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## J.R. Davidson: California Modernist

SAH/SCC Lecture & Panel Discussion, Pacific Palisades

Wednesday, November 6, 2019, 7-9PM

Please join SAH/SCC and the Thomas Mann House for a very special evening exploring the work of Case Study House architect J.R. Davidson (1889-1977) in the residence the architect built for the author in 1941. Mann (1875-1955) was a German novelist, social critic, philanthropist, and essayist, who was driven from Nazi Germany during the early 1930s. Most famous for the classics *Death in Venice* (1912) and *The Magic Mountain* (1924), Mann brought his family to settle in Los Angeles in the early 1940s.

The Thomas Mann House will be the perfect setting in which to explore the émigré stories of both Davidson and Mann. In 1940, Davidson got in touch with the author, who spent the previous years of his exile in Princeton but decided to move to Los Angeles with his family. The Manns bought a property in Pacific Palisades and hired Davidson to design a house intended to be aligned with the family's lifestyle and daily routines.

Davidson's previous houses were built in an international style, however, the house on San Remo Drive resembles a moderate modernist design. The interior embodied German bourgeois culture in contrast to the modern white appearance of the house. Journalist Heinrich Wefing noted, "The outside form suggests an adjustment to the new Californian world, while on the inside, you see the attempt to reconstruct, even if only partially, what was lost."

The event begins with a presentation by Lilian Pfaff, Davidson scholar, author, and curator of the current exhibition "J.R. Davidson: A European Contribution to California Modernism" at UC Santa Barbara's Art, Design, and Architecture Museum. She will be joined by panelists Christopher Long, PhD, the Martin S. Kermacy Centennial Professorship in Architecture, and Monica Penick, PhD, Associate Professor of Design, both from the University of Texas. The panel will be moderated by SAH/SCC Life Member Kenneth Breisch, PhD, Associate Professor at USC School of Architecture.

*J.R. Davidson—Wednesday, November 6, 2019; 7-9PM; Thomas Mann House, 1550 N. San Remo Dr., Pacific Palisades; free; seating is limited; reservations required; go to [Thomas Mann House](#); 424.238.8586.*



Thomas Mann staircase today



Lilian Pfaff at Thomas Mann House

All photos: courtesy Content Production

# SAH/SCC President's Letter

## Meet the SAH/SCC Board

In this issue, we continue to meet our SAH/SCC board members. Longstanding board members Jay Platt and Mark Piaia, AIA, have created numerous tours and programs during the past several years.

Vice President Jay Platt is the Senior Urban Designer for the City of Glendale, where he is responsible for the City's preservation program, including serving as staff liaison to the Historic Preservation Commission. He also leads the City's Urban Design Studio, in which he conducts design review and helps develop and implement planning policy.

Jay joined the SAH/SCC board in 2009 as a Member-at-Large and has risen to the rank of Vice President. His passion for architecture and education is also evident in his work as Adjunct Assistant Professor in USC's School of Architecture, teaching classes in its Master's program in Heritage Conservation.

Though a Los Angeles native, Jay began his preservation career in the Northeast, getting his Master's in Historic Preservation at the University of Pennsylvania, followed by a move to New York City. While there, he worked for that city's Landmarks Preservation Commission, the private consultancy Building Conservation Associates, and the Historic Districts Council, a non-profit advocacy group.



Jay Platt

For SAH/SCC, Jay created "Conjunctive Points: Samitaur, Moss, & Culver City," a tour of the Hayden Tract (Eric Owen Moss, 1999-present). He is our "ambassador" to Glendale's Brand Library & Arts Center (Nathaniel Dryden, 1904; Gruen Associates, Offenhauser/Mekeel Architects, 2014), and has organized numerous free lecture programs there. Jay secured an exclusive visit to the Brand Family Cemetery for the next "Authors on Architecture" program at the Brand Library, "Campbell on Père-Lachaise Cemetery" (see Page 3).

This month we say good-bye, with great appreciation, to Member-at-Large Mark Piaia, AIA, who is a Principal in the Los Angeles office of ZGF. Growing up in the Midwest, he was exposed to many works by Frank Lloyd Wright, FAIA, but it was the design of the Milwaukee Art Museum (1957) by Eero Saarinen, FAIA, that served as his primary architectural inspiration. Mark earned a Bachelor of Science in Architectural Studies from the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee.



