BUILT BY BECKET

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THE LOS ANGELES CONSERVANCY
MODERN COMMITTEE
WELCOME

The Modern Committee is proud to honor the work of architect Welton Becket. Becket and his firm, Welton Becket and Associates, were responsible for a stunning array of iconic modern structures that literally defined post-war Los Angeles as the City of Tomorrow.

Through this event, as well as our work to preserve the Music Center, the Santa Monica Civic Auditorium, and tonight's host venue, the Cinerama Dome, the Modern Committee is working to make sure that Los Angeles still has a place for the City of Tomorrow, the City of Welton Becket.

Sincerely,
Alan Leib, Chairman
Los Angeles Conservancy Modern Committee

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INTRODUCTION

by Alan Hess

It is impossible to survey the panorama of Los Angeles in the mind’s eye without including certain iconic landmarks. Hollywood is crowned by a circular office tower. The annual Oscar ritual is celebrated (until recently) in a glittering palace of modernity on Bunker Hill. Could LAX ever be imagined without its great spider-legged theme building? Or Westwood without the UCLA Medical Center? Or Pasadena without Bullock’s? Or Beverly Hills without the Beverly Hilton?

Each of these is a Welton Becket design. The list proves the tremendous impact Becket has had on our image of L.A. Even demolished Becket buildings can leave an indelible afterimage: the Pan Pacific Auditorium remains a part of the mental landscape of L.A. long after the actual building vanished.

And yet surprisingly Becket’s name is not as recognized today as many less prolific architects. In part that’s due to Becket’s very success: his buildings captured so much of the personality of mid-century L.A., they served as templates for so many other buildings, his pioneering planning ideas were so influential, that they established a norm. Becket buildings have blended with the pattern and texture of our postwar suburban metropolis so seamlessly that we take them utterly for granted.

It is the commercial city of shopping plazas, office centers and cultural temples, and Welton Becket had a hand in creating all of them. In the 1950s and 1960s they were each a piece in the City of Tomorrow. Los Angeles has long seen itself as just that. Along with his colleague firms Pereira and Luckman, A.C. Martin, Victor Gruen and others, Welton Becket Associates gave it form in the heyday of Imperial California.

Though Los Angeles was much smaller when Becket arrived in the early 1930s, the city was already decentralizing under the influence of the auto, the movies, aviation and popular culture. Born in Seattle in 1902, studying architecture at the University of Washington, Becket and his schoolmate and future partner Walter Wurdeman moved
to Los Angeles and worked with Charles Plummer, a solid commercial architect of shops, cafeterias, drive-ins and markets. But even in the dark days of the Depression, Wurdenman and Becket dreamed of tomorrow’s city. This progressive vision won them the design competition that put them on the architectural map: the Pan Pacific Auditorium in 1935.

The Pan Pacific was a vivid interpretation of the Moderne, of all that was new and hopeful, of progress that would not be denied. No wonder its effortlessly fluid pylons became an iconic image of the Streamline Moderne – and Los Angeles.

With the end of World War II, the entire architectural profession realized that the face of the American city was about to change dramatically. No one knew exactly how. The architects of Los Angeles, however, were well-positioned to experiment and explore.

After the war Becket and Wurdenman continued to design buildings that would be iconic. Bullock’s Pasadena was one of the first department stores designed for the suburbs, the new centers of urban gravity. Mastering the Late Moderne style, it integrated the parking terraces (elegantly landscaped by Ruth Shellhorn) with auto entries and four levels in an innovative and fully realized form. It reflected the new informality of postwar life. The Prudential Center on Wilshire and the General Petroleum building downtown explored different solutions to the workplace and the need for flexibility. After Walter Wurdenman died unexpectedly in 1949, Becket bought out his partner’s heirs and continued as the solely-owned Welton Becket Associates. The iconic buildings continued as well: Capitol Records, Parker Center, Los Angeles International Airport (with William Pereira, Charles Luckman, and Paul R. Williams), UCLA Medical Center, the Music Center – buildings that embodied a major era of Los Angeles.

