding their collections, and opening a manufacturing facility in North Hollywood.[34] They sought to create classic pieces that would have a long lifespan. "Their thinking lends itself to a group of furniture of a basic, timeless design, well-constructed, that can be added to or subtracted from, in small numbers as the architecture and furnishing picture changes, thus giving the homeowner an opportunity to fill properly as convenient without risking the shock of hearing that the furniture is no longer in production."[35]

The now-famous "sun chaise" in the Kaufmann residence photo was also featured in *Life* magazine in 1951, which gave Van Keppel-Green their most widespread exposure to date. To find out who was designing the best work of the day, the editors of *Life* sent secret ballots to the top interior designers, decorators, and department store buyers: "Then the manufacturers who received the most votes were invited to submit examples of what they considered their best work. They were asked to guide themselves not by the sales popularity of any item they made, or by its price, but solely by its beauty, its craftsmanship and the pride with which they made it."[36]

By the late 1940s, Van Keppel-Green tubular steel and yacht-cord furniture work had become instantly recognizable to a select group. They understood it was time to freshen up their furniture line. As *Art News* reported in 1949,

> Even before the war, the outdoor furniture of Hendrik van Keppel and Taylor Green was appreciated by a few knowing people. In the last three years its popularity has immensely increased; only a lack of variety seemed to stand in its way. A few months ago, the sight of a cord-wound Van Keppel-Green chair was enough to send any West Coast decorator into a state of cliché-catalepsis; it was a great compliment, of course,

since these chairs had become extremely popular in that part of the country. The usual reaction to this situation would have been to "design a new line." Happily, this team of designers resisted the temptation; they believed in the fundamental soundness of their original designs and set to work augmenting and varying the very same basic frames that had proven worthy in practical experience.

They maintained their original frames, which had become internationally acclaimed for their comfortable proportions and classic structure. For a different look, they switched out the white cotton yacht cord for reed, hand-split and then hand-woven. This offered a unique range of effects since it could be left in its natural soft state, or shellacked to a bright yellow, or painted any custom color desired. Low, two-tiered tables had split reed or redwood on the lower shelf, with fluted or textured glass on top.

Another introduction was the "sofa-chaise." This versatile piece featured an gracefully simple steel frame. An expanded metal and redwood base was hinged on one end so it could be raised above horizontal. This was covered with a thin foam rubber upholstered mattress with two removable innerspring bolsters supported by a steel-framed back. This adaptable piece could be used indoors or out—as a spare bed, sofa, or chaise. "Here versatility and comfort are joined in as restrained and elegant a piece of furniture as the market offers."[37]

By 1950, the work of Van Keppel-Green had been exhibited at the Museum of Modern Art in New York, at the "Good Design" exhibition in Chicago at the Merchandise Mart. They were honored by the Akron Art Institute, The Walker Art Gallery in Minneapolis, the Boston Industrial Design Institute, and the San Francisco Museum of Art.[38] Considering Van Keppel-Green's remarkable ascent in such a short time, it's astonishing to learn, as noted in the *Furniture Field* article from 1951, "the amazing point about this famous pair is that all the recognition and honors that have come to them have been reaped purely through the results of their work. It's true that they have been the recipients of publicity and countless special showing honors, but not once has such recognition been solicited on their part, and they never have engaged the services of publicity or public relations agencies."[39]

VKG: THE DARLING OF ARCHITECTS, LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTS, AND INTERIOR DESIGNERS

Van Keppel-Green was one of the first companies in the United States to focus solely on modern furniture designed for modern houses—to be used inside the home, as well as outside. While wildly popular with architects, landscape architects, and interior designers, this radical concept of living fell largely on deaf ears with the general public. Most people wanted comfortable upholstered furniture indoors, and purchased Van Keppel-Green mainly for outdoor use. While they did design and sell wood and upholstered furniture in their earlier years, it was their all-weather designs that made them famous and that they encouraged people to use inside and out. "At that time modern wasn't popular with the masses," architect Pierre Koenig later observed. "A very elite group bought modern and for this small group it was the top."[40] Julius Shulman, whose photographs often featured Van Keppel-Green, stated the furniture was a little too radical for most people. "Sure, it was revolutionary. No one would dream of having patio furniture inside. Don't forget before World War II modernism was new, and therefore it was a strange vocabulary for

This spread: The office of architect Thornton Abell, Santa Monica, 1954. Abell's offices have a relaxed, residential feeling, with fixed and sliding glass walls opening onto the landscaped patio. Abell used the work of Van Keppel-Green throughout. The garden walls are fabricated using steel tubes with panels of grommeted canvas strapped with cord to the steel frame. In lower photo the #631-27 steel frame and travertine dining table is being used here as a conference table. This project received the AIA Award in 1954 from the Southern California Chapter of the American Institute of Architects. Julius Shulman photographer. © J. Paul Getty Trust. Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles (2004.R.10).

people to absorb."[41]

Max and Rita Lawrence began selling their Architectural Pottery at the Beverly Hills location of Van Keppel-Green in the early 1950s. They became good friends with the partners and had Van Keppel-Green furnish their Bel Air home, which Hendrik had encouraged them to purchase, having been roped into house hunting for them by the couple who trusted his sense of taste and style. When interviewed at his home in 2002, Lawrence said, "People who had money had nice wood and plush things, but Hendrik didn't try to be luxurious." He pointed at the top of a custom, metal-framed Van Keppel-Green table. "This is Formica. If you pay a million dollars for a house, you don't want a Formica table."[42]

The singular focus on design and the belief it would change the world was a universal concept among young architects and designers of this era. "When Rita and I were young," recalled Lawrence, "We thought good design and living would change the world. We really believed that, and of course, we just became a commercial aspect of life. At that time, it was sort of revolutionary… people were considered outlaws - free love and whatnot."[43]

It was really architects and landscape architects who understood their designs and encouraged their clients to invest in Van Keppel-Green. According to Taylor Green, "Hendrik spent most of his life disappointed he wasn't an architect."[44] Van Keppel's deep appreciation for and understanding of their work may explain why Van Keppel-Green was in such demand by the architects of the day. Pierre Koenig was just out of architecture school when he met Van Keppel at the Beverly Hills store. "Hendrik was a really sweet guy—he helped me—when I got out of school. I had a line of furniture that I thought would supplement my income as an architect just starting out—but the furniture game is difficult. Hendrik took the furniture and repainted and refinished it and never charged me a cent." However, modern design was still a niche market. As Koenig recalled, "it was esoteric. It was for the vanguard. A small percentage of the more educated people—scientists, doctors, and artists all liked modern. *Arts & Architecture* was the only magazine that completely promoted modern all the time." When Koenig designed Case Study House #22, he selected Van Keppel-Green to furnish the entire house. "My houses were steel-framed, and their furniture was steel-framed, so it made sense." Koenig said that he and Van Keppel, "decided which pieces to use and what the color scheme would be." The very hands-on Van Keppel himself delivered the furniture: "He came up and put them according to the plan." Koenig remarked that having the designer and owner of the company come to place the furniture himself was highly unusual, since most companies outsourced the work.[45]

The work of Van Keppel-Green was also noticed and championed by the leading landscape architects of the day, most notably Garrett Eckbo. In his book *The Art of Home Landscaping,* Eckbo singled out their work as one of the "few notable exceptions" to most other furniture designed for outdoor use, which Eckbo found "clumsy if not actually ugly in appearance. The general theory seems to be that outdoor furniture, since it is 'only' for the garden, need have no grace or charm." He included Robert Royston and Jorge Ferrari-Hardoy (designer of the ubiquitous Butterfly Chair) as the other two exceptions to his opinion.[46] In his 1953 book *Planning the Garden*, landscape architect Robert Deering featured the designs of Van Keppel-Green as examples to illustrate what he considered fine furniture for landscape design.[47]

MERCHANDISING THE MODERN HOLLYWOOD

Over the years, Van Keppel-Green changed store locations several times. After the original site on Dayton Way closed during the war, upon Van Keppel's discharge in 1943, they opened a showroom at 9529 Santa Monica Boulevard at Rodeo in Beverly Hills. In 1949, they opened a much larger location on that same block. In 1955, riding high in their success, they had a store built specifically for them at 116 South Lasky Drive in Beverly Hills. The brick structure was designed by architect Leslie E. Arthur. The 6,000 square foot showroom was designed with a relaxed residential feeling—steel-framed sliding glass doors opened onto an exposed aggregate patio at the entrance where their furniture could be displayed. Outside, the brick walls were painted a deep umber. The same exposed aggregate flooring continued inside, with the walls painted a pale sandstone shade to match. Here, they sold ceramics by Edith Heath, along with "imported and domestic lighting, a splendid collection of stainless steel flatware, china, glassware, and decorative accessories."[48]

They opened a second Southern California location in Santa Monica in 1968, dubbed "The Country Store." The Country

This spread: For Case Study House #22, 1960, architect Pierre Koenig used steel-framed Van Keppel-Green throughout because the house was steel-framed. Before this famous Julius Shulman photo session, Hendrik Van Keppel himself came and staged the house. Pictured are the #603-13-01 Quad club chair, and Quarto low table, and the Quarto #650-57-01 love seat. Julius Shulman photographer. © J. Paul Getty Trust. Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles (2004.R.10).

Store was on a large plot of land, with lots of outdoor space and even a barn, a nod to Van Keppel's childhood as a farm boy. Finally, a third location was opened at Huntington Harbour in Huntington Beach.[49]

All the Van Keppel-Green shops were destinations, not just because they were one of the few stores stocking specifically modern design, but also because of the numerous events they hosted. Novel merchandising strategies were hatched, such as an in-store kitchen in The Country Store that was built for cooking classes offered by Green's brother Fred and his aunt, Virginia Pasley, a cookbook author, and *Chicago Tribune* food writer. Van Keppel purchased hundreds of crickets and cricket cages so the store would be filled with their chirps, making the indoors seem outdoors. Unfortunately, Green, unaware of Van Keppel's plan, purchased dozens of flytraps, and the crickets all died.

Art exhibits and live music events were common, with guests such as Frank Sinatra and Steve McQueen mingling in the crowd. According to Nick Cann, who dated Van Keppel in the 1960s (and did the illustrations for their advertising), "Edward Albert, Jr. had a show of photography at the Beverly Hills store. For the show opening, Liza Minnelli was his date, and she brought her father," stage and film director Vincente Minnelli. Cann also recalls that Jens Quistgaard, the iconic designer for Dansk, when he first visited Los Angeles, said the first place he had to see was the Van Keppel-Green shop, which (of course) stocked many of Quistgaard's designs.[50]

As Sam Kaufman later observed, "Van Keppel and Green themselves were comfortable members of the elite Hollywood social scene, their shop regularly visited by celebrities. Friendships with movie stars, though, did not make their furniture glamorous. The furniture did that all by itself."[51]

Cann also says Rudi Gernreich, the fashion designer famous for his topless bathing suit, started working as a stock boy in the store and later designed fabrics for them. Van Keppel and Green were friends with many celebrities such as Vincent Price and Anne Baxter. Cann recalls, "Fanny Brice was Hendrik's favorite celebrity customer for her sense of taste and style—and she always covered her eyes when she wrote a check."[52]

When Virginia Van Keppel was asked about her brother's celebrity friends, she recalled, "Joan Crawford and Vincent Price were his good friends." She often accompanied Van Keppel for dinner at the Price's house, where gourmet food was standard fare. Price and his wife Mary Grant Price had authored several cookbooks, such as *A Treasury of Great Recipes*, now a highly collectible book.

Cann also remembers Van Keppel being close friends with architect Philip Johnson, "they used to cruise Santa Monica Boulevard together." Bobby Short, the pianist who was a long-time resident performer at the Carlyle hotel in New York City, was also a good friend. In a telephone interview shortly before he died in 2005, Short reminisced that he and Van Keppel became friends over their love of music and collecting records.[53]

UNRAVELLING

About a year after Van Keppel-Green opened The Country Store in 1968, it caught fire in a suspected arson. Damages

were estimated at $125,000.[54] According to Nick Cann, in 1970, Van Keppel suffered a stroke, though he fully recovered within two weeks. Shortly after that, the stores in Beverly Hills and Huntington Harbour were closed. Finally, in April 1972, Van Keppel-Green closed its final location at The Country Store in Santa Monica. It was the end of an era. As Van Keppel's sister Virginia recalled, "When the fire happened, and the Barn burned down, he didn't have enough insurance to build it back, and that was kind of the beginning of the end."

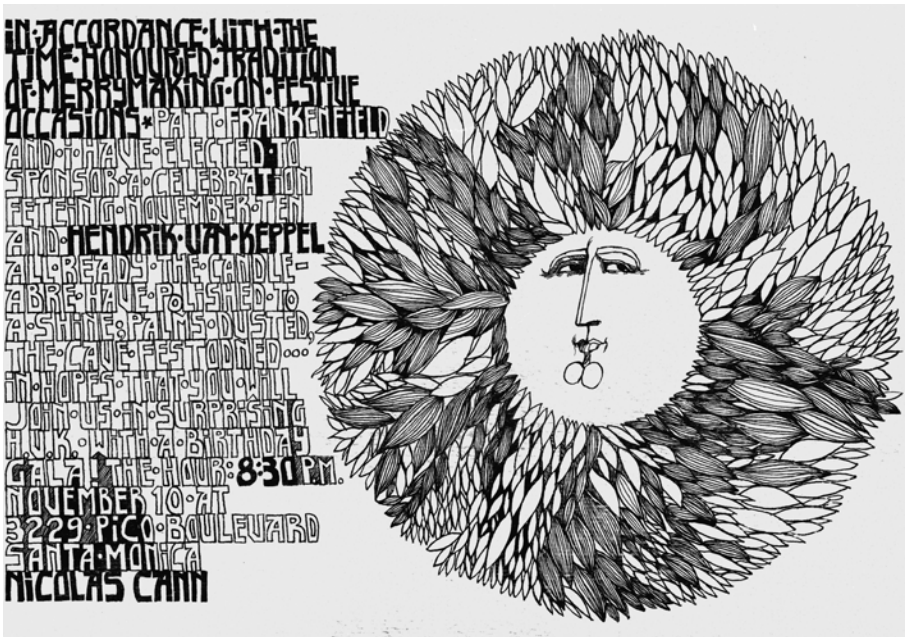
To commemorate the store's closing, the *Los Angeles Times Home Magazine* reported, "When the shop Van Keppel-Green closed its doors with finality this spring, it split from our daily way of living the continuing influence of its two partners. These two tasteful men, Hendrik Van Keppel and Taylor Green had filled their shop with much of the best contemporary design in interior furnishings and accessories for more than thirty years. In the end, the business suffered reverses making it impossible to continue."[55] Curt Wagner, a store owner dealing in high-quality twentieth-century modern design, sent a letter of appreciation to his clients. In it, he said, "It is due in part to the taste of these two gentlemen that a design revolution occurred in American products, and today a consumer can go to an average store and buy good design at a reasonable price, but it was not always so."[56]

After the store closed, Green, who ran the company's business side, became a partner in the interior design firm Dan Steen Interior Design in Huntington Beach. Green had started a relationship with Steen in the late 1950s, and Steen began working for Van Keppel-Green at that time. Their relationship would continue through Green's death.[57]

Van Keppel bought a small bungalow in Santa Monica and lived alone. He briefly worked as a real estate agent in the office of Ken Kremith.[58] But without the design business to keep him occupied, a friend later said his only interest became "drinking vodka with grapefruit juice." Though Van Keppel had been a heavy drinker all his life, it started to get worse, which concerned his friends. "I think creatively he dried up and [that] probably [escalated] the ravages of drinking, to be perfectly honest," says Cann. It finally got so bad that Cann said, "I found out about intervention. And so, I got together all the people I thought he might call in case of an emergency. We gathered at his house, and I had a piece of cardboard with an AA number on it, and I taped it to the floorboard of the house and said, 'next time, call this number,' and from that point, he never drank again."[59]

Later, Van Keppel suffered a second stroke, losing the ability to speak, and was transferred to his younger sister Alice's house in San Carlos, California. Van Keppel died aged seventy-three on March 20, 1988, in San Mateo. Green remained with Steen, his partner of thirty-three years, who cared for him after Alzheimer's set in. Taylor Green passed away on August 22, 1991, at seventy-six.[60]

Above: Dale Netland, left, managed the Van Keppel-Green store in Beverly Hills. Artist Nick Cann, right, lived with Hendrik Van Keppel in the mid-to-late-1960s and created Van Keppel-Green's distinctive advertisements. Photo courtesy Nick Cann.



