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THOMAS S. HINES

LOS ANGELES MODERNISM 1900-1970

# ARCHITECTURE OF THE SUN



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### Review

"Los Angeles's modernist architecture is defined by the city's climate, opulence and clash of cultures...Thomas Hine's new Architecture of the Sun: Los Angeles Modernism, 1900-1970 (Rizzoli) is a thorough study of the work of Schindler, Neutra, Wright and the inimitable John Lautner. It is also a study in fine living. Chilled cocktail, anyone?" ~Playboy

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### About the Author

Thomas S. Hines is Professor Emeritus of History and Architecture at UCLA, where he teaches cultural, urban, and architectural history. His books include Irving Gill and the Architecture of Reform and Richard Neutra and the Search for Modern Architecture. Hines has held Guggenheim, Fulbright, NEH, and Getty fellowships. In 1994 he was elected to the American Academy of Arts and Sciences.

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Architecture Of The Sun: Los Angeles Modernism 1900-1970 By Thomas S. Hines. In undergoing this life, lots of people always aim to do and also obtain the very best. New knowledge, encounter, lesson, and every little thing that could boost the life will be done. Nonetheless, lots of people sometimes feel confused to obtain those things. Really feeling the limited of encounter and also resources to be far better is one of the lacks to own. Nevertheless, there is an extremely straightforward point that can be done. This is what your instructor always manoeuvres you to do this. Yeah, reading is the solution. Reviewing a publication as this Architecture Of The Sun: Los Angeles Modernism 1900-1970 By Thomas S. Hines and various other referrals could enhance your life quality. Exactly how can it be?

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An authoritative survey of the masters of twentieth-century modernist architecture in Los Angeles. This revisionist study explores the history of modernist architecture in Greater Los Angeles from the early twentieth century to the 1970s, focusing on both its regional and international contexts. Thomas Hines critically analyzes the concepts of modernism and regionalism and begins his exploration by contrasting the turn-of-the-century Craftsman work of Charles and Henry Greene with the rationalist modernism of their contemporary Irving Gill and the expressionist modernism of Frank Lloyd Wright and his son Lloyd Wright. The book re-interprets the modernist variations of Wright's disciple Rudolph Schindler and the International Style of his contemporary Richard Neutra, as well as of their followers: Gregory Ain, Raphael Soriano, and Harwell Harris. The minimalist Case Study House program is contrasted with the sensuous modernism of John Lautner and with the large-scale modernism of William Pereira and Welton Becket. Hines ends the book in the early 1970s, as modernism began to confront the challenge of the post-modernist critique. A personal epilogue reflects on the author's exploration of Los Angeles modernism from the late 1960s to 2009.

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Sunny design

By Robin

By any criteria this has to be considered a monumental study and because of its thoroughness it will surely become the standard reference on LA modernism up to 1970. This year wasn't just chosen as an arbitrary cut-off point but as the author explains in his Epilogue: it coincided with the conclusion of the Case Study Houses program. CSH, least as far as housing went, was the culmination of all the modernism that preceded it; it was the year Richard Neutra died (also Welton Becket died in 1969); around 1970, according British critic Reyner Banham, modernism ceased to be a major worldwide architectural influence.

The thirteen chapters provide an in-depth look at the architects who created such wonderful houses and in later decade's commercial buildings in the Los Angeles area. The craft style of Green & Green in the first years of the last century kicks off the survey and by 1910 Irving Gill was designing clearly modernist structures and the style was on its way. Southern California with its wealth, climate and a group of progressive architects, in more than four decades, became the world center of the style.

I found the chapters on Irving Gill and Richard Neutra fascinating, both were heavyweight contributors to modernism in LA and get extensive coverage (the author has written books about both) also the Case Study Program as a potential solution to the housing problem of the times is explained in reasonable detail. An intriguing and worthwhile design concept instigated by John Entenza, the editor of Arts & Architecture magazine. I always thought it looked a rather amateurish publication yet it nourished this amazing program of contemporary housing.