Step by step the firm rethought almost every aspect of urban life: housing, work, shopping, housing, education, recreation, culture. Bullock’s Pasadena was followed by a succession of shopping centers evolving the type: Stonestown in San Francisco, Bullock’s Westwood and Northridge, Seibu, malls such as Fashion Island in Newport Beach, and literally dozens of others. The General Petroleum building led to office towers from Houston to
Bartlesville to Oakland, for Ford and Kaiser and Equitable. Americans began vacationing in droves, and Welton Becket designed LAX with his colleagues, Canyon Village at Yellowstone and Hawaiian Village in Honolulu. Becket played a large role behind the scenes too. None proved more consequential than when he advised his friend and Holmby Hills neighbor Walt Disney to abandon an architect’s design for his new amusement park in Anaheim. Design it yourself with your movie studio staff, architect Becket urged. No advice more insightful, more far-reaching was ever made in twentieth century architecture. Though he and Wurdeman began their partnership designing Tudor homes for movie stars in the 1930s, they helped to design the classic tract houses of Panorama City for developers Fritz Burns and Henry Kaiser, based on their 1946 Post-War House. As master planner for UCLA, Welton Becket Associates designed much of the Medical Center, several dorms, classroom buildings and Pauley Pavilion. And in the ultimate assertion of the multi-nodal city, he planned Century City, turning the old movie factory into a new type of downtown. To fulfill the cultural and recreational needs of the new city, he built the Memorial Sports Arena (where JFK was nominated for president in 1960), the Cinerama Dome, and finally the Music Center.

The Music Center, with William Pereira’s Los Angeles County Museum of Art, proved that Los Angeles had arrived as a major capital. Tellingly, neither required the importing of a famous east coast architect. Welton Becket had the ability, staff and — even more importantly — the experience in designing large complexes and public spaces for Southern Californians. The Music Center is today a masterpiece of a modern era, in the broad formal gestures, in the open air plazas, and especially in the self-confident ornamental invention of its terraces, grand staircases and chandeliers. This is the assured opulence of American mid-century might.

This brief list doesn’t give full credit to Becket’s entire work. His long career took his firm overseas to design an embassy in Warsaw, Hiltons in Havana, Cairo and Manila, towers for the Riviera Hotel in Las Vegas, pavilions for Ford and General Electric at the 1964 New York World’s Fair, the Contemporary and Polynesian hotels at Walt Disney World, and office buildings and shopping centers everywhere.

This was architecture on a scale and scope never before seen. To accomplish it, Becket had to reorganize the traditional architecture office on a new corporate footing. As Welton Becket Associates
grew into the nation’s largest architecture office in the 1960s, Becket developed the methods for the architecture profession to be able to deal with the larger scale and complexity of commercial and institutional projects in the last third of the 20th century. The new era demanded a new sophistication in the organizational scope of an office, the services it provided, and Becket pioneered the means — “Total Design” he labeled it — to mobilize a firm to deliver a constant, consistent architectural product to the growing U.S. economy.

Yet for all the national and international reach of his work, we should not overlook that Becket remained a Los Angeles architect. From the beginning of his career, he was designing the City of Tomorrow. Los Angeles was shaped by the forces of technology, commerce and popular culture; Becket understood them and welded them into a popular product. Without the pressure or aspiration to high art, such a designer was not likely to excite the interest of most critics of the time. He did not invent and promote a theory of design or planning so much as recognize the trends at work in society, business and technology and respond to them with pragmatism and innovative thinking.

Today we can begin to rediscover that faith in Los Angeles as we begin to see the delicate interplay between the 35-year-old Music Center and its new neighbor under construction. Frank Gehry’s Disney Hall doesn’t rebuke or overpower, shame or ignore the Music Center; it responds to and enhances, creating a stronger unified cultural center, as was always intended, atop Bunker Hill. The cost of failing to acknowledge the seminal influence of Welton Becket’s images and concepts is the loss of their urban lessons and the graceful presence of his best buildings.

