

**From:** USModernist Newsletter - George Smart <gsmart@nc.rr.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, February 10, 2020 11:01 AM  
**To:** gsmart@strategicdevelopment.com  
**Subject:** Red Alert! Federal Modernism Could be Banned / Modernism Week Opens Feb 13 / Filmmakers Alysa Nahmias and Akira Boch



# USModernist

*[USModernist](#) and [NCModernist](#) are part of Modernist Archive Inc, a North Carolina 501C3 nonprofit educational archive providing donors, volunteers, and advocates the information and organization they require to passionately engage the documentation, preservation, and promotion of residential Modernist architecture. Get connected to exciting [tours](#), [parties](#), [design competitions](#), and the show named as #2 in DWELL's [top architecture and design podcasts](#), [USModernist Radio](#). [View newsletter in browser](#). [See past newsletters](#).*

**Monday, February 10, 2020**

*Note: There will be no newsletter on Monday, February 17.*



Get your company, studio, or practice involved in the wildly growing mid-century Modernist movement documenting, preserving, and promoting residential Modernist design across the US! [Become a sponsor!](#)

USModernist [has an online store](#) - with all the thoroughly ridiculous coffee cups, logowear, and mousepads you could possibly want! All proceeds benefit USModernist's ongoing documentation, preservation, and promotion work.

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NEWS



**There's a plan to eliminate Modernism (or any non-classical style) in Federal buildings.** The name of the plan? Make Federal Buildings Great Again. Sadly, we are not making this up. It was first reported by [Architecture Record](#) which came out against the plan last week.

This heap of ridiculousness is a [pending executive order](#) that would officially designate

classical architecture as the preferred style for federal courthouses, all federal public buildings in the Capital region, **and all other federal public buildings in America** whose cost exceeds \$50 million. This order, which is expected to go to President Trump next month, defines classical to mean derived from classical Greek and Roman architecture, and specifically prohibits the use of Brutalist architecture (the FBI Headquarters is a favorite target). Through bureaucracy it also essentially prohibits anything non-classical, which includes Modernism and even good ol' Pomo.

[CityLab](#) reports the plan would further authorize a “President’s Committee for the Re-Beautification of Federal Architecture,” which would help draft new guiding principles for federal architecture to replace common-sense rules used for decades. The committee would not only work with federal agencies to establish design polices for new projects; it would also work on renovations to existing buildings to change their look.

**Would you want doctors or other healthcare professionals prohibited from serving on a medical board?** Of course not. Citylab reports the order requires the US General Services Administration to convene public panels to provide feedback on design proposals. But no experts allowed: The order forbids “artists, architects, engineers, art or architecture critics, members of the building industry” and anyone else involved with this kind of work from participating.

The AIA's President and CEO, **Jane Frederick and Robert Ivey**, [issued a letter in opposition](#). The National Trust for Historic Preservation released a [statement](#) too, as did the [American Society of Landscape Architects](#) and the [Society of Architectural Historians](#).

**Don't leave it to architecture groups to do all the heavy lifting.** If you want to preserve Modernism as one of many styles in federal design, the plan to eliminate design diversity and lock us in the past is a populist movement that will only be won with a better, stronger, more organized populist movement. For a start, [click here to tell President Trump this is a really bad idea](#). **Spoiler: he'll write back.**

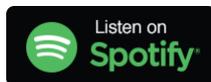
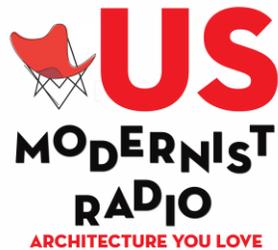


There's a new documentary on legendary California architect [Paul Williams](#) airing on PBS stations in California.

[Arckits](#): buy them "for your kids", but we know who will play with the the most!

Lego's pop-up house [in London](#).

Correction to last week: [Bjarke Ingels](#)' huge exhibition at the [National Building Museum](#) was back in 2015.



New on USModernist Radio: **#130/Architecture+Design Film Festival #2: Alysa Nahmias + Akira Boch**.

