M News: DC Buildings on the Block? / Moving Matsumoto / Fallingwater Trip / You're Fired, Calibri!
From: George Smart HAIA <george@usmodernist.org>
Date: Monday, December 15, 2025



US Modernist



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Welcome, Modernist architecture fans, to the USModernist newsletter, sharing Modernist news and events since 2008. USModernist is an award-winning nonprofit 501C3 educational archive for the documentation, preservation, and promotion of Modernist architecture.

Modernist House Archives: 25,000+ Houses	Architecture Media Library: 5M+ Pages	USModernist Radio Podcast: 430+ Shows

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Editor: **Ron Gallagher** Newsletter Staff: **Virginia Faust, George Smart**
Got Modernist News? Contact **Ron Gallagher** at rpg.modernist@gmail.com

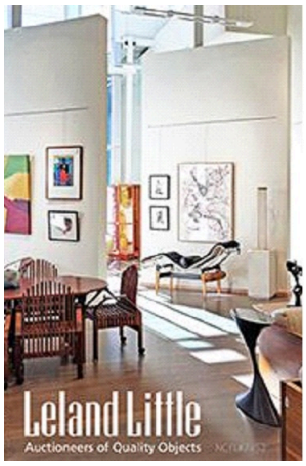
Newsletter Sponsorship: Connect your product, service, or organization to USModernist's 77,000 Modernist fans, architects, real estate agents, preservationists, and builders. Reach out to George Smart, 919.740.8407.

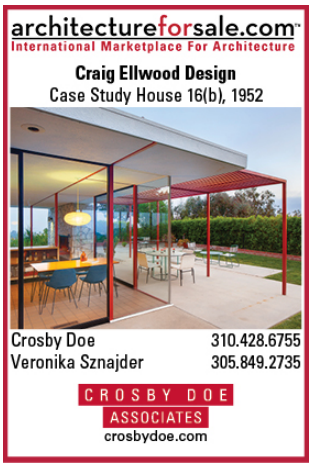
Meet the USModernist Team

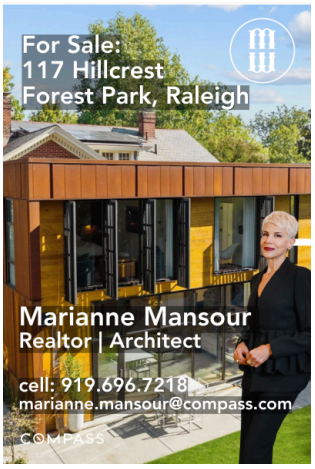
Check out the NCModernist For Sale/Rent Database. Real estate agents and owners can list their North Carolina Modernist houses for sale or rent for free.
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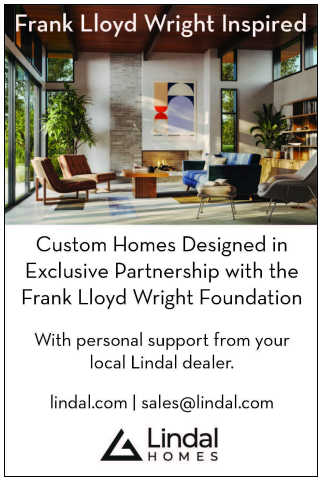














Featured Upcoming Events

This Thursday, December 18: NCModernist Thirst4Architecture Happy Hour at Arrowhead, a design-build firm, 5-7pm, 330 Dupont Circle #102, Raleigh.

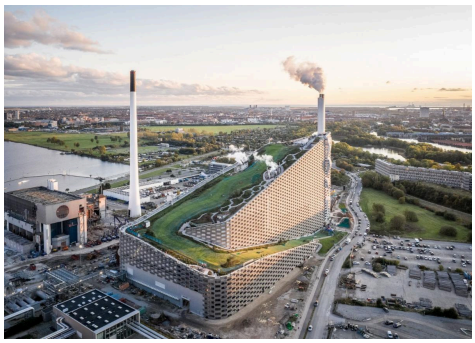
Free, registration required. Enter ARROWHEAD on the form through Tuesday, 5pm ET.

ARROWHEAD



This Saturday, December 20: Moving Matsumoto. Nearly sold out!