Above, right: Artist Nick Cann's signature style on a surprise birthday party invitation for Hendrik Van Keppel, ca. 1969. The party was held at Nick Cann's studio on Pico Boulevard, which Hendrik helped design. According to Cann, "ALL the guests brought him bottles of vodka!"

Right: Actress Anne Baxter enjoys a classic Van Keppel-Green lounge chair and ottoman with designer Hendrik Van Keppel, ca. 1968. Photo courtesy Nick Cann.

VAN KEPPEL-GREEN LEGACY

With the loss of the Van Keppel-Green stores in 1972, it was difficult for their designs to remain relevant. In the mid-1970s, Benedetti reissued several Van Keppel-Green designs but updated them with chrome tubing. This venture was short-lived. Unlike larger companies such as Knoll and Herman Miller, which were focused on the more lucrative office furniture market, Van Keppel-Green had no succession plans, let alone children or heirs to carry on the company. After continuous manufacturing ceased in 1972, Van Keppel-Green designs became rarities coveted by collectors and architects, who purchased the vintage pieces at modernist auctions and vintage furniture dealers. A few small companies did unauthorized knockoffs, often changing dimensions and manufacturing details.

Furniture designer John Caldwell, a consultant for Brown Jordan and a well-respected furniture manufacturer, worked with Van Keppel on some of the Van Keppel-Green furniture Brown Jordan manufactured for them. Caldwell echoes Koenig's view that modern design was a tough sell back in the 1950-60s, when Van Keppel-Green was at its peak. "Traditional has always been popular and simple modern design—it's a miracle if it is successful. We all go to design or architecture schools, we read journals on modern design, we think the world is a certain way, but it isn't—we forget to drive down Main Street." Caldwell was involved in the early days of Design Within Reach, who briefly reissued a few of the Van Keppel-Green chairs in 2010, but they didn't sell well. Caldwell feels that most of the general public, even in the modern segment, don't have excellent taste: "The best-selling stuff in the [Design Within Reach] catalog isn't great design, we aren't necessarily proud of it, but it sells. The furniture that is very clean and pure is compromised by this furniture."[61]

In some ways, the world hasn't changed much in terms of design since the 1940s. In their heyday, Van Keppel-Green catered to a select niche. Many decades later, with more people interested in modern art and design, their work is still considered too minimal and too radical for mainstream interest. But the Van Keppel-Green legacy remains—the worldwide enthusiasm for indoor/outdoor design and living.

ABOUT THE AUTHORS

From an early age, author Eric Haeberli has been interested in modern art and design. The son of art and antique collectors, he thinks growing up surrounded by antiquities shaped his rebellious love of a modern, simple aesthetic. As a child, he spent his free time designing and drafting houses and cars. Because of that, he planned to go to architecture school, only to end up in art school focused on film and painting. After a series of jobs landed him in the tech industry in the 1990s, he finally had the money to purchase a home in San Francisco, which, he decided, must be an Eichler. He found one and restored it himself. In his quest to furnish the house with period-appropriate furniture, he discovered some Van Keppel-Green pieces at his friend Chris Huston's Modern Artifacts shop. A former journalist, Haeberli loved to research the designers he purchased. When he discovered no published material on Van Keppel-Green, he promised himself he would write that book himself. This turned into a twenty-plus-year odyssey of tracking down and interviewing surviving family members, friends, lovers, architects, and business associates. The book is a work in progress, which he hopes will someday be published.

Steven Keylon is the editor of *Eden* and is past-president of the California Garden & Landscape History Society. He has written two books, *The Design of Herbert W. Burns* and *The Modern Architecture of Hugh Michael Kaptur.* He is the co-author of a third book, *Tom O'Donnell: Generous Spirit of Palm Springs* (with Steve Vaught and Tracy Conrad) which will be released in the fall of 2021. Keylon is vice-president of the Palm Springs Preservation Foundation, serves on the board of DocomomoUS/So Cal and the Stewardship Council of The Cultural Landscape Foundation. He regularly writes and lectures on the historic architecture and landscape of Southern California. He too hopes this book about Van Keppel-Green will soon be published.

Endnotes

[1] The house that Van Keppel and Green bought in 1951 had been designed and built by Waldo Waterman (1894-1976) and his wife Carol in 1945. Waterman was a larger-than-life pioneer aviator, aircraft manufacturer, engineer, barnstormer, inventor, and test pilot. He was the inventor of the Waterman Aerobile flying car, one example of which is on display at the Smithsonian. In 1968, Waterman was inducted into the International Air & Space Hall of Fame, and his life was the inspiration for the film "The Great Waldo Pepper." According to *Santa Monica Canyon: A Walk Through History,* by Betty Lou and Randy Young (1997), 345 Amalfi was their "dream house," incorporating everything they wanted in a home, including an acoustically-designed room for his wife Carol and her piano. The modernist house, which turned out to be 5,000 square feet, "caused much pro and con discussion," according to Waterman, "which didn't bother me a bit."

[2] "This Week," *The Press Democrat*, Santa Rosa, California; June 14, 1933, 7; The Vineyards in Sonoma County, by Isaac DeTurk, 1893, 33,

[3] *Forestville*, by Penny Hutten, Forestville Historical Society, Arcadia Publishing, 2008, 44.

[4] Eric Haeberli interview with Virginia Hughes, August 13, 2005, at the Van Keppel farm in Forestville.

[5] Ibid.

[6] "Van Keppel-Green: Design Team," by James J. Cowen, Furniture Field, unpaginated clipping in Hendrik Van Keppel papers, 1951.

[7] Fritz Eldon Baldauf was born on December 8, 1887, in Annaberg, Germany. At sixteen he started studies at the Royal Art School in Dresden. In 1909 he completed his courses in architecture, probably at the Technische Hochschule—German universities at the time did not teach architecture. In 1911 he won an architect's contest and became one of the first architects in Europe to design domestic interiors as well as exteriors of homes. Baldauf immigrated to New York in 1924, and in 1925 he moved to San Francisco to take employment with A.F. Marten Company, interior decorators, where he designed interiors for homes, hotels, and clubs. He also provided the interior architecture and decoration for two steamships: the S.S. President Coolidge and the S.S. President Hoover. Around the time Van Keppel was working for him, Baldauf was planning an exhibition room for the 1939 Golden Gate International Exposition in San Francisco. He designed a "room for a bachelor" with twelve pieces, which he created, and which was executed by The Herman Miller Furniture Company of Zeeland, Michigan. Baldauf passed away in July of 1970 in San Francisco. According to Lisa Baldauf, his granddaughter, Van Keppel is listed in their payroll books as a "draughtsman, installer." Eric Haeberli telephone interview with Lisa Baldhauf March 8, 2004.

[8] *Furniture Field.*

[9] John Henry Van Keppel draft registration card, October 16, 1940. The card lists his employer as F.G. Bruns, with offices at 442 Post Street in San Francisco, and at 812 W. 8th Street in Los Angeles. By this time, Van Keppel was living with Taylor Green at 1469 Scott Avenue in Los Angeles.

[10] Eric Haeberli telephone interview with Fred Green, May 17, 2004.

[11] *Furniture Field.*

[12] Ibid.

[13] "California '49ers," *House Beautiful*, July 1949, 45.

[14] "Tubular Steel, Cord and Glass," Interiors, April 1947, 46.

[15] *Furniture Field.*

[16] Parra-Martínez, J., Gutiérrez-Mozo, M.-E. and Gilsanz-Díaz, A.-C., 2020. "Queering California Modernism: Architectural Figurations and Media Exposure of Gay Domesticity in the Roosevelt Era," *Architectural Histories*, 8(1), p.14. DOI: http://doi.org/10.5334/ah.382

[17] Parra-Martínez, J., Gutiérrez-Mozo, M.-E. and Gilsanz-Díaz, A.-C., 2020. "Queering California Modernism: Architectural Figurations and Media Exposure of Gay Domesticity in the Roosevelt Era". *Architectural Histories*, 8(1), p.14. DOI: http://doi.org/10.5334/ah.382

[18] Though it has been written many times that Entenza bought the bankrupt *California Arts & Architecture* in 1938, recent scholarship by John Crosse reveals a different story. See: https://socalarchhistory.blogspot.com/search?q=ENTENZA

[19] "Garden Fantasy" exhibition announcement, *Los Angeles Times*, June 8, 1941, 117; *California Arts & Architecture*, June 1941, 18.

[20] In past scholarship on the work of Van Keppel-Green, it has been inaccurately noted that they opened their first shop on Flower Street in 1938, followed by a custom design studio in Beverly Hills in 1939. This misinformation originated in a 1951 article about Van Keppel-Green by James J. Cowen in *Furniture Field*. Whether the author misinterpreted what they said, or perhaps Van Keppel or Green got the dates wrong isn't known. But Van Keppel's draft registration card from October of 1940 shows that he was still managing at the to-the-trade fabric showroom Johnson & Faulkner on West 8th Street, near Flower. An advertisement in the *Los Angeles Times* in June 1941 announced the opening of the Hendrik Van Keppel showroom in Beverly Hills. When Van Keppel could not find suitable modern spotlights for his new showroom, he worked with Bob Brown to create a ceiling-hung fixture, a long gas pipe from which adjustable bullet lights were attached, an early example of track lighting. From "Van Keppel-Green: Design Team," by James J. Cowen, *Furniture Field*, unpaginated clipping in Hendrik Van Keppel papers, 1951.

[21] Eric Haeberli Interview with Max Lawrence at his Bel Air Home, July 28, 2006.

[22] "Van Keppel-Green: Design Team," by James J. Cowen, Furniture Field, unpaginated clipping in Hendrik Van Keppel papers, 1951. The article makes note that while the iconic steel and yacht cord furniture was Van Keppel's design, Green was the author of their popular club chairs and sectional seating. In the 1940s and early 1950s, Van Keppel-Green produced chunky Late Moderne-style upholstered and case pieces, using maple or birch. The Furniture Field article credits them with popularizing "the blonde finishes that are so easy to keep clean." The Los Angeles furniture manufacturer Brown-Saltman commissioned a 20-odd piece coordinated collection of blonde mahogany pieces, including their innovative and popular convertible coffee-dining table. The Museum of Modern Art in New York selected the buffet from the Brown-Saltman group for its Good Design Exhibition.

[23] "Van Keppel and Green," *House Beautiful*, July 1947, 43.

[24] Eric Haeberli telephone interview with Elaine Jones, August 22, 2003.

[25] *Furniture Field.*

[26] Van Keppel, Department of Veteran's Affairs death file; Green, 1991 obituary and Veteran's Affairs death file; U.S., World War II Hospital Admission Card Files, 1942-1954. According to *Neuropsychiatry in World War II,* (Volume I), although many varieties of sexual deviation were observed in the Army, homosexuality was the most frequently encountered. Military codes of justice contain provision for the punishment of homosexual acts. As provided in the *Manual of Courts-Martial,* an enlisted person in the military service charged with an overt homosexual act could be tried under the 93d Article of War for "sodomy" and, if convicted, could receive a maximum sentence of 5 years imprisonment. Officers involved in homosexual acts were handled similarly, by either court-martial or administrative regulations dealing with the elimination of the noneffective officer. Discharges for homosexuality were usually without honor (blue)." See: https://history.amedd.army.mil/booksdocs/wwii/NeuropsychiatryinWWIIVol1/DEFAULT.htm

[27] *Furniture Field.*

[28] "Announcement: The Case Study House Program," *Arts & Architecture*, January 1945, 37.

[29] *Eames House Conservation Management Plan*, published by The Getty Conservation Institute, 2018, 18.

[30] For more about Elizabeth Gordon, see Monica Penick's very fine book *Tastemaker Elizabeth Gordon, House Beautiful, and the Postwar American Home*, Yale University Press, 2018. See also "Tahquitz River Estates" in *Eden*, Summer 2017.

[31] "1947: Design Year in the U.S.A.," Elizabeth Gordon, *House Beautiful*, 26.

[32] "Art Into Living: Summer Furniture 1947," Edgar Kaufmann, Jr. Art News, May 1947, 32.

[33] Ibid

[34] *Furniture Field.*

[35] Ibid. This permanent design approach, a concept of lines of modern furniture that would be sold for years, eschewing the typical Winter and Summer Market presentations, was pioneered by New York industrial designer Gilbert Rohde in the 1930s, for the Herman Miller Furniture Company of Zeeland, Michigan. See *Gilbert Rohde: Modern Design for Modern Living*, Phyllis Ross, Yale University Press, 2009.

[36] "America's Best," LIFE, December 11, 1950, 88.

[37] *Art News,* April 1949, 39-40.

[38] *Furniture Field.*

[39] Ibid.

[40] Eric Haeberli interview with Pierre Koenig at his Brentwood Home, October 29, 2003.

[41] Eric Haeberli Interviews with Julius Shulman at his home/studio in Los Angeles: October 28, 2003; May 17, 2004; June 29, 2006.

[42] Eric Haeberli Interview with Max Lawrence at his Bel Air Home, July 28, 2006.

[43] Ibid.

[44] Steven Keylon telephone interview with Nick Cann, May 31, 2021. Taylor Green made this remark to Nick Cann, who said to me he did not share this observation about Van Keppel.