Growing from a two-man office into one of the largest in the world, prepared to handle any project of any size and any complexity, Becket’s career rode the trajectory of twentieth century Los Angeles. Today, thirty four years after his death in 1969, Welton Becket’s legacy is still an inescapable part of Los Angeles. His contributions have not diminished; they have simply become so integral to the fabric of the city that we have forgotten that it was not always this way.
TOUR STOP
#1 BULLOCK’S PASADENA (1947)
(See description page 10)
401 South Lake Avenue
Travel South on Lake Avenue to California Ave.
turn RIGHT
At Arroyo Parkway turn LEFT
Continue South along Arroyo Parkway as the
110 Pasadena Freeway South approaches
Travel South on 110 Pasadena Freeway
toward Downtown Los Angeles
Prepare to exit on the LEFT side of the freeway
EXIT onto Hill Street Southbound
Proceed South through Chinatown
Turn LEFT on Temple
Turn RIGHT on Los Angeles Street
Halfway down the block on your left is
#2 PARKER CENTER (1955) (See description page 30)
150 S. Los Angeles Street
Continue South on Los Angeles Street to 1st Street
Turn RIGHT on 1st Street
Proceed 7 blocks to Hope Street
Turn RIGHT on Hope Street where you will approach

TOUR STOP
#3 THE MUSIC CENTER (1964-1967)
(See description page 12)
135 N. Grand Avenue
EXIT NORTH Hope Street to Temple
TURN RIGHT on Temple
Turn RIGHT on Grand Avenue
Proceed South on Grand
Approximately 6 blocks to WILSHIRE BOULEVARD
Turn RIGHT on Wilshire
At the Corner of Wilshire and Grand is
#4 STANDARD FEDERAL SAVINGS (1954)
(See description page 43)
601 Wilshire
Continue West on Wilshire 1 block to
#5 GENERAL PETROLEUM BUILDING
(See description page 19)
731-735 Wilshire at Flower
Proceed West on Wilshire to
#6 ALLSTATE SAVINGS BANK (1970)
800 Wilshire Boulevard
Later highrise
Proceed West on Wilshire
After you pass through MacArthur Park
Turn RIGHT on Coronado Street
Immediately on your left will be

#7 REMINGTON RAND (1951)
2601 Wilshire Blvd.
(Now Department of Social Services)
Kahn & Jacobs, Associated Architects
Exterior intact, notice the glass box and marble cube.
Aluminum canopy at the entrance.
Proceed North on Coronado St. to 6th Street
Turn LEFT on 6th Street to
#8 NEW YORK LIFE INSURANCE COMPANY (1955)
2801 6th Street
(Now LAUSD Metro Skills Center)
mostly intact but obscured by landscaping and fencing
Continue West on 6th Street to Virgil
Turn left on Virgil
On the SW corner of 6th and Virgil is
#9 AMERICAN POTASH AND CHEMICAL (1957)
3000 6th Street
(Currently under construction)
Large mass of marble over all-glass first floor
Continue South on Virgil to Wilshire
Turn RIGHT on Wilshire to
#10 U.S. BORAX CO. (1963)
3075 Wilshire Blvd.
Now U.S. Government offices
Exterior intact, interiors and artwork gone
Continue West on Wilshire to
#11 CLIFTON INVESTMENT CO. (1960)
(Now Towers-on-Wilshire)
3200 Wilshire Blvd.
Continue West on Wilshire to

LOS ANGELES
#12 TEXACO (1957)
3350 Wilshire Blvd.
(Now Albion Pacific)
Exterior and many lobby features intact. Mosaic canopy above entrance. This area housed many corporate headquarters between 1945-1965.
Continue West on Wilshire to
#13 EQUITABLE LIFE BUILDING (1969)
3435 Wilshire
Very original. Built on the site of the Chapman Park bungalows. One of the tallest buildings on Wilshire, Equitable features large open plazas and monolithic scale.
Continue West on Wilshire to
#14 TRAVELERS BUILDING (1960)
(See description page 44)
(Now Wilshire Financial Tower)
3600 Wilshire
Continue West on Wilshire to
#15 SITE OF WURDEMAN AND BECKET OFFICE
(1945) (Demolished)
3757 Wilshire
The firm relocated from this site to the Prudential Building in 1948, and finally in 1960 to 10000 Santa Monica Blvd., the first building in Century City.
Continue West on Wilshire to
#16 PIERCE NATIONAL LIFE (1965-1970)
3807 Wilshire
Later concrete tower
Continue West on Wilshire to
BULLOCK'S PASADENA

