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NEWS



Burlinghall Residence (1954). Photo: Rochelle Kramer

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Getting to
Know Architect
Paul Edward Tay:

Five Houses in Long Beach

SAH/SCC Tour
Saturday, September 20th

Please join SAH/SCC on Saturday, September 20th, in Long Beach as we uncover the work of architect Paul Edward Tay, an unknown yet prolific figure in the annals of modern architecture. From 10:30AM to 3:00PM, this tour takes an intimate look at five never-before-toured residential projects. The self-driving tour—organized by SAH/SCC Board Member Adam Wheeler—is \$35 for SAH/SCC members and \$45 for nonmembers and includes access to the homes and guide book.



Braly Residence (1972).



Sipprelle Residence (1961).



Sipprelle Residence (1961).

Built between the 1950s and 1970s, these homes each have a unique language and pure identity; however they all show the unbridled yet talented hand of Tay. Born in Pomona, CA, in 1924, Tay early on desired to be an architect and kept this vision close at hand. After a tour of duty in the US Navy as a patrol plane pilot, he went on to pursue architecture at the University of Southern California alongside contemporaries such as Cal Straub and Pierre Koenig. Soon after, he established his office in Long Beach focusing primarily on residential work.

Professionally, Tay was close friends with Edward Killingsworth, as they both practiced residential architecture in Long Beach. One of his major influences was modernist Harwell Hamilton Harris. Tay's architecture can be characterized as ranch modernism. In the 1950s, this domestic architectural mode began as a way of life before it was adopted as a style, and Tay's signature was in keeping with this progression. The openness and freedom of a ranch can be seen in many of Tay's residential projects, such as the Penn Residence (1954), the Drake Residence (1951), and the Crail Residence (1957). With direct access to nature and unassuming street facades, interior spaces—both private and public—emphasize comfort, flexibility, and simplicity of being.

Tay's homes incorporate much of what is so recognized in this Southern California vibe. Predominantly single story without being claustrophobic, Tay's designs for simple yet efficient structural systems of post-and-beam—with vaulted ceilings and clerestory windows—allowed streams of indirect light while avoiding views into the home, reinforcing it as a sanctuary. As one enters a Tay home from the street, a feeling of escapism is evident in his planned vistas to the backyard and simple floor plans that frame the rear and side yards.

He noted in the 1950s, "I think the trend is away from 'less is more', and I am glad. I like to take the example of the natural world around us. Nature, I think, is abundant, not stingy." His architecture speaks to this organic quality but still infuses it with a modern aesthetic.

Many of Tay's Southern California homes are consistent with a melding of a ranch vocabulary within a lifestyle. However, Tay's houses also show us that site is equally important to design. The Tay tour will touch upon the evolution of an architect, who, although working extensively in a very local area for 25 years, did not just apply this style to all of his projects. He took the "essence" of ranch modernism and applied it to each individual project. The Sipprelle Residence (1961) is an example of these principles applied to a house on a hillside condition with a very sculptural form. The last house Tay designed and built in Southern California—the Braly Residence (1972)—similarly applies the "qualities" of his ranch modern designs (expansive views, connection with nature, flexibility of space, lots of natural light). He also adds a twist by flipping it upside down and incorporating a piano nobile concept, with public spaces on the second floor to capture the views of the Peninsula and the bedrooms on the ground floor with patios opening out to the beach.

He would eventually move his office from Long Beach to Mendocino in Northern California. He has spent the past 36-plus years designing homes on the Mendocino Coast.

Please join us to explore this untapped architect's approach to five stellar projects.



Burlinghall Residence (1954). Photo: Rochelle Kramer

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SAH/SCC

President's Letter



Tour and Event Information: 1.800.972.4722; sahscc-info@sahscc.org

SAH/SCC NEWS is published bi-monthly by the Society of Architectural Historians / Southern California Chapter. Subscription is a benefit of membership and provides members with one of the most comprehensive calendars of architectural events in Southern California and advance notice of exclusive SAH/SCC architectural events and tours.

I've just returned from a couple of weeks in Southern Germany and Austria, with a side trip to Prague. Of course, I visited and photographed historic buildings wherever I went.

In Vienna, a highlight was the Secession Building where exhibits, true to the Secession's founding principles, are still selected by a majority vote of its artist-members. I bought a book that mapped out other examples of Jugendstil in its various phases, and I understand the tourist information offices offer a pamphlet along the same lines. What a pleasure to find bars, bookshops, residences, businesses, and public buildings in use, mostly for their original purposes, and well kept.

