

# **NEWS**

Spring

2024



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M. Wesley Farr residence (1953) in El Segundo.



Dental Building for Dr. George Hurd (before 1948)

# The Radical Practice of James Garrott

SAH/SCC On-Site Gallery Talk, Silver Lake Saturday, April 13, 2024, 5-7 PM



Anthony Fontenot

at The BAg at Bestor Architecture in Silver Lake. Curator, author, and scholar Anthony Fontenot will lecture about

Join SAH/SCC for a behind-the-scenes

look at the exhibition "The Radical

Practice of James H. Garrott: Civil

Rights Activist and Modern Architect"

the architecture and activism of James H. Garrott (1897-1991). Garrott was one of the few Black modernist architects in the United States and throughout his career he maintained a steadfast commitment to progressive politics and civil rights activism. He designed hundreds of buildings, including single-family residences, tract housing, schools, civic buildings, libraries, industrial facilities, and medical buildings, as well as 25 churches.

Garrott had no formal training, but in 1928 he successfully completed the Architect Licensure Examination (now known as the ARE), becoming the second licensed Black architect west of the Mississippi River. Among the projects he was involved with—sometimes collaborating with Paul R. Williams (1894-1980) and William E. Young-are the Golden State Mutual Life Insurance Building (1928) and St. Philip the Evangelist Episcopal Church (1929).

Garrott's allies included Black and white progressives, such as developer/builder Robert E. Alexander (1925-1965), architects and designers Gregory Ain (1908-1988), Charles (1907-1978) and Ray (1912-1988) Eames, Garrett Eckbo (1910-2000), Harwell Hamilton Harris (1903-1990), Reginald D. Johnson (1882-1952), and Richard Neutra (1892-1970), photographers Julius Shulman (1910-2009) and Marvin Rand (1924-2009), and civil rights attorney Loren Miller (1903-1967).

Garrott Exhibition Talk: Saturday, April 13, 2024; 5-7 PM; The BAg, 2030 Hyperion Ave.; \$25 for SAH/SCC Members; \$35 for Non-Members; go to www.sahscc.org, and pay via PayPal or mail in order form on Page 6 with check.

Photos: Julius Shulman; courtesy Julius Shulman photography archive, 1935-2009, Research Library, Getty Research Institute

# Aluminaire Extraordinaire



Aluminaire House in Palm Springs. Photo: John Berley

One of the most exciting developments at Palm Springs Modernism Week 2024 was the energy around the completion of the restoration of the Aluminaire House. Designed in 1931 by A. Lawrence Kocher (1885-1969) and Albert Frey (1903-1998), it was built as a full-scale model house for a temporary exhibition on the east coast.

Intended as a prototype of mass-produced housing constructed of factory-made materials, Aluminaire was composed primarily of aluminum, steel, and glass. Swiss-born architect Frey, fresh off his time with Le Corbusier (1887-1965) and keen to apply the master's "Five Points of Architecture," designed the house to rise on pilotis (piers), culminate in a rooftop open space, and obey the rigors of modernism.

After the original exhibition at the Architectural and Allied Arts Exposition in New York City, the house was dismantled and sold to architect Wallace Harrison (1895-1981), who rebuilt it on his property in Huntington, Long Island.

In 1988, under the threat of demolition, Aluminaire was moved to the Central Islip campus of the New York Institute of Technology. I saw the house there in the early 2000s. In 2012, it was removed, dismantled, and stored in a container.

In 2015, the Palm Springs Art Museum began the long journey of acquiring the house and reconstructing it as a permanent exhibit. Many, including myself, questioned the idea of an all-metal house in the desert.

As part of Modernism Week, the Palm Springs Art Museum and the Palm Springs Architectural Alliance combined forces to create Albert Frey: A Symposium, which brought scholars Joe Rosa, Brad Dunning, SAH/SCC Member Barbara Lamprecht, and critic Paul Goldberger together to discuss the architect and his work.

