

MUSEUM TO PUBLISH NEUTRA VOLUME IN CONJUNCTION  
WITH THE EXHIBITION

THE ARCHITECTURE OF RICHARD NEUTRA: FROM INTERNATIONAL STYLE TO CALIFORNIA MODERN, which closely analyzes the celebrated architect's style and discusses the background of his work, will be published in conjunction with the exhibition which will be on view in The Museum of Modern Art's new West Wing from July 24 through October 12, 1982. The book is co-authored by the directors of the exhibition, Arthur Drexler, Director of the Department of Architecture and Design at the Museum, and Thomas S. Hines, Professor in the Department of History and School of Architecture and Urban Planning at the University of California, Los Angeles, where he has been a faculty advisor to the Neutra Archive established in 1955.

By the early 1930s Richard Neutra (1892-1970) had achieved worldwide professional acclaim, not only for his architectural work in California but also for the two books and numerous articles he had written on American architecture. In 1932 Alfred H. Barr, Jr., then Director of The Museum of Modern Art, referred to Neutra as "among American architects second only to Frank Lloyd Wright in his international reputation." Although over the next decades this reputation was to suffer an eclipse, until the 1960s Neutra continued to make important contributions to American domestic architecture, particularly as it was practiced on the West Coast.

Born in Vienna and trained in Europe, Neutra came to the United States

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in 1923 at the age of thirty-one. He "admired American energy and optimism and wanted to understand better what they had produced in order to add something of his own. Five years after his arrival he himself had become another distinctively American voice, heard with respect in the growing international community of architects," comments Arthur Drexler. After working briefly with Frank Lloyd Wright at Taliesin, Neutra established his own practice in California, where he remained for the rest of his life. By 1932 he had built several houses of great sophistication, innovative in their handling of structural steel framing and subtle in their balance of design elements. Although he produced some notable larger projects during his later career, his practice continued to be primarily concerned with private homes, most of them small and many significant to the development of an indigenous California tradition.

Neutra's houses share a characteristic handling of such elements as parapet or spandrel, ribbon window, overhanging roof, thin wall plane, and steel or wood skeleton structure. The book discusses the early influence of Wright and their shared admiration for aspects of Japanese design. It comments also on Neutra's early portrait and landscape drawings (of which ten examples are illustrated) and on fluctuations in critical esteem for Neutra's work in relation to the development of modern architecture in the United States.

The 114-page volume contains a detailed chronology of Neutra's life and work, as well as 185 illustrations in black and white and 2 in color. It will be distributed by The Museum of Modern Art in a paperbound edition at \$10.00.

The exhibition THE ARCHITECTURE OF RICHARD NEUTRA: FROM INTERNATIONAL STYLE TO CALIFORNIA MODERN has been organized with the aid of a grant from the National Endowment for the Arts.

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