Modern architecture in California
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MODERN ARCHITECTURE IN CALIFORNIA

The Museum of Modern Art, New York
MODERN ARCHITECTURE IN CALIFORNIA ARRANGED BY THE
DEPARTMENT OF ARCHITECTURE OF THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART

Committee

Philip L. Goodwin, Chairman
Professor Henry-Russell Hitchcock, Jr.
George Howe
Dr. Joseph Hudnut
Philip Johnson

Alfred H. Barr, Jr., Director of the Museum
Ernestine M. Fantl, Staff Member in Charge

Arranged for circulation by the Department of Circulating Exhibitions.

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Modern architecture in California is conspicuous for two reasons: the number and variety of the influences which have shaped its expression, and the opportunities for actual construction which it has enjoyed. The peculiar ebullience of the state which has produced the EPIC movement, the Vigilantes, Hollywood, the Four Square Gospel, the Red Menace and the Yellow Peril, has resulted in the encouragement of experimental and reactionary ideas in architecture, as well as in politics, religion and entertainment. A state whose only architectural tradition is one sympathetic to contemporary design, California is friendly to imported traditions as well as to native development. As early as 1908 Irving Gill, a pioneer of modern architecture in America, was building houses whose formalization and simplification anticipated the finest contemporary architecture. Frank Lloyd Wright not only through his own buildings but also through the work of his followers contributed the principle of open planning and an early interest in prefabricated construction. Through Richard J. Neutra and R. M. Schindler the European traditions of Otto Wagner and Adolf Loos have been cordially accepted. The codified modernism of the East, the revivalism of the World's Fair, the classical tradition of the Beaux Arts, straightforward engineering, experiments in construction and modern design,—all flourish on the Coast.

In this small exhibition the vast range of manners in California has been necessarily elided. No examples of Eastern classical nor World's Fair modernism have been included. The buildings of Gill and Wright are arche-
types of the best modern tradition. The Colby house by
William Wilson Wurster illustrates the transition
from conservative traditionalism to conservative modern-
ism. The airplane hangars of A. C. Z. Zimmerman express
a modern industry in a contemporary vernacular and pre-
sent a cogent contrast with the airport's modernistic
administration building. The apartment house by Kocher
and Frey is typical of the restrained ingenuity of
Eastern experimentalism which in contrast with that of
California seems economical and chaste.

Hollywood has played a dual role in the history of
modern architecture on the Coast. It has encouraged
much new building and has also exerted a not altogether
healthy influence on its style. The extravagances of
the motion picture center have produced an eccentric
modernism which while tasteless in detail still intro-
duces certain essential features of modern design. The
Hollywood house of Cedric Gibbons, chief set designer for
Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer and a pioneer in the introduction of
modern design in the movies, has been much publicized
and in spite of its allegiance to Paris '25 decorative
details, has undoubtedly done much to awaken an inter-
est in modern architecture. Of the movie sets included
in the exhibition, the most interesting are those by
Paul Nelson for "What a Widow" produced by United
Artists. Mr. Nelson, a pupil of Le Corbusier, was
brought to Hollywood especially to design these sets
and they are distinguished by an architectural, rather
than decorative detail. The sets for "Trouble in Paradise"
and "A Bedtime Story" were designed by Hans Dreier,
chief set designer for Paramount. The organization of
this studio permits another department to "dress" the
sets, unfortunately to their detriment. Both Mr. Gib-
bons' house and the sets themselves date back several
years. More recently Eastern decorators have dominated
the studios and movie homes, and Neo-Victorianism, adap-
ted Regency, modern Empire and re-modelled farmhouse
tastefulness have replaced modern design.
Modern architecture on the coast finds its finest expression in the work of Richard J. Neutra and R. M. Schindler.

R. M. Schindler, although a student of Otto Wagner, has identified himself as a follower of Wright. His houses show an unusual understanding of comfortable living, even during the period of violent experimentation in form. In his Buck house, he indicates a return to the clarity of his early inspiration.

Richard J. Neutra has carried on the Wagner tradition of experimentation in new forms, materials and methods of construction. His work is distinguished by a variety of function and a consistent originality. Of his recent buildings, perhaps the most interesting is the Experimental Public School and Kindergarten, a credit not only to Neutra but to the vision of the Los Angeles Board of Education. The extent of Neutra's executed work permits him to rank as one of the foremost architects in America and, through his projects as well as through his work, he has given an impetus to the intelligent solution of new problems.