After moving 7 miles in 2024 and a brilliant restoration and reconstruction, the house is ready for its big debut. Photo by **Art Howard**. Discount advance tickets close Tuesday 5pm ET. $25 at the door.





Tuesday, January 6: Opening double feature night of the NCModernist Architecture Movie Series at the Rialto Theatre, Glenwood Avenue in Raleigh NC, sponsored by **Matt Griffith** and **Zach Hoffman** at in situ studio.

The first film is *Making A Mountain*, the story of an Denmark incinerator no none wanted into a ski slope loved by everyone, designed by architect Bjarke Ingels. The second film is *Counterweight*, about the creative gadgets in Tom Kundig houses. Get tickets in advance, $16 plus small fees. Other scheduled movies.



New: Frank Lloyd Wright's Fallingwater+ Tour!
Friday-Saturday, April 24-25, 2026

You've always wanted to go! It's our most-requested tour. Have you always wanted to see Fallingwater, Frank Lloyd Wright's masterpiece? It's the most famous Modernist house in America. Flight? Included. Breakfast? Lunch each day? Wi-fi? Yes. Hotel? You betcha. Ground transportation? Of course, plus all admissions. Wow, that's incredible! We think so, too. We do all the work so you can have a wonderful bucket list experience!

Did you know that just a few miles away, there's another remarkable Wright house, Kentuck Knob, and its world-class outdoor sculpture garden? That's included. Want to see more Modernist houses by Wright and his apprentices? You'll go to Polymath Park which is chock full of them! Plus the Andy Warhol Museum in Pittsburgh, including lunch!

Join USModernist's merry band of architectural adventurers as we make the Wright pilgrimage, a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity with virtually everything included! Limited to 24 participants. Tickets and details.



USModernist Scandinavian Capitals Trip
Copenhagen / Oslo / Stockholm
Tour May 12-22, 2026 / *Only two tickets left!*

You will see – and visit – incredible architecture, art, design, and furniture in three countries, including the work of **Bjarke Ingels**, plus the stunning natural beauty of Scandinavia. Details.

Support USModernist



Your Gift to Modernism. Doubled!

A generous $10,000 matching gift means every dollar you give to support USModernist through December 31 counts twice. Donate here.

Here's what donors made possible last year:

- * 360,000 magazine pages scanned, indexed, and made available to the public, 95% for the first time.
- * 1100 houses documented - the life works of Modernist architects gathering dust are now searchable, savable, *alive* again. Each one someone's dream. Someone's vision. Someone's home.
- * Six housefire victims in Altadena received free architectural design from NC architects for their new homes. This is tragedy met with beauty.
- * This newsletter, reaching passionate architecture fans just like you every Monday.
- * Saving a George Matsumoto house, now completely rebuilt.
- * 52 new podcast episodes. Stories that would not have been told.

Every week, another house is in trouble. Another architect's archives in some forsaken attic or storage unit gets thrown away. Another story disappears forever. Your membership makes the difference between saving a house and watching it fall to a wrecking ball. Between saving archives or hearing about their disposal.

USModernist's documentation and preservation work consistently delivers national impact, but our future success is only possible through generous supporters. Plus there are many new and creative options in addition to direct donation, including legacy gifts. Every gift to USModernist keeps our entire digital archive free; produces engaging tours, parties, and events; and races against time to document at-risk houses. You cannot save something if you don't know where it is and why it is important.

Thanks to you, we're leading the way — one house, one story, one community at a time. Donate here.

On behalf of the devoted team at USModernist, we are so grateful for your support.

With heartfelt appreciation,

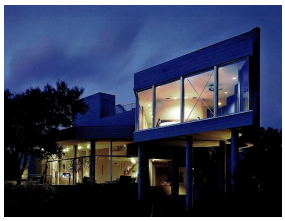


George Smart
Executive Director, USModernist

Endangered Modernist Houses



Endangered: The 1961 Prairie House in Norman OK, designed by Herb Greene, was named to Preservation Oklahoma's 2025 Most Endangered Places List. Preparations are underway for a 2026 capital campaign to support a restoration. Full press release.