**Alysa Nahmias** is an award-winning filmmaker and founder of the Los Angeles-based production company Ajna Films. Her directorial debut feature, *Unfinished Spaces*, co-directed with **Benjamin Murray**, won a 2012 Spirit Award, numerous festival prizes, and is in the permanent collection at the Museum of Modern Art, New York. In *The New Bauhaus*, the film's narrative weaves original interviews with archival footage, voiceover, and stylized filming of documents and artwork. The result is a new perspective view of **Laszlo Moholy-Nagy**, a man who was ahead of his time creating a philosophy of art and design education that has captured imaginations for nearly a century.

**Akira Boch** is an award-winning filmmaker and Director of the Media Arts Center at the Japanese American National Museum in Los Angeles. He has made over 50 short films, documentaries, and music videos. His latest film, *Masters of Modern Design: The Art of the Japanese American Experience* explores five second generation Japanese American artists—**Ruth Asawa, George Nakashima, Isamu Noguchi, Gyo Obata, and S. Neil Fujita**—following the ways in which their US internment camp experiences impacted their lives, influenced their art, and sent them on trajectories that eventually led to their changing the face of American culture with their immense talents. USModernist Radio is sponsored by [Angela Roehl](#) and [Nichiha.com](#). [Listen to past shows](#).



Photographer **Robin Hill's** Side by Side exhibition opens May 24 at The Farnsworth House in Plano IL. The show is a series of photographs that highlight similarities and differences between two iconic modern glass houses, the Farnsworth House by [Mies Van der Rohe](#) and [Philip Johnson's](#) Glass House. Curated by **Hilary Lewis**.



There are so many ways you can be part of USModernist and NCModernist!



1. Does someone you know collect architecture magazines, perhaps hundreds or thousands of them, in their attic, basement, or storage unit? We [need certain ones](#), and we'll pay to ship them to us. Contact **George Smart** at [george@usmodernist.org](mailto:george@usmodernist.org).



2. Have you got an iconic mid-century chair or clock (Eames, Nelson, Barcelona, Bertoia, etc.)? Donate to NCModernist and get a great tax deduction - and we can pick it up! Contact **Rebekah Laney** at [Rebekah@ncmodernist.org](mailto:Rebekah@ncmodernist.org).

3. Are you a longtime subscriber to this newsletter going back 10-12 years when it was Triangle Modernist Houses? Still got those issues on your hard drive? We need to find our old newsletters. [Here's what we have so far](#). To donate a newsletter, just forward through email.

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Hat tips to **Daniel Perrin** and **Virginia Faust**.

MODERNISM WEEK

# modernism week™

USModernist heads out to Modernism Week in Palm Springs February 18 for our annual trip. Some of the many, many, interesting upcoming events at Modernism Week include:



The Alexander family, pioneering developers of Modernist houses across Palm Springs, will be honored on the Palm Springs Walk of the Stars (like **Richard Neutra** was, above) on **February 14** at 2 p.m. at the Palm Springs Art Museum Architecture and Design Center. Free!

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## Lectures

Modernism Week develops a world-class series of lectures that range from entertaining to academic. Scholars, authors, architects, designers and others are invited to speak at the Lecture and Presentation Series at the Annenberg Theater, CAMP and other theater-style venues each day during Modernism Week.



The Sarasota Architectural Foundation (SAF) will [auction a replica](#) of Paul Rudolph's Walker Guest House during Modernism Week in Palm Springs. It was constructed from the original Rudolph plans, and initially installed on the grounds of The John & Mable Ringling Museum of Art where it was open for tours from 2015 to 2017. Countless visitors have toured the interior and exterior of the 576-square-foot house to learn about Rudolph and discover the principles of the Sarasota School of Architecture movement.

The structure was thoughtfully constructed with the intention to be portable, and in 2018, it was reinstalled in Palm Springs. The bidding will start at \$10,000 – the same amount as the original 1950s budget.