Prague has a potential to become another magnet for travelers with an interest in the early stages of modernism. A museum devoted to Alphonse Mucha, with both on-premise and a satellite gift store, is much publicized. One hotel advertises itself as an Art Nouveau landmark, with little in its interior to support the claim, however. A couple of hotel-restaurants on Wenceslas Square and the wonderful Municipal House nearby receive brief notice among the sea of Baroque, Neo-Baroque, and Medieval landmarks. But the alert pedestrian can find inspired examples of Czech Jugendstil storefronts, apartment houses, theaters, and restaurants in the Nové Město (New Town) section on streets outside the tourist zones. Some have been ill-treated over time, many only need a good cleaning to shine like the jewels they once were.

While the Secession Building contains an illustrated account of its history, including a scene of much of the building in ruin attributed to a fire set by departing German soldiers at the end of World War II, plaques on the many ancient churches, abbeys, palaces, and public buildings in Germany that were hard-hit by Allied bombing merely mention that the buildings were damaged during the war, without identifying extent or perpetrators. They go on to give the years when rebuilding was done (mostly in the 1960s). While this downplaying of epic destruction and massive reconstruction diplomatically encourages both American tourism and German cultural identity, it obscures the prodigious accomplishments of design and craftsmanship in the post-war restorations. Who were these individuals who figured out how to put these exquisite cathedrals and palaces back together? How did they solve the structural issues the ancient builders had overcome but not documented? And what stories there must be about training stonecutters, masons, stained glass craftsmen, and the like! This is a story that deserves attention.

Merry Ovnick

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SAH/SCC Members: Save a Tree and a Stamp

With rising postage costs and increased attention to recycling and waste reduction, SAH/SCC prefers to send event confirmations and directions electronically. If you have not sent us your email address, please do so at sahscc-info@sahscc.org. As a matter of policy, SAH/SCC does not share its membership lists with other organizations, and that privacy extends to email addresses, as well. As a nonprofit organization totally funded by membership and donations, sending correspondence electronically helps keep our costs down.

SAH/SCC— Don't Keep it a Secret!

We know that, as a member of SAH/SCC, you enjoy the insightful tours and informative calendar. Well, now is the time to share the wealth. Encourage your friends and associates to become members. Although Architectural Historians is in our name, SAH/SCC membership is open to all people enthusiastic about experiencing architecture in a personal way.

We strive to keep the costs of tours and events as low as possible, thus they are not usually money-making ventures. Indeed, the fees for the successful "Haus and Home" event at Neutra's VDL House all went to the restoration fund for the house itself.

We call on you to upgrade your membership and encourage others to become a member at any level they can most contribute. It's only with you that we can continue to be a member of our thriving architectural community.

See the back page for more information.



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Contemporary Patrons: Fisher in Santa Ynez

SAH/SCC Talk and Tour: Saturday, August 9th

Join SAH/SCC for the next installment of *Contemporary Patrons* to learn firsthand about the currents, concepts, and challenges of building a house today. On Saturday, August 9th, 11AM-1PM, you will have the opportunity to visit a recently completed custom house with extensive views of the Santa Ynez Valley and surrounding mountains.

The 100-foot by 100-foot home, designed by Frederick Fisher & Partners, Architects, is organized around a central courtyard that divides the building into three distinct "zones" with areas for living, sleeping, and working. To take advantage of the warm climate during the summer months, three outdoor rooms extend the living space. This blurring of inside and outside is achieved with the use of large sliding glass panels. The interior courtyard protects the residents from harsh wind and sun while providing an alternate view of the landscape, which is contemplative, serene, and quiet.

The contained exterior world is juxtaposed to the outer landscape of natural grasses, shrubs, and trees. The residence is clad entirely in corrugated Cor-ten steel that has taken on a rich brown color as it oxidizes, complementing its earthy surroundings. Perforated Cor-ten steel is used for sun-shading along glass panels and covered areas, adding a play of light across the home's surfaces. Large sliding and swinging steel gates enclose the home at night and while the owners travel.

The owners, an artist and a lawyer, requested a home that would include an open living area, master bedroom suite, two guest bedrooms, office, artist studio, and lap pool. The result was a 7,000-square-foot single-family residence conceived within a 25-square-foot grid pattern.

Our afternoon in Santa Ynez will be an opportunity to experience the house and learn from the perspective of the owners who commissioned the architect.

The event is \$10 and is open to Life and Patron members of the SAH/SCC (the program will only be available to the general membership in the event there is space available). Space is limited.



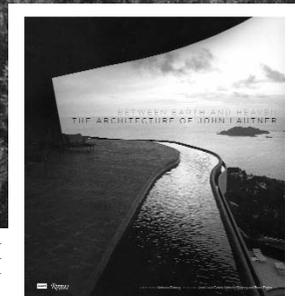
Photos: Benny Chan/Photoworks

A Little Piece of Heaven John Lautner at The Hammer Museum



Garcia Residence, Los Angeles, 1962, by John Lautner. © J. Paul Getty Trust.

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Photo by Julius Shulman.



