M News: Sturges on High Alert / JFK Center Drops Trump / Chattanooga Courthouse / Residential Design Awards
From: "George Smart, Hon AIA" <george@usmodernist.org>
Date: Monday, June 15, 2026

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: 5.5M+ Pages	USModernist Radio Podcast: 465 Shows

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Editor: **Ron Gallagher** Newsletter Staff: **Virginia Faust, George Smart**
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Featured Upcoming Events



This Thursday, June 18, 6-8pm. NCModernist's long running Thirst4Architecture happy hour this month is hosted at a new house designed by NOTCH. Join **Mike Dickson-Mills**, **Jose Noya,** and **Grau Builders** in a home that beautifully showcases Modernist design. 5918 Beech Bluff, Durham. Free, registration required. Enter NOTCH on the form.

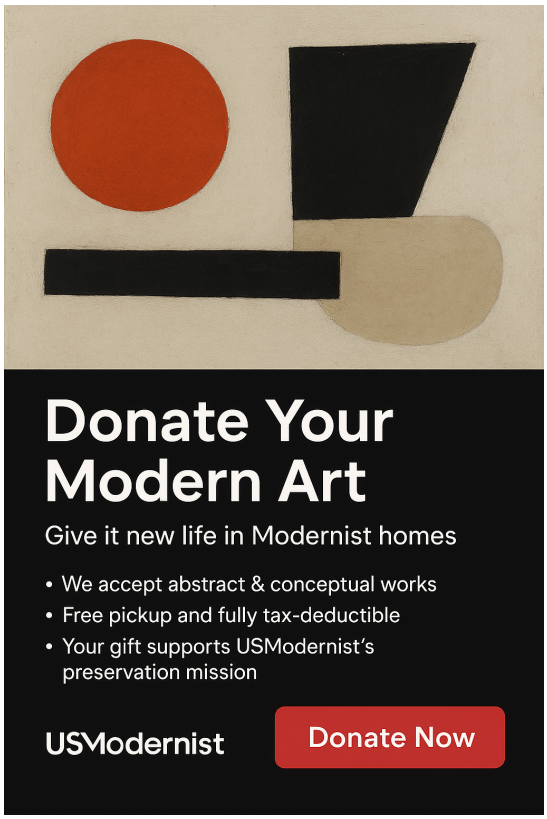
Saturday, June 20, 10am-2pm: **The Grand Masonic Lodge Tour, 2921 Glenwood Avenue, Raleigh NC** You've driven past this midcentury Masonic Lodge building for years, perhaps decades. Are you curious about what's inside? See for yourself and learn the rich public service history of Masons in North Carolina. Details and tickets.



Thursday, June 25, 4pm. NCModernist will be on the green at AIA Triangle's Mini Golf tournament at the ParTee Shack 6231 Triangle Plantation Drive in Raleigh. Open only to AIA Triangle members. Players who score a hole in one get a shot glass and a NCModernist pin, and AIA Triangle gets a $25 donation for their scholarship fund.

Wednesday, July 22, 6-8pm: Thirst4Architecture and the 2026 George Matsumoto Awards at Leland Little Auctions in Hillsborough NC. Preview hundreds of Modernist items going on auction the next day.
Free, registration required. Enter MATSUMOTO on the form.

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So many ways to be part of the intrepid USModernist community! Sponsor this newsletter or the USModernist Radio podcast.

Join the Mod Squad. Make a tax-deductible donation. Contribute your dad's abstract paintings. Donate old architecture and design magazines to the USModernist Library. Donate your midcentury furniture or modern art.

Can't sleep? Volunteer to do online research. Travel with us. Attend our Raleigh architecture movies. Come to a free Thirst4Architecture Happy Hours (schedule in Calendar section below).

Contact **Caroline Francis,** USModernist's Chief Development Officer, at **caroline@usmodernist.org.**



Donate your old magazines to the USModernist Library, the largest open digital archive for of architecture and design magazines in the world. We scan and give them new text-searchable, online life – with free user access. We even pay for shipping.

Contact **George Smart**, 919 740 8407, or george@usmodernist.org.

Endangered Modernist Houses



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.