# THE **MARVIN**<sup>®</sup> **CONVERSATION SERIES** CELEBRATING ALEXANDER GIRARD

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FEBRUARY 17 – 21



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Barton Jahncke • Joel Turkel • Brooke Hodge •  
Paul Makovsky • Amanda Dameron •  
Mercedes Kraus • Sean Anderson •  
Michela O'Connor Abrams

**MARVIN** 

 Palm Springs  
Art Museum

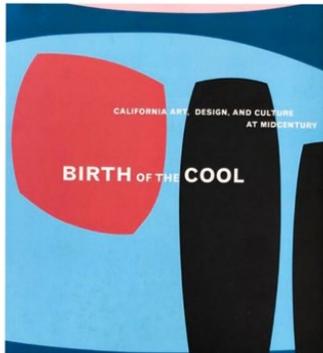
FEBRUARY 22, 2020

2:00 - 4:30PM

PALM SPRINGS CULTURAL CENTER / CAMELOT THEATRE  
2300 E BARISTO ROAD, PALM SPRINGS

FOR INFORMATION ABOUT THE EVENT, PLEASE VISIT:  
MODERNISMWEEK.COM/F/MW20/COOL

PS MODCOM PRESENTS



# BIRTH OF THE COOL

A SYMPOSIUM ON CALIFORNIA  
ARCHITECTURE, ART, DESIGN,  
AND CULTURE AT MIDCENTURY



Moderator **Liz Armstrong** who wrote the book, BIRTH OF THE COOL, will be joined by an extraordinary panel taking us back to one of the hippest, most creative times and places in our modernist history.

**Peter Bart:** A legendary Hollywood raconteur and insider who saw it all as editor in chief of Variety for over 20 years as well as a producer and executive at MGM and Paramount studios.

**Michael Boyd:** A world class collector and designer whose knowledge and lifelong pursuit of great design make him indispensable to any discussion of it.

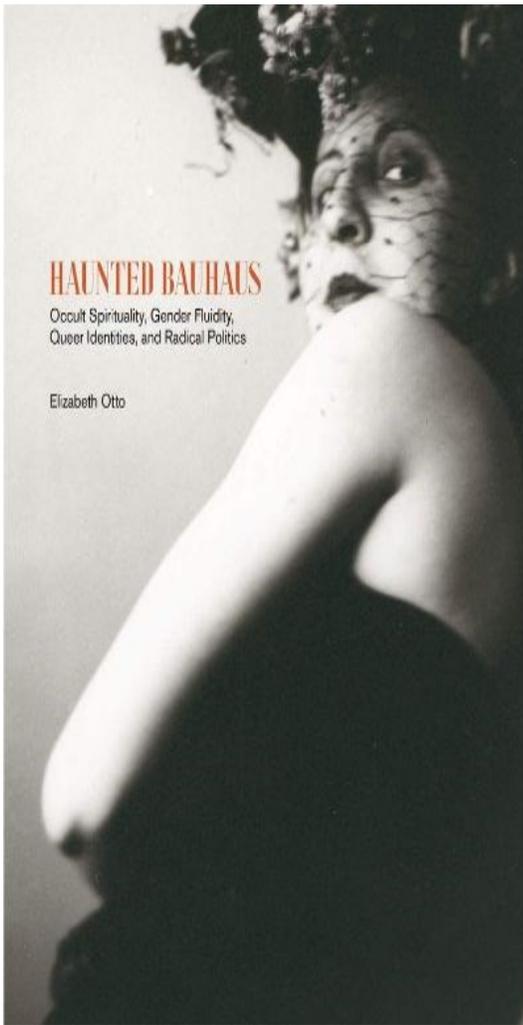
**Tracy Conrad:** President of the Palm Springs Historical Society, architectural writer and historian, cultural entrepreneur, and jazz aficionado, with highlights of the rat pack style of jazz at "The Chi Chi."

**Brad Dunning:** A designer and author whose client list is a who's who of creativity and whose passion for design and its history are reflected in all of his work and writing.

**Lorraine Wild:** Graphic design historian and an amazing graphic designer in her own right. Lorraine will guide us through this often overlooked but immensely important and visually stunning art form that connected everything else together.