Mark Piaia, AIA

Mark has worked on a broad range of projects and building types, including educational, corporate, civic, cultural, and other mixed-use projects, as well as adaptive reuse of historic facilities. With more than 39 years of professional experience, he has lent his talents to recent California projects, such as J. Craig Venter Institute, La Jolla; Conrad N. Hilton Foundation Headquarters, Agoura Hills; Soka University of America, Performing Arts Center and Wangari Maathai Hall, Aliso Viejo; and Judicial Council of California, Superior Court of California, County of Santa Clara, Family Justice Center Courthouse, San Jose.

Mark joined the SAH/SCC board in 2012. In this capacity he has organized a number of exceptional programs, including "Ray Kappe: Apotheosis," a lecture and tour of the Royal Oaks tract of custom homes (one of which was Mark's) and a salon featuring the 1959 Marina Tower Display Residence in Long Beach by Edward Killingsworth, FAIA.

Mark and Jay also work behind the scenes to support other board members and programming. Please say hello (and goodbye) to them when you see them at the next SAH/SCC event.

—Sian Winship

### Tour and Event Information:

ph: 1.800.972.4722 e:info@sahscc.org

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SOCIETY OF ARCHITECTURAL HISTORIANS  
SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA CHAPTER

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**Julie D. Taylor**, Hon. AIA, Editor  
SAH/SCC News P.O. Box 56478  
Sherman Oaks, CA 91413  
Newsletter telephone: 310.247.1099  
Newsletter fax: 310.247.8147  
Newsletter e-mail: julie@taylor-pr.com

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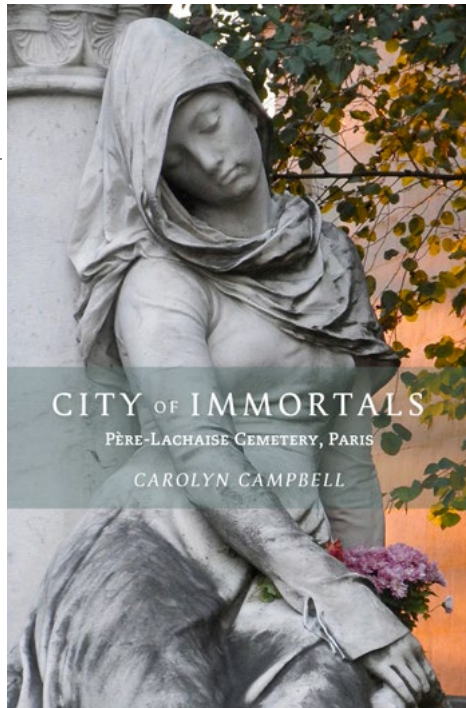
# Authors on Architecture: Campbell on Père- Lachaise Cemetery:

## SAH/SCC Lecture & Book Signing, Glendale Saturday, November 2, 2019, 2-4PM

Join SAH/SCC and author Carolyn Campbell to explore the legendary Paris cemetery through the book *City of Immortals: Père-Lachaise Cemetery, Paris* (Goff Books, 2019). Campbell will give a veritable tour of Père-Lachaise, pointing out the memorable “inhabitants.” The event takes place at the Brand Library & Arts Center (Nathaniel Dryden, 1904; Gruen Associates, Offenhauser/Mekeel Architects, 2014).

Featuring previously unpublished material, including more than 100 original color photographs by Campbell and U.K.-based landscape photographer Joe Cornish, as well as 19th-century lithographs and an illustrated map of the legendary necropolis. Père-Lachaise is a 107-acre labyrinth housing an eternal “salon” of cultural icons, rebels, intellectuals, innovators, and rule-breakers.

In the book, accompanying map, and a [GPS tour app](#), Campbell focuses on the gravesites of 84 architects, artists, writers, musicians, dancers, filmmakers, and actors, including: Alexandre-Théodore Brongniart, Pierre Fontaine, Charles Percier, Amedeo Modigliani, Oscar Wilde, Jim Morrison, Frédéric Chopin, Isadora Duncan, and Simone Signoret, among others.



As a special treat, after the talk we will gain access to the private Brand Family Cemetery for our own mini-tour of the site. (We regret that the tour is not appropriate for those with disabilities or difficulties walking.)

*Authors on Architecture: Campbell—Saturday, November 2, 2019; 2-4PM; Brand Library & Art Center, 1601 West Mountain St., Glendale; free; seating is available on a first-come, first-served basis; 818.548.2051.*



## Postcard From Bakersfield

On Saturday, September 21st, more than 200 people attended “Bakersfield Built: The 1960s,” an exhibition, symposium, and home tour created by Bakersfield Museum of Art (BMOA), Kern County Museum, and SAH/SCC. The day-long event was the vision of SAH/SCC Board Member David Coffey.

