The Radical Practice of James Garrott

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

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" at The BAg at Bestor Architecture in Silver Lake.

Curator, author, and scholar Anthony Fontenot will lecture about 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 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.
Aluminaire Extraordinaire

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 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. James-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 proto-modernist 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.sahsc.org, and pay via PayPal or mail in order form on Page 6 with check; Zoom link sent upon registration.
Authors on Architecture: Webb on California Houses

SAH/SCC Zoom Program

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

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.
Authors on Architecture: Trafton on Movie-Made LA

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 www.sahssc.org, and pay via PayPal or mail in order form on Page 6 with check; Zoom link sent upon registration.

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.sahssc.org, and pay via PayPal or mail in order form on Page 6 with check; Zoom link sent upon registration.
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Design for Learning: 11 x 17" touring walk map and brochure of the University of California, Santa Barbara, campus. $4

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

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

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

The Historical 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

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

Killingsworth: A Master Plan for Learning: 11 x 17", four-page walking tour brochure of the Cal State Long Beach campus features history of master plan development by architect Edward A. Killingsworth, FAIA. $4

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

Meet Me at the Carousel: Large tri-fold brochure and docent scripts for self-guided tour of South Coast Plaza. $5

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

John Parkinson, Downtown: 11 x 17", four-color brochure featuring a self-guided walking tour of Parkinson buildings in Downtown LA's historic core and beyond. $5

Space and Learning: eight-page, four-color brochure on the historical and contemporary legacy of LA school architecture, featuring projects by Richard Neutra, Thom Mayne, Rios Clementi Hale Studios, and others. $8

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

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

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

Growing up Modern: Authors Julia Jamrozik and Coryn Kempster discuss their new book, Growing up Modern: Childhoods in Iconic Homes. $5

Havana Modern: Discussion on Havana Modern: Critical Readings in Cuban Architecture by the book's editor Ruben Gallo and contributor Miguel Cabrallero. $5

Hitchcock & Architecture: Author Christine Madrid French discusses The Architecture of Suspense. $5

Jack Rogers Hopkins: Explore California Design Maverick: Master Mid-Century Designer Craftsman about Hopkins, a contemporary of Sam Maloof, with editors Jeffrey Head and Katie Nartonis. $5

Irving Ranch: Authors C. Michael Stockstill and H. Pike Oliver discuss Transforming the Irvine Ranch: Joan Irvine, William Pereira, Ray Watson, and the Big Plan. $5

Hugh Kaptur: Steve Keylon, author of The Modern Architecture of Hugh Michael Kaptur, presents the architect's work—with a guest appearance by Kaptur himself. $5

Florence Knoll: Dr. Ana Arujo talks about her book No Compromise: The Work of Florence Knoll, about a leading force of modern design. $5

L.A. Housing: Multifamily housing is the topic for journalist Frances Anderton. $5

Metropolis in Latin America: Authors Maristella Caxiato and Idurre Alonso shed light on the transformations that modified the colonial model of Iberian cities in America. $5

MG M Studios: The wide-ranging effect of MGM is proven by this exhibition. By Steven Birnbaum. $5

Julia Morgan: Architectural historian and writer Kimberly Perette, Assoc. AIA, chronicles the life of trailblazing architect Julia Morgan, FAIA. $5

Neutra in Latin America: Catherine Rose Ellinger discusses her 2018 book Richard Neutra: Encounters with Latin America. $5

New West: SAH/SCC Life Members Wolfgang Wagner, AIA, PBIA, and Leslie Erganias explore history through hand-tinted postcards. $5

Newport Cottages: Author Michael C. Kathryn's book provides superb visuals of Newport Cottages Between 1925 and 1980. $5

John Parkinson: Author Stephen Gee discusses the unsung genius of architect John Parkinson, designer of many LA icons. $5

Jack Peters: Historian Christopher Long relays the architect and designer's "varieties of modernism" and his work in Los Angeles. $5

Alfred Preis: Co-authors present the book Alfred Preis DISPLACED: The Tropical Modernism of the Austrian Emigrant and Architect of the USS Arizona Memorial at Pearl Harbor. $5

Preserving Los Angeles: Author Ken Bernstein and photographer Stephen Schacher reveal how LA's preservation programs saved architectural and cultural jewels of the city. $5

Will Price: Author George E. Thomas makes the case for Will Price as an early modern architect working in Philadelphia. $5


Rebuilding Cities: Author Andrew Demshuk looks at Three Cities After Hitler: Redemptive Reconstruction. $5

David Wyn Roberts: Architect, author, and SAH/SCC Member Cory Building, speaks of his career and very personal look at the work of Cambridge modernist David Wyn Roberts. $5

Aline & Eero Saarinen: Author Eva Hagberg relays the architectural love story from her book When Eero Met His Match: Aline Louchheim and Eero Saarinen. $5

Millard Sheets: Author Adam Arenson discusses the work of Millard Sheets and his association with Home Savings and Loan. $5

The Stepwells of India: Author Victoria Lautman conducts a personal tour of the mysterious and magnificent stepwells in India. $5

Wayne Thom: Author and SAH/SCC Member Emily Billings examines the architectural photography of Wayne Thom, who documented Southern California architecture. $5

Unlikely Modernism: SAH/SCC Board Member David Coffey reveals Bakersfield's hidden legacy of modern architecture. $5

Warner Bros.: Former Warner Bros. archivist Steven Bingen takes you behind the gates at the famed studio. $5

Jean Welz: Author/filmmaker Peter Wyeth uncovers the little-known architectural legacy of the lead of perhaps the leading South African painter. $5

Jean Welz, Part 2: Peter Wyeth provides insight and perspective about the little-known architect Jean Welz and his work. $5

Russel and Mary Wright: Author Jennifer Golub's special look at Dragon Rock at Maitomo, the home of the famed industrial designer. $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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James Garrott Talk—Saturday, April 13, 2024

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_____ non-member ticket(s) at $35 each = 

Movie-Made LA—Sunday, April 14, 2024

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Gill’s Sacred Architecture—Sunday, April 28, 2024

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Webb on California—Sunday, May 19, 2024

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Water & Sacred Architecture—Sunday, June 9, 2024

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Bookmarks

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.

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 Jenice 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 architecture”—a distinction most architects would appreciate.