[45] Eric Haeberli interview with Pierre Koenig at his Brentwood Home, October 29, 2003.

[46] *The Art of Home Landscaping*, Garrett Eckbo, F.W. Dodge Corp, New York, 1956, 204.

[47] *Planning the Garden*, Robert Deering, University of California (Berkeley), 1953, 68-69.

[48] "New Verve for Van Keppel-Green," *Interiors*, July 1956, 38.

[49] By 1960, a branch of Van Kan Keppel-Green opened in Chicago at 161 East Erie, though that was short-lived.

[50] Eric Haeberli Interviews with Nick Cann: November 12, 2003, in San Francisco and February 10, 2008 at his home in Napa. Nick Cann is a very talented artist who was schooled at San Jose State, the Ecole des Beaux Arts in Paris, and The Art Center in Los Angeles. He met Hendrik Van Keppel in 1965, and they lived together unti about 1970, though they remained lifelong friends. He worked for Van Keppel-Green doing the artwork and designing their advertisements and catalogues. He went on to a long career creating artwork for departments stores, film and television sets, and created the artwork for two Blossom Dearie album covers. He now lives in Napa.

[51] https://modernism101.com/products-page/industrial-design/van-keppel-green-1951-beverly-hills-ca-hendrik-van-keppel-and-taylor-green-1951/#.YKf_hKhKjIU

[52] Eric Haeberli Interviews with Nick Cann: November 12, 2003, in San Francisco and February 10, 2008, at his home in Napa.

[53] Eric Haeberli telephone interview with Bobby Short, 2005.

[54] *Los Angeles Times*, June 10, 1969.

[55] "It's Our Loss," by Joan Dektar, *Los Angeles Times Home Magazine*, August 20, 1972, 35.

[56] Ibid.

[57] "A Structural Spectacular," *Los Angeles Times*, October 16, 1966, 451, makes note that Steen worked for Van Keppel-Green; Obituary, Taylor Green, Los Angeles Times, September 7, 1991, 28.

[58] Announcement in Ken Kremith advertisement, *Los Angeles Times*, June 2, 1974

[59] Eric Haeberli Interviews with Nick Cann: November 12, 2003, in San Francisco and February 10, 2008, at his home in Napa.

[60] Obituary, Taylor Green, *Los Angeles Times*, September 7, 1991, 28.

[61] Eric Haeberli telephone interview with John Caldwell, May 3, 2009.

ARCHITECTURAL POTTERY: A FLOATING LANDSCAPE

ANN HEROLD

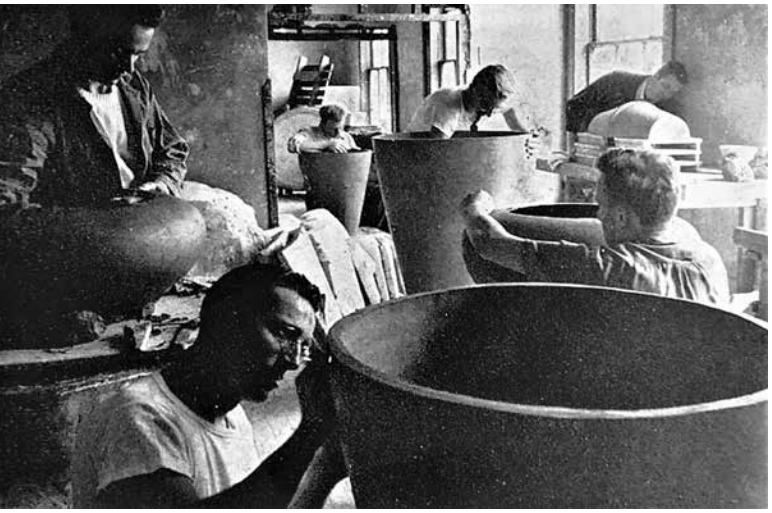
The article in a 1950 issue of *Life* magazine described it as a "stunt:" Ten student designers at California School of Art in Los Angeles descended upon a local terracotta factory and tore apart clay pots—once destined to bear the traditional cherubs and flowers—and refashioned them into giant modernist planters. The results were startlingly oversize ovoids and primitive sombreros and even a piece that looked eerily like a strawberry planter on steroids. The "show" staged by their instructor, revered ceramist LaGardo Tackett, at the Evans and Reeves nursery in Brentwood in 1949 was intended to not only produce something functional but also appropriate for the space-age homes emerging from such architects as Richard Neutra, John Lautner, Rudolph Schindler, and Gregory Ain, and for the Case Study Houses commissioned by *Arts & Architecture* magazine. One, by Pierre Koenig and famously photographed at night by Julius Shulman, forever established L.A. as a modernist center. Smack in the center of the photo: ceramic pots by a fledgling business, born of a student stunt.

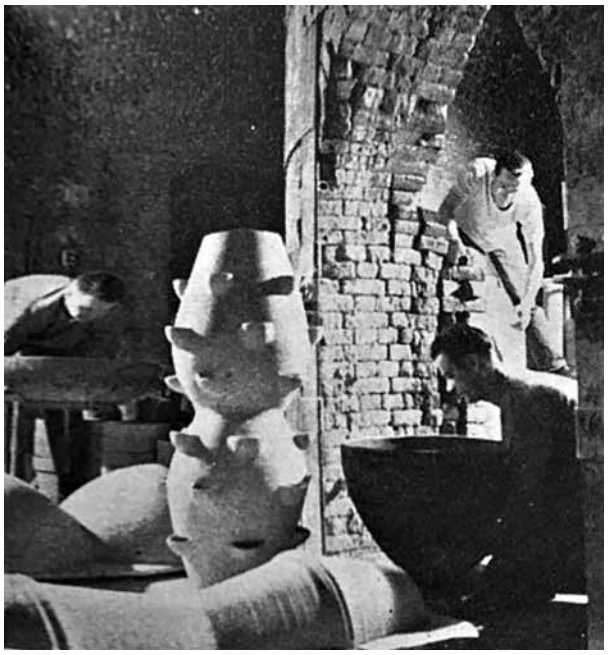
In the wake of the nursery show, two of the students—Rex Goode and John Follis—continued manufacturing the pots, buying the designs from their colleagues and setting up a studio in Pasadena. Almost by happenstance the tiny pottery operation came to the attention of Max Lawrence, who was running a successful meatpacking company but shared an interest in modernism with his friend, noted graphic designer Lou Danziger, who pointed him to the innovative project. The Lawrences were living in a home by Gregory Ain, and the pots so suited their place that they couldn't imagine other like-minded homeowners passing them up. "I was a very bored young housewife with a new baby," Rita told an interviewer of her launch, using the designs of Follis and Goode, of Architectural Pottery. "All the pottery then was Italian, Spanish or Renaissance. There was nothing at all that suited the new city architecture."[1] And it wasn't much of a leap for Max when, with Rita working all hours in the couple's bedroom marketing the business, he went from moneyman to full-time manager.

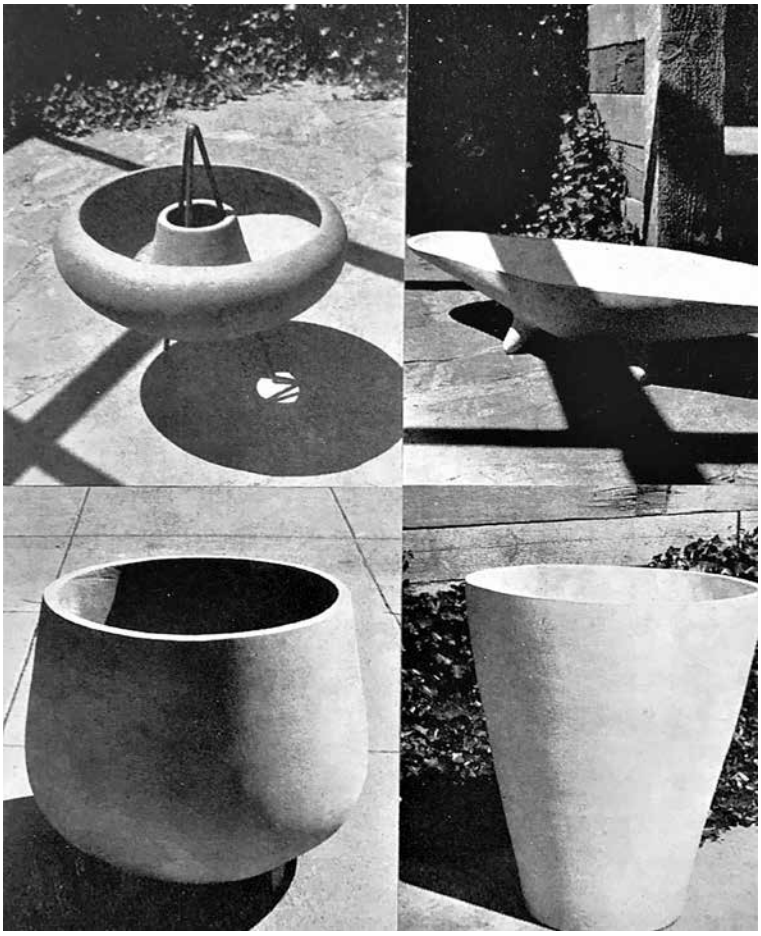
In the beginning the huge pots, which were left unglazed to protect the health of the plants, had to be made by hand, the only place with kilns large enough to fire them the same terracotta factory that had served as the stage for the student project. Production was slow and an even bigger challenge was shipping the pots to buyers around the country, where they would often arrive in pieces. Then in 1950 and again in 1951, the pots were chosen by the Museum of Modern Art in New York for its Good Design exhibitions in Chicago. There the Architectural Pottery planters shared space with the creations of such midcentury legends as Ray and Charles Eames and George Nelson in presentations designed by iconic Scandinavian architects Finn Juhl and Eero Saarinen.

Meanwhile the Lawrences had moved into what they perceived as another much-needed niche—smaller pots that allowed homeowners to make the interiors of their homes as gardenlike as the exteriors. The Lawrences established relationships with several progressive designers for the venture, including Tackett, whose "bullet" and hourglass pots and sand urns—the ashtrays that would soon become ubiquitous in public spaces—were among the company's most popular products and enduring silhouettes in midcentury modernism.

Opposite: An assortment of Architectural Pottery in the Bel Air garden of the home of Max and Rita Lawrence, owners of the company. Julius Shulman photographer. © J. Paul Getty Trust. Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles (2004.R.10).







This page: Photos of the students at the California School of Art busy at work creating ceramics for the 1949 exhibition at the Evans and Reeves Nursery in Brentwood. Photos from *Arts & Architecture*, July 1949.

"We were not self-consciously making these decisions that we were part of the modernity movement, but we would decide, for example, that designers were divided between those who wanted to cling to the past and those who wanted to represent today's world," said Rita in an oral history conducted by UCLA. "We had made the decision to go with those who wanted to create a new world.

"I think the reason that there was a mix in the arts and in architecture and design in the sense of changing the world is that, after all, in 1949 to 1950, when we got started, there had been two disastrous world wars and the Holocaust and grim things, and people picking up the threads and wanting to re-create a new life…and create not only a more beautiful environment but an environment that would be based on peace in the world, on social justice, on civil liberties and so on.

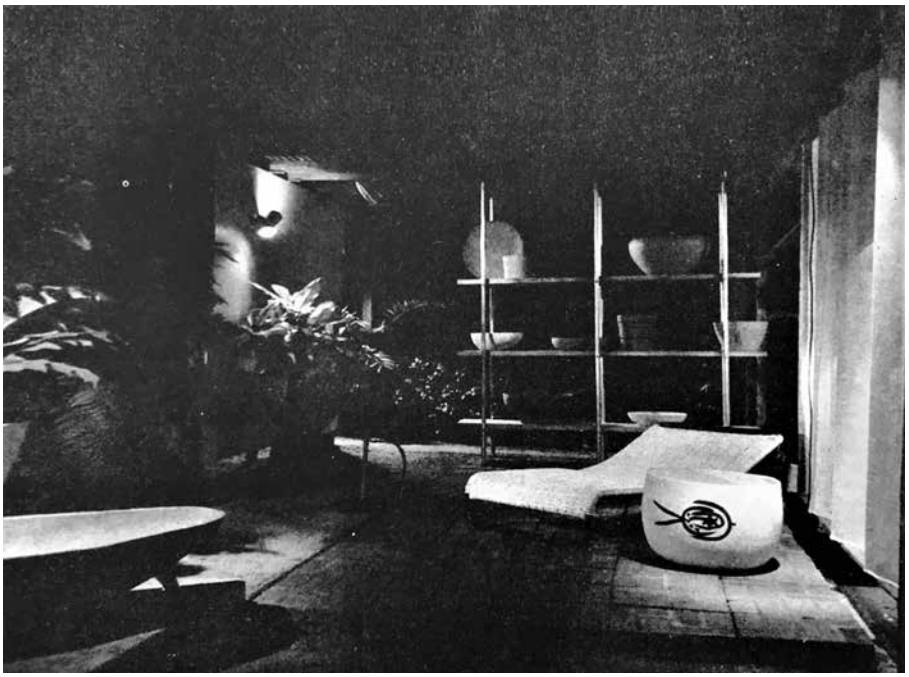
"When we made decisions about what new products to bring out, this would have been the overlying background."

Among those new wares were practical yet stylish planter stands by Follis, whose simple metal and wood designs not only raised the pots off the floors but lent a floating quality to the pieces. Another new product in the Architectural Pottery lineup, the gourd-shaped hanging bird shelters by Malcolm Leland, further elevated the company's oeuvre. Meanwhile, Tackett, who had captivated landscape designers with his outdoor totems—vertical pot stacks that could be turned into fountains—engaged the attention of interior designers with his roughly textured artisan planters. That organic look was further enhanced by Raul Angulo Coronel, whose hand-thrown pots came in three textures and a variety of colors that included the newly trendy turquoise and olive. This evolution to a more custom yet still accessible product line culminated in the early 1960s with Architectural Pottery's Artist-in-Residence program, tapping the considerable talents of L.A. sculptor David Cressey.

"My interest in archeology influences my design," Cressey has said of the massive artworks that he would literally muscle into being, shaping the clay by hand into the massive brutalesque-style pieces that defined Architectural Pottery's award-winning Pro-Artisan Collection. "The kind of rugged beauty that I prize in this line is the same kind of archaic ruggedness we see in ancient ruins."

"I'm very close to the earthier, brutal look, the organic feel of the material, the kind of things that happen to clays and glazes when they've gone through the fires of hell."

Cressey was already in charge of the



new factory that Max—weary of working with a subcontractor—had established in Manhattan Beach. There Cressey invented a slip cast process that allowed him to mass produce his sometimes hefty and often complex stoneware pots and lamps, hanging lights and decorative sculptures. It was also where, with the help of ceramics engineers, the company devised electric kilns capable of firing Cressey's unique stoneware.