Endangered: From a town known as Oyster Bay, Long Island, NY made famous in song by **Billy Joel**, there's was a rare, long-neglected Burke House at 144 Center Island Road for sale on 17 acres for $6.75M. It's been taken off the market but has not sold. **Benjamin Thompson** of TAC was the project architect. TAC leader **Walter Gropius** was friends with the Burkes.

News



Endangered: Frank Lloyd Wright's Sturges House in Los Angeles was built in 1939. Located at 449 North Skyewiay Road, the house is long-abandoned and in significantly deteriorating condition, with the cantilevered balcony falling down.

The Los Angeles Conservancy has named the Sturges House the first advocacy priority on its 2026 L.A. Watch List, which highlights endangered historic places across Los Angeles County. USModernist and the Frank Lloyd Wright Building Conservancy share this concern.

The house has been owned since 2016 by the All Right Now Foundation, aka **Robert Brisco**, an executive with Internet Brands. While the house has been a Los Angeles Historic-Cultural Monument for over 30 years and is legally protected from alteration or demolition, there's *no legal protection from neglect. If a property partly collapses on its own, it can be bulldozed the rest of the way and the owner cannot be forced to rebuild.*

The Los Angeles Conservancy and the Frank Lloyd Wright Building Conservancy have repeatedly asked All Right Now for a preservation plan and maintenance timeline with no response. If you are concerned about this Frank Lloyd Wright house, contact LA City Council Member **Traci Park** at traci.park@lacity.org and urge the council to step in now.

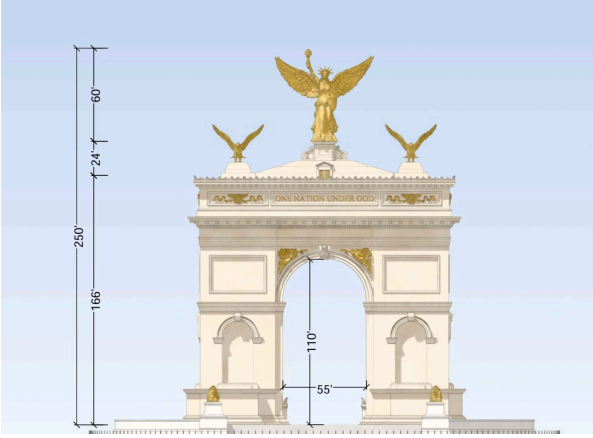


The John F. Kennedy Center, designed by Edward Durell Stone, removed **Donald Trump's** name from the building last Saturday. Staff were already updating other Kennedy Center branding, including their email signatures and marketing materials, to restore the Center's long-held identity.



Two massive Modernist government buildings designed by Paul Rudolph in downtown Boston are officially on the market. The Hurley and Lindemann buildings sit on a 6.5-acre "superblock" near Massachusetts General Hospital, which is undergoing a $1.9B expansion. Officials hope to carve out mixed-income housing inside the fortress-like structures, add retail and restaurants, and possibly build a new tower alongside. The goal is to revive a stretch of the

West End flattened by 1950s urban renewal. It's the state's second try. A previous lab-and-office plan collapsed when the lab market tanked, prompting Governor Maura Healey to pivot to housing in 2024. Winning bids must include space for the Department of Mental Health's programs and substantial new housing.



You can comment to the **National Park Service** until midnight tonight on **Donald Trump's** massive arch proposal in Washington DC**.** The location of the proposed arch would interrupt the highly significant relationship between the Lincoln Memorial, across Arlington Memorial Bridge, and Arlington National Cemetery and Arlington House Robert E. Lee's home. One of the most symbolic landscapes in Washington, the vista was designed to represent the post-Civil War reconciliation of the North and South of the United States. The arch would dwarf the Lincoln Memorial and disrupt the long, open, and uninterrupted viewsheds, overwhelming the entry to Arlington National Cemetery

1. 1. Review National Trust concerns.
2. 2. Read more project details.
3. 3. Submit comments to the National Park Service by tonight at 11:59pm MT. Visit the NPS project page for "Triumphal Arch at Memorial Circle." Select "Open for Comment" in the left-hand sidebar. Select "Triumphal Arch - Section 106 Assessment of Effect and Draft Programmatic Agreement." Select either of the two buttons labeled "Comment Now."
4. 4. If you submitted comments to the National Capital Planning Commission (NCPC) or Commission of Fine Arts (CFA), please submit again to NPS. This is a new comment period for a separate government entity.