(Now Macy's)
1946, Exterior Intact, Interior Altered, Pasadena Historical Landmark
Wurdeman & Becket, Architects; Raymond C. Dexter, Interior Designer;
Ruth Shellhorn, Landscape Architect
401 South Lake, Pasadena, California

Proclaimed "One of the World's Most Modern Buildings" in the November 1946 issue of Arts and Architecture magazine and a recipient of an AIA Merit Award in 1950. P.G. Winnett, president of Bullock's Department Stores, visited many of the homes Wurdeman and Becket had designed for movie stars. From those visits came his vision of a department store designed as if it were a fine residence as befitted Pasadena, which at the time had the highest per-capita income in the country. This commission was critical to the development of the Becket philosophy of "total design." The firm oversaw the design and installation of everything in the store including wallpapers, artwork, fixtures, carpets, murals, counters, display cases, contemporary and antique furniture and even the conveyor system that delivered purchases directly to the parking lot.
The main entrance to the building is in the rear, oriented to the motor court rather than the street. This is because Bullock's Pasadena carried on the Southern California tradition of designing for the automobile with a then unheard of six-acre parking lot.

Bullock's Pasadena was the first of over 100 department stores designed by Wurtemberg & Becket, later known as Welton Becket and Associates. The Bullock's chain had over 25 stores in California. Other large chains who utilized Wurtemberg & Becket's skills included Gimbel's, Joseph Magnin, Saks Fifth Avenue, Buffum's, Ohrbach's, and Macy's to name a few. In addition to individual stores, Welton Becket and Associates is responsible for dozens of shopping centers including Stonestown Shopping Center in San Francisco, Del Amo Shopping Center in Torrance, Fashion Island Shopping Center in Newport Beach and The Beverly Center in Los Angeles.

The Bullock's Pasadena commission also led directly to the General Petroleum Building Commission. One of the directors of Bullock's was on the Board of Mobil Oil. He was so impressed with Bullock's Pasadena that he became a champion of Wurtemberg and Becket and was instrumental in securing the firm for the General Petroleum building.

In 2002, Johnson Favaro architects wrapped "The Shops at Lake Avenue" around the historic Bullock's store. Pasadena Heritage and the Los Angeles Conservancy worked with the developers to preserve as much of the site as possible. Bullock's is now a Macy's Department Store.
MUSIC CENTER

(Now Music Center/Performing Arts Center of Los Angeles County)
1964-1967
Welton Becket and Associates, Architects
Cornell, Bridgers and Troller, Landscape Architects
135 North Grand Avenue, Los Angeles, California

The Music Center is composed of three interrelated theaters designed in the New Formalist Style. The theaters are arranged on a sweeping plaza at the top of a rise overlooking the Civic Center. Constructed in two phases over a period of five years, the original Music Center consists of the 3,250-seat Dorothy Chandler Pavilion, the 2,100-seat Ahmanson Theater and the 750-seat Mark Taper Forum. Parking for over 2,000 cars is located below the Center.

DOROTHY CHANDLER PAVILION

1964, Intact
Welton Becket and Associates, Architects

The Dorothy Chandler Pavilion was the first theater constructed and is the most imposing of the three buildings, enclosed as it is in a free standing colonnade. The interior lobby area with its impressive chandeliers and sweeping grand staircase is a wonderful statement of mid-sixties sophistication.
AHMANSON THEATRE
1967, Altered
Welton Becket and Associates, Architects
Ellerbe Becket, Remodeling Architect

The Ahmanson Theater and the Mark Taper Forum were both constructed in 1967. The Ahmanson, which was originally faced in off-white Onyx on all four sides, underwent extensive interior and exterior alterations in 1995, by the successor firm to Welton Becket and Associates, Ellerbe Becket.