The program coalesced Frey's work into a cohesive journey. Frey's move to Palm Springs during the 1930s clearly changed his life and significantly influenced the trajectory of his architectural evolution. His time in the desert had changed him—gone was the subjugation of context and landscape that the prototype Aluminaire represented. The desert landscape and vistas became as much a part of his vocabulary as piloti. As a result, the presence of Aluminaire, not far from the hilltop perch of Frey House II, will help bookend the ideas that Frey's modernism embodied.

You can delve more into Frey's process at the exhibition "Albert Frey: Inventive Modernist" at the Palm Springs Art Museum's Architecture and Design Center, Edwards Harris Pavilion, through June 3, 2024.

## Authors on Architecture: Hargreaves on Gill

#### SAH/SCC Zoom Program

#### Sunday, April 28, 2024, 1-2:30 PM Pacific







Rev. Dr. Mark Hargreaves

Rev. Dr. Mark Hargreaves will share his observations on architecture from an unusual perspective through his book, The Sacred Architecture of Irving J. Gill (The Irving Gill Foundation, 2023).

In 2016, Hargreaves arrived from London to become the new rector of St. Jamesby-the-Sea Episcopal Church in La Jolla. He came with a long-standing interest in architecture and was delighted to discover that the St. James bell tower and chapel were designed in the 1930s by Louis Gill (1885-1969), nephew of the famous protomodernist architect Irving J. Gill (1870-1936). Hargreaves became fascinated by the work of the elder Gill, which led him to write his book.

Hargreaves will present Gill's work in the broader context of the sacred architecture of San Diego. What makes this collection notable is that the city has outstanding examples of sacred buildings representing the major movements in 20th-Century architecture, including several examples that reflect the midcentury modern movement.

Some of these architects had national reputations, including Gill, Richard Neutra (1892-1970), and Charles Moore (1925-1993). Others, such as Robert Mosher (1920-2015) and Rob Wellington Quigley (b. 1945), are locally based. Taken together, they have created a wonderfully diverse collection of sacred architecture.

Hargreaves on Gill-Sunday, April 28, 2024; 1-2:30 PM Pacific; \$5; go to www.sahscc.org, and pay via PayPal or mail in order form on Page 6 with check; Zoom link sent upon registration.

#### Tour and Event Information: ph: 1.800.972.4722 e:info@sahscc.org



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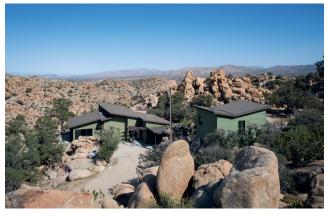
#### Authors on Architecture: Webb on California Houses

#### SAH/SCC Zoom Program

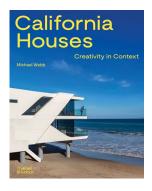
#### Sunday, May 19, 2024, 1-2:30 PM Pacific



Michael Webb, Hon. AIA/LA



Weekend Cabin in Yucca Valley by ORA Architecture & Design. Photo: Fric Staudenmaier



Join SAH/SCC as we welcome author Michael Webb to share about his newest book, California Houses: Creativity in Context (Thames & Hudson, 2024). California has always attracted adventurous spirits—from the earliest pioneers to the innovators of Silicon Valley. The latest expression of that daring is contained in these 36 houses created by talented architects to enhance the lives of their owners.

Completed during the past 10 years, the homes in California Houses capture the spirit of the Golden State in distinctive ways and respond creatively to context and the environment. They engage California's range of landscape, from forests and deserts to the ocean and city streets. Large or small, they demonstrate the extraordinary range of invention emerging from the offices of established as well as younger architects; all but three are based in California. This is

a celebration of superlative talent as well as clients with the imagination and means to commission houses that advance the art of architecture.

Webb is a Los Angeles-based writer who has authored 30 books on architecture and design, including Building Community: New Apartment Architecture (Thames & Hudson, 2021) and Architects' Houses (Princeton Architectural Press, 2018), while contributing essays to many more. He has published countless articles as a regular contributor to leading journals in the United States, Asia, and Europe. Growing up in London, he was an editor at The Times and Country Life, before moving to the United States, where he resides in LA at the Strathmore Apartments (Richard Neutra, 1937) in Charles and Ray Eames' former unit.