The book itself is big, chunky and well printed on a matt art with a 175 screen for the hundreds of photos. Julius Shulman's wonderful work gets a good showing though the author is responsible for the most throughout the book; unfortunately these are no match for the professional Shulman. The title's layout is rather austere with plenty of empty page space (so many photos could have been larger) which could well have been used for the sixteen pages of footnotes in the back pages, using these involves an awful lot of page turning. One thing I definitely think there should have been more of: floor plans. A thing that characterizes modernist houses is the fluid use of space and a floor plan is probably the best way to appreciate this. Some are included but mostly they appear too small.

As I said earlier this will probably become the standard book on the subject but this no dry purely academic study. Fortunately the author frequently reveals the background to these architects lives and society at the time. This certainly made the book come alive for me.

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10 of 10 people found the following review helpful.

This is a book you buy for the fascinating TEXT rather than the images.

By R. Mac

When I first got the book I was disappointed. Most of the images are so-so, and there is, inexplicably, a dearth of floor plans. Is anything more frustrating regarding a book on architecture?

Later I started to actually read the book, and my opinion wholly improved! There was a lot I'd not read elsewhere, and the various architects came alive in way they normally don't in more academic-like studies. In particular I enjoyed the chapter on Schindler. I had believed the All-Important Schindler Myth: greater fame had been essentially stolen from him by his former friend/colleague, the nefarious Neutra. But the book

makes it clear that it was more complicated than that, and that Schindler himself can be principally blamed for a failure to better understand and coddle important editors and writers. It's fascinating and sad to read Schindler's letters to people who WANTED to publish/exhibit him. He basically insults them.

There's another interesting story of the once great Louis Sullivan at Wright's Taliesin. Wright spoke to his former boss "in tones of such deference and affection [that Sullivan] came out of his somber silence and knew himself to be once more loved, revered" - as noted by Pauline Schindler.

The book is filled with such gems.

I also very much appreciate that the author brings the reader up-to-date on many of the iconic structures in the book. While shocking to learn that a famous building has been demolished, it's uplifting when a famous building has been beautifully restored.

I rate the book five stars but would love to see it in a revised format with gorgeous, large images, a ton-oplans, but the text unchanged. Now THAT would be a great great book!

11 of 12 people found the following review helpful.

Architecture of the Sun (Rizzoli)

By BlogOnBooks

In recent years it has become increasingly apparent that Southern California and Los Angeles in particular, have emerged as leading areas for the development of topline architectural work, particularly in the area of residential real estate. After all, A-listers like Frank Lloyd Wright, Richard Neutra and Frank Gehry have been plying their craft in the area for decades. Now come two new books to educate and elucidate the epic works of building achievement that make the region what it is today.

Thomas Hines' "Architecture of the Sun" is an elaborate, coffee table sized volume detailing the rich history of regional design from the aforementioned players to a host of others who have contributed their significant works to the area. This 756 page tome covers Los Angeles Modernism from 1900 thru 1970 in a complete, robust, detailed and well research edition which, given its exhaustive presentation, may make it the most definitive volume ever produced on the subject. Hines, a Professor Emeritus of History and Architecture at UCLA, explores the region's adoption of the British school of Craftsman homes (still tremendously popular in the area), through the aforementioned Wright as well as disciples and followers like Rudolph Schindler, Neutra and the modernism of John Lautner - all kingpins of the region.

Hines dissects both the design and the historical context of the architects in a way that is both scholarly and completist making this book both a reflective work of art as well as arguably a study guide for architecture students as well. Through ample text and photographs, Hines covers a wide berth of information - from informed biographies of the major designers to lengthy discussions of their work and their inner-workings, to rich views spanning everything from their early sketches (see Wright's original design for the Hollywood Bowl) to extensive views of both their final interiors and exteriors. While much of the coverage is of the famed residences of the area, special attention is given to the work of Welton Becket and William Pereira, who were responsible for much of the distinct industrial design of the city including the famed Capitol Records tower, LAX, the downtown Music Center and the entirety of Century City, making Hines work as complete a take on the modernism of L.A. architecture as one can reasonably expect to ever experience.

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