Now under contract: Carl Abbott's 1989 Gaines House, 1761 Oceanview Drive, in Tierra Verde near St. Petersburg FL. The listing originally showed renderings for larger new house (not by Abbott), implying teardown. Under contract, no word yet on the buyer's intentions.



Endangered: Ray Kappe's 1946 Stoner House at 5679 East Corso Di Napoli in Long Beach CA was approved for a demolition permit. The decision will be appealed by a coalition of the Los Angeles Conservancy, Docomomo US/SoCal, and Long Beach Heritage to the California Coastal Commission. Support the coalition's work through this petition.



Endangered: From a town known as Oyster Bay, Long Island, made famous in song by **Billy Joel**, there's a rare, long-neglected 1955 Walter Gropius house, 144 Center Island Road, for sale on 17 acres for $6.75M.



Still endangered: Frank Lloyd Wright's 1903 Walser House in Chicago is out of foreclosure, but not out of the woods. The lender was the only one to bid on the house at auction and now holds the title, but whether there's a plan to stop deterioration or make any repairs is unknown.

Endangered: The deteriorating 1946 Booth House, 319 Pound Ridge Road, in Bedford NY is again for sale. One of the first houses designed by Philip Johnson, still languishing at the too-high price of $1.2M. Rumor is there is a very interested buyer.

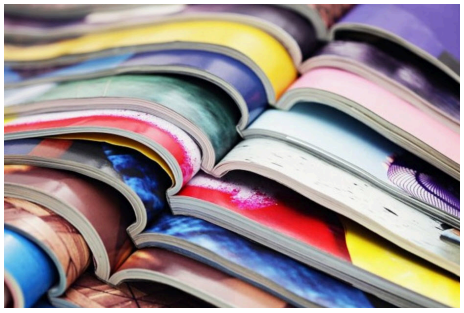
Endangered? In 1980, after years of battling with the Modernist-hating Town of Southampton Architectural Review Board (ARB), **Orest Bliss** finally got to build his Norman Jaffe-designed house at 88 Meadow Lane. Fast forward 40+

years, including a non-Jaffe renovation, and Bliss wanted a demolition permit before putting the house on the market, as oceanfront properties get a better price with pre-arranged permits. After lawsuits against the ARB, Bliss got his permit and the house went on the market in August at $24M. Now it's off the market but listed at $21M. *Has it been sold?* If so, a buyer has the green light to tear it down if they wish. Details.

Endangered: Frank Lloyd Wright's 1952 Lewis House, aka Spring House, 3117 Okeeheepkee Rd, Tallahassee FL, was for sale through a commercial property broker for a little over $2.1M. **The property type is listed as "vacant land." That's never good.** Now off the market.



Know an endangered Modernist house? Through our preservation alert program, **Modernism In Danger,** USModernist calls attention to the Modernist buildings around the country at risk for deterioration, demolition, lowball auction, or inappropriate renovation (like turning your Modernist house into an Italianate villa). Tell us.



At 5 million pages, the **USModernist Library** is the largest open digital archive for of architecture and design magazines in the world. USModernist gives long-gone architecture and design magazines new, text-searchable, online life with free user access.

If you have shelves of architecture and design magazines no one has looked at for decades – and need that shelf space -- we can help. Major magazine donors include: SOM, Tod Williams Billie Tsien, Kevin Roche John Dinkeloo, Pei Cobb Freed, Pei Partners, Madhu Beriwal, Smithsonian Institution, UNC-Greensboro, Paul Rudolph Institute for Modern Architecture, University of Hawai'i Manoa, Atomic Ranch, AIA National, Savannah College of Art and Design, Palm Springs Museum of Art, Cranbrook, Baltimore Museum of Art, Minneapolis College of Art and Design, Robert Keil, Julie Taylor, Michael Raso, and IIT Architecture.

Got some? We pay for shipping. Contact bobbie@usmodernist.org.

News



A former US General Services Administration worker says in a document filed in federal court in Washington DC that the Trump administration is moving to destroy four buildings in Washington, including the 1968 Robert C. Weaver Federal Building designed by Marcel Breuer, without following GSA demolition rules. Government lawyers said they are looking to sell, not demolish.