Webb on California Houses—Sunday, May 19, 2024; 1-2:30 PM Pacific; \$5; go to www.sahscc.org, and pay via PayPal or mail in order form on Page 6 with check; Zoom link sent upon registration.



Light Box in San Francisco by VeeV Design. Photo: Bruce Damonte



Collywood in West Hollywood by Olson Kundig. Photo: Aaron Leitz

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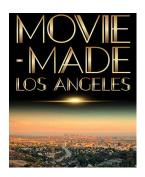
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John Trafton

# Authors on Architecture: <u>Trafton on Movie-Made LA</u>

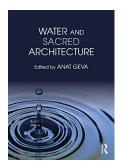
# SAH/SCC Zoom Program Sunday, April 14, 2024, 1-2:30 PM Pacific

We will once again look at the nexus of architecture in LA and the city's role as the home of the film industry when author John Trafton talks about *Movie-Made Los Angeles* (Wayne State University Press, 2023).

LA was a cinematic city long before the rise of Hollywood. By the dawn of the 20th Century, photography, painting, and tourist promotion in Southern California provided early filmmakers with a template for building a myth-making business. These art forms positioned California as a land of transformative experiences and catapulted the dusty backwater town of LA into the largest city on the west coast. Trafton explores how Hollywood, an industry based on world-building, was the product of these art forms in the land of sunshine.

Trafton is originally from Southern California, and received his PhD from the University of St. Andrews in Scotland. He teaches cinema and media studies at Occidental College in LA and Chapman University in Orange. He is the author of several works on cinema history.

Trafton on Movie-Made LA—Sunday, April 14th, 2024; 1-2:30 PM Pacific; \$5; go to <a href="www.sahscc.org">www.sahscc.org</a>, and pay via PayPal or mail in order form on Page 6 with check; Zoom link sent upon registration.



Anat Geva, PhD, Assoc. AIA



Baptismal Font from Saint John's Abbey Church (1961) in Collegeville, MN, by Marcel Breuer (1902-1981). Photo: Victoria Young

# Authors on Architecture: Geva on Water & Sacred Architecture

#### SAH/SCC Zoom Program Sunday, June 9, 2024, 1-2:30 PM Pacific

Join Anat Geva, PhD, Assoc. AIA, for a return engagement in our Authors on Architecture program as she presents her work as editor of *Water and Sacred Architecture* (Routledge, 2023).

This book examines architectural representations that tie water, as a physical and symbolic property, to the sacred. The discussion centers on two levels of this relationship: how water influenced the sacredness of buildings across history and religions; and how sacred architecture expressed the spiritual meaning of water

The book's chapters are compiled by a stellar group of scholars and practitioners from the US, Canada, Europe, Asia, and Africa. All chapters are based on original archival studies, historical documents, and field visits to the sites and buildings. These examinations show water as an expression of architectural design, its materiality, and its spiritual values.

Geva is a registered architect in Israel and Professor Emerita of Architecture at Texas A&M University (College Station), where she taught design, historic preservation, and the history of sacred architecture and of building technology. Among other books, she is the author of Frank Lloyd Wright's Sacred Architecture: Faith, Form, and Building Technology (Routledge, 2011) and The Architecture of Modern American Synagogues, 1950s-1960s (Texas A&M Press, 2023)—see Page 5 to order the Zoom presentation on the latter.

Geva on Water—Sunday, June 9, 2024; 1-2:30 PM Pacific; \$5; go to www.sahscc.org, and pay via PayPal or mail in order form on Page 6 with check; Zoom link sent upon registration.

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

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

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

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**Kesling Homes:** bi-fold, two-color brochure from the "Kesling Modern Structures" tour. \$2

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Learning: 11"x17", four-color walking tour brochure of the Cal State Long Beach campus features history of master plan development by architect Edward A. Killingsworth, FAIA. \$4

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- Robert Byrd: Author Chris Lukather explores the fairytale ranch houses designed by Robert Byrd. \$5.
- California Capitol: The history and recent preservation challenges of California's Capitol building in Sacramento are discussed by Dick Cowan, Wayne Donaldson, FAIA, and Paula Peper. FREE.
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- Unlikely Modernism: SAH/SCC

Board Member David Coffey reveals Bakersfield's hidden legacy of modern architecture. \$5

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- Russel and Mary Wright: Author Jennifer Golub's special look at Dragon Rock at Manitoga, the home of the famed industrial designers. \$5



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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!

