



Case Study Houses

By Elizabeth Smith

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Redefining The Modern Home: A monumental retrospective of the Case Study Houses program

The Case Study House program (1945-66) was an exceptional, innovative event in the history of American architecture and remains to this day unique. The program, which concentrated on the Los Angeles area and oversaw the design of 36 prototype homes, sought to make available plans for modern residences that could be easily and cheaply constructed during the postwar building boom.

The program's chief motivating force was **Arts & Architecture editor John Entenza**, a champion of modernism who had all the right connections to attract some of architecture's greatest talents, such as **Richard Neutra, Charles and Ray Eames, and Eero Saarinen**. Highly experimental, the program generated houses that were designed to re-define the modern home, and thus had a pronounced influence on architecture—American and international—both during the program's existence and even to this day.

TASCHEN brings you a monumental retrospective of the entire program with comprehensive documentation, brilliant photographs from the period and, for the houses still in existence, contemporary photos, as well as extensive floor plans and sketches.

Text in English, French, and German

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Editorial Review

Amazon.com Review

The first thing you notice about *Case Study Houses: The Complete CSH Program, 1945-1966* is its size: it's big. Contained within its 16-inch frame is the history of *Arts & Architecture* magazine's famed program created to inspire the building of low-cost modern homes in America. The brainchild of magazine editor John Entenza, the program drew well-known architects including Charles Eames, Eero Saarinen, and Richard Neutra. Throughout the book are spectacular photographs of modernist glass- and patio-filled homes. Most of the homes were built in the Los Angeles area and make wonderful use of the surrounding scenery. A 17-foot-tall front door opens up onto a canal; streamlined Herman Miller furniture fills out a living room that overlooks a breathtaking panorama. While not all the projects were built, each received a detailed spread in the magazine, including drawings and models. Some of the architectural drawings are lovely, drawn with the movement and fluidity of a master. Included are short biographies of each architect, a provocative epilogue by photographer Julius Shulman, and the reprinted original magazine pages that announce the birth of the Case Study idea. This book is a true gem, and considering its size it's the Hope diamond. --J.P. Cohen

Review

Perhaps what's most fun here is the flavor of the period captured by the photographs. -- *Newsweek.com*, 3/9/02

About the Author

Elizabeth A. T. Smith is the former Chief Curator and Deputy Director for programs at the Museum of Contemporary Art in Chicago. Previously a curator at MOCA Los Angeles, where she organized "Blueprints for Modern Living: History and Legacy of the Case Study Houses," Smith has taught at the University of Southern California and the School of the Art Institute in Chicago. She has curated numerous exhibitions and published widely on various aspects of contemporary art and architecture.

Peter Gössel runs an agency for museum and exhibition design. For TASCHEN he published monographs on Julius Shulman, R.M. Schindler, John Lautner and Richard Neutra as well as several titles in the Basic Architecture Series.

A resident of Los Angeles since 1920, Julius Shulman documented modernist architecture in Southern California and across the globe for nearly eight decades. His images of Pierre Koenig's Case Study House No. 22 (1960) in Los Angeles and Richard J. Neutra's Kaufmann House (1947) in Palm Springs are among the most recognizable and iconic architectural photographs of the 20th century. Shulman's interest in photography developed into a career when he photographed Neutra's Kun Residence in Los Angeles with his Kodak Vestpocket camera in 1936. Neutra admired young Shulman's images and continued to commission his work. Other leading architects of the time followed suit, as did hundreds of magazines, newspapers, and book publishers. Shulman's numerous awards include the Architectural Photography Medal from the American Institute of Architects (1969), a lifetime achievement award from the International Center of Photography in New York (1998), and honorary doctorates from various academic institutions. He died on July 15, 2009 at the age of 98.

Users Review

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