Ernestine M. Fantl
A. M. HERMAN

At the beginning of a subject or course, a student is faced with the task of determining the level of difficulty. The procedures and methods for acquiring information vary, and the student must be prepared to adapt to these variations. The process of learning requires reading and understanding materials, and the student must be able to identify key information and organize it in a way that is meaningful to them.

In the course of this lesson, we will focus on the process of acquiring information. We will explore the role of the student in the acquisition process, including the use of specific techniques and strategies. The objective is to enhance the student's ability to effectively acquire and retain information.
CEDRIC GIBBONS

Born in Dublin. Came to America and in 1912 became art director for the Thomas A. Edison company at Bedford Park, New York. Served in the War and upon his return joined the old Goldwyn organization in New York as art director. After four years was sent to the Goldwyn company on the coast in the same capacity. In 1924 became head of the art department of Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer which position he now holds. His sets for "Our Dancing Daughters" in 1928, although "modernistic" rather than modern, were the first indication in the movies of an awareness of contemporary design.

EXHIBITS

House of the architect, Santa Monica, 1931

House of the architect, view toward swimming pool, Santa Monica, 1931
EXHIBITS

Exhibit of the properties, County Court, 1931

Home of the property, April 1931

Geneva Factory, 1931
A. LAWRENCE KOCHE AND ALBERT FREY


ALBERT FREY. Born in Zürich, Switzerland, 1903. Studied architecture at Technische Hochschule, Zürich; worked with Le Corbusier 1928-1930; came to America 1930. In association with A. Lawrence Kocher, designed the Aluminaire, the first prefabricated house erected in America; Darien Guild Hall, Darien, Conn; Week-End House, Northport, Long Island.

EXHIBITS

A Real Estate office and Apartment building for Dr. J. J. Kocher, Palm Springs, 1935. Exterior view.

A Real Estate office and Apartment building for Dr. J. J. Kocher, Palm Springs 1935. View from patio.
A. TARMACEH NOCKEN. Born at Bay Top, California, 1928.

B. TARMACEH NOCKEN. Born at Bay Top, California, 1928.

C. TARMACEH NOCKEN. Born at Bay Top, California, 1928.

D. TARMACEH NOCKEN. Born at Bay Top, California, 1928.

E. TARMACEH NOCKEN. Born at Bay Top, California, 1928.

F. TARMACEH NOCKEN. Born at Bay Top, California, 1928.

G. TARMACEH NOCKEN. Born at Bay Top, California, 1928.

H. TARMACEH NOCKEN. Born at Bay Top, California, 1928.

I. TARMACEH NOCKEN. Born at Bay Top, California, 1928.

J. TARMACEH NOCKEN. Born at Bay Top, California, 1928.
RICHARD J. NEUTRA

Born in Vienna in 1892. Graduate of the Technische Hochschule in Vienna. Studied with Adolf Loos. Worked for a time at landscape architecture under Gustav Amman in Switzerland. Executed his first architectural commission in the Balkans during the War. For several years after the War designed commercial buildings and residences in Berlin.

In 1923 came to the United States. Worked in the offices of Holabird and Roche in Chicago; met Sullivan, and spent several months with Wright at Taliesin.

In 1925 established himself in Los Angeles. His Garden Apartments, built in 1927, and exhibited in the International Exhibition of Modern Architecture at the Museum of Modern Art in 1932, was the first building to show a practical application in America of a consistent scheme of design based on modern methods of construction.

Through his books he has been active as both critic and interpreter to Europe of American methods of construction.

Neutra has continued to build steadily, having completed twenty-eight buildings from 1931 to 1935.

AWARDS

1st award  House Beautiful 1934  Anna Sten residence
Gold Medal  Better Homes in America 1935  Wm. Beard residence
1st award  Better Homes in America 1935  Mosk residence
2nd award  Better Homes in America 1935  Koblick residence
2nd award  General Electric Co. 1935  All electric home
RICHARD M. WENTZ

Born to African American parents in 1882, Wentz grew up in a prominent family. His parents were active in civil rights and social reform movements. Following their example, Wentz became deeply involved in the struggle for equality and justice. He was a leader in the movement for African American rights, serving as a key figure in several organizations and movements.

In 1920, he ran for the United States Senate from California, but was defeated. Despite this setback, he remained committed to his cause and continued to work tirelessly on behalf of African Americans.

Wentz was a tireless advocate for civil rights and social justice. He worked closely with other leaders in the movement, and his influence was felt throughout the country. He was a respected and beloved figure, and his legacy continues to inspire new generations of activists.

