

Heidi Creighton is a Midcentury Modern enthusiast, writer, collector, and researcher. In 2012 she purchased a restored and updated Palm Springs home designed by William Krisel in 1957. She divides her time between her Palm Springs home and Vancouver, British Columbia.

Chris Menrad was drawn to Palm Springs in 1999 by its abundance of Modernist architecture. A lover of all things midcentury, he is a former board member of the Palm Springs Art Museum Architecture and Design Council, and a founding board member and current president of the Palm Springs Modern Committee. He lives in a Krisel-designed home that is Twin Palms' first Alexander-built house designated as a Class One Historic Site.

This volume includes contributions from Heidi Creighton, Wim de Wit, Jake Gorst, Jim Harlan, Alan Hess, Barbara Lamprecht, Chris Menrad, J. C. Miller, Jim West, and Sian Winship.



Book jacket designed by Gary Wexler.
Front cover: Corinne Krisel and Twin Palms tract house (1957). Photograph by Julius Shulman. Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles (2004.R.10). © J. Paul Getty Trust.
Back cover: Interior of Menrad Residence (2015). Photograph © Darren Bradley.
Back flap: Chris Menrad, William Krisel, and Heidi Creighton (left to right) in the William Krisel Architectural Archive, Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles (June 2015). Photograph by Heidi Creighton.



william krisel's palm springs : the language of modernism

MENRAD • CREIGHTON



william krisel's palm springs

THE LANGUAGE OF MODERNISM

edited by CHRIS MENRAD and HEIDI CREIGHTON

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THE LANGUAGE OF MODERNISM

This is the first major monograph chronicling the work and architectural philosophy of William Krisel. Featuring excerpts from Krisel's own papers, culled from his personal collection as well as the extensive archives of the Getty Research Institute, it explores his journey and his lasting impact on Midcentury design. A pioneer of Midcentury Modernism, Krisel's influence has had an immeasurable impact on Modernist architecture and design. His remarkable career has spanned over sixty years and his built work includes more than 40,000 living units. This volume features many examples of Krisel's uniquely artistic architectural renderings, archival photographs by renowned photographer Julius Shulman, and recent photos of his custom homes, mass-produced housing, and recreational facilities in and around Palm Springs.

