



Courtyard of Herman Miller Showroom.

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Authors on Architecture: Ostroff on Eames

SAH/SCC Lecture & Book Signing
Saturday, September 19, 2015, 2-4PM

SAH/SCC is pleased to welcome back Daniel Ostroff for "Authors on Architecture." In 2011, he treated us to an inside look of the exhibition "Collecting Eames: The JF Chen Collection." This event, hosted by Herman Miller's LA showroom (Lynch/Eisinger/Design, 2009), features Ostroff discussing his fourth book on Eames, *An Eames Anthology* (Yale University Press, 2015). Surrounded by furniture designed by Charles and Ray Eames, we'll be treated to surprises and new insights into many of the seminal designs of the 20th century.

An Eames Anthology collects for the first time the writings of the Eameses, illuminating their marriage and professional partnership of 50 years. More than 120 primary-source documents and 200 illustrations highlight iconic projects, such as the Case Study Houses and the molded plywood chair, as well as their work for major corporations as both designers (Herman Miller, Vitra) and consultants (IBM, Polaroid). Previously unpublished materials appear alongside published writings by and about the Eameses and their work, giving a peek into their creative process. Correspondence with such luminaries as Richard J. Neutra and Eero



Charles and Ray at their Pacific Palisades home and studio.

Photo by Monique Jacot, © Vitra AG.

Saarinen provides a personal glimpse into the advance of modernity in mid-century America.

Ostroff is also the author of *Modern Classic: The Eames Plastic Chair* (Neenah Paper/The Eames Office, 2006, with Eames Demetrios), *Eames + Valastro* (The O Team, 2011), and *Collecting Eames* (JF Chen, 2011). He was consulting curator for "Eames Words" and curator of "Collecting Eames: The JF Chen

Collection," both for The Getty Foundation's Pacific Standard Time Consortium. He has consulted for The Eames Office, Museum of California Design, Herman Miller, LACMA, SFMOMA, and others. Ostroff also produces feature films, television programming, and documentaries.

Books will be available for sale and signing after the presentation.

Authors on Architecture: Ostroff—Saturday, September 19, 2015; 2-4PM; Herman Miller, 3641 Holdrege Ave., LA; free; registration strongly requested—see order form on Page 6, call 800.972.4722, email info@sahscc.org, or go to www.sahscc.org.



Architectural Forum from September 1950.



Eames kite design.



Charles at his desk.

Photo by Monique Jacot, © Vitra AG.

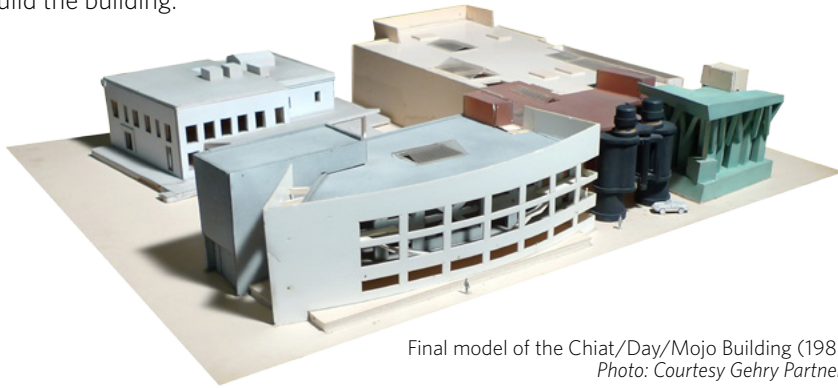
SAH/SCC President's Letter

This month, the Los Angeles County Museum of Art will open its retrospective of the work of Frank Gehry, FAIA. The exhibition—on view September 13, 2015, to March 20, 2016—promises to feature work from all phases of his 50 years of practice in Los Angeles.

One of Gehry's more famous buildings in Los Angeles (aside from Disney Concert Hall, of course) is the Chiat/Day/Mojo Building (1985-91) on Main Street in Venice. Known informally as "the binoculars building," the office for the advertising agency has been recognized for its iconic imagery and integration of the 45-foot-high binocular sculpture by artist Claes Oldenburg. This building, however, was actually the second office space Gehry designed for the agency.

For years, the agency worked out of offices in downtown LA in the Biltmore Hotel, but moved to Venice in 1988. Known for its guts, radical ideas, and creativity, Chiat/Day's relocation to the ocean seemed a great fit with agency culture.

Jay Chiat, who lived in Venice, bought the Main Street site from Gehry himself, and engaged the architect. Unfortunately, when excavation began, it was revealed to be a toxic waste site dating back to the Abbot Kinney days; the soil was polluted with coal tar from a former gas works. Ultimately, it would take many years to clean up the site and build the building.