The clearest picture of **Donald Trump's** classical architectural agenda is rising in Chattanooga TN. Officials unveiled designs for a new federal courthouse, designed by HOK, set to open in 2030. It's the first major design announced by the General Services Administration since Trump's executive order, "Making Federal Architecture Beautiful Again," which requires major federal buildings to follow classical and traditional styles.



The Bjarke Ingels Group is designing a three-building campus for a new STEM university in Bentonville AR, working for two grandsons of Walmart founder Sam Walton.



Two architects and the original owner take you on a tour of a 1966 rural Modernist house in Mt. Washington CA deigned by **Egon F.J. Winkens,** who worked under Richard Neutra.

RESIDENTIAL DESIGN

The 2026 Residential Design Architecture Awards were recently announced. See their past winners.

- * French Creek Workshops — Snohomish WA — Wittman Estes
- * Point Dume Residence — Malibu CA — Lake Flato Architects
- * Meridian House — Indianapolis IN — Specht Novak
- * Navy Beach — Montauk NY — Bates Masi + Architects
- * Slayton House Renovation and Addition — Washington DC — Robert M. Gurney
- * Old Yacht Club — East Blue Hill ME — Elliott Architects
- * Lafayette ADU — Lafayette CA — Swatt + Partners
- * Casa del Lago — Austin TX — Miró Rivera Architects
- * iolair — Eastsound WA — GO'C
- * City Park Residence — Austin TX — Alterstudio
- * Courtyard House — Vancouver BC — RUFproject
- * Camp Meeker — Allenspark CO — Renée del Gaudio Architecture
- * Sag Harbor Bay — North Haven NY — BMA Architects
- * El Aleph Guesthouse — Port L'Hebert NS — MacKay-Lyons Sweetapple Architects
- * Farmhouse in a Meadow — Needham MA — Elliott Architects

- * Accabonac House — East Hampton NY — Berg Design Architecture
- * Cootie Catcher — San Antonio TX — Cotton Estes Architect
- * Tierra de Paz — San Antonio TX — Cotton Estes Architect
- * Snider House — Toronto ON — Giannone Petricone Associates
- * Brooklyn Heights Townhouses — Brooklyn NY — The Brooklyn Studio
- * Lilac Cottage — North Truro MA — Keira Ritter Design Co.
- * Tennis Pavilion — Emmons County ND — Johnsen Schmaling Architects
- * Willamette Pool House — Newberg OR — Fieldwork Design & Architecture

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What began as a $2,800 off-grid A-frame built in a few days in Mendocino County CA has become the heart of a redwood sanctuary.



Home @ 9



Hsu Residence



Lakeview Residence



Nebo House



Olivette House



Pavilion House



Sandbox



Village Modern

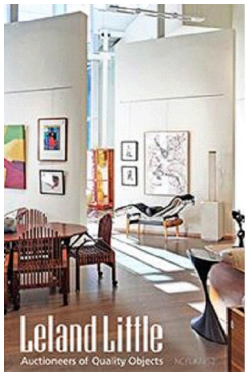


White Residence



VOTE in the **2026 George Matsumoto Prize**, hosted by NCModernist and sponsored by Fitch Lumber / MARVIN. This is the 15th year of the Prize. Anyone, anywhere, can vote!

Go here to see the houses (9 are shown above). You can vote for two categories, NEW and RENOVATED. Click on a photo or house name. Then click the VOTE button at the top of that page. It will bring up your email program. Just click send and you are done. If the vote button does not function, send an email with the word Vote and the name of the house in the subject to **george@ncmodernist.org**. Limit of one vote per category per e-mail address. However, if you want to vote more than once for any category, say from a home email and a work email, that's fine. **Voting ends June 30, 5pm ET.** The 2026 George Matsumoto Prize Awards are sponsored by



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Movie of the Week: A 2002 panel discussion, led by Case Study Houses author **Elizabeth A.T. Smith with Thorne, Knorr, Koenig, Killingsworth, Hensman, and Shulman.**

California Trip

California Trip is both a celebration of the sun-kissed California myth and a deep drive beneath that golden brand for what is real, beautiful, hopeful, and human for what makes California more than a state...*but a state of mind.*

In each half-hour episode of this upcoming series, actor and preservationist **Kelly Lynch** (owner of a Lautner and a Neutra house) hits the road to uncover what is real, soulful, and meaningful. More info. This bootstrap effort is fundraising to finish the series. Donate here. Grateful Film Fund is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization and all donations are tax-deductible as allowed by the IRS.