The other three buildings are the Wilbur J. Cohen Federal Building, the GSA Regional Office Building and the Liberty Loan Building. These are "gems of America's architectural history and its collective heritage," says **Judith Levine**, a civil liberties advocate and author, in *The Guardian*. "They are not Trump's to dispose of, like battered file cabinets or obsolete computers."



The largest wooden structure in the world – the Grand Ring erected for Expo 2025 Osaka in Japan – is going to come down and be used for firewood, it's

architect, **Sou Fujimoto**, told *Dezeen.*



Font fans grieved this week as the popular Calibri font, chosen by the Biden administration for Federal websites, memos, and other documentation, was replaced by the Trump administration with Times New Roman.

Calibri was invented by Dutch type designer **Lucas de Groot** for Microsoft in the early 2000s as part of the ClearType initiative to improve screen readability, with its rounded, friendly style used in Microsoft Office starting in 2007 before being replaced by the almost identical Aptos in 2023.

This is Calibri.
This is Times New Roman.



When mid-century Modernist architecture adapted to owners' varying needs, so did furniture design, as featured in *Midcenturyhome*.



Architect **Gordon Nichols** helped exemplify mid-century Modernist design in Dallas, as shown in this one from 1954 featured in *Candy's Dirt.*



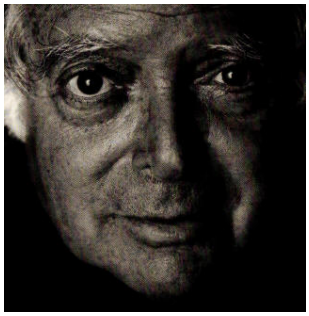
The 1988 home that Victor Lundy designed for himself was recently saved by a coalition of preservationists. *Dezeen* tells the story of how they did it.

Do you love Modernist architecture? That feeling when you discover a cool house. The thrill of saving a piece of history. The community of people who get it. The midcentury homes you love - they're still out there and still vulnerable and worth fighting for. Become a USModernist Mod Squad member and join a national community of architecture fans supporting and preserving the Modernist architecture you love. Your membership can make the difference between saving a house and watching it fall to a bulldozer.

Join for a year, get a year free! New members only. Does not apply to monthly memberships. Good through 5pm ET December 22. Sign up here.



The 1986 John Portman House, aka Entelechy II, that the Atlanta-based architect designed for himself on Sea Island GA has sold for $30M, reportedly is a record price for a Georgia home.



Circle Square Triangle is a traveling exhibition on the brilliant and exciting geometric work of Modernist architect Myron Goldfinger. This high-value, portable, exhibition can be assembled in three hours and is available starting January 1. Perfect for small museums, galleries, architect offices, or historic preservation societies. For more info, contact **Kelvin Dickinson** at kelvin.dickinson@paulrudolph.institute or **June Goldfinger** jmgoldfinger@gmail.com.

Modernist Houses For Sale



The 1946 Roxy Roth House in LA's Studio City enclave was designed by Rudolph Schindler for a screenwriter and actor. The house is listed now for $2.8M.



Deal of the year: A townhome in the Mies van der Rohe-designed Lafayette Park development in Detroit MI is on the market for $365,000.



In 1959, Celanese commissioned architect Edward Durell Stone, to build the Celanese House in New Canaan CT to showcase the company's new materials and styles. Carefully restored to museum-quality finishes, the Celanese House is one of New England's celebrated mid-century Modernist landmarks, admired and published by design publications for decades. Just over 2 acres, $4.4M. Details.

Upcoming Events

December 20 - March 29: The Art Institute of Chicago presents *Bruce Goff: Material Worlds*, at Regenstein Hall. Features architect Bruce Goff (1904–1982), best known for his groundbreaking single-family homes. Details.

Through December 31: An American Versailles, a mixed-media exhibition at the New Canaan Museum, New Canaan CT. It is all about the Eero Saarinen-designed General Motors Technical Center in Warren, Michigan. Free.

