Living the California Dream
Modern Domestic Architecture and Design in Los Angeles
AHIS 468 (12196)

Maymester, Spring 2015
Prof. Megan R. Luke
mluke@usc.edu

Information session: November 5 | VKC 379

Description
This course introduces students to the history of modern architecture through the domestic buildings and interior design of Los Angeles. We will investigate the relationship between architecture and the natural environment, considering how major architects such as Charles and Henry Greene, Frank Lloyd Wright, R. M. Schindler, Richard Neutra, John Lautner, and A. Quincy Jones deployed built form to annex and shape exterior spaces for private consumption. In the process students will consider how changing definitions of the private sphere have dictated the course of urban planning and priorities for historic preservation.

The built environment of Los Angeles is a rich laboratory for understanding social concerns that have shaped the city’s history in the twentieth century: immigration and exile, utopian schemes, tourism, ecology, mass transit, and industry in entertainment and natural resources. How can a private home exemplify particular arguments about the collective life of a city? Students gain critical skills and historical knowledge to answer this question for a range of case studies. We will appreciate how private enterprise and the public commons operate in cooperation and conflict within our most intimate spaces.

Through seminar discussion, written assignments, and photographic projects, students will cultivate a nuanced appreciation for the city they call home.

Experiences
Students can expect the following experiential learning opportunities:

- Excursions to 10–12 homes (pending final approval) and exterior viewings of many more
- Two-day excursion to Palm Springs
- Sessions in archival collections of libraries and museums to study furniture, textiles, photographic documentation, and publicity
- Forums with architects, curators, and experts engaged with the conservation and preservation of the modernist heritage of the city

Assignments
This is an upper-level seminar course eligible for 4 units of credit.

- Responsible and respectful participation (punctual arrival to each site visit; professional care of fragile environments and objects; mutual respect, robust discussion participation, and on-time submission of all written work) (20%)
- Daily blog entries (250 words and 1-2 photographs each) (25%)
- Short paper that introduces and describes the value of a particular local archive, museum collection, or reading for a contextual understanding of your choice of one of the homes we visit (5pp) (20%)
- Term paper that develops an argument about that same home through the lens of a particular topic gleaned from the readings (10pp) (35%)
Required Books
Esther McCoy, *Five California Architects*, 2nd ed. (Los Angeles: Hennessey & Ingalls, 1975)

In addition to readings of these textbooks, PDFs of articles/chapters dedicated to specific architects, buildings, preservation histories, and sociological studies of domestic urbanism. Specific texts TBD as appointments are confirmed with site visits (not to exceed 60pp/week).

**Week 1** May 18–22

**Mon**
Introduction at Will Rogers Historic House and State Park

**Tue**
Gamble House, Charles and Henry Greene [*www.gamblehouse.org*]
Millard House/La Miniatura, Frank Lloyd Wright (exterior)

**Wed**
Greene & Greene Archives and Exhibition, Huntington Library and Museum
See also: [*USC Greene & Greene Digital Archive*]

**Thu**
Hollyhock House, Frank Lloyd Wright [*www.barnsdall.org/visit/hollyhock-house*]
4800 Hollywood Boulevard, Barnsdall Park
Forum with curator overseeing restoration, Jeffrey Herr

**Fri**
Frank Lloyd Wright’s Concrete Block Homes in the Hollywood Hills:
Samuel Freeman House, 1961 Glencoe Way
Ennis House, 2607 Glendower Avenue
Storer House, 8161 Hollywood Boulevard
Week 2  May 25–29

Mon  Memorial Day (No Class)

Tue  Forum with Los Angeles Conservancy

Wed  Schindler House, Rudolph Schindler ([www.makcenter.org](http://www.makcenter.org))

835 N. Kings Road, West Hollywood

Greystone Mansion, Beverly Hills

Thu  Neutra/VDL House, Richard Neutra ([www.neutra-vdl.org](http://www.neutra-vdl.org))

2300 Silver Lake Boulevard

Walking tour of the Neutra Colony in Silver Lake

Visit to Lovell Health House, Richard Neutra (*pending approval*)

Fri  Fitzpatrick Leland House, Rudolph Schindler

Laurel Canyon

Mackey Apartments, Rudolph Schindler

1137 South Cochran Avenue (Mid-Wilshire)
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<tr>
<th>Week 3</th>
<th>June 1–5</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mon</td>
<td>UCLA Special Collections, Richard Neutra Papers (<a href="#">Finding Aid</a>)</td>
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| Tue   | Eames House, Charles and Ray Eames (tour) ([www.eamesfoundation.org](http://www.eamesfoundation.org))  
203 Chautauqua Boulevard, Pacific Palisades |
| Wed   | Stahl House, Pierre Koenig (tour) ([www.stahlhouse.com](http://www.stahlhouse.com))  
1635 Woods Drive, Hollywood Hills |
| Thu   | Getty Research Institute, Special Collections  
Julius Schulman, Pierre Koenig, John Lautner, Reyner Banham collections  
Materials related to Frank Lloyd Wright, Rudolph Schindler, Case Study Houses |
<p>| Fri   | Forum with the Los Angeles County Museum of Art |</p>
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<tr>
<th>Week 4</th>
<th>June 8–12</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mon</td>
<td>John Lautner forum with Escher/GuneWardena Firm</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Chemosphere House, 7776 Torreyson Drive</td>
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<td>Sheats-Goldstein Residence, 10104 Angelo View Drive</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tue</td>
<td>Walking tour of postwar vernacular housing complexes</td>
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<td>The Village Green, Baldwin Hills and</td>
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<td>Park La Brea, Mid-Wilshire</td>
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<td>Wed</td>
<td>Sunnylands Estate, A. Quincy Jones (<a href="http://www.sunnylands.org">http://www.sunnylands.org</a>) (<em>pending approval</em>)</td>
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<td>Thu</td>
<td>Mid-century architecture in Palm Springs: tour and discussion</td>
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<td>Fri</td>
<td>Final Wrap-Up (Getty Research Institute)</td>
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