MARK TAPER FORUM
1967, Altered
Welton Becket and Associates, Architects

The Mark Taper Forum is a circular building that originally rose from a reflecting pool of water which has since been removed. Its curved wall is adorned with a low-relief sculpture with an abstract design repeated every seventh panel.

MUSIC CENTER PLAZA
1964-1967, Intact
Welton Becket and Associates, Architects
Cornell, Bridgers and Troller, Landscape Architects
Jacques Lipschitz, "Peace on Earth" sculpture

The Music Center Plaza was designed in tandem with the three main buildings. In size and intent, the central sunken plaza becomes the fourth element of the complex. The plaza was intended as a public gathering space, recessed so as to set the buildings apart symbolic of their roles as temples to culture. The design of the Music Center Plaza is an integral part of the design of the buildings themselves, and is key to the viewers experience of those buildings and their surroundings.
THE POST-WAR HOUSE

1946, Altered
Wurdeman & Becket Architects
Eckbo, Royston, and Williams, Landscape Architects
Bullock's Inc., Decorators
4950 Wilshire Blvd., Los Angeles, California

The Post-War House was designed as a prototype. Part serious research house, part model home, and part gimmick, it was all marketing. Featured in dozens of magazines, including an unheard of 42-page spread in the May 1946 issue of House Beautiful, the house was visited by over a million people and read about by millions more.

Fritz Burns was one of the most important real estate developers in Southern California. Burns introduced innovations in prefabrication techniques for the production of affordable homes. Following World War II, in association with Henry J. Kaiser, he formed Kaiser Community Homes to help ease the post-war housing shortage. Burns opened the Post-War House in 1946 charging an entry fee of $1.00 per person.

The Post-War House was a showcase for practically every building product on the market and must have been a marvel to weary Americans, and a thing of envy to housing-desperate GI’s. It was also a brilliant design with clever built-ins, indoor/outdoor spaces and above all, every labor saving device known to man.

“CLEAN AIR ELECTRONICALLY ... dust will be rare in this new home. The Precipitron, an electronic air cleaning device developed by Westinghouse, removes more than 90 per cent of all dirt, dust and other foreign particles in the incoming air. A little larger than an electric refrigerator, and containing no moving parts, the Precipitron requires practically no attention.” Souvenir Pictorial Booklet of the Post-War House, 1946

“Open till 9 P.M. Every Day of the Week – Even Sunday!”

As attendance slowed Burns dropped the entry fee to 35 cents. The house had been viewed by over one million people when he temporarily closed the house in 1950 for a year for remodeling. With only minor changes, mostly the addition of a helicopter landing pad and a few more futuristic gadgets, Burns reopened the building in 1951 as the “House of Tomorrow.” Once again, it drew large crowds.
The house was beautifully decorated by Bullock's and marks the start of a Welton Becket/Bullock's collaboration, a partnership that would result in the design and construction of over 25 Bullock's/Federated Department Stores.

Unfortunately, the interior has been altered over the years, but the exterior is largely intact and much of the original landscaping remains. Today it seems quite startling that this low slung modern ranch house lurks amongst the behemoths of Wilshire Blvd, but at the time it was surrounded by open space, crops, and lots of parking.

"The Most Thought-Provoking House in America"
Fritz B. Burns

"Designed to enchant, astound and inspire the home-loving public, this exhibition house displays a multitude of novel ideas, innovations, and devices. Manufacturers have supplied, and architects have incorporated, almost every known (and some till now unknown) contribution that our mechanical age is making to the ease, comfort, and delight of the prospective home builder. No expense has been spared in providing the utmost in glamour and gadgets...to bring into focus the focus of public opinion the very best in postwar thought that architects, builders, and manufacturers have to offer."
Architectural Record, April 1946
RESIDENTIAL PROJECTS

Some of Charles Plummer, Walter Wurdeman and Welton Becket's earliest work was in residential design. After Charles Plummer's death in 1938, Wurdeman and Becket continued as a team designing homes and other small commissions. After designing the award winning Pan Pacific Auditorium in 1935, they received a $5,000 dollar commission and prize. Wurdeman used his portion of the fee to join the Beverly Hills Tennis Club, a club frequented by celebrities. As a result of this shrewd investment, Plummer Wurdeman and Becket received a number of residential commissions, enough work to see them through the depression and into the Los Angeles building boom following World War II.