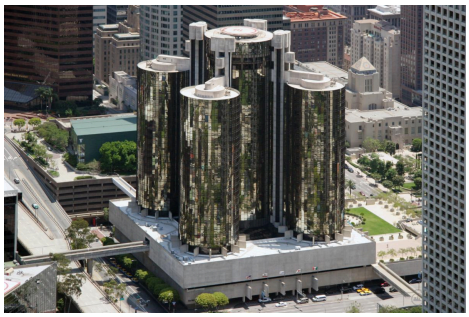


January 29, 630pm: Mayberry Modernism: North Carolina's Modernist Legacy, an entertaining and informative talk by NCModernist's George Smart at the new Durham County Library, designed by Vines Architecture. You can explore the building before or after. Free, registration required. Enter MAYBERRY on the form.

Saturday, February 7: Special tour in Raleigh. Details TBA.

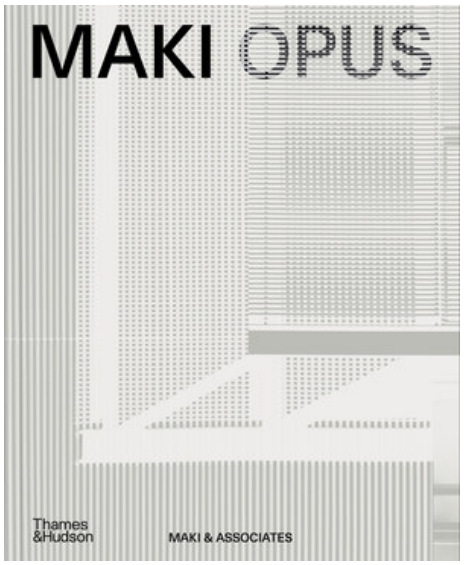
February 12-22: Modernism Week 2026, Palm Springs CA. Tickets here.

Thursday, February 19 - NCModernist Thirst4Architecture Happy Hour at Haven Design Build, 923 Broad Street, Durham NC. Free, registration required. Enter HAVEN on the form.



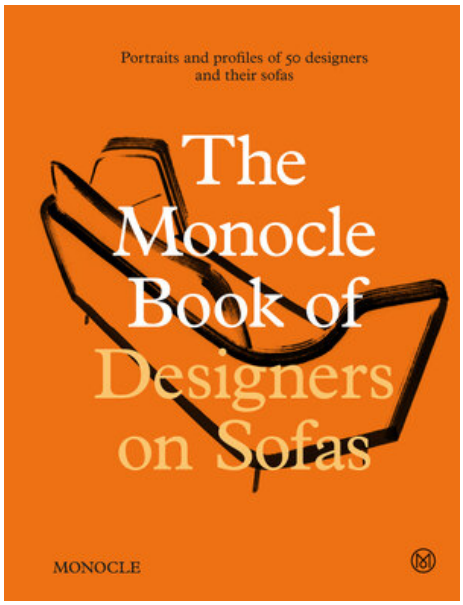
March 17-22: DOCOMOMO International Conference in Los Angeles. Join USModernist's **George Smart** for a fantastic cocktail hour on **Wednesday, March 18**, at the revolving bar atop of the Bonaventure Hotel, designed by **John Portman**, with a thrilling view of LA. Register here. You must register for the conference to attend the party.

New Books



Available January 20: ***Maki Opus*** is the definitive book showcasing the life and work of the Japanese architect **Fumihiko Maki**, known for designing understated yet boundary-pushing buildings in Japan and around the world. At four hundred pages and including one thousand illustrations, this impressive volume on Maki's work was compiled in close collaboration with his studio both before and after his passing. The book brings together the architect's own selection of the buildings that have best exemplified his career and seen him pave the way for the next wave of superlative Japanese architects, such as **Kengo Kuma** and SANAA. Featuring fifty buildings from 1960 to the present day, the book reconsiders Maki's work in light of materials, changes in building technology, and his relationship with the world outside Japan.

Available January 27: ***The Monocle Book of Designers on Sofas,*** written by **Virginia McLeod, Nic Monisse**. A fun, informative collection of portraits and biographical interviews with fifty designers from all over the world sitting on their sofas, revealing their style, wit, personality—and sofa choices. Each of the fifty entries features a portrait of the designer on their sofa, taken at their own home or workplace, sometimes with their family, their pets, or with



other possessions. In addition, a special foldout presents one hundred sofas from the last century with designs by **Le Corbusier, Alvar Aalto, Charlotte Perriand, Verner Panton, Cini Boeri, Zaha Hadid, John Pawson,** and many more.