It was this aptitude for inventiveness that would lead the Lawrences down an ever-widening entrepreneurial path—as creators of large public planters, sand urns, trash containers, and benches in their new venture: Architectural Fiberglass. Vacationing at a Ventura County beach cottage, they noticed a diver carrying a board upon which he'd floated his gear as he hunted for abalone. The diver described how he'd molded the board out of fiberglass—but without the underlying foam blanks used in surfboard construction. The Lawrences hired the intrepid inventor and put him in charge of their Oxnard fiberglass factory. "There was a big movement for shopping centers, and they needed very large containers that were larger than we could make of clay," Rita recounted. "They couldn't have a lot of small containers--even the cylinders, which were put in clusters and could serve some traffic control purposes. And they had to be sturdy but lightweight for the purpose of being on roof decks and for moveability within shopping centers."

As Architectural Fiberglass transitioned into public furniture, Douglas Deeds, acclaimed for his indoor-outdoor chairs, was named the design director. Among the division's landscape-altering contributions were the bucket-seat benches—minus the clutter of chair legs—now used at airports and malls around the world, and ultimately inspire the formation of yet another enterprise: Arcon Furniture.

The growing array of products prompted newly appointed Architectural Pottery president Barry Rosengrant to lobby for a retail outlet much like that of his old firm, Knoll International. The chic multilevel Architectural Pottery showroom on Robertson Boulevard became the company's hub—part display space and part workroom. Then in 1970, in a move to consolidate all the divisions—which now included ceramic tile designs by Cressey and a tile factory in Maywood—the Lawrences renamed their burgeoning business Group Artec. On its heels came Thompson System R/S, which produced modular office furniture for the futuristic office.

"It all stemmed from this desire to get into other items connected to the architectural field and to people that knew us," said Max. "Because these were big-time fields. They were not ceramic. When you get into ceramic pottery, there were really only small companies outside of the big tile companies. And the main thing was to generate more income so that we could afford all the people who were working for us, and to accommodate the needs of Barry and other people who would come in to engender growth in the company."

Rosengrant also believed the company needed an image makeover, hiring graphic designer Jayme Odgers to remake the company's logo: "I used a hand-lettered alphabet that was computer-like but had the touch of cast and handmade pottery or moulded fiberglass," said Odgers. Then he set about updating the company's catalogues, which Rita had steadfastly maintained should show a plant in every pot and always be photographed in black and white. Odgers went in the opposite

Above, left: The exhibition at the Evans and Reeves Nursery was staged with pieces from Van Keppel-Green. Photo from *Arts & Architecture*, July 1949.

Above, right: Max and Rita Lawrence regularly ran ads for Architectural Pottery in *Arts & Architecture.*

Bottom: LaGardo Tackett's iconic hourglass-shaped planter, seen in an early Architectural Pottery catalog.

Above, left: This photo from a 1961 Architectural Pottery catalog shows the wide array of shapes and colors available.

Above, right: Designer Malcolm Leland's elegant Bird Shelter, 1951. Photo courtesy David Skelley/Boomerang for Modern, Palm Springs.

Right: John Follis' "pig" planter in the garden of Max and Rita Lawrence. Julius Shulman photographer. © J. Paul Getty Trust. Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles (2004.R.10).

Opposite top left: This early Architectural Pottery catalog shows pieces designed for the 1949 exhibition, including two versions of John Follis' "pig" planter, along with Rex Goode and Follis' "sombrero" and "peanut planters."

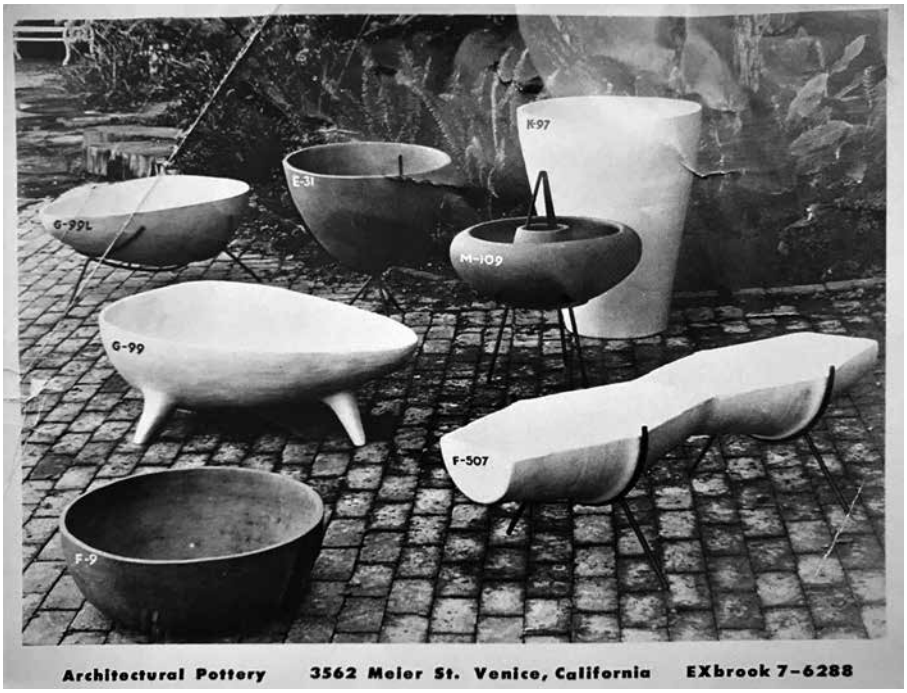
Opposite top right: Featured in the Bel Air garden of Architectural Pottery owners Max and Rita Lawrence are Goode and Follis' "peanut" planter in the foreground, and LaGardo Tackett's stacking totem in the background. Furniture by Van Keppel-Green.

Opposite below: The heavily textured and dynamic work of David Cressey. Photos from Architectural Pottery catalogs.

direction, using the plant-less pots as props in what would become celebrated surrealist landscapes, including goosebump-inducing photographs inspired by the Apollo 14 moon landing. Odgers also defied the ban on color, going so far as to print a catalogue cover in a bright red and blue montage despite Rita's edict.

It was a hit.

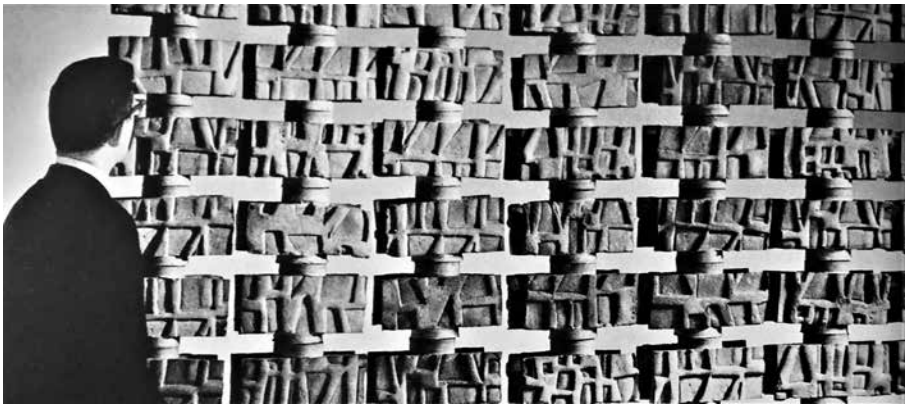
Among Rita's many fans—those who repeatedly credit her with making Architectural Pottery the phenomenon it became—was architect A. Quincy Jones. "As a manufacturer, she is more than a patron of good design," Jones told the *Los Angeles Times* in 1972. "As a 'resonator' she brings together the designer and the manufacturer, a role difficult to undertake and understood by few because it involves a commitment to the purpose of producing good design."[2]



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Ann Herold covered architecture and interior design for *Los Angeles* magazine from 2009 to 2017, which included a package on fifty years of Los Angeles architecture. Prior to that, she was the managing editor of the *Los Angeles Times Sunday Magazine*, and her writing appeared in the paper's Op-Ed, Travel, Health, Home, Food, and Sports sections and included a Home cover story on architect George Washington Smith for the *Times*' greatest architects series. Ann was an adjunct professor of journalism at the University of Southern California from 1980 until 2016.

Architectural Pottery: A Floating Landscape is adapted from a forthcoming book, a collaboration between Ann Herold, photographer Dan Chavkin, and photography editor Lisa Thackaberry. They have worked closely with Max and Rita Lawrence's son Damon, who lives in the couple's Bel Air home and is the keeper of a comprehensive archive. Other materials reside at the Charles E. Young Research Library at UCLA.



Endnotes

[1]The majority of information and quotes in this article come from an oral history created in 2000: "A Better World Through Good Design," conducted by Teresa Barnett for the Oral History Program at the University of California, Los Angeles. The hard copy is available in the Max and Rita Lawrence Architectural Pottery Records (Collection 1587). Library Special Collections, Charles E. Young Research Library, University of California, Los Angeles. At the time of publication, the Young Research Library was closed due to COVID, so the page numbers could not be retrieved.

[2] "A Gentle Kind of Genius," *Los Angeles Times Home Magazine*, February 13, 1972, 33.

Memories of Bill Grant, CGLHS Founder

Bill Grant maintained a correspondence with a global intelligentsia. Usually it was fellow rosarians. However, not uncommonly he would write the author of a book or article he had enjoyed and engage them in debate. For instance, he communicated with an authority on, a topic germane to his family history, the 18th to 19th-century Highland clearances. I myself, writing on less turbulent topics, received more than one appreciative note from this industrious correspondent.

Few could resist Bill's charm and ebullience. Among his foreign fans were the British horticultural luminaries Robin Lane Fox, garden editor for the *Financial Times*, and David Wheeler, editor and publisher of *Hortus*. Indeed, Bill contributed to eighteen issues of that refined and idiosyncratic journal, including a reverie in the Winter 2014 issue on, as the title "Closing the Gate" suggests, the dismantling of his Aptos garden.

With Bill's founding of CGLHS, California garden historians were particular beneficiaries of Bill's wide-ranging interests and zeal. Not to be overlooked was the huge pleasure of his larger-than-life presence at many of the organization's events, or over sandwiches looking over his roses.

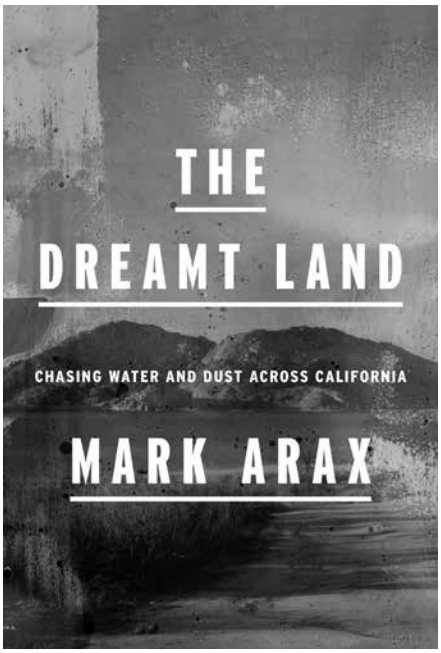
Phoebe Cutler
Desmond Smith

Book Review

The Dreamt Land; Chasing Water and Dust Across California
by Mark Arax. Alfred A. Knopf, 2019

California's Central Valley is the most expensive and intensive experiment in agriculture in the world, made possible by the movement of water across the state. Arax tells this vast and complex story in a brisk and conversational style. He encompasses stories large and small, from his own grandfather leaving Constantinople to land at a Fresno farm, to early farmers such as Joseph Gallo and his desperation, to the largest landowners in the valley who have almost unfathomable wealth and influence. Continuing racial and cultural delineations circumscribed farming areas and practices and factor into many stories.

California's water engineers recognized that the valley's aquifers were being overdrafted early on. Their decision to "move the rain" reads like a who-done-it. This audacious plan, familiar to Californians, was called "The Great Exchange" and killed the San Joaquin River, diverting its water from Fresno further south, then supplying Fresno with water from the Sacramento River. The allotment of water was complicated and unrealistic from the beginning and has only grown more so. In a bounteous rain year, a rancher may receive more water than he can use via the state's publicly



funded water project, allowing him to sell excess water back to the state. Now, water allotments in the valley have become liquid assets that can be "bought and sold like lean hog futures."

Water and crops are the backbone of the story. Growers are profiled and many are fascinating. Even when Arax disagrees with a growers' practices, the portrayals are nuanced. Almond growers are experimenting with artificially pollinating their trees at a massive scale. Almond groves are giving way to pistachios, and now I know why. (I thought of this switch when I passed a Starbucks advertising their new pistachio milk – it's big business at work.) New varieties of table grapes involve many test tubes and genes from around the world. Some characters flash by, whetting one's appetite for more, an example being Eliza Tibbets, an abolitionist and spiritualist who settled in Riverside Colony in the 1870s. California's Washington navel trees may be traced to her trees. Also appearing are bootleggers, the Ku Klux Klan, a daylight lynching in San Jose, and more.

California's water future only grows less certain. Arax prepares us to face it as well as we can by arming us with the history of what we've created, and why. Arax's fine understanding of the complexities of California's water supply and its distribution fascinate. The many stories provide context and human scale in this compelling book that is as sprawling and fertile as the irrigated fields of the great Central Valley.

Janet Gracyk, May 2021

Members in the News

Eden editor Steven Keylon was recently awarded the 2021 Gold Medal for Architecture at the Independent Publisher's Book Awards for his book "The Modern Architecture of Hugh Michael Kaptur."

The book was published in 2019 by the Palm Springs Preservation Foundation. Congratulations, Steven!

Submitted by Kelly Comras, FASLA

Errata: Susan Chamberlin has a correction to an article in the Winter 2021 issue, on page 72. Regarding a description of the Eden logo which featured a drawing of an agave: "Tom Buhl designed the logo using clip art from early handouts featuring the agave—he did not draw the agave himself."

Requiem for a Mid-Century Garden

WAVERLY B. LOWELL

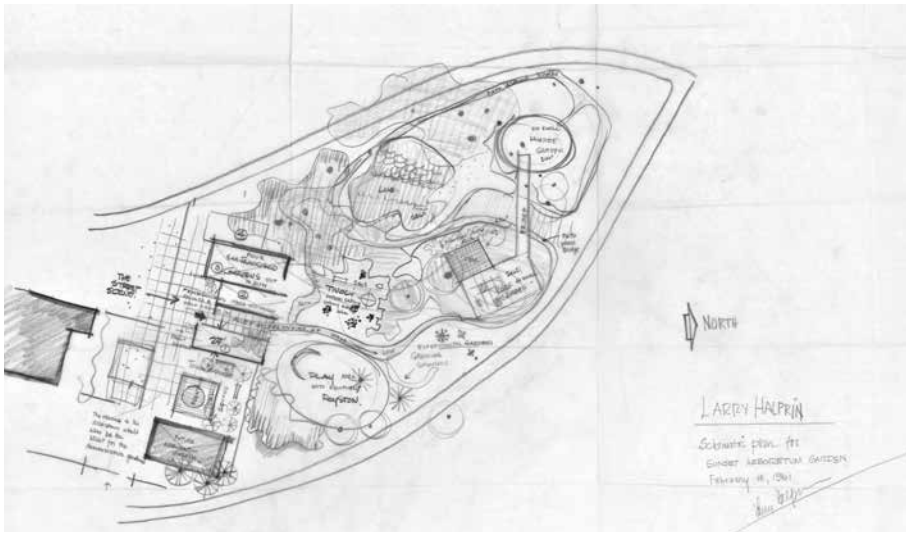
Right: Demonstration Garden entrance sign, 1965. Sunset Magazine Records (M2065 Box 159), Department of Special Collections, Stanford University Libraries reprinted with the permission of Sunset Publishing [hereafter SU and Sunset Publishing] Photo: Glenn Christiansen.