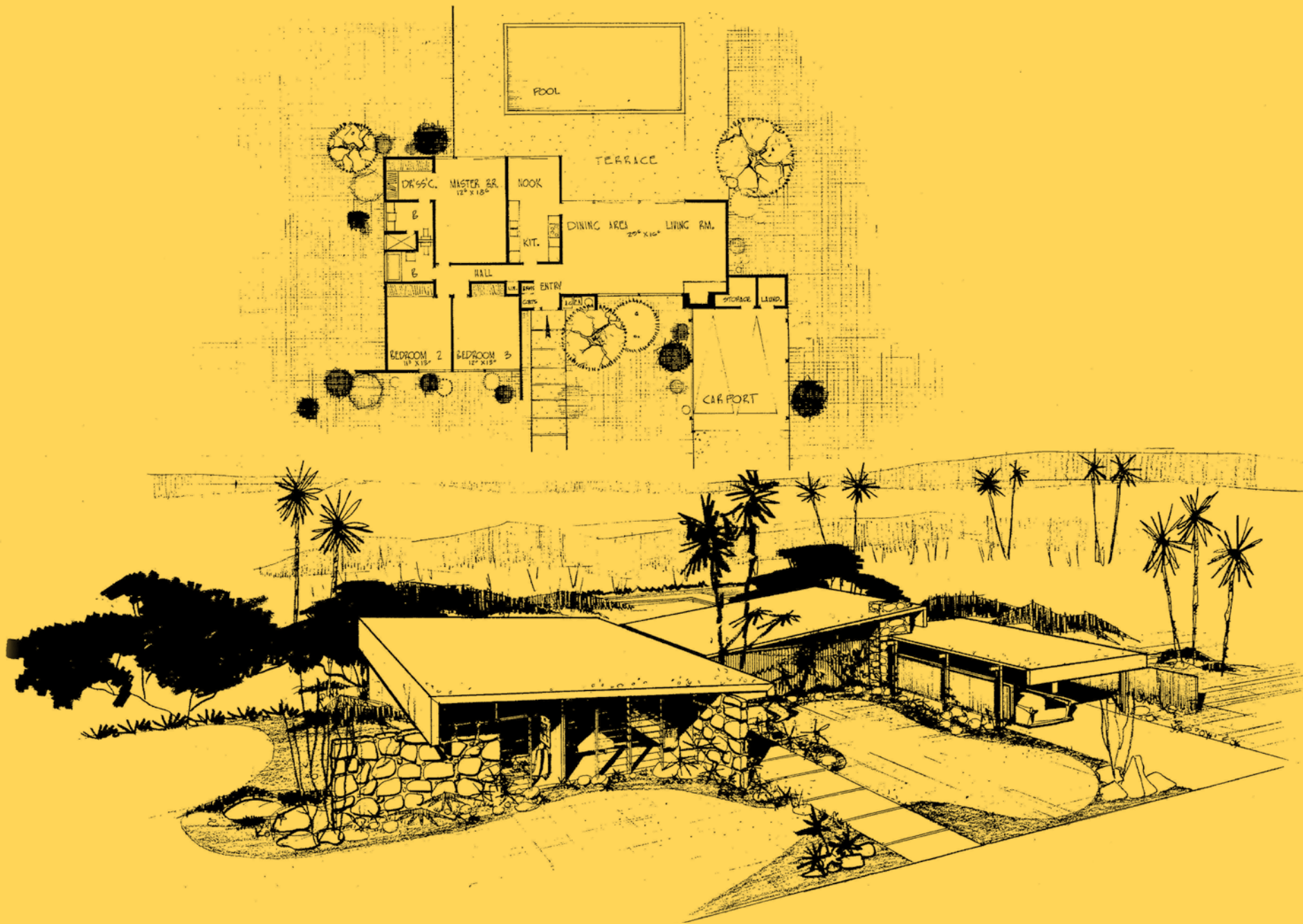


Facing: Mike Lee and Deborah Rumens
Residence (formerly the Dunas Residence),
Palm Springs, California (2015).

Photograph © Darren Bradley.

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3 on tract

JIM HARLAN

“[It’s] significant [that] almost every big name in Modern architecture at midcentury tried to crack into the mass-produced housing market. And they all failed.” — ALAN HESS



Left: Krisel Residence, Corbin Palms tract, Woodland Hills, California (1953).

Photograph by Julius Shulman. Gift of William and Corinne Krisel. William Krisel Architectural Archive, Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles (2009.M.23). © J. Paul Getty Trust.

Levittown, New York, one of the early postwar tract neighborhoods, was described by architectural historian Lewis Mumford in 1961 as “a multitude of uniform, unidentifiable houses, lined up inflexibly, at uniform distances on uniform roads, in a treeless command waste, inhabited by people of the same class, the same incomes, the same age group, witnessing the same television performance, eating the same tasteless prefabricated foods, from the same freezers, conforming in every outward and inward respect to a common mold manufactured in the same central metropolis.

Thus the ultimate effect of the suburban escape in our time is, ironically, a low-grade uniform environment from which escape is impossible.”¹ In fact, social critics and architectural historians for the most part ignored the development of tract housing. “To them these houses did not seem to be ‘architecture.’”²

With that condemnation, the use of the word “tract” to describe and then market a home, let alone a vacation home in the desert, could hardly have been seen as a wise move.

Facing: Rendering of tract house with floor plan, Valley of the Sun, Rancho Mirage, California (1957).

Gift of William and Corinne Krisel. William Krisel Architectural Archive, Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles (2009.M.23). © J. Paul Getty Trust.

Interior view of the Buzyn Residence,
Palm Springs, California (2015).

Photograph © Darren Bradley.