The day began with a panel discussion with former students of Bakersfield High School educator Clarence C. Cullimore, FAIA, during which the profound impact of his architectural guidance was revealed. The second panel featured an all-star group of scholars and Frank Lloyd Wright, FAIA, experts, who shared their thoughts about Wright and the Ablin Residence (1961) featured on the tour. The final panel of architects who practiced in Bakersfield in the 1960s and 1970s spoke of being inspired by the modern architecture springing up after the earthquake of 1952 and the eastward expansion of the city during the 1960s.

In the afternoon, participants visited five private residences showcasing the post-and-beam modernism of local architects, such as Robert N. Eddy, FAIA, & William Paynter, AIA, Jack Hayslett, and David G. Cross, AIA, along with concrete-built residences by Whitney Biggar, AIA, and Wright. The last two homes provided a useful comparison between the master and a local architect that revered his work.

BMOA’s exhibition, “Bakersfield Built: The 1960s,” runs through January 18, 2020. Several exhibitions on Bakersfield history at Kern County Museum are also on view. [Click here](#) to watch the first panel of the symposium on the contributions of Cullimore, the Bakersfield architect and educator.

Congratulations to David for creating one of the more memorable and important programs celebrating our built environment and, most importantly, raising the architectural profile of Bakersfield.

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Julie D. Taylor, Hon. AIA

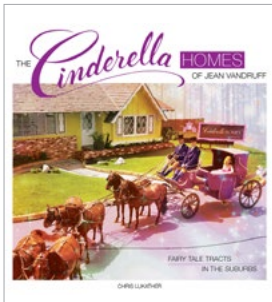


## Ehrlich Yanai: Outside-In—New California Modernism

*Introduction by Zahid Sardar; text by Nancy Griffin*

Recipient of the 2015 Firm Award from the American Institute of Architects, EYRC Architects has worked in a multitude of typologies. This book focuses on 15 single-family residences by the E (Steven Ehrlich, FAIA) and Y (Takashi Yanai, FAIA). The projects span from the northern town of Ross in Marin County, to the southern enclave of Laguna Beach, with a brief detour to Houston, where the client desired that “California spirit.” Sardar’s essay, “The Nature of Houses,” frames the work through California modernist history, along with seminal influences of African culture, Japanese architecture, and minimalist art. After a few brief descriptive paragraphs and a spread of architectural drawings, caption-less photos show the homes in sun-drenched glory. Strongly emphasizing the photography does exactly what the book attempts: to seduce observers by placing them into the space between building and landscape.

*The Monacelli Press, 2019, 240 pages, hardcover, \$60.*

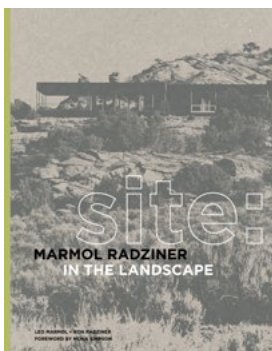


## The Cinderella Homes of Jean Vandruff: Fairy Tale Tracts in the Suburbs

*by Chris Lukather; introduction by Jean Vandruff*

Lukather expresses his passion for quirky and obscure California architectural styles with in-depth research, field work, and interviews. The follow-up to his book on Birdhouse ranch homes by William Mellenthin is on Jean Vandruff’s fanciful Cinderella Homes. At 97, Vandruff proved to be an informative, amiable interview and tour guide into “this long overdue revolution in home design trends,” as the designer states in the opening text. Coined “Cinderella Homes” after an offhand remark by Vandruff’s wife, Eleanor, while observing the first design, the mid-1950s marketing of the product stressed wishes coming true for suburban families. The exhaustive research, access to the Vandruff family and its archives, along with realtor and homeowner interviews pays off with a very personal look at an easily overlooked part of Southern California’s residential architectural history.

*The Writing Disorder, 2019, 120 pages, softcover, \$35*



## Site: Marmol Radziner in the Landscape

*By Leo Marmol, FAIA, and Ron Radziner, FAIA;  
foreword by Mona Simpson*

Categorized by habitat—canyon, desert, urban, woodland—19 homes capitalize on the multi-disciplinary aspects of Marmol Radziner, with most houses displaying architecture, interiors, landscape, and construction by the firm. After an interview with the two principals by writer Katya Tylevich, the large-scale book unfolds with immersive photography in an elegant design (overseen by noted book designer Lorraine Wilde) that includes many end-to-end spreads. Whether shot from the outside or in, elements of nature are imbued in each view. The book’s project descriptions further pull the reader into an understated intimacy, as they are written in the first-person voice of the architects. For example, describing the relationship between building and environs in the desert: “Our landscaping followed [the] philosophy: make the nature feel as though we were never there.” Or, when describing a Pacific Palisades house: “Inside and out, we prioritized views of the hills and canyon, placing home life within the context of the landscape.” In fact, that last statement could be included in each of the featured homes, as they all deftly integrate natural and built elements.