Awards

Wentz received numerous awards and honors for his contributions to civil rights and social justice. He was a recipient of the NAACP's highest award, the Spingarn Medal, in 1941. He also received the Presidential Medal of Freedom in 1964, one year after his death.
Richard J. Neutra, cont'd

PUBLICATIONS

Wie Baut Amerika, 1926
New Building in the World
Co-author of Problems of Building
Co-author of Rational Planning Methods

EXHIBITS

Residence of Mrs. Ernest Mosk, Hollywoodland, 1931.
   a) Street facade
   b) Rear facade

V. D. L. Research House, Los Angeles, 1932.
   a) Entrance facade
   b) Interior
   c) View from lake

   a) View from southwest
   b) Interior

Farm of Mr. and Mrs. M. Koblick, San Francisco, 1933.
Co-supervision W. A. Garran.

Residence of Miss Anna Sten, Santa Monica, 1933.

   a) North facade
   b) Interior
   c) View from west
   d) Detail of patio
Richard J. Neutra, cont'd.

EXHIBITS

California Military Academy, Los Angeles, 1934-35
a) Administration wing
b) Classroom interior
c) Classroom wing

Experimental Public School, Los Angeles, 1934-35
a) General view

Experimental Public Kindergarten, Los Angeles, 1935

MODELS

Planetarium, Los Angeles, 1935
R. M. SCHINDLER

Born in Vienna. Graduated from the Technische Hochschule and L'Ecole des Beaux Arts in Vienna. Two years before he left Austria Schindler happened upon a portfolio of the work of Frank Lloyd Wright and became an ardent admirer of Wright's early work. As he says, "Here was the first architect. And the timeless importance of Wright lies especially in these first houses."

Worked in Vienna until he came to this country in 1914. Worked in the Chicago office of Frank Lloyd Wright for two years and also taught at the Church School. Eventually he found his way to Los Angeles. In 1925 collaborated with R. J. Neutra on a project for the Palace of the League of Nations which was sent around Europe by the Deutscher Werkbund along with those of Le Corbusier and Hannes Meyer. Has taught at the Chouinard School of Art in Los Angeles, where he has been for some time in private practice.

EXHIBITS

Residence of Mrs. J. J. Buck, Los Angeles, 1934.
   a) Entrance facade
   b) View toward the patio

Oliver House, Los Angeles.
   a) Exterior
   b) Interior

Born in 1894, in Stockton, California. Began his architectural career at an early age, working summers while still in school in the office of a Stockton architect. Graduated from the University of California where he also studied marine engineering and naval architecture. After a year at sea as cadet engineer, he returned to the University to take his degree in architecture. Worked in San Francisco and Sacramento, 1919-1921. Travelled abroad, 1922. Upon his return worked two years in the office of Delano and Aldrich, New York, and in 1925 returned to California. In 1927 began private practice in San Francisco, specializing in country houses.

EXHIBITS

Residence of Mr. and Mrs. H. B. Colby, Berkley, 1931.
  a) View from street
  b) Dining room terrace
A. C. ZIMMERMAN

Born 1894. Graduated from the University of Southern California and worked with the Beaux Arts School of Design. He is a member of the American Institute of Architects and is at present practicing architecture in Los Angeles.

AWARDS

1923 Honor award from the Southern California Chapter of the American Institute of Architects for best design for a commercial building.

1923 Honor award from the Southern California Chapter of the American Institute of Architects for best designed school.

1929 First prize. Lehigh Airport Competition.

EXHIBITS

Panoramic view of airplane hangars at the W.A.E. Terminal, Alhambra, California, 1934.

Air view of airplane hangar at the W.A.E. Terminal, Alhambra, 1934.
A. C. TAYLOR

B.S. 1930. Graduated from the University of California with a major in economics.

A.B. 1931. Graduated from the University of California with a major in accounting.

A.M. 1932. Graduated from the University of California with a major in economics.

A. Sc. 1933. Graduated from the University of California with a major in economics.

AWARDS

1932 Honorable Mention from the University of California for his work in economics.

1933 Honorable Mention from the University of California for his work in economics.

1934 Honorable Mention from the University of California for his work in economics.

EXHIBITS

Preparation of exhibits for the W.H.T. Society.

Affirmative attendance, 1932.

Affirmative, 1932.
SUPPLEMENTARY MATERIAL

IRVING GILL
Banning Residence, Los Angeles, 1908

MOVIE SETS
1. Paul Nelson - What a Widow, 1930, United Artists
2. Paul Nelson - What a Widow, 1930, United Artists
3. Hans Dreier - Trouble in Paradise, 1932, Paramount
4. Hans Dreier - A Bedtime Story, 1933, Paramount
5. Hans Dreier - A Bedtime Story, 1933, Paramount
6. Hans Dreier - A Bedtime Story, 1933, Paramount