BECKET RESIDENCE, MALIBU

In the late 1930s and early 1940s Wurdeman and Becket designed period revival homes for some of Hollywood's biggest stars including James Cagney, Cesar Romero, and Robert Montgomery. In 1948, Welton Becket built his own beach house at Trancas beach in Malibu. The beach house is significant in that it was his first published modern residence (Architectural Record, Sept. 1948). The house is post and beam with walls of glass and is a major stylistic break from his earlier designs.

In addition to private homes, Wurdeman and Becket also designed a number of multi-unit residential projects, including two landmark public housing projects in Los Angeles. Wurdeman and Becket were part of a consortium of prominent architects including Paul Williams, Adrian Wilson, and Richard Neutra. Wurdeman and Becket helped design Hacienda Village Housing located near the Watts District of Los Angeles and Pueblo Del Rio Public Housing in the South Central District of Los Angeles (both in 1941.)

Pueblo Del Rio was one of the earliest public housing projects in Los Angeles and the nation, and the only Los Angeles area public housing development open to African Americans in the early 1940s. Fifty-seven two-story units were placed on this 17.5 acre site landscaped by Ralph Cornell. Hacienda Village was built on 17.6 acres of flat land. Its 71 single story buildings provide 182 units of housing.

During World War II, Wurdeman and Becket also designed as many as 14,000 housing units to meet the needs of military families and war workers. It was during this time that the Wurdeman and Becket office expand-
ed. In order to handle its defense contracts, the office increased to almost 40 employees. This large staff positioned the firm to be competitive in the post-war residential and commercial building boom.

**ROBERT McCULLOCH RESIDENCE**

**1955, Threatened**

Welton Becket and Associates
Rancho Mirage, CA

Widely publicized as an aesthetic and technological wonder, the house was dubbed “McCulloch’s Push-Button Paradise” by *Life* magazine in 1956 for its futuristic incorporation of remote controlled motorized devices throughout the house.

The house is characterized by a low-pitched roof, deep overhangs, extensive use of glass, an open floor plan, exposed beams, terrazzo floors and an integration of landscaping with interiors creating an indoor/outdoor living environment.

The McCulloch House also features site-specific artwork and a host of mechanically operated devices. The house is remarkably intact and currently on the market.
**KAISER COMMUNITY HOMES**

1947-48, Altered
Wurdemann & Becket, Architects; Fritz Burns and Associates, Fritz Burns Development for Kaiser Homes, Inc.
Panorama City, California
The original Kaiser Community Homes tract boundaries were Osborne Blvd, Woodman, Van Nuys Blvd. and Roscoe Blvd.

Loosely affiliated with the Fritz Burns "Post-War House," Kaiser Community Homes is a large development of over 4,000 houses in Panorama City. The houses incorporated the thoughtful design of the Post-War House as well as many of its innovations all for under $10,000. Initial design was by Wurdemann and Becket with extensive modifications and changes by Fritz Burns' staff.

The largest subdivision of Kaiser Community Homes was Panorama City. Other Kaiser Community Homes include: 1,410 houses in San Jose, 471 houses in Ontario, 430 houses in Compton, 562 houses in Monterey Park, 300 houses in Westside Terrace, and 1,295 houses in Westchester. A factory was constructed near the Los Angeles Airport to prefabricate and prepare the houses for shipment to the building site for assembly.

Panorama City was developed on the site of the 1,000 acre Panorama Ranch, one of the largest dairy farms in Southern California. Purchased by Fritz Burns and steel magnate Henry Kaiser for around $2,250 dollars an acre, it became the site of Panorama City and Kaiser Community Homes.