The Hammer Museum in Westwood presents "Between Earth and Heaven: The Architecture of John Lautner", the first major exhibition survey of the architect's work, on view July 13th through October 12th.

John Lautner (1911-94), residing and working in Los Angeles during much of his remarkable career, created designs known for their radical innovation with specific attention to materiality, space, and a consciousness of the natural environment.

This exhibition hopes to bring Lautner's work to a greater public beyond the world of architecture and design, where he has achieved cult-like status. The general public will gain the "shock of recognition", as several of his works have famously been the backdrop of many Hollywood films. The Hammer's programming will reflect this part of Lautner's legacy along with more analytical angles. (See the SAH/SCC Calendar section for detailed events.)

An aesthetic, philosophical, and social visionary, Lautner made buildings that continue to amaze architects and patrons alike with their formal variety and freedom, their structural originality, and their sculptural force. Private residences, such as Elrod Residence (1968) in Palm Springs and Malin Residence (1960) in Los Angeles—also known as the "Chemosphere"—have become iconic examples of his work and vision.

Curated by historian Nicholas Olsberg and architect Frank Escher, "Between Earth and Heaven" will feature an exhibition design intended to be as visceral an experience as Lautner's buildings themselves. Newly crafted large-scale models will give a sense of the internal spaces and scale of key projects, and will reveal Lautner's construction processes.

Short color films by documentarian Murray Grigor will convey the sensation of movement through the actual buildings and their sites, helping visitors feel the "vitality within repose" that Lautner sought to create. Surrounding this dramatic core will be a wealth of archival materials, including never-before-seen drawings, architectural renderings, study models, and construction photographs that offer visitors insight into how the structures and spaces unfolded in Lautner's mind and emerged physically in their settings.

The accompanying book of the same name contains texts by Olsberg, Escher, and architectural historian Jean-Louis Cohen. Published by Rizzoli International (\$60, 234 pages, hardcover), the book gives an in-depth and intimate view of Lautner's work. From the front cover—using the display font that Lautner himself used on his practice's letterhead—the book's design by Volume Inc. draws readers in with the same magnetism felt when visiting a Lautner structure. This prized volume is more than a mere "beauty book." While marveling at how gorgeous sweeping concrete can be, one is also afforded *how* it can be, with a look at detailed drawings showing the workings of the architect. Nor is it a catalogue of project after project, but a presentation of the compelling ideas, intentions, and inventions behind Lautner's heavenly designs.

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sc publications order form

For those of you who missed out on recent SAH/SCC tours, or would like more information for your reference, here's an opportunity to get your hands on the publications printed especially for SAH/SCC events. Don't let another chance pass you by.

Out of the Shadow: 24-page, two-color brochure from Phoenix travel tour featuring the work of Frank Lloyd Wright, Al Beadle, Blaine Drake, Paolo Soleri, Edward B. Sawyer, Bennie Gonzales, and Will Bruder
 _____ at **\$12 each**

A Block in Glendale: pocket-size fandeck of cards featuring five diverse properties—including a Paul Williams residence—plus historical background information on the Brockmont Heights subdivision
 _____ at **\$3 each**

Rodney Walker 3 30 90: 12-page brochure exploring the architect's usage of the three-foot module and features nine homes on five sites
 _____ at **\$8 each**

Edward Killingsworth: Setting a Modern Standard: 20-page, black-and-white brochure featuring seven Long Beach houses and an article by the architect
 _____ at **\$8 each**

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
 _____ at **\$8 each**

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
 _____ at **\$5 each**

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

The Historic and Modern Spirit of Ventura: 20-page guide from Ventura tour
 _____ at **\$10 each**

Modernism for the Masses: tri-fold brochure with inserts of detailed floor plans of Eichler homes visited on the Orange County tour
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New Case Study House #16 by Rodney Walker
BEST Modern Architecture Value In Ojai Vicinity

Re-created by Craig Walker, 2006. The spirit of celebrated Case Study House #16 lives again on an oaken ridge just outside Ojai. This is not a slavish copy, but rather a sensitive reinterpretation incorporating today's technological and green resources. The timeless aspect of the early modernist vision pervades: one lives within nature, not sheltered away from nature. Inside dissolves to outside, and the peace of the mountains is with you. The property is over 2 acres and affords dramatic mountain and valley views. Includes: three bedrooms, 2.5 baths, den, office, sitting room/atrium, live on roof terrace with fireplace, laundry, and four car covered parking.
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Contemporary Patrons—August 9th

_____ Patron and Life member ticket(s) at **\$10 each** = \$ _____

(Only SAH/SCC Patron and Life Members are eligible. To become a member, see below.)

Tay Tour—September 20th

_____ member ticket(s) at **\$35 each** = \$ _____

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SAH/SCC Membership Benefits:

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 Member prices for SAH/SCC events
 Free Members' Celebration

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- \$30** Student (with copy of current ID)
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