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- The knowledge that you are supporting our mission to increase public awareness of Southern California's architectural heritage

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All event ticket sales are final. We are sorry, refunds cannot be accommodated. \*SAH/SCC PRIVACY POLICY: The SAH/SCC never sells, rents, or shares your mailing or email address. Electronic communications enable us to operate economically and efficiently.

#### SAH/SCC EVENT TICKETS

#### James Garrott Talk-Saturday, April 13, 2024

SAH/SCC Member ticket(s) at \$25 each = LIMIT: 2 TICKETS AT MEMBER PRICE	\$		
non-member ticket(s) at \$35 each =	\$		
Movie-Made LA—Sunday, April 14, 2024			
reservation(s) at \$5 each =	\$		
Gill's Sacred Architecture—Sunday, April 28, 2024			
reservation(s) at \$5 each =	\$		
Webb on California—Sunday, May 19, 2024			
reservation(s) at \$5 each =	\$		
Water & Sacred Architecture—Sunday, June 9, 2024			
reservation(s) at \$5 each =	\$		
check enclosed (Make checks payable to SAH/SCC)	)		

### Bookmarks

Julie D. Taylor, Hon. AIA



Rizzoli Electra, 2023, 260 pages, hardcover, \$80.

#### Renewing the Dream: The Mobility Revolution and the Future of Los Angeles

Edited by James Sanders, FAIA; preface by Nik Karalis

Produced in association with the Los Angeles office of the multidisciplinary global design firm Woods Bagot, this book represents the results of an intensive study of LA's mixed and sometimes muddled relationship with various modes of transporting people throughout the sprawl. Rather than rehashing the old arguments, Sanders-known for his books about New York-lovingly turns his focus to LA, both embracing its past and positing visions for the future. Within are essays, interviews, and reports, as well as projects—historical, contemporary, and future—that point to how LA has dealt with and will approach issues of mobility, parking (of course), and placemaking. Among the contributors are architecture writer Frances Anderton, UCLA professor Donald Shoup, and policy expert Mark Valliantos. Profusely illustrated, the book includes expected photos of clogged freeways, palm trees, and architecture, yet goes beyond with paintings, data charts, and movie stills, as well as documentary and fine art photography. For the city of ultimate reimagining, the ideas here to rethink gas stations, parking spots, and courtyard typologies, among other city situations, point to a revolutionary future for the city.



Radius Books/ Palm Springs Art Museum, 2024, 282 pages, hardcover, \$65.

#### **Albert Frey: Inventive Modernist**

Edited by Brad Dunning

This book as an object alone gave me an even richer experience of Frey's work than the museum exhibition it was based on. The deliberateness of its design-the large size, thick matte paper for images, smaller trim size for text pages (with writings by Frey himself differentiated by stock the same goldenrod color as the curtains in Frey House II), exquisite black-and-white reproductions, brilliance in color photographs, and (be still, my heart) a gatefold-match the precision of the architect's work. Projects are placed chronologically, yet displayed as a narrative, rather than a project catalogue seen in too many architecture books. Drawings, books, ephemera, and personal photo albums—many published here for the first time—are photographed as precious specimens on a background.

What makes this collection even more intimate and tender are the personal relationships some of the contributors had with Frey. He was friend and teacher to editor Dunning and architect Michael Rotondi; Barbara Lamprecht made a pilgrimage to Frey House II as a student; as directors of Palm Springs Art Museum, both Janice Lyle and Adam Lerner lived there; Christina Kim had tea with the architect. The listing of works is annotated by Frey's own distinction between projects where "Albert Frey was in charge of design" and those where "Albert Frey was in charge of design and permitted to execute his philosophy of architecture"—a distinction most architects would appreciate.