*Princeton Architectural Press, 2019, 312 pages, hardcover, \$65.*

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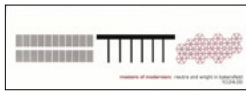
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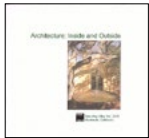
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# SAH/SCC PUBLICATIONS



\_\_\_\_\_ at \$5 each

**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 \$6 each

**Irving Gill: Los Angeles:** 10-page booklet featuring photos and articles on Gill and three residential projects in LA.



\_\_\_\_\_ at \$8 each

**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.



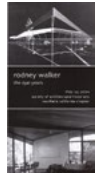
\_\_\_\_\_ at \$8 each

**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

**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 \$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.



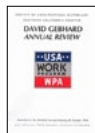
\_\_\_\_\_ at \$2 each

**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

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



\_\_\_\_\_ at \$10 each

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



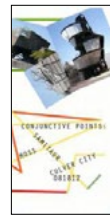
\_\_\_\_\_ at \$4 each

**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.



\_\_\_\_\_ at \$8 each

**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.



\_\_\_\_\_ at \$4 each

**Designed for Learning:** 11"x17" walking tour map and brochure of the University of California, Santa Barbara, campus.

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# SAH/SCC MEMBERSHIP FORM

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!

## MEMBERSHIP BENEFITS:

- Advance notice of all SAH/SCC events—important because they usually sell out just to members
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- FREE tickets to our annual Members' Celebration event
- Special Members-Only E-Alerts about upcoming events
- A tax deduction for your membership dues
- The knowledge that you are supporting our mission to increase public awareness of Southern California's architectural heritage

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**Send to:** SAH/SCC, P.O. Box 56478, Sherman Oaks, CA 91413  
All event ticket sales are final. We are sorry, refunds cannot be accommodated.  
\*SAH/SCC PRIVACY POLICY: The SAH/SCC never sells, rents, or shares your mailing or email address. Electronic communications enable us to operate economically and efficiently.



Thorne Hall (1938) at Occidental College by Myron Hunt and H.C. Chambers.  
Photo: Tom Polansky

*Recommended by SAH National*

## Myron Hunt & Beatrix Farrand: Occidental College Campus Tour

**Tour & Discussion, Eagle Rock  
Sunday, November 3, 2019, 1:30-3:00PM**

The largest concentration of Myron Hunt (1868-1952) buildings will be on tour at Occidental College in Eagle Rock on Sunday, November 3, 2019. This special event features a 45-minute review of the architecture and landscape at the College. Following the presentation and discussion, Stefanos Polyzoïdes, partner at Moule & Polyzoïdes; Odom Stamps, president of Stamps & Stamps; former SAH/SCC Board Member Jennifer Trotoux, curator at The Gamble House; and Tom Polansky, Associate Vice President of Facilities at Occidental College, will lead a tour of four sites around the campus, including the new pool and tennis courts designed by Polyzoïdes. This tour also offers the opportunity to explore the work of renowned landscape architect Beatrix Farrand (1872 -1959) .

Farrand was one of 11 founders of the American Society of Landscape Architects (ASLA), and the only woman. Her career included commissions to design more than 100 gardens for private residences, estates, and country homes, as well as public parks, botanic gardens, and college campuses—and even the White House.

In addition to the Occidental College campus, Hunt designed scores of notable Southern California landmarks, including several in the area:

- Valley Hunt Club (1907)
- Throop University Campus Plan (1908); now Caltech
- Huntington Mansion (1910); now Art Gallery
- Huntington Hotel (1914)
- Huntington Library (1919)
- Ambassador Hotel (1919-1921); demolished
- Rose Bowl (1922)
- Pasadena Central Library (1924)
- Huntington Memorial Hospital (1940)

The event is a fundraiser for the Oneonta Club Foundation, a philanthropic organization dedicated to education. The foundation has been awarding college scholarships to South Pasadena High School seniors since 1955. This is the first Oneonta Club fundraiser open to the public to help continue that community service.

Tickets are \$35 in advance and \$40 at the door. For information and registration, go to [oneontaclub.org](http://oneontaclub.org).



Booth Music and Speech Center (1929) at Occidental College by Myron Hunt and H.C. Chambers.  
Photo: Tom Polansky