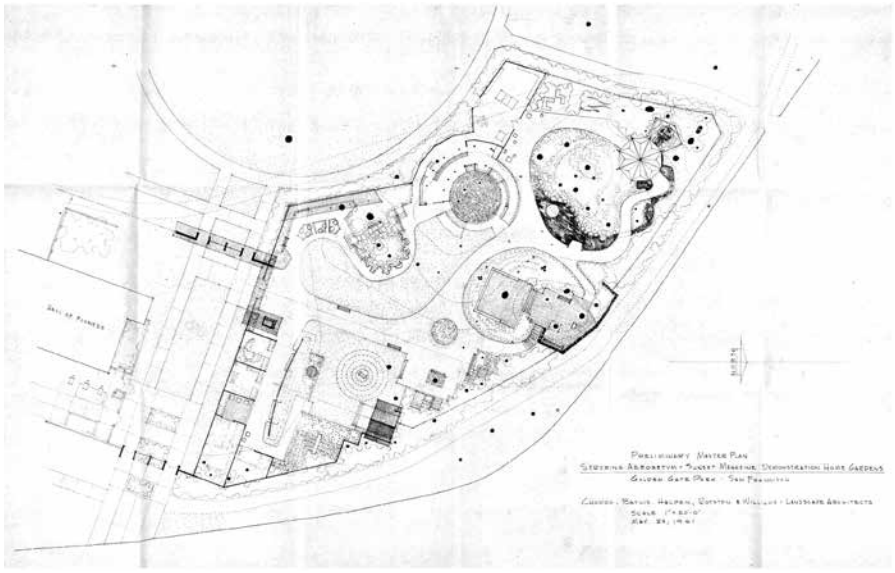
This article raised issues that required additional research. However, given the pandemic, the relevant research collections were unavailable for use. The author will continue her research as soon as access to libraries and archival institutions becomes possible.

It's gone! After more than half a century, the Demonstration Garden at the San Francisco Botanical Garden has been completely removed. Only the gazebo from the Thomas Church-designed garden of 1962 remains. Dedicated at the Strybing Arboretum (now the San Francisco Botanical Gardens) in August of 1965, the stated purpose of the third Sunset Magazine Home Demonstration Garden was "simply helpfulness to home gardeners, particularly helpfulness with planting ideas."[1] But it was far more than that, providing Bay Area homeowners with inspiration and ideas about design, patio and terrace construction and materials, paving, fencing, and outdoor living.

When the Demonstration Garden was installed at SFBG, the idea of a demonstration-type garden was not new. These types of gardens had previously existed with different names in a variety of situations and with differing sponsors, all with the intent of engaging people with their domestic environments. The most consistent venues for these gardens were the horticulturally-based temporary display or demonstration gardens provided by nurseries to showcase their plants and products, but these displays rarely promoted the idea of overall design. Domestic-scale garden designs were also found at international expositions and regularly displayed at garden shows and botanical gardens.[2]

In the Northeast, perhaps in response to ***Sunset Magazine***'s endeavor, ***House & Garden Magazine*** would sponsor Answer Gardens (1969) at the Old Westbury Gardens in Long Island, New York to attract visitors





Above: Lawrence Halprin. Initial garden layout based on early discussions. February, 1961. Lawrence Halprin Collection, The Architectural Archives, University of Pennsylvania (hereafter Halprin, AAUP)

Below: Church, Baylis, Halprin, Royston& Williams. Preliminary Master Plan, May, 1961. The entrance at the southwest corner leads to the Baylis lawn design, the Williams (EDAW) pergola, and the open space that in time will become the work area. Demonstration Garden. San Francisco Botanical Garden Records, Helen Crocker Russell Library of Horticulture, San Francisco Botanical Garden (hereafter SFBG)

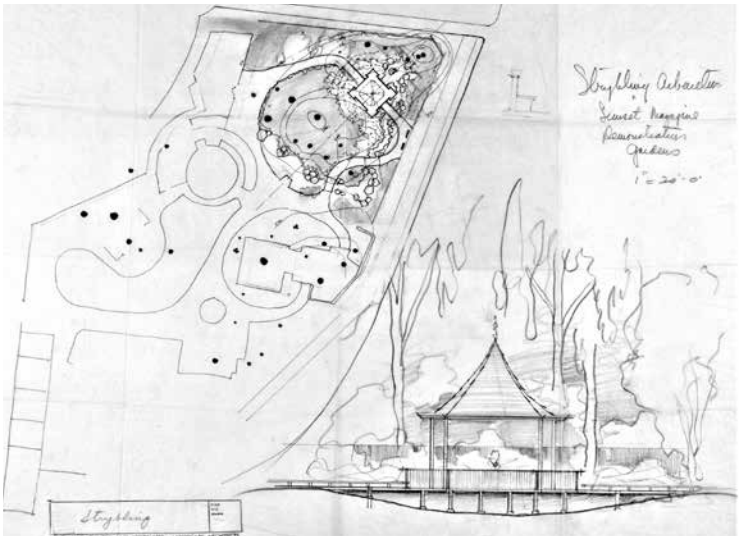
from regional suburban developments.[3]

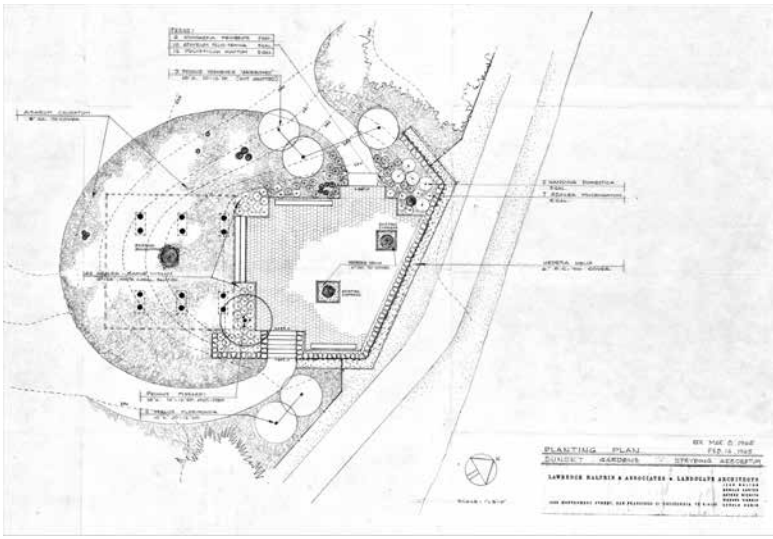
The quartet of ***Sunset Magazine*** Home Demonstration Gardens was unusual for combining design, horticulture, infrastructure, context, and commercial accessories in a significantly "permanent" installation.

Landscape architect Thomas Dolliver Church was responsible for the first of the ***Sunset Magazine*** Demonstration Gardens in 1951 when Lawrence "Bill" Lane Jr., publisher of ***Sunset Magazine***, commissioned Church and architect Cliff May to design the magazine's offices in Menlo Park, California. Intended to give the appearance of a large suburban home rather than an office building, the building and grounds were designed to appear as the type of home the magazine's readers might live in: the epitome of modern indoor-outdoor living. In addition to a lawn and patio, part of the garden was designed to serve as a demonstration garden. Following the contours of San Francisquito Creek, ***Sunset***'s Pacific Coast Garden was intended to show visitors native plants from the rainforests of the Pacific Northwest to the semi-desert of the Southwest. The garden also illustrated the "newest introductions of western growers and nurserymen."[4] According to the magazine's editor Walter Doty, "Sunset and Tommy Church were of the same mold and same connection."[5] The Menlo Park garden was followed by demonstration gardens in other locations with a density of middle-class suburban homes in partnership with an agreeable institution. By the time the San Francisco project began, ***Sunset Magazine*** had already collaborated on Home Demonstration Gardens with both the Los Angeles State and County Arboretum in Arcadia, funded by Rancho Santa Ana (1958),[6] and with the Tucson Arizona Desert Museum (1963).[7]

The garden at SFBG was initiated with a December 1960 letter from ***Sunset***'s Bill Lane to Arboretum Director P.H. "Jock" Brydon concerning the possibility of creating a demonstration garden in Golden Gate Park. Lane noted that members of the Strybing Arboretum Society (SAS) had contacted the ***Sunset Magazine*** staff about the possibility of establishing such a garden, referring to the popularity of the co-sponsored Arboretum Foundation-***Sunset Magazine*** Demonstration Home Garden in Arcadia. A message Sunset's Bill Lane had received from William Stewart, Director of the Los Angeles Arboretum, had noted the success of their Demonstration Garden as shown by the many letters Stewart was sent by visitors who often included "snapshots showing changes [to their gardens] brought about by their visits." In his appeal to Lane, Brydon also noted that "attendance at the Arcadia Arboretum had increased 100% since the Demonstration Garden had opened in 1958."[8] Lane was convinced.

At that time, ***Sunset*** was already developing a second jointly-funded garden at the Arizona Desert Museum near Tucson. These ***Sunset***-sponsored gardens played a significant role in post-World War II magazine-sponsored design that showcased model homes and gardens as inspiration for new homeowners. In fact, echoing John Entenza's Case Study House Program in ***Art & Architecture Magazine***, the Demonstration Garden at the Sonoran Desert Museum in Tucson that opened in 1963 was referred to as the Case Study Garden.[9] A letter from Lane to Arboretum Director Brydon, timed with the newly completed San Francisco City and County Hall of Flowers nearby, put the project in motion. Lane Publishing, he offered, would fund the landscape architects' fees, necessary personnel, and procurement of materials, and in return the city would yield design control to the magazine. Walter L. Doty, formerly ***Sunset***'s Director of Editorial Research and "a leading interpreter of Western horticulture," would serve as





project coordinator; several senior editorial staff would also contribute their time. Lane honestly stated that in addition to any urban improvements resulting from an increased public knowledge of horticulture and home landscaping, the garden would also benefit ***Sunset Magazine***. Their only request was that the magazine be recognized in the entryway signage.[10]

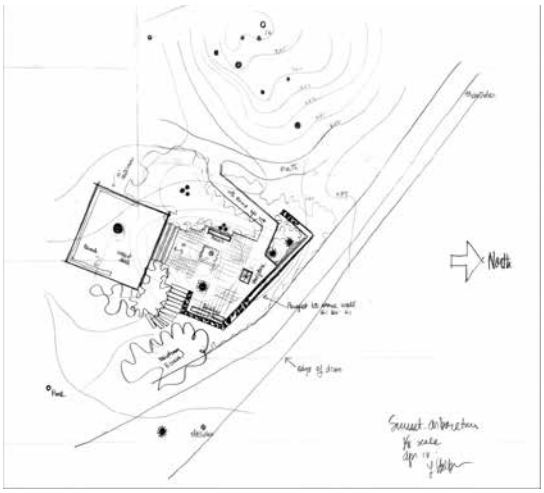
Despite the bureaucracy involved, development of the new demonstration garden at the Strybing Arboretum moved quickly. A week following the receipt of Lane's letter, the Chief of the California State Department of Finance granted approval for the project and promised necessary funding. The General Manager of the San Francisco Recreation and Parks Department forwarded the Finance Department's promise of funding to the Recreation and Parks Commissioners requesting their approval. The Commissioners approved the development of home demonstration gardens adjacent to the Hall of Flowers as described in their Resolution number 4231 passed later that December.[11] The California State Department of Finance Fairs and Exposition Division funded the basic construction while ***Sunset Magazine*** paid design fees to the landscape architects and supplemented state payments for construction and equipment. Manufacturers donated furnishings and materials.[12]

Sunset Magazine envisioned the Demonstration Garden as the subject for articles seasonally presenting ideas on a variety of topics. The gardens would also serve as a source of illustrations, promotions for designers and manufacturers, and as physical places that could be visited to study plant materials and promote good design. It was clear from the beginning that product placement and advertising income would play a major role in promoting the garden. ***Sunset*** and similar magazines encouraged a post-war generation of first-time homeowners responsible for domestic environments to create their own garden paradise as a flexible, multifunctional space with distinct areas for both children and adults – something to be lived in and enjoyed.[13] To educate this audience, community colleges offered courses on home garden design including single classes in gardening, garden-landscaping classes, and courses in landscape design and construction.[14]

Sunset invited Thomas Church, Lawrence Halprin, Douglas Baylis, Robert Royston, and Edward Williams (Eckbo, Dean & Williams), all notable Bay Area landscape architects, to participate in the project. Proctor Mellquist, a senior editor for ***Sunset Magazine*** involved in the Demonstration Gardens from the beginning, had known the five landscape architects for many years. Mellquist commissioned Douglas Baylis to design his home garden in 1951 and worked with Church on the design of the ***Sunset*** Headquarters in 1952. In addition, in conjunction with the American Institute of Architects, Mellquist founded the ***Sunset Magazine*** awards program in 1957, choosing Church, Royston, Halprin, and Williams as jurors for the landscape entries.

