Authors on Architecture: Long on Peters

SAH/SCC Zoom Presentation
Sunday, January 23, 2022; 1-2:30 PM Pacific Time

Be sure to join us for another dynamic lecture by scholar and historian Christopher Long from University of Texas at Austin, as he turns his attention to the little-known architect and designer Jock Peters (1889-1934). Long’s new book, Jock Peters, Architecture and Design: The Varieties of Modernism (Bauer and Dean, 2021), is the first monograph on the acclaimed architect and designer. Peters, a German-born modernist, immigrated to Los Angeles in 1922 where he gained national recognition for his elegant and lavish interiors of the iconic Bullock’s Wilshire department store (John and Donald B. Parkinson, 1928).

Peters designed film sets for Famous Players-Lasky (later Paramount Pictures), working in the famed art department of Hans Dreier (1885-1966). Despite his early death, Peters managed to leave his mark on the modernist landscape in Southern California at a time when the new style was just emerging.

This visually rich study includes never-before-published material from the architect’s personal archive, still in family hands.

Long—author of ground-breaking studies on Kem Weber (1889-1963), Adolf Loos (1870-1933), and Paul Frankl (1878-1962)—writes another important history to broaden our understanding of modern architecture and design. This book offers 262 historic photographs, etchings, watercolors, and drawings (including floor plans)—many in color—that provide design inspiration for houses, retail spaces, storefronts, furniture, packaging, textiles, and set designs.

Authors on Architecture: Long on Peters—Sunday, January 23, 2022; 1-2:30 PM PST; $5; go to www.sahscoc.org, and pay via PayPal or mail in order form on Page 6 with check; Zoom connection information sent upon registration.
At any given moment, it is hard to find something positive in the global pandemic. Yet, SAH/SCC has used the past 20 months to pivot to virtual programming and to bring you presenters from not just all over the U.S., but from all over the world.

We have enjoyed presentations from scholars based in Italy, the UK, and Spain. Other exotic locales included Philadelphia, Baltimore, San Francisco, Connecticut, and Texas. We’ve learned more about Southern California as well as broadened our understanding of architectural history in cities across America. All without having to wait for speakers to be making a trip to Southern California.

During 2021 alone, SAH/SCC presented 20 programs—approximately one every two weeks—to keep you engaged and stimulate creative thinking.

The pandemic and the available technology have also allowed us to expand our footprint with members in Southern California and all over the world to whom we are truly grateful for their support. The ability to record these programs has also allowed people in other time zones to enjoy the presentations at their leisure (See Page 5 to order any you may have missed).

These virtual programs will continue to be a vital and robust part of our programming. As we edge closer to reinstating in-person programming, it is clear that virtual events have their place, even among the local faithful. We completely understand that traveling to a local in-person lecture within Los Angeles can be an overnight excursion for some members. I remember driving from the Westside to Pasadena late one afternoon for an event—with the trip taking close to three hours one way due to traffic. And I’m not going to lie, it is much easier to walk from the living room into the home office to make the events happen.

Our recent in-person behind-the-scenes walk through of the exhibition “From Riggs to Neutra and Niemeyer: Tremaine Houses, 1936-1977” at the University of California, Santa Barbara, however, was a powerful reminder of the benefit of a collective, real-life experience. SAH/SCC Life Member Volker Welter, curator of the exhibition, was able to provide in-depth context and information about the topic in a more emphatic and personal way than was possible in his Zoom program on the same topic. Additionally, having different perspectives in the room in real time was illuminating.

So, thank you to all of our members and friends—new and long cherished—who have supported SAH/SCC during the past two years. I truly look forward to seeing every one of you in person, as well as in your Zoom boxes. Here’s to a happy and healthy 2022.

—Sian Winship

Trends in Architectural History

The Society of Architectural Historians (SAH) has released Architectural History in the United States: Findings and Trends in Higher Education, a 263-page print and PDF publication of the SAH Data Project Report. Funded by The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, the SAH Data Project is the first in-depth, data-driven study designed to assess the health of the fields of architectural, landscape, and urban history at institutions of higher education in the U.S.