Kaiser Community Homes were, for the most part, pre-milled and shop-fabricated, and represent an early large scale experiment in prefabrication. Everything for a house was delivered on site and assembled in just a few weeks. Kaiser Homes were prefabricated by Kaiser Shipbuilders, a division of Kaiser Metals. After the war the shipbuilder was looking for a peace-time business and diversified greatly into construction, especially prefabrication. This experiment was a failure. While Burns was prefabricating 3,000 homes in the Kaiser shops, he was also hand-making hundreds of others on site, which cost significantly less to build.

This Wurdemann & Becket involvement with Kaiser marked the beginning of a 30-year personal and professional relationship between Welton Becket and Henry J. Kaiser, culminating in the 1960 construction of the Kaiser Center in Oakland California.

Kaiser Community Homes were extremely popular with the war-weary house-hungry public. On average 5,000 people a week viewed model homes. On some weekends, so many people showed up, the Los Angeles Police Department had to be called up for traffic and crowd control.
Building and Parking Garage
1947, Adaptively Re-used
Wurdeman & Becket, Architects
Killefer Flammang, Adaptive Reuse Architects
612 S. Flower Street, Los Angeles, California

The General Petroleum Building was built in 1947 as headquarters for Mobil Oil. When built it was the largest office building in Southern California, with a gross space of 504,425 square feet. General Petroleum was one of the nation’s first buildings to conserve energy through thoughtful siting and placement of shading devices. Fifty-nine non-glare aluminum fins shade 1,600 windows and conduct the sun’s heat to the top of the building.

Wurdeman and Becket were also pioneers in making buildings lighter and cheaper. “Strength without Weight” was achieved through the extensive use of steel and lighter concretes. Wurdeman & Becket helped develop a concrete which used pumice and vermiculite as aggregate rather than traditional gravel. This new lighter “rocklite” concrete is also responsible for giving Becket buildings their famous whiteness. This material was first used in the General Petroleum Building and later in the Prudential Building.

The building is outwardly modern in appearance but with classic Art Deco touches, especially the pronounced vertical banding and the use of colored terra-cotta. Above a black granite base, the exterior of the structure is covered with a warm, grey-beige terra-cotta, with grey-green terra-cotta spandrels.

The General Petroleum Building was one of the first in the United States to have open floors with movable “modular” walls for ultimate flexibility – even the plumbing system was movable. Built-in flexibility and modularity has since become a standard feature of most office buildings.

Even more radical, innovative and modern than the General Petroleum Building itself was its parking garage. The garage has been described as a single floor, six stories high. It is essentially a continuous rectangular spiral, extending like a corkscrew from basement to roof on a 4% grade around a central core housing elevators and stairways. It was a radical design that would be copied in parking structures nationwide for decades.

Restoration and adaptive reuse of the General Petroleum Building into 322 residential lofts is nearing completion. The building will be renamed Pegasus in homage to its past as “Home of the Flying Red Horse” and Mobil Oil.
PRUDENTIAL BUILDING

(Now Museum Square)
Orbach's Headquarters and Department Store
1948, Altered
Wurdean & Becket Architects;
Ruth Shellhorn, Landscape Architect.
5757 Wilshire Blvd., Los Angeles, California

A 1949 an *Arts and Architecture* magazine cover story called Prudential Square "a symbol of Los Angeles and the western way of life." Embracing the International Style, it marked a stylistic change for Wurdean & Becket. Stretching across two city blocks and with 517,000 square feet of office and retail space, it was, at the time, the tallest and largest privately owned structure in the city.
The Prudential building is made up of two asymmetrical flying wings flanking a central windowless shaft. The shaft contains electrical and mechanical services. Originally the exterior was finished with louvers and sunshades arranged in varying patterns to add visual interest. Most of the sunshades and louvers have been removed, but the original main entrance and lobby, which pierces the building from front to back, is relatively intact in shape and form. The entrance is lined with thirteen state medallions. In the main lobby the cornerstone incorporates an actual piece of the Rock of Gibraltar, Prudential's corporate symbol. One unique aspect of the building that remains unchanged is that at night it becomes an illuminated negative of itself.
UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, LOS ANGELES

For over two decades Welton Becket and Associates was the Master Planner for the UCLA campus, and the firm was the architect for some of UCLA’s most important buildings. The Becket firm has left a major imprint on the campus.