In early February 1961, Elsa Uppman Knoll, Garden Editor for ***Sunset***, confirmed a meeting with all the landscape architects, Jock Brydon of the Strybing Arboretum, and members of the ***Sunset*** staff. A week later, Proctor Mellquist distributed that notes from the meeting to all participants. Included were the following points:

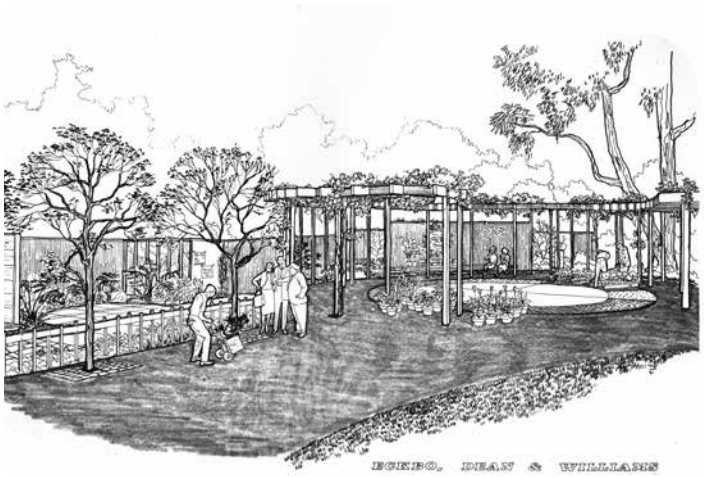
- Your clients are Strybing Arboretum (Jock Brydon) and ***Sunset Magazine*** (Walter Doty).
- The word demonstration in the title states our purpose. We wish to demonstrate not only a variety of garden experiences, but a variety of solutions to problems. We also hope to demonstrate the place of art in the garden, the role of night lighting, the sight and sound of water.
- In our discussions we have pictured

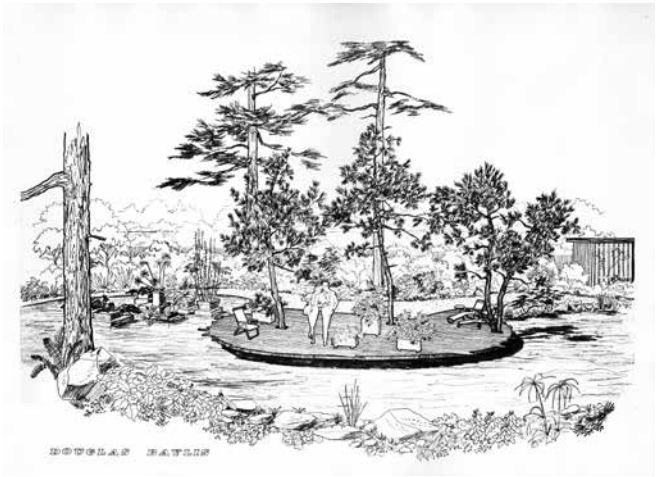


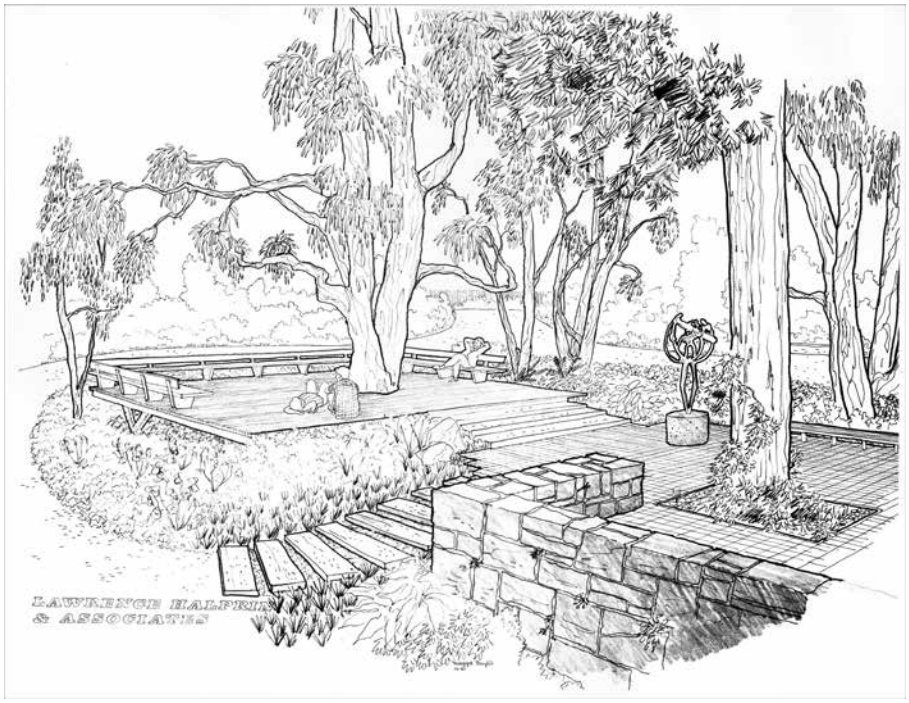
Above, left: Thomas Church. Sketch for plan and elevation for the Gazebo Garden, 1961. Thomas Church Collection, Environmental Design Archives, University of California (hereafter EDA, UCB).

Above, right: Lawrence Halprin. Sketch for plan and elevation of deck garden, 1961 (Halprin, AAUP).

Bottom: Lawrence Halprin. Planting plan for deck garden, 1965 (Halprin, AAUP).







Above, left: Edward Williams (EDW). Pergola garden design with small gardens surrounding it. Presentation Portfolio, 1961/62. (SFBG)

Above, right: Douglas Baylis. Aquatic garden design. Presentation Portfolio, 1961/62. (SFBG)

Bottom: Lawrence Halprin. Deck with sculpture. Presentation Portfolio, 1961/62. (SFBG)

as many as four distinct gardens or garden areas within the two-acre site. We have thought it desirable, if possible, to have each of these gardens present a quite different experience and solve quite different groups of problems.

• The gardens are intended as a demonstration to San Franciscans. For this reason, we have felt we should consider problems peculiar to San Francisco, particularly matters of climate, slopes, tight space.

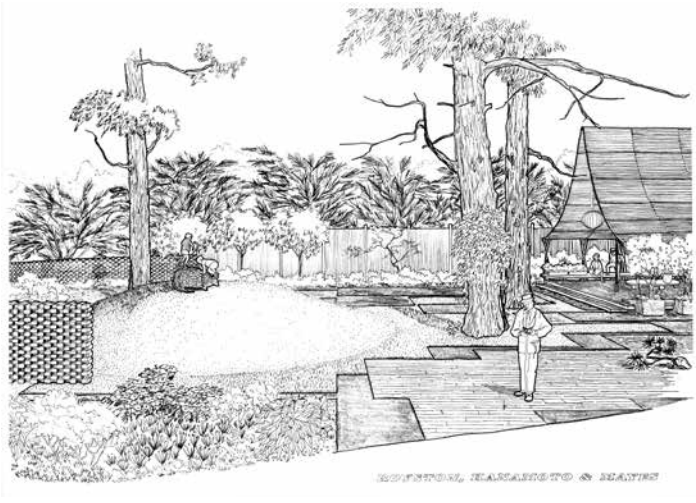
• The gardens should be permanent in nature; this is not a temporary project. Yet we foresee changes in the future to make new demonstrations.

• We've engaged Walter Doty, now working as an independent consultant, to coordinate the project. He will work with Elsa Knoll and Jock Brydon. He will be able to expedite decisions and will take charge of arrangements for materials donations.[15]

Interestingly, the meeting's original timetable called for the submission of the plans to the San Francisco Parks and Recreation Commission in April; construction would then extend from May through August, and a public opening would coincide with the San Francisco Flower Show at the end of that month.[16] The garden actually opened in August 1965, 'only' four years later.

At this first meeting the designers and other members of the project discussed numerous options for types of gardens and garden elements. A resulting memo from Elsa Knoll provided additional ideas imagined from the clients' perspective including the purpose of the garden "to provide a changing exhibit of take-home ideas for San Francisco Homeowners and visitors from outlying areas." It also took into account characteristics of the garden site such as the climate, soil, topography, and plants native to the Bay Area. More meaningfully she noted that beyond the practical requirements, the gardens should "provide emotional and aesthetic experiences without which urban living would be barren." And she added that "These gardens could show that this isn't just an age of concrete and missiles, automobiles and machines, but that even in the big city you can feel close to nature."[17]

These meetings resulted in the basic structure for the demonstration garden including an overall design for the entire two-acre space consisting of a permanent play area garden, a roof and deck garden, a hillside garden, a lake, a 'Tivoli' garden with outdoor eating and viewing areas, an experimental garden, a number of smaller gardens, and a town square gathering area with a fountain.[18] Additional meetings tried to capture ideas to be represented in specific areas. By the end of March Ed Williams, who had become the supervising landscape architect for the project, compiled and distributed meeting notes reflecting the relationships, ideas, questions, and humor shared by the designers. For example, someone wondered "what the place of art would be in



Above, left: Robert Royston (RHA). Design for a garden with play area and pavilion. Presentation Portfolio, 1961/62. (SFBG)

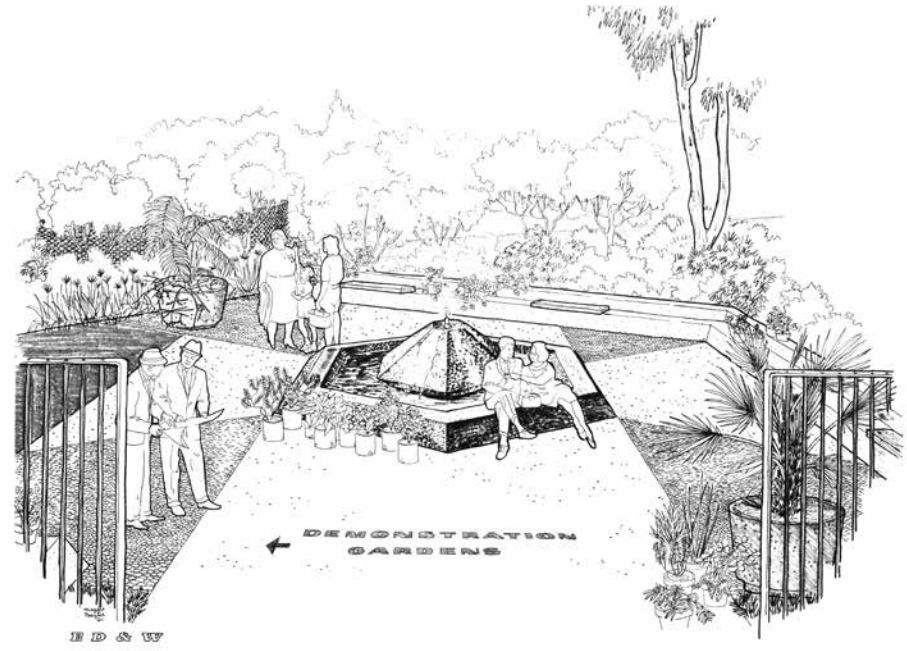
Above, right: Thomas Church. Gazebo garden design. Presentation Portfolio, 1961/62. (SFBG)

Bottom: Church, Baylis, Halprin, Royston & Williams original with Baylis proposed designs pasted over. Modified master plan, 1961. The fountain and paved area at the entrance have been relocated to the southeast corner of the site, the pergola with three small garden spaces occupies the southwest corner, adjacent to Baylis's design for an aquatic garden, in turn leading to a planned work area. Douglas & Maggie Baylis Collection (EDA, UCB)

the garden. Could we work out some commissions and finance them? Can we provide places for future art contributions?" Other comments included "one important function of the demonstration garden is to display little known plant material – to encourage new introductions." "I like a garden that turns corners – one that invites you to explore – an uncluttered garden with a feeling of serenity and repose…a sensual garden." Someone also expressed the idea that "Through the garden there might be a better understanding of the world."[19] There were notes for each of the designers, for example Ed Williams "threw ideas into Tommy's hopper: such as an "entertainers garden, handkerchief garden, tight garden, or cocktail garden…. Let's have a drinking man's garden. It will be at its best at 5:00 P.M." Williams collected many ideas on decks for Halprin's reference such as "The success of lightweight U.C. mix as used on the Kaiser Center roof[20] should lead to more freedom in roof gardening – and in deck gardening."[21]

Consideration for Royston's play-area garden noted the success of vegetable plantings in the Los Angeles Arboretum gardens, creative places that children could use unsupervised, and plants that children would like. Ideas for Baylis revolved around both a work center and a garden: "Shouldn't we have a glass house and lath house in one garden…. Why not an herb and vegetable garden for the gourmet, an aviary garden for the bird lover; a garden workroom for the sculptor, the painter ceramist, or writer? A combination lanai and garden for the gardener-entertainer?" and an All-Weather Garden. "I'd like a garden in which I have complete weather control, one in which if I press the right button, there'd be no wind and the temperature will be whatever I select."[22] Williams's notes also addressed issues related to the main entrance such as whether it should serve as a place for people to rest, a meeting place, a place for purchasing publications, a food concession, or simply be a garden to remind people of the Sierras. They even discussed having "a place where native grasses and plants are allowed to grow; where the only paving is tamped, swept earth; a little clearing among pines, perhaps, where the surface is carpeted with pine needles for we all need a place in which to dream now and then."[23]

In a 1978 interview Proctor Mellquist told of one meeting at which each of the landscape architects was asked to propose an idea for the entire garden. He thought this "was about as competitive a project as the five of them had ever been in because here was this beautiful tract of land in the Strybing Arboretum, and money was available, these gardens would be built, and all or some of them or maybe only one of them would do the design."[24] Three of the designers made their proposals; it may have been Baylis who declined to present. Based on his request to make the final presentation, "Tommy came up and



Above left: Edward Williams (EDAW). Design for the entrance to the Demonstration Garden. Presentation Portfolio, 1961/62. (SFBG)

Above right: Edward Williams. Pergola with various types of paving, seating, and vines, 1965. (SU and Sunset Publishing)

Bottom: Lawrence Halprin. Completed deck in use with plants in containers, 1965. (SU and Sunset Publishing)