Some of the findings include:

• Almost none of the respondents reported encountering architectural history in a meaningful way through K-12 curricular or extracurricular educational experiences.

• Three-quarters of faculty and students reported that the most common “pipeline” for some type of meaningful encounter with architectural history before college was touring buildings, historical societies, and museums.

• The vast majority of programs where architectural history is taught offer some courses with broad geographic scope and with content that includes global/non-Eurocentric traditions.

• There is a notable gap between what institutions and faculty reported about architectural history courses with social justice themes and what students reported about taking such courses. This suggests the existence of a significant generational difference in perception about what constitutes a social justice-related architectural history course.

Click here to delve into more data found in Architectural History in the United States: Findings and Trends in Higher Education.
Join SAH/SCC for a virtual program with author and filmmaker Peter Wyeth, whose string of discoveries excavated from the most fragmentary evidence has uncovered the architecture career of perhaps the leading South African painter, Jean Welz. The Lost Architecture of Jean Welz (DoppelHouse, 2022) chronicles the mystery of Welz’s virtual absence in the architectural record and Wyeth’s decade-long quest, which gradually assembled an extraordinary picture of Welz’s twelve years in Paris.

Through Welz’s South African family archive, Wyeth retrieves stories, letters, portfolios, and photographs to unravel Welz’s heroic designs and reveals his unique critique of Corbusier’s “Five Points of Architecture,” tracking the many ways that Welz was disappeared, intentionally and not. Wyeth explores why Jean Welz did not become a famous name in architecture and takes us through Welz’s art-dealer brother’s Nazi-dealings, Welz’s own illness, betrayals, and self-destruction as an artist, born of an uncompromising artist’s vision, while sifting through every scrap of evidence of Welz’s buildings and visionary, unrealized designs.

Authors on Architecture: Wyeth on Welz—Sunday, January 30, 2022; 12-1:30 PM PST; $5; go to www.sahscc.org and pay via PayPal or mail in order form on Page 6 with check; Zoom connection information sent upon registration.
Join us for a new lens on public housing history in Los Angeles, as scholar Nicole Krup Oest shares her PhD thesis for the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences, University of Zurich.

Her fascinating thesis-turned-book, *Photography and Modern Public Housing in Los Angeles* (Heidelberg University Library, 2021), looks at how photography shaped public perceptions of public housing projects in Los Angeles and nationally. The book includes dozens of seldom seen images from offline collections, which illuminate how the narrative for public housing was shaped, for better or for worse, by the local housing authority.

Oest’s training in art history (she is a lecturer in art history at City College of San Francisco) helps bring to light the important role that commercial photographers, such as Luckhaus Studio, played in crafting the narrative. Photography, graphic design, and exhibition design also played key roles.

This program is another installment in SAH/SCC’s ongoing series examining how photography and architecture shape our perceptions of the built environment. Past programs on Wayne Thom (see Page 5 to purchase video) and Marvin Rand by Emily Bills have been extremely popular.

Oest’s Photography and Modern Public Housing in Los Angeles is made available as an open-source document, free to those who wish to read online.

Authors on Architecture: Oest on LA Public Housing—Sunday, February 13, 2022; 1-2:30 PM Pacific Time

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(We are no longer accepting mail at Sherman Oaks address.)
SAH/SCC
PUBLICATIONS & VIDEOS

Catch up on previous SAH/SCC tours and Zoom programs. Go here to order.