Final model of the Chiat/Day/Mojo Building (1985-91).
Photo: Courtesy Gehry Partners, LLP

But Chiat/Day needed more space fast. The new office had been commissioned to accommodate the agency's sudden growth resulting from landing its first automobile account, Nissan. A 42,000-square-foot warehouse at Hampton and Rose was leased, and Gehry (along with the late Anne Greenwald as interior designer) remodeled the vast space to hold 300 people.

As a young advertising executive, my goal had always been to work at Chiat/Day. In 1988, I achieved my goal, and moved into the recently opened "temporary" warehouse space.

And as I like to say, that was the beginning of my "Johnson Wax Moment."

"The warehouse," as it became known, was a revelation in space and how it influenced the work environment. The building had 30-foot-high ceilings and was divided by a wide-open "Main Street" that served equally as circulation, assembly and party space, and art gallery. A major feature was "the fish" conference room—an open, undulating 22-by-54-foot steel-skinned form featuring brown corrugated-cardboard furniture inside.

Throughout the warehouse, Jay strategically placed pieces from his art collection and rotated them regularly. At the terminus of Main Street was a large Jenny Holzer message board that flashed ironic messages. Along the Street and ancillary circulation paths, Gehry placed open, deconstructivist cubicles. The crate-like cubicles were egalitarian in that they were of equal size, no matter if you were an assistant or Jay Chiat himself. With open framing to the exterior and press-board desks, the avant-garde design was startling in its rebellion. Former loading docks were replaced with large panes of glass that let in natural light and provided surreal views of men in hazmat suits removing toxic waste from the site of the permanent building.

The design of the warehouse had a significant impact on how we all worked. I truly believe it fostered creativity and transparency in a way that other workspaces of its time did not. It inspired me, and others like me, to do our very best. One of my fondest memories was seeing a used brown corrugated pizza box thrown down on Main Street with a curator's card reading "Frank Gehry coffee table."

continues on page 6

Tour and Event Information:

1.800.972.4722

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SOCIETY OF ARCHITECTURAL HISTORIANS
SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA CHAPTER

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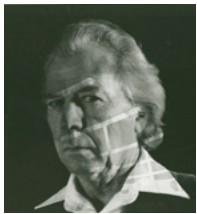
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Walter S. White: Inventions in Mid-Century Architecture

SAH/SCC Gallery Tour & Talk

Saturday, October 10, 2015, 10:30AM-3PM

Join SAH/SCC for a behind-the-scenes visit to the new exhibition "Walter S. White: Inventions in Mid-Century Architecture," at the AD&A Museum at UC Santa Barbara. Educator, White scholar, author, and SAH/SCC Life Member, Volker M. Welter, will lead the group on a special tour of the new gallery show. Our group will have exclusive access to the exhibition before the gallery opens to the public.

Walter S. White's (1919-2002) designs for the Coachella Valley desert cities of Palm Desert, Indio, La Quinta, and Palm Springs in the 1940s and 1950s addressed the extreme climate with thrilling, expressionistic forms that took inspiration from the natural landscape. He proposed new, ecologically sensitive, and inexpensive construction methods. White's inventive roof designs—he received a patent for his all-steel Hypar roof (derived from hyperbolic paraboloid shapes) and wood roof construction methods—make his desert projects especially distinctive. His roofs swoop and curve to match the forms of the mountains in the distance, while providing protection for their inhabitants.

Schedule permitting, the day may also include a special viewing of additional White materials with SAH/SCC Member Jocelyn Gibbs, Curator of UCSB's Architecture and Design Collection.

Participants will enjoy gourmet box lunches on campus, followed by a construction update on the Faculty Center (Moore, Lyndon, Turnbull, Whitaker, 1967-8) with UCSB campus architect and former SAH/SCC Board Member, Dennis Whelan. Work on the center is by one of Moore's legacy firms, Los Angeles-based Moore Ruble Yudell.

Due to gallery restrictions, space is limited for this event. Participants will arrange their own transportation to and from Santa Barbara.

Walter S. White: Inventions in Mid-Century Architecture—Saturday, October 10, 2015; 10:30AM-3PM; \$39 for SAH/SCC members; \$49 for non-members; includes box lunch and museum admission; does not include transportation to UCSB or parking (\$8); registration—see order form on Page 6, call 800.972.4722, or go to www.sahscc.org.



Miles C. Bates House, Palm Desert, circa 1955.



Max Wilcockson House, Indio, circa 1960.