Attention Lego fans: The company launched its biggest set ever – 12,060 pieces – Barcelona's Sagrada Familia cathedral designed by **Antoni Gaudí**, who died 100 years ago.



Architectural Digest explains how they made the Ferrari-out-the-window scene at the Ben Rose House in Highland Park IL 40 years ago for *Ferris Bueller's Day Off.*



The government of Ottawa, Canada, is proposing to designate five buildings designed by James Strutt as protected heritage properties. There are two houses and three churches, including St. Teklehaimanot Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church, above.



George Crandall, who designed Oregon's tallest skyscraper, known as Big Pink, died June 9. Crandall co-founded the urban design and architecture firm Crandall Arambula with urban designer **Don Arambula** in 1998 after working for Skidmore, Owings & Merrill.





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Modernist Houses For Sale



Richard Neutra's 1960 Robert and Else Sale House in Los Angeles remains for sale, though with a steep price reduction. It was listed in mid-2025 for just under $8M and was relisted this month for $4.75M.



The 1955 William and Betty Oliver House in Glendale CA designed by Gregory Ain is for sale for the first time since it was built. It's priced at $3M.



The 1962 Steel House #4 by Donald Wexler in Palm Springs CA is on the market for $1.4M. It is one of seven steel houses with the George Alexander Construction Company.



In Boulder CO, a 1958 house by local Modernist architect **Charles Haertling** has turned up on the market with a listing price of $5.75M.



A 1956 house that noted architect Arthur McKimmon designed for himself in Raleigh NC is up for sale at $2.5M.



In 1940, three students of Frank Lloyd Wright – **Tony Smith, Ted van Fossen and Laurence Cuneo** – designed a house in Blacklick OH, east of Columbus, and dubbed it the Glenbrow House. In 2013, a couple bought the abandoned house to save it from an encroaching subdivision. Now, it's for sale for $1.2M.



Architect **Alexander Liebman** worked with **Jesse and Rae Bochco** to design a House in Venice CA that Rae said was an homage to Ray Kappe, one of whose houses they had owned in Pacific Palisades. Finished in 2022, the Venice house is for sale for $15M.



Wise Sellers: 1306 Mayfair in Raleigh NC is a delightfully small 1951 Modernist house in good condition. However, it's in a neighborhood full of teardowns. The owners, who love the house and have been there for over 50 years, have wisely required a no-teardown agreement for prospective buyers. Knowing that buyers can and do lie about destroying houses, this version of deed restriction is a legally enforceable binding promise attached to the property title. New caring owners, who have no intention of tearing a great house like this down, are undeterred. This scares away developers who would destroy it, as happened recently with the Milton-Small-designed Frank Walser house on Alamance Drive. Details.

Upcoming Events

June 25: Cocktails and the Collector, part of the Mad for Modern series is hosted jointly by Ridgefield CT Historical Society and Ridgefield Guild of Artists. Details.

Opening **July 1:** The Onera Foundation, New Canaan CT. *AMERICA ABROAD: Art, Architecture, and Diplomacy – Works from the FAPE Collection* explores how art and architecture have shaped the US diplomatic presence abroad—from the Cold War to today. The exhibition features artworks from leading

American artists including **Ed Ruscha, Robert Rauschenberg, Carrie Mae Weems, Julie Mehretu, and Martin Puryear**, alongside embassies designed by leading mid-century architects such as Edward Durell Stone and Walter Gropius, alongside more recent contributions by firms including Skidmore, Owings & Merrill (SOM) and Kieran Timberlake, among others. Details.

July 7-12: West Coast Modern Week, Vancouver BC. Details.