Masters of Modernism: eight-page, two-color brochure featuring works of Richard Neutra and Frank Lloyd Wright in Bakersfield. $5

Architecture: Inside and Outside: 5”x5” folded color brochure featuring Santa Barbara’s Lotusland, Casa del Herrero, and Val Verde. $3

Irving Gill: Los Angeles: 10-page booklet featuring photos and articles on Gill and three residential projects in LA. $6

Rodney Walker 3 30 90: 12-page brochure featuring nine homes on five sites, as well as the architect’s use of the three-foot module. $8

Greta Magnusson Grossman: 3.5” x 8” 2-page color brochure featuring two residences by Greta Grossman. $4

John Parkinson, Downtown: 11”x17”, four-color brochure featuring a self-guided walking tour of Parkinson buildings in Downtown LA’s historic core and beyond. $5

Rodney Walker: The Ojai Years: tri-fold, black-and-white brochure featuring Walker’s important residences in Ojai, with pictures and article by historian David Mason. $5

Kesling Homes: bi-fold, two-color brochure from the “Kesling Modern Structures” tour. $2

Union Station and MTA Transit Center: bi-fold map for a self-guided walking tour including historical facts and photos. $2

Modernism for the Masses: tri-fold brochure with inserts of detailed floor plans of Eichler homes visited on the Orange County tour. $10

David Gebhard Review: essays on the Works Project Administration by Robert W. Winter, Orville O. Clarke, Jr., and Mitzi March Mogul. $5

The Historic and Modern Spirit of Ventura: 20-page guide from Ventura tour. $10

Ray Kappe—Apotheosis: eight-page brochure features five Kappe Houses from 1959 to 1966 in the Royal Woods development of the San Fernando Valley. $8

Conjunctive Points: four-color, 11”x17” brochure featuring a 20-building walking tour of the Hayden Tract, designed by architect Eric Owen Moss and developed by Samitaur Constructs. $8

Designed for Learning: 11”x17” walking tour map and brochure of the University of California, Santa Barbara, campus. $4

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SAH/SCC MEMBERSHIP FORM

SAH/SCC is a 501c 3 nonprofit organization dedicated to providing its members with opportunities to learn about and experience the rich architectural heritage of Southern California and beyond. Our volunteer board members create tours, lectures, travel tours, and other events that explore the ideas behind the architecture as well as the buildings that result from them. From modern to craftsman, from Spanish Colonial to contemporary, our programs are the best-kept secrets in Southern California!

MEMBERSHIP BENEFITS:
• Advance notice of all SAH/SCC events—important because they usually sell out just to members
• 20-30% discounts on tour and event ticket prices
• Quarterly E-news with printable newsletter
• FREE tickets to our annual Members’ Celebration event
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Fill out the order form below or join online at www.sahscs.org.

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$30 Student (requires scan of valid Student ID) – All the benefits of Individual membership at a 30% discount.

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SAH/SCC EVENT TICKETS

Long on Peters—Sunday, January 23, 2022
_____ reservation(s) at $5 each = $______

Wyeth on Welz—Sunday, January 30, 2022
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LA Public Housing—Sunday, February 13, 2022
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Bookmarks

Frank Gehry: The Masterpieces
by Jean-Louis Cohen and Cahiers d’Art

Is every piece created by a master a bona fide masterpiece? That’s the question I asked in regard to professor and author Jean-Louis Cohen’s sumptuous review of 38 of Gehry’s projects, ranging from a 1962 Santa Monica apartment building to the Luma Foundation finished in 2021. No one would begrudge LA’s greatest architectural export his absolute masterpieces, but the book could have pared down the projects by half and presented each with its place in architectural and societal history along with an illustrative process (some sections and Gehry’s wonderfully seductive sketches would help) that shows the workings behind the genius. But that would have been a different book. This one will certainly delight Gehry fans from all over with its size and heft and full-bleed photos accompanied by the architect’s quotes on his work. To his credit, Cohen addresses the dubious use of “masterpiece” at the end of his essay, citing an arcane 13th-century definition as “crucial work.” Maybe not as market-driven a term, but crucial work makes more sense with the project selections and the descriptive text.

Flammarion, 2021, 400 pages, hardcover, $85.

—Julie D. Taylor, Hon. AIA