



Glen Lukens

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## Soriano: Before & After—The Glen Lukens Residence

SAH/SCC Salon & Home Visit; Sunday, July 22, 2012, 2-4PM

Join SAH/SCC in celebration of the rescue and restoration of the Glen Lukens Residence (1940) by Raphael Soriano. For those of us who witnessed the sad state of this important house for the past 25 years, the rescue of the Lukens Residence as an important architectural and cultural resource is a story that should be told. And this is a house that should be experienced.

From a boarded-up eyesore in West Adams to a vital and vibrant masterpiece, the Glen Lukens residence was saved from demolition in 2006. A new owner purchased the property in 2010, with a commitment to return the house to its glory days.

The house was originally designed by Soriano for the noted artist/ceramicist Glen Lukens, who also taught at the University of Southern California. Lukens invited a promising young extension student of his, Frank O. Gehry, to visit the construction site and meet Soriano. Gehry remembers, "...[Soriano] was directing construction with great authority. I was terribly moved by this image. I found myself intrigued with the work of Soriano and the idea of architecture. I think it was Glen's hunch that would happen."

According to Wolfgang Wegener, author of *Raphael Soriano* (Phaidon, 2002), the Lukens Residence also represents an important transition in Soriano's work between the International Style and California Modern—with its configuration the first of Soriano's work to really establish an indoor-outdoor relationship.

Program participants will have the opportunity to visit the house that inspired Gehry, learn more about Soriano, and hear from guest speakers about the challenges and opportunities faced by the owner in bringing it back to life, including the changes they made along the way. Light refreshments and nibbles will be served.

*Soriano: Before & After—July 22, 2012; 2-4PM; \$25 each for SAH/SCC members; \$55 each for non-members; reservations required; space is limited; spaces are available on a first-come first-served basis; registration—see order form on Page 6, call 800.972.4722, or go to [www.sahscc.org](http://www.sahscc.org).*



An artists' gathering at the Lukens House, with Lukens second from the left.

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The Glen Lukens residence, designed by Raphael Soriano in 1940.

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# SAH/SCC President's Letter

## UCSB Asks: What is a Californian Architecture?

At the recent symposium "Icon and Anonymity," SAH/SCC member, author, and professor at University of California, Santa Barbara (UCSB), Volker Welter, posited the question: "What is a Californian architecture?" The symposium aimed at the nexus between the unique built heritage of California and the trends in the teaching of architectural history that place an increasing emphasis on cultural significance.

It was ironic (or perhaps not) that the conveners of the symposium (Welter and his UC Davis colleague, Simon Sadler) were both born outside of the United States and that many of the attendees searching for answers were from outside California as well. Stories abounded of California Ranch houses in such far-away places as Northern Ireland and Venezuela. And it was clear that the influence of California architecture (particularly in the postwar period) flowed beyond the shores of the United States.

In years past, SAH/SCC has traveled to other American cities to explore modernism: Pittsburgh, Phoenix, Sarasota, and Boston among them. Those of us who create these programs are always wary of bringing the baggage of self-importance along for the ride. In Phoenix, in particular, we struggled with oral histories that often mentioned A. Quincy Jones more than Frank Lloyd Wright in terms of their influences. Ultimately, we conceded that the transplantation of Calvin Straub to Phoenix resulted in the importation of post-and-beam architecture to a climate dubiously suited to all-wood construction. Our hosts in Sarasota repeatedly cited the widespread influence of *Arts and Architecture* magazine.

In fact, it was the presence of an outside group, such as SAH/SCC, that made stakeholders in Boston, Sarasota, and Phoenix more aware and appreciative of their modern architecture. So perhaps one lesson is that it often takes an "outsider" to help people recognize what is unique in their own backyards.

"Icon and Anonymity" also asked powerful questions about whether aesthetic considerations of space and form, and materials and construction are still valid categories by which to judge architecture. Much discussion ensued about "quality architecture" and the "bland built environment." Ultimately, there were more answers than questions. One thing was clear: Architectural historians have much work to do to identify, understand, and contextualize California's built environment, in addition to defining a "Californian architecture." Cheers to UCSB for starting the conversation.

—Sian Winship



Tour-goers at the Woods Residence (1950) by Paolo Soleri and Mark Mills during the SAH/SCC travel tour to Phoenix.

## Tour and Event Information:

1.800.972.4722



SOCIETY OF ARCHITECTURAL HISTORIANS  
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# Huntington Postcard

Bright and early on Sunday, May 20th, 43 SAH/SCC tour-goers gathered at the Entrance Pavilion of The Huntington in San Marino. At just 9:15AM, we had our big hats on, our sunscreen applied, and our comfortable walking shoes laced up for a morning of adventure and learning. We trekked over (actually a 10-minute walk past the Myron Hunt-designed Huntington Residence) to the Japanese Garden. Here, the day unfolded as we observed the Japanese House from across the arroyo. While the Shoji screen opened, Dr. Kendall Brown regaled us with his vast information on the garden and the relationship of the house to the garden. It was a delightful way to start the day, even if the Wisteria are past their prime.

As we neared the house, now open and gleaming in the morning sun, we had our first-hand look at the beautiful rehabilitation work done by our A-list guest speakers: Kelly Sutherlin McLeod, AIA, of Long Beach-based KSM Architecture, who was in charge of the project; Dr. Brown, a professor of Asian Art History at Cal State Long Beach and a leading expert on Japanese gardens in America; and John Griswold, from Griswold Conservation Associates. Together, they gave us the low-down, pointing out salient features on the house.