USMODERNIST RADIO
ARCHITECTURE YOU LOVE

Latest Podcast









#435/Archispeak's Evan Troxel + Adaptive Reuse with Ken Reiter + Jason Langkammerer + Musical Guest Julianna Raye

Today, we welcome podcast host **Evan Troxel** of *Archispeak*; developer **Ken Reiter**, who answers the question: What do you do with a Modernist school? **Jason Langkammerer**, founder of AT6 Architecture, on renovating his own house; and returning podcast guest, the enchanting **Julianna Raye**, singer-songwriter and CEO of Unified Mindfulness, blending soulful music with meditation practice.

USModernist Radio is underwritten by **Diane Bald** and The Budman Family, restoring significant architecture in Toronto, Los Angeles, Malibu, and Palm Springs. New to podcasts? You can listen to USModernist Radio on any major podcast platform or through any computer.

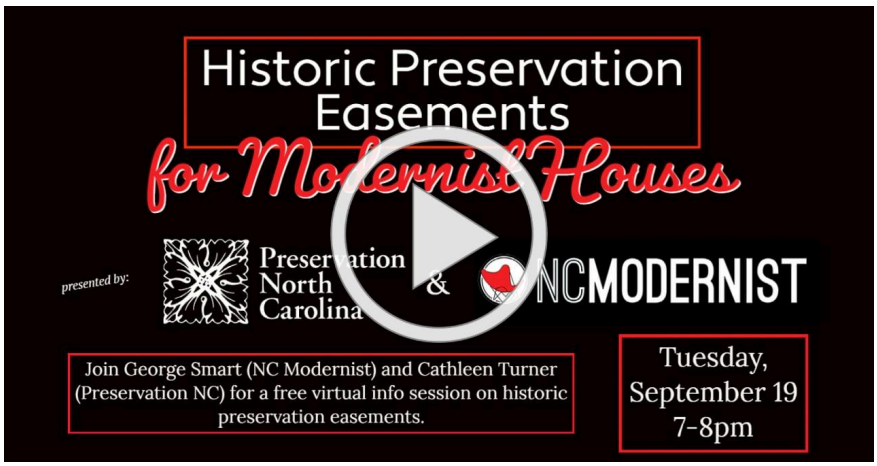
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FOR SALE

Vacancy, not development, is the enemy of mid-century Modernist houses. Preserve and protect the architecture you love by notifying us when North Carolina houses go vacant or on the market.

Check out the NCModernist For Sale/Rent Database. Real estate agents and owners can list their NC Modernist houses for sale or rent for free. Submissions are subject to approval: single-family Modernist houses only, they can be old or new, the architect or designer can be from anywhere, but the house must be in North Carolina. Exclusively sponsored by:

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The **preservation easement** is one of the only legally enforceable ways to assure a Modernist house does not get destroyed by future owners. National Register status? Meaningless. Famous architect? Nope. Local historic designation? At best, a delay in demolition. And as history shows, there are plenty of smiling buyers who say, "I would never tear this down." Then after closing, it's gone. Think of the preservation easement as a homeowner's association for one house. The easement requires future owners to maintain the house in current structural condition and state of repair, or better, including necessary work to preserve its integrity. Here's a video featuring Preservation North Carolina and NCModernist, along with **Jane Levy**, who has an easement on her Greensboro Modernist home. Here's a sample preservation easement document.

There is another way, the deed restriction. Consider it "preservation easement lite." When a once-cherished residence falls into the hands of new owners, there is always the risk that it will be destroyed, despite promises to the contrary from those owners. One powerful legal tool families can use to guard against demolition is a **deed restriction**. Knowing that potential buyers can and do lie about destroying houses, a deed restriction is a legally enforceable binding promise attached to the property title. Unlike some historic designations, a deed restriction travels with the property through changes in ownership. Even if a buyer threatens to demolish or radically alter a house, they are limited by the deed. The restriction is usually ten years, and it becomes part of the chain of title. Implementing a deed restriction before a sale immediately scares off developers (or developers-in-hiding) in an owner-value-friendly way to protect a property.

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