Thursday, August 20, 5pm: NCModernist Thirst4Architecture Happy Hour at the new Raleigh Building Product Showroom of Fitch Lumber and Hardware, 3010 Stony Brook Drive, Suite 105. Free, registration required. Enter FITCH on the form.

Through September 2, AIA Center for Architecture in New York: Dutch photographer Arjan Bronkhorst published lesser-known houses by renowned architect Gerrit Rietveld (1888–1964). This exhibition features fifteen, including one in Oberlin OH. Curated by **Arjan Bronkhorst** and **Barry Bergdoll**. Details.

September 13-15: AIA regional design conference, ASPIRE. Asheville NC. Open to architects and non-architects. *Save $50 with code ASPMODERNIST26.*

October 3: La Jolla Modernism Home Tour. Tickets will go on sale in July. Details.

Friday-Saturday, October 9-10: Harkrader House Tour and Celebration Party, Durham NC, sponsored by Preservation Durham and NCModernist. Details TBA.

Thursday, October 15: NCModernist Thirst4Architecture Happy Hour at Raleigh Architecture at their new office in Raleigh NC. Free, registration required. Enter RACO on the form.

Through December 31: Tours of Frank Lloyd Wright's Kraus house in Ebsworth Park, Kirkwood MO. Details.

USMODERNIST RADIO
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Latest Podcast





#461/USModernist Radio Retro: Ernst Wagner + Eric Lloyd Wright

We're revisiting conversations with two special guests who have passed away since these interviews were recorded — architect **Paul Rudolph's** partner, **Ernst Wagner**, and Frank Lloyd Wright's grandson, architect **Eric Lloyd Wright**.

Ernst Wagner was a Swiss exchange student who came to New York in 1970. He met Rudolph, and the two became lifelong partners in architecture and in business, co-founding the Modulightor lighting company and building the landmark Modulightor Building on East 58th Street. After Rudolph's death, Ernst spent nearly three decades keeping that legacy alive, founding what has become the Paul Rudolph Institute for Modern Architecture, now under the leadership of CEO **Kelvin Dickinson**.

Eric Lloyd Wright was an American architect, son of **Lloyd Wright** and grandson of Frank Lloyd Wright. He worked with both. Based in Malibu, California, he championed organic architecture and ecological design, restoring family landmarks while developing his own distinctive practice over decades.

USModernist Radio is underwritten by The Brent R. Harris Charitable Trust, restorer of Richard Neutra's Kaufmann Desert House in Palm Springs and six other houses in California; by the E Fay Jones Conservancy, preserving the legacy of Modernist architecture in Northwest Arkansas. Visit efayjonesconservancy.org; and by Diane Bald and The Budman Family, restoring significant architecture in Toronto, Los Angeles, Malibu and Palm Springs.

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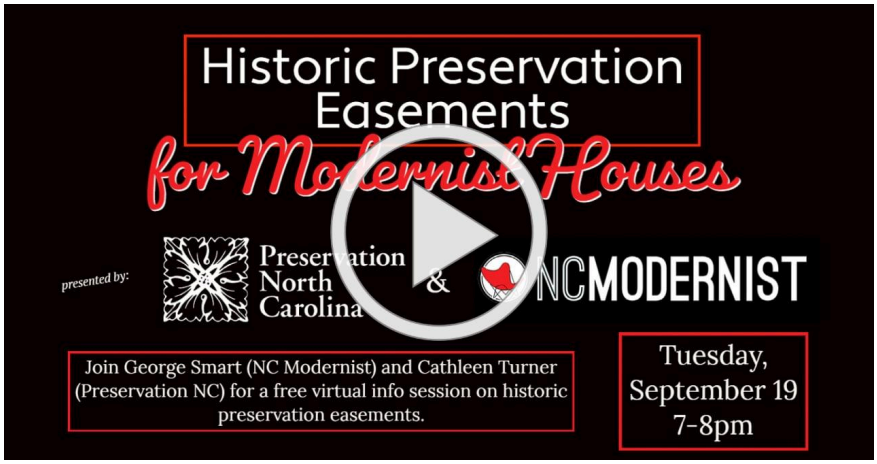
Raleigh Magazine has a big article on the history and importance of Modernist houses in Raleigh NC.

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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