February 22, 2-4:30pm. [Tickets and details.](#)

NEW BOOKS



**Available Now: Haunted Bauhaus by Elizabeth Otto.** The Bauhaus (1919–1933) is widely regarded as the twentieth century's most influential art, architecture, and design school, famous for bringing functional and elegant design to the masses. Art historian Otto uncovers a movement that is vastly more diverse and paradoxical, tracing the surprising trajectories of the school's fascination with occult spirituality, gender fluidity, queer identities, and radical politics. She explores the role of radical politics on both the left and the right—during the school's Communist period, when some of the Bauhäusler put their skills to work for the

revolution, and, later, into the service of  
the Nazis.

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**Available March 26: Bauhaus Women: A Global Perspective, by Elizabeth Otto and Patrick Rossler.** The story of the Bauhaus has usually been kept narrow, localized to its original time and place and associated with only a few famous men such as Walter Gropius, Marcel Breuer, Paul Klee, Wassily Kandinsky, and László Moholy-Nagy. *Bauhaus Women: A Global Perspective* bursts the bounds of this slim history by revealing 45 Bauhaus women unjustifiably forgotten by most history books and how, through these cosmopolitan female designers, artists, and architects, it sent the Bauhaus message out into the world and to a global audience.

OTHER TOURS and EVENTS





**Only 2 seats left! USModernist's all-Modernist Tour May 1-3 of Washington DC!** Includes Glenstone, one of the largest private Modern art collections in the world; and Hollin Hills Homes and Gardens, open only once every two years. [Details and tickets](#). Nearly everything's included: flight, hotel, tours, dinners, breakfasts, wifi - you'll be amazed at what we'll see!

**MODA PALOOZA MODA PALOOZA MODA PALOOZA**





**Only 14 seats left! Modernist Houses Tour: Saturday, April 18.** Enjoy a great day touring brilliant new and recently renovated Modernist houses and buildings around Durham, Carrboro, Chapel Hill, and Pittsboro without the hassle of driving! Modapalooza includes the delightful company of fellow Modernist architecture fans, breakfast, snacks, drinks, a delicious lunch, and free wifi in our luxury restroom-equipped, air-conditioned bus. You'll also meet many of the architects, designers, and builders - like **Arielle Schechter, Paul Snow, Louis Cherry, Jason Hart, Heather Washburn, Dail Dixon, Doug Pierson and Youn Choi, and Jenny Hoffman.** [Details and tickets.](#)



## Modernist architecture tours of Europe ↑

USModernist, an American not-for-profit that promotes and preserves mid-century modernist architecture, has collaborated with Firebird Tours to offer the first modern architecture tours of Europe. Travellers can explore their passion for modernism in eight European countries, including Sweden and Belgium. Each tour includes expert guides and stays in a collection of design-focused hotels. Tours can be booked for groups as small as two people, on dates that suit them. The trips are curated by George Smart, founder and director of USModernist.



# Martin Evans

## PhotoImaging

Architecture & Interior Design Photography

This Thursday, February 13, 6-8pm, The Nest, 414 Fayetteville Street, 4th floor, Raleigh. Co-hosted

with Martin Evans PhotoImaging.



Thursday, March 19, 6-8pm, Visual Art Exchange, 309 West Martin Street, Raleigh.

Thirst4Architecture (T4A) parties are free, exciting, informal events welcoming *anyone* with a huge crush on great architecture. T4A events focus on building relationships, sharing passion about Modernist design, creating strategic alliances, and connecting people. There are no presentations -- just come join the fun and make new design friends! The 2020 [Thirst4Architecture Series](#) is sponsored by Modernist Realtor [Angela Roehl](#).



The NCModernist/ModHomes Architecture Movie Series **is over for the year. Thanks to** Modernist Realtor [Sarah Sonke](#), we brought five visually and intellectually compelling movies about Modernist architecture and architects that rarely get shown in commercial theaters. Also sponsored by [NCSU Libraries](#) and [Hill Country Woodworks](#). The series will be back in October 2020.



Vacancy, not development, is the enemy of mid-century Modernist houses. Preserve and protect the architecture you love by buying or renting before the bulldozers come a few years from now. Visit our [exclusive statewide list](#).

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