We went back to the Overseers' Room with big comfy chairs, a big screen, and a slide presentation followed by question-and-answer time. Here, we got into the nitty-gritty. We talked about materiality, history, and Japanese-versus-American restoration processes. It turns out that this house is one of only five similar houses in the United States. We also learned that one of the guests flew in from Tokyo just for this event! The chat continued (for 21 of us) in the Rose Tea Room over tea and finger sandwiches. A blending of cultures on a beautiful sunny Sunday with like-minded folks—what more could an architecture and garden aficionado want?

—John Ellis



Getting a look inside the Japanese House at the Huntington's Japanese Garden.



Tour-goers hear from restoration architect Kelly Sutherlin McLeod.

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# Exploring Kappe in the Valley

**Note:** The following was reprinted from *The Architect's Newspaper* blog, <http://blog.archpaper.com/wordpress/>. Used by permission. All architects registered in California can subscribe free to *The Architect's Newspaper*.

The Southern California chapter of the Society of Architectural Historians (SAH) recently capped off a Ray Kappe-focused weekend with a home tour around Kappe's many Sherman Oaks homes. As part of the series, *The Architect's Newspaper* got a chance to peek inside one of Kappe's earliest works, the Dr. and Mrs. Robert Hayes House.

Stepped far back from the street, the home is accessed only through a small path that one could easily miss among the rows of residential homes. The house was atypical of Kappe's work, said historian Dana Hutt, but one can still see the beginnings of Kappe's many architectural themes, including the aggressive opening of space, the blurring of inside and outside by continued elements and the complex layering of space.

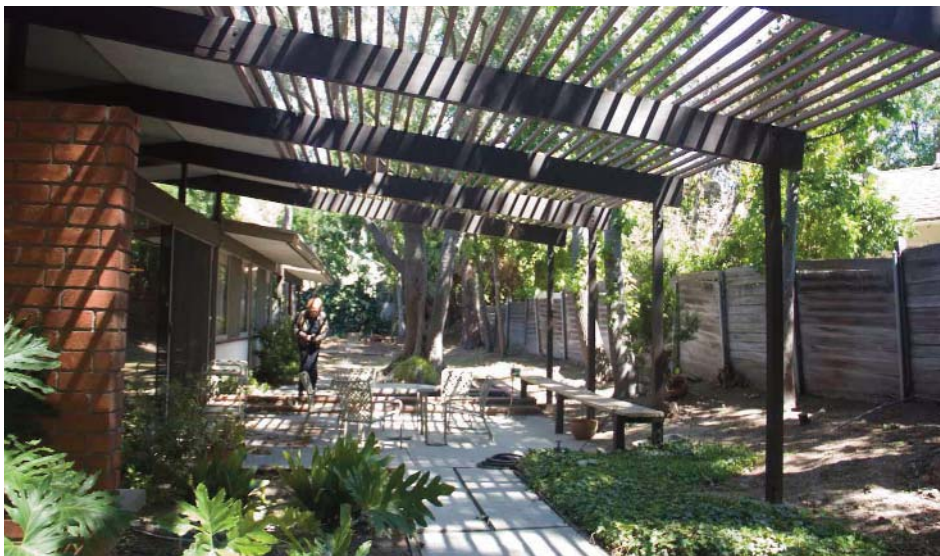
The four-bedroom, two-bath house has a simple triangular silhouette. Glass sliding doors and clerestory windows surround the house allowing ample light in. Wood beams from inside the home continue outdoors forming large eaves, through which filtered light easily cast over the outdoor patio. In its heyday of entertaining, the Hayes house would welcome up to forty guests, the owners adding space by opening up one of the sliding partitions that flows right into a patio.

"That patio was part of the house, not outside of it," insisted Dr. Hayes, now retired from his work at UCLA.

Inside, the space becomes more complex. A high ceiling over the living area is made more intimate with a lower frame over the kitchen and dining areas. Every part of the late 1950s home is used and very much lived in. Bookshelves are full of thick textbooks. Framed posters and paintings line the walls. On the living room mantle, a quaint box of handwritten recipes is still neatly filed, ready to be used at a moment's notice. "As much as this house is Ray's, this was also Alice's," said Dr. Hayes, referring to his deceased wife, who had closely collaborated with Kappe during the home's construction in the late 50s.

While driving along a stretch of West Los Angeles, it was Alice who spotted Kappe's National Boulevard apartments. The design captured her imagination and when she arrived home, she told her husband, "Bob, I found him." Him, being the architect of their new home. When asked how he felt about returning to the home after so many decades, Kappe in typical deadpan fashion replied, "It's never good to revisit." A grin lingered on his face, suggesting quite the opposite. While the row of trees fronting Sepulveda Boulevard has thinned—"This used to have better shading," said the architect—the home has held up remarkably well through the years, even weathering the great Northridge earthquake.

—Carren Jao



Outside the Hayes House.

Photo: Carren Jao

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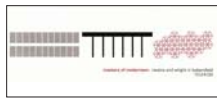
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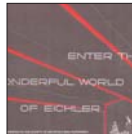
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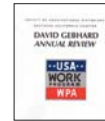
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