Dr. Franz Alexander House under construction, Palm Desert, circa 1955.

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Save the Date!

SAH/SCC Members' Celebration

Saturday, October 17, 2015, 2-5PM

Mark your calendar for the annual SAH/SCC Members' Celebration on October 17th at the South Pasadena Public Library. The schedule of speakers is being finalized, so watch your email for more details. As is with all Members' Celebrations, admission is free; guests pay \$10, which may be applied to new membership on that day.

The South Pasadena Public Library opened in 1908 and functioned as a library until 1982, when it also became a community center. During the past 107 years, the building has undergone several changes, and is now an unusual combination of its earlier and later forms. There is little, however, to be seen today of the original Classical Revival building by Marsh & Russell, which was expanded in 1916. In 1930, original architect Norman Marsh remodeled it to Mediterranean Revival style with classical elements. Back-to-back to the 1930 building, a 1981 building expansion replicates its elements in a spare and modern configuration.

With its 1930 face to El Centro Street and its 1981 face to the parallel Oxley Street, the library occupies a landscaped city block between Fairview Avenue and Diamond Avenue. We'll be meeting in the community room of the 1930 building, which was made a South Pasadena Cultural Heritage Landmark in 1972.

SAH/SCC Members' Celebration: South Pasadena Public Library—Saturday, October 17, 2015; 2-5PM; Community Room, 1100 Oxley Street, South Pasadena; free for SAH/SCC Members in good standing; \$10 for non-member guests, applicable to new membership; reservations are required; registration—see order form on Page 6, call 800.972.4722, email info@sahscc.org, or go to www.sahscc.org.



Oxley Street façade of South Pasadena Public Library.
Photo: Courtesy Creative Commons.

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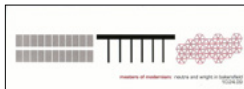
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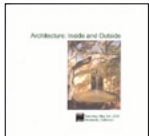
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SAH/SCC PUBLICATIONS



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



_____ at \$3 each

Architecture: Inside and Outside: 5"x5" folded color brochure featuring Santa Barbara's Lotusland, Casa del Herrero, and Val Verde.



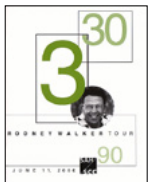
_____ at \$12 each

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 \$3 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.



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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.



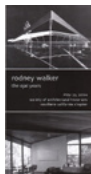
_____ \$4 each

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



_____ 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 \$5 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 \$2 each

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



_____ at \$2 each

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



_____ 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.



_____ at \$5 each

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.



_____ at \$10 each

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



_____ at \$5 each

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



_____ at \$4 each

Killingsworth: A Master Plan for 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.



_____ at \$8 each

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



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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.

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SOCIETY OF ARCHITECTURAL HISTORIANS / SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA CHAPTER

NEWS

September/October 2015

5

SAH/ORDER FORM

JOIN OR RENEW TODAY!

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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SAH/SCC EVENT TICKETS

Ostroff on Eames—September 19, 2015

_____ free ticket(s)

Walter S. White—October 10, 2015

_____ SAH/SCC member ticket(s) at \$39 each = \$ _____

_____ non-member ticket(s) at \$49 each = \$ _____

Members' Celebration—October 17, 2015

_____ SAH/SCC member ticket(s)

_____ SAH/SCC non-member ticket(s) at \$10 each = \$ _____

Ticket fee is applicable to new membership at the event.

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continued from page 2

Eventually, the new building was readied for occupancy, sort of. It had taken so long to build, that agency growth had exceeded its capacity. It was under construction for the first year we were there and the move inspired Chiat/Day to undertake a then-radical social experiment in people working from home, using laptops and cell phones.

The building's design, a play between a white Corbusian volume and the deconstructivist "trees" structure joined by art (the binoculars as porte cochère), was a disappointment for those of us who had worked in the warehouse. Gone was the rawness and the rebellion—the feeling that breaking rules was not just tolerated, but expected. And the camaraderie experienced in the great gathering spaces of the warehouse waned in a "club house room" with a pool table. Not to mention that the conference rooms in the binoculars themselves were afunctional; sound traveled up the tall, narrow cones and you couldn't hear the person directly across from you.

Ultimately, the agency left the new building for a Play del Rey warehouse space that was meant to recapture the spirit of the Venice warehouse, but really felt more like a factory. In the hands of a lesser architect, the magic was gone. (And soon, so was I.)

Gehry, of course, went on to achieve "starchitect" status after Bilbao. I'll always remember the earlier work, where he may have been rejecting modernism, but not the importance of architectural space as a condition that can feed the soul and inspire creativity.

—Sian Winship