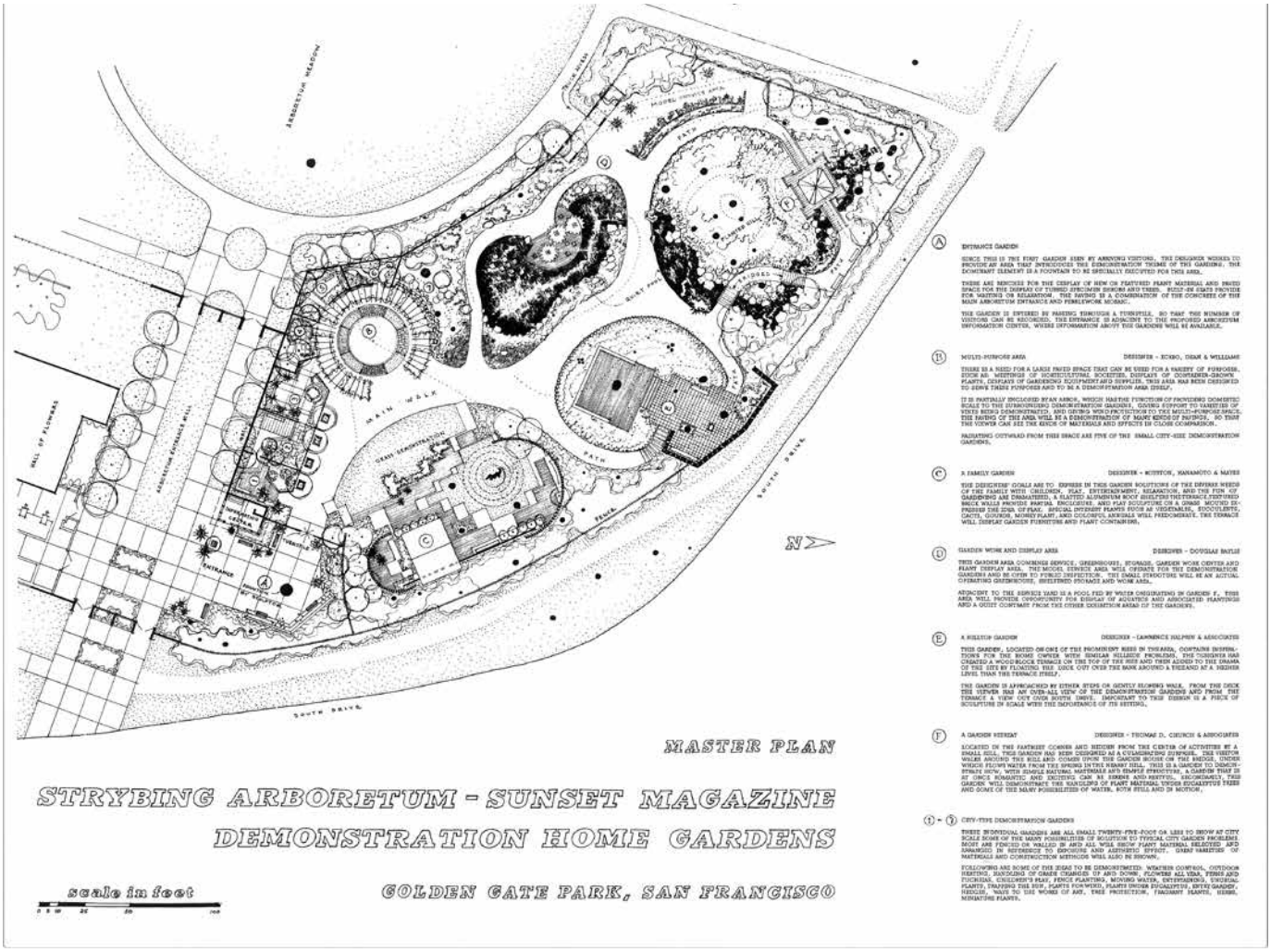
Opposite: Final Master plan. Presentation Portfolio, 1961/62. (SFBG)

what he did blew them all out of the ballpark….in effect he said, let's do five things and let's organize the space as a walking experience and the experiences should differ." It was decided then to assign a different area to each of the people in the room.[25] The original ideas were further clarified into a master plan that combined Church's proposal with ideas from Halprin's earlier sketch. This iteration also had a series of small "backyard" gardens on the south side positioning the entrance to the west of them. What were considered the Royston and Halprin gardens were sited along the east wall, with Church's garden, located behind a small hill, to the north. Baylis's work and display areas and Williams's multi-purpose area/pergola were located on the west side of the site.

Each designer was given a specific program. Church's garden was to feature a water element "to demonstrate the serene and exciting possibilities of water. The visitor was intended to be surprised by a gazebo or pavilion on a bridge above water flowing from the spring in a nearby hill."[26] Reflecting his experience with parks and playgrounds, Robert Royston was asked to design a mixed-use garden for a family's "play, relaxation, entertainment, and the fun of gardening."[27] It included a play sculpture at the top of a mound and a terrace that would display garden furniture and plant containers.

The challenge for Lawrence Halprin & Associates was a Hilltop Garden for the many homeowners in the Bay Area confronted by challenging topography. The garden featured a woodblock terrace with a sculpture at the top of the rise and a floating deck surrounding a tree. Douglas Baylis designed a demonstration area with a lawn to feature temporary plantings and a garden work area. Edward Williams designed a garden pergola to showcase climbing plants accompanied by a variety of paving options in a multi-use space intended for meetings, workshops, and classes.

Although lacking a lake and Tivoli Garden, the May 1961 plan shows Williams' pergola/multi-use area between the Baylis garden and the undefined work area. Not long after, the pergola garden was relocated adjacent to the entry area thus allowing the Baylis design to become an extensive garden featuring aquatic plantings, taking advantage of the water source used for the Church garden.



It is not surprising that the initial designs for the San Francisco demonstration gardens reflected the recognizable curve, biomorphic shapes, and modernist approach pioneered on the west coast by Thomas Church. All the designers had either studied with Church at the University of California, Berkeley (Royston and Eckbo) or had worked in his office: Royston (1940-1942), Baylis (1941-1943), and Halprin (1946-1949). In addition, ***Sunset Magazine*** often published designs by all five landscape architects and their firms, so it was not surprising to find them invited to contribute designs for the ***Sunset***-sponsored Demonstration Garden. According to Walter Doty:

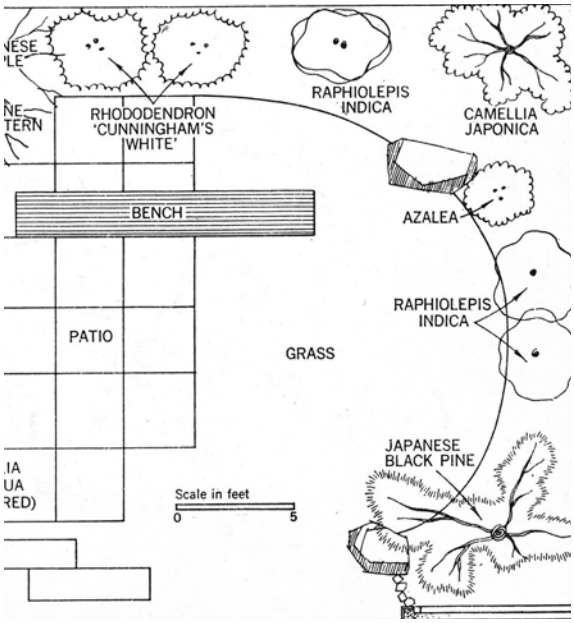
> Undoubtably all these guys influenced each other. It's hard to think of Church, Halprin, Eckbo, Williams, and the others without feeling that they all influenced each other particularly in terms of gardens to live in. The one key thought of them all was "do your own thing." On that they all agreed, though how they developed their ideas often differed. This was the beginning of the new freedom from the old landscaping. It was a departure from remedial landscaping to "this is the way I want to live" landscaping.[28]

Naturally, the individual gardens reflected design approaches common in the work of each of the landscape architects during that period. Halprin was the perfect selection for a deck-based garden. Having worked in Church's office during the design of the 1947 Donnell Garden, he was familiar with its constructed hillside-deck and the existing oak trees that protruded through it. From ***Gardens Are for People***, published in 1955, he probably also knew of other decks of Church's design such as those at the Fahrney (Kent Woodlands, Ca 1950) and Erving (Santa Barbara, 1954-55) homes. Decks with trees coming through them, whether they were new plantings or had existed, featured in a number of Halprin's designs in the 1950s and '60s including his own hillside home in Kentfield (designed by William Wurster in 1952) and the Ackerman House at Greenwood Common (Joseph Esherick, 1953).[29]

Robert Royston's Children's Garden reflected features, such as the curving fences, mound with play structure, walking paths, and a structure providing shade, from his Krusi Park in Alameda, CA (1954) and other of his parks and playgrounds. The garden also exhibited Royston's frequently used multi-use slabs and demonstrated his skill with mixing textures and materials. The eight-sided pavilion or gazebo was the main feature of Church's garden recalling other gazebos of his design such as one in the Bechtel garden and the pair enlivening the San Francisco Fay-Berrigan garden.[30] Accessible by winding paths the pavilion was intended to sit above a water course and to appear as if floating. Existing evidence indicates, however, that the proposed water course was never completed.

Initially, Bayliss's charge was to create both display and work areas, as changing demonstration sites, rather than as permanent installations. Shortly after the initial plan was sketched out, however, he designed a more permanent garden centered around a floating island featuring primarily aquatic plants. The work area was now more completely laid out.

Williams' two contributions were the entry fountain plaza and adjacent multi-use area intended for meetings, workshops,



Left: Frank C. Shinoda. Plan for a Japanese Garden. "Plan illustrates the simple, uncluttered character of the garden. It includes a total of 15 plants, all evergreen except the maple." From "Legend of a Japanese Home Garden." Pearl T. Kimura, 1966. (SFBG)

Right: Frank C. Shinoda. East-West Japanese Garden, 1966. (SFBG)

and classes. The main feature of the second project was a curved pergola featuring thirty-three kinds of paving material, various types of vines, and an assortment of seating alternatives. These areas, as well as others throughout the Demonstration Garden, included a variety of container plants in conjunction with seating, fences, paving, and other garden accessories.

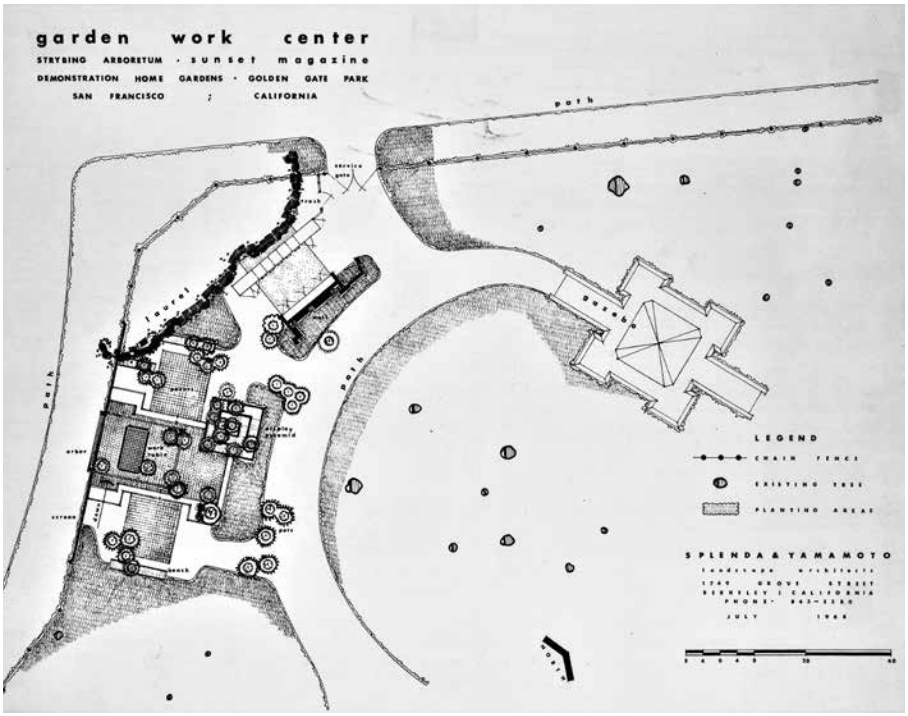
By September 1961, the garden had not been opened as originally planned, but was still being designed. According to a note in the Royston project file, all the grading drawings were to be completed by the fall of 1962; drawings for the main walls, ground level walls, three small gardens, and Halprin's garden for Spring '63; and the gardens by Royston, Baylis, and Church in '64.[31] The original long-range plan was expected to be completed only over an extended period of time.

In the end, according to Mellquist, "we had enough money we thought to maybe develop three of these five…. So the three we chose were Ed Williams, Larry Halprin, and Thomas Church for the first stages. Baylis had still not come up with anything we liked the look of and Royston, I forget what our reasoning was there."[32] It may be that Royston put his design on hold in response to a 1961 letter that explained "… you can demonstrate a garden for family and children if you want to, but the consensus of opinion of the Park people was that it should be eliminated from the use point because of liability, safety, attractive nuisance — play equipment could be part of the garden if enclosed so as not to be used."[33] It is more than likely that not having been selected as one of the first three gardens to be constructed and having his "play" factor severely diminished, was sufficient to sour Royston on the project and to go no further with the design.

Prior to presenting the final plan to the Parks and Recreation Commission in 1962, the entrance plaza had been relocated to the east at the entrance to the Botanical Garden. The design had also become grander in scope, with a welcoming fountain designed by Williams, filled with benches and paving, and set on an east-west axis with the multi-use area. The San Francisco Art Commission approved the project's preliminary plans in January of 1962 although approval for structures required a separate submission as semi-working drawings. Fees to the five landscape architects were paid at the end of 1962.

Four years after its intended 1961 opening, the ***Sunset Magazine*** Home Demonstration Garden in the Strybing Arboretum was dedicated in August 1965. In the end, the main part of the two-acre site contained three individual permanent garden areas designed by Thomas D. Church, Lawrence Halprin, and Ed Williams. The model San Francisco backyard gardens had been moved further west along the south wall and the Williams designed multi-use space was now surrounded by enclosed spaces for additional smaller gardens. There was no water feature and therefore no aquatic garden.

Changes to the garden began happening almost immediately after its opening, with small individual gardens permanently replacing the small demonstration city lots west of the entrance. In March 1966 the San Francisco Bay Area Chapter of Ike-



Left: Splenda & Yamamoto. Plan for the Garden Work Center, 1968. (SFBG)

Right: Site plan from opening day brochure showing the entrance and three main gardens, 1965. (SFBG)

bana International donated funds for the Japanese Home garden (also referred to as the East Meets West Garden), designed and installed by Frank Shinoda, landscape contractor and garden designer, assisted by landscape architect Ari Inouye.

The firm of Splenda & Yamamoto designed the planned garden work center area funded by ***Sunset Magazine***, the Fairs and Exposition Division of the State of California, and the Arboretum Society. Completed in 1969, this area served numerous purposes including training San Francisco city gardeners, classes held by the Arboretum Society, and staging flower shows.[34] The installation of both the Fuchsia Garden and the Peninsula Chapter of the California Association of Nurserymen's Association Garden, designed by Eckbo, Dean, Austin & Williams, followed in 1971.

Keeping Demonstration Gardens relevant was important to hosting institutions. For example, the Arizona Desert Museum added their Mexican garden in 1972. That same year, arboretum director John Bryan wrote to Joseph Williamson of ***Sunset Magazine*** requesting that they provide a new brochure reflecting the changes made to the garden over time, as the brochure issued at the time of the garden's opening was no longer accurate. He also informed Williamson of an offer from "Scotts (the lawn people)" to install plots demonstrating the different grass mixtures suitable for the area and wondered "if this is something for your magazine?"[35]

The 1973 Alice Eastwood Garden, designed by Wayne Barber, was constructed in one of the fenced spaces southeast of the Pergola. The San Francisco Garden Club garden was added in 1974, the Nurserymen's garden was redesigned and replanted in 1986, and the Jean Wolff Garden, designed by Jonathan Plant, was installed in 1988.

Less than a decade after its opening, feelings about the much-lauded Demonstration Garden had changed, possibly a result of changing local demographics, expansion of the suburbs farther from San Francisco, and the differing interests of a new generation. A scathing report from the Demonstration Garden Committee of the Strybing Arboretum Society charged that:

> …there is something discomforting about the Demonstration Garden as it functions in 1974. This discomfort seems to result from a static quality, an apparent lack of interest by the visiting public, and a lack of traffic within the garden. Very likely the reason for the lack of interest in the Demonstration Garden is that the ideas demonstrated are not of first-rate significance to the San Francisco Public in 1974. Without doubt, the subject of greatest interest to the gardening public is the growing of vegetables.[36]

Writing again to Williamson in 1975, John Bryan explained that the poor condition of the deck had deemed it as a definite hazard, resulting in its being roped off from the public and that other structures would also be closed if much needed repairs were not made soon. He reminded Williamson that in the founding resolution ***Sunset*** agreed "to procure contributions

for construction costs and plant material throughout the life of the gardens." He was suggesting that the cost of removing and/or replacing these structures should be covered by ***Sunset***'s earlier agreement to "continually pay for construction costs," as procuring funds from the city was very difficult.[37] The result of Bryan's plea is unknown but according to Proctor Mellquist, "After a dozen years we pulled out of the Strybing project; our name is no longer associated with it. We were interested in change and also had limited time to put against public projects."[38] By 1979 Halprin's large wooden deck had been removed because of wood rot and replaced by smaller Halprin- designed terraces reached by wooden stairs constructed of railroad ties.

Later changes to the overall garden were proposed by Tito Patri & Associates around 1994, and by Fernau & Hartman in conjunction with the Portico Group in 2000. Although as initially installed, the Demonstration Garden provided a unique collaboration between a group of distinguished Bay Area modernist landscape designers, as a result of changing interests, finances, and visitors, it had lost its mid-century design aesthetic. Ultimately, despite the lofty ideals and ideas of its promoters and designers, the ***Sunset*** Home Demonstration Garden, once a beloved part of San Francisco's Strybing Arboretum, serving as a regional center of gardening that included design, horticulture, and commerce, was demolished in 2019. Reflecting new uses for the public and the arboretum, its two acres, were converted to a general use space for public and private events.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Waverly Lowell is an archivist, historian, author, and educator. She began this project while working with the San Francisco Arboretum Library to establish an archives of their historic records and drawings. A Fellow of the Society of American Archivists, she developed the Environmental Design Archives at the University of California, Berkeley and served as its Curator for twenty years. Currently she is co-founder of The ONDA Group, consulting on archival, historical, and information issues. Her publications include ***Living Modern: A Biography of Greenwood Common***; ***Landscape at Berkeley: The First 100 Years***; ***Design on the Edge: 100 Years of Architecture at the University of California, Berkeley***; and ***Architectural Records: Managing Design & Construction Records***, as well as many articles and exhibits.

Endnotes

[1] "New Idea-gardens you can visit in San Francisco's Golden Gate Park." *Sunset Magazine* 135 (August, 1965); 74-77.

[2] Exceptions include André Parmentier's sample picturesque landscape at his nursery in Brooklyn, NY, ca. 1825 and the twenty-five nursery gardens designed by Dutch landscape architect Wilhemina 'Mien' Ruys for her father's Royal Moerheim Nursery in Dedemsvaart before the second world war. Another example is the 1925 Paris Art Deco Expo's "Garden of Water and Light" designed by Gabriel Guevrekian that led to his cubist design for the garden for the Villa Noailles in Hères in southern France, 1926 (now the Hères Parc St Bernard). Edwin Joseph Toth, *Home Landscape Demonstration Gardens* (Newark, Del.: University of Delaware; Longwood Program in Ornamental Horticulture, 1974), 35-36. The Demonstration Garden at Edinburgh's Royal Botanic Garden, was established in 1961; the Norfolk, VA Botanical Gardens initiated a Model Gardens Project (1972); and Delaware's Longwood Gardens provided an "Example Garden, (1973)."

[3] "H&G's Answer Gardens/Old Westbury Gardens," *House & Garden*, 135 (Feb 1969): 82-83.

[4] "Sunset's Pacific Coast Garden: a walk from Canada to Mexico in a quarter of a mile," *Sunset Magazine* (August 1952): 54.

[5] Walter Doty, interview by Susan Riess, *Thomas Church, Landscape Architect: oral history transcript*, 1975-1978, Berkeley: The Bancroft Library, Regional Oral History Office, 1978, Vol. 1, p. 239 [hereafter referred to as Doty Interview].

[6] The landscape architects responsible for the design of the Los Angeles Gardens were Bettler Baldwin and Owen Peters. Bud Baldwin (1921- 2010) had worked for Eckbo, Royston, & Williams from 1950 to 1952. Owen Peters, FASLA (1924 – 2000), was a principal in Eriksson, Peters and Thoms (EPT) Landscape Architects in Pasadena and San Juan Capistrano. His obituary specifically mentioned "that he greatly admired the work of Thomas D. Church and his gardens reflected the same simplicity and design purity of which Church's gardens were known." *The Union* (Nevada County, CA) February 22, 2010. accessed 6/17/2020 https://www.theunion.com/news/lives-lived-bettler-baldwin/ Robert Eriksson, "In Memoriam, Owen Peters," Landscape Architect, December 1, 2000. Accessed 6/17/2020 https://landscapearchitect.com/landscape-articles/in-memoriam-owen-peters#article1

[7] In 1960 Sunset provided initial funding for the Arizona Desert Museum to host a series of exhibition spaces for native plants from the Sonoran Desert. The garden was to provide a source of ideas for Arizona homeowners by illustrating a range of paving materials and developing and testing useful plant varieties. "Proposed Desert Museum – Sunset Magazine 'Demonstration Desert Garden' at the Arizona-Sonora Desert Museum, Tucson Mountain Park, Tucson, Arizona," 1960.

[8] William Lane to P. H. Brydon, December 6, 1960. Demonstration Garden manuscript files, Helen Crocker Russell Library of Horticulture, San Francisco Botanical Garden [hereafter referred to as SFBG].

[9] ***Historic American Landscapes Survey Report on the Sunset Magazine Demonstration Desert Garden*** (HALS AZ-18) The authors suggest that the best-known example of magazine sponsored design is the Case Study House program sponsored by *Arts & Design Magazine* from 1945 to 1962. https://cdn.loc.gov/master/pnp/habshaer/az/az0600/az0663/data/az0663data.pdf Accessed 6/26/2020 The Sonora Desert Museum was established in 1952, and *Sunset Magazine* began planning the Demonstration Garden in 1958. With news of the impending garden, local nurseries began cultivating native plants in expectation of a future market. Opened in 1963, the garden was designed by Tucson Architect Guy Greene assisted by landscape architect Warren Jones, a pioneer in developing plants for dry climates. Helen Erickson, "Guy Greene, 1923-2003," *Tucson Historic Preservation Foundation*, https://preservetucson.org/stories/desert-dreaming-the-landscape-architecture-of-guy-greene/

[10] Lane to Brydon, 1960. SFBG.

[11] Inter-departmental memo from Raymond S. Kimbell to Recreation and Park Commissioners, December 13, 1960. SFBG.

[12] Fact Sheet, Strybing Arboretum Demonstration Home Gardens, 1985. SFBG.

[13] Daniel Gregory. "Thomas Church and Sunset Magazine." In *Thomas Church Landscape Architect: Designing A Modern California Landscape, ed.* Marc Treib (San Francisco: William Stout Publishers, 2003), 80.

[14] Specific examples include a series of classes offered by Pierce Jr. College in Canoga Park, CA, a 1959 course in landscape design and construction at the College of Marin, and the 1969 garden-landscaping classes at the Novato Adult School. "College of Marin's Spring Adult Evening Classes Set," *Daily Independent Journal* (San Rafael), January 31, 1964; and Morton Binder, "Adults Enjoy Home Landscaping Courses," *Junior College Journal* 25 (November 1954): 142-144.

[15] Memo from Proctor Mellquist to project designers, February 1961. Strybing Arboretum file, Royston/RHAA Collection. Environmental Design Archives, University of California, Berkeley [hereafter referred to as Royston/RHAA Collection, EDA].

[16] Proctor Mellquist memo.

[17] Memo from Elsa Uppman Knoll to project designers, February 1961. Royston Collection/RHAA, EDA. According to Logan Jenkins, a writer for *Sunset Magazine*, who worked with editor Proctor Mellquist, "I grew up with Sunset in a mid-century modern house in Orinda. The magazine introduced my parents from Wisconsin to the West after World War II. *Sunset* unraveled the mystery of living in the West. This was a brave new world of fresh vegetables, outdoor living, and sliding glass doors." Logan Jenkins. "The sun rose for S.D. writer when he was hired by Sunset." *San Diego Union Tribune*, December 10, 2018.

[18] Sunset Garden File, Lawrence Halprin Collection, The Architectural Archives, University of Pennsylvania.

[19] Memo from Proctor Mellquist to project designers, February 1961. Strybing Arboretum file, Royston/RHAA Collection, EDA.

[20] This is a reference to the Kaiser Company roof garden at its headquarters in Oakland, CA designed by the Bay Area landscape architecture firm of Staley and Osmundson.

[21] Sunset Garden File, Lawrence Halprin Collection, The Architectural Archives, University of Pennsylvania.

[21] Memo from Walter Doty to project designers, February 1961. Strybing Arboretum file, Royston/RHAA Collection, EDA.

[23] Doty to project designers, Royston/RHAA Collection, EDA.

[24] Proctor Mellquist Interview, Vol. 2, 693.

[25] Mellquist Interview, Vol. 2, 693.

[26] Proposal for Sunset Home Demonstration Garden, 1961. Demonstration Garden drawings. SFBG Archives.

[27] Proposal for Sunset Home Demonstration Garden, SFBG Archives.

[28] Doty Interview, Vol. 1, 247.

[29] Lawrence Halprin, *A Life Spent Changing Places* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2011).

[30] The Two Gazebo Garden, now called Fay Park, is open to the public.

[31] "Schedule – Sunset Magazine GG Park Arboretum," 1962. Royston/RHAA Collection, EDA.

[32] Mellquist interview, Vol. 2, 694.

[33] Ed Williams to Robert Royston, September 5, 1961. Royston/RHAA Collection. EDA.

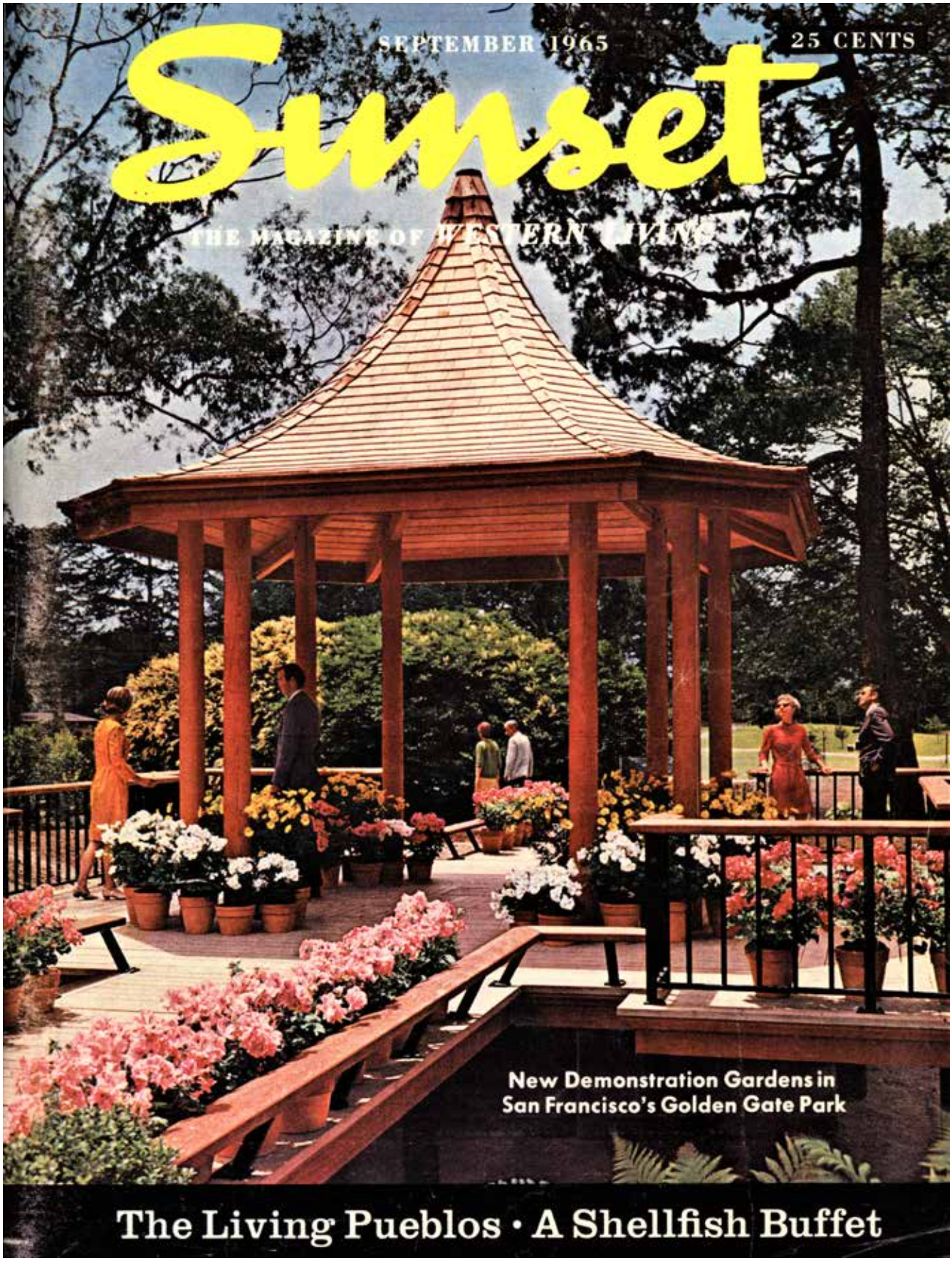
[34] Toth, 18.

[35] John Bryan to Joseph Williamson of Lane Publishing, 1972. SFBG Archives.

[36] Report from the Demonstration Garden Committee, Strybing Arboretum Society, 1974. SFBG Archives.

[37] Bryan to Joseph Williamson, 1975. SFBG Archives.

[38] Mellquist interview, Vol. 2, p. 694.



Sunset Magazine cover celebrating the opening of the Home Demonstration Garden, featuring the gazebo in the Thomas Church garden. September 1965 (SU and Sunset Publishing).

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Front Cover: Terrace designed by Thomas D. Church for the Aptos beach house of Mr. and Mrs. Ernest Meyer and Charles B. Kuhn. The black steel tube outdoor dining set and lounge chairs and ottomans by Van Keppel-Green. August 1949 photograph was used on the cover of the July 1950 issue of House Beautiful. Maynard L. Parker, photographer. Courtesy of The Huntington Library, San Marino, California

Back Cover: Case Study House #22 in the Hollywood Hills. Pierre Koenig, architect, 1960. Because the house is framed in steel, Koenig chose steel-framed Van Keppel-Green furniture used both inside and out. Designer Hendrik Van Keppel is seen at the center of the photo in the orange shirt. Ceramic planters by Architectural Pottery. Julius Shulman photographer.