UCLA CENTER FOR HEALTH SCIENCES

1948-1970, Altered
Welton Becket and Associates, Architects
University of California, Los Angeles
Westwood, California

The giant two-million square-foot UCLA Center for Health Sciences was planned in 1948 and constructed between 1951 and 1970. The interconnected complex is the largest single building in Southern California and cost over 100 million dollars to construct. The main buildings in the UCLA Center for the Health Sciences include: Clinical Research Building, 1954; Vivarium, 1954; Neuropsychiatric and Brain Research Institute, 1961; Marion Davies Children’s Clinic, 1962; Institute for Chronic Disease, 1965; Jules Stein Eye Institute, 1966; School of Public Health, 1968; Reed Neurological Research Center, 1970.

ENGINEERING BUILDING

1952, Intact
Welton Becket and Associates, Supervising Architects
Allison and Rible, Associate Architects
University of California, Los Angeles
Westwood, California

Designed for heavy duty loads, this building will accommodate “live loads” ranging up to 600 pounds per square foot. Provisions were made for heavy equipment, trucks, and free movement of tractor trailers up to 67 tons on all levels including the roof.
SCHOENBERG HALL

1955, Intact
Welton Becket and Associates, Architects
University of California, Los Angeles
Westwood, California

This Modern building was obviously influenced by the work of Eliel Saarinen, and the Scandinavian aesthetic. When built, Schoenberg Hall was a radical departure for UCLA. It was one of the first buildings approved by the UC Regents that was not a hybrid neo-classical style. Above the exterior foyer of the building is a 164-foot mosaic mural by Richard Haines. In 16 panels it depicts the history of music through the ages.

ACKERMAN UNION BUILDING

1959-60, Altered
Welton Becket and Associates, Architects
University of California, Los Angeles
Westwood, California

This building is a late 1950s modular Modernist box equipped with sun grilles. The building was, according to an article of the time, “carefully related to its [1931 gothic] neighbor Kerckhoff Hall, through the use of related materials.”

PAULEY PAVILION

1965, Intact
Welton Becket and Associates, Architects
University of California, Los Angeles
Westwood, California

Edwin W. Pauley Pavilion opened in June 1965 and is the home of the UCLA basketball and volleyball teams. The venue, with its distinctive “space-frame” construction, seats over 12,000 people and was the home of John Wooden’s UCLA Bruins dynasty of the 1960s and 1970s. It has also been the site of many large music events as well as host to such programs as the 1984 Olympics and the 1988 presidential debates.
BULLOCK'S WESTWOOD

1950, Adaptively Re-used
Now Ralphs, Best Buy and Expo
Welton Becket and Associates, Architects;
Raymond C. Dexter, Interior Designer
Stephen Kanner/Kanner Architects, Adaptive Reuse Architects
10861 Le Conte, Westwood, California

"The ultimate in contemporary suburban department store shopping"
(1951 advertisement).

This building is considered a premiere example of the Becket philosophy
of “total design.” Everything in the building was coordinated: architectural
design, finishes, interior decorations, landscaping, graphics, fixtures, and
art. There were specially commissioned Gladding McBean and Company
“Westwood Tiles” and two Bernard Rosenthal sculptures. Everything was
carefully coordinated to create “a perfect merchandising mechanism.”
Bullock’s Westwood is also a monument to Southern California’s obsession
with the automobile, featuring two-and-one-half acres of rooftop parking.
The building finishes featured luxurious materials such as fine and exotic
woods, stained concrete, fieldstone, Arizona mint stone, and, as noted
above, specially commissioned tiles and art work. With its lush indoor and
outdoor plantings, the building had a distinctive Southern California Style.
No detail was overlooked by the designers from the wrapping paper in the
toy department to the labels in women’s dresses. It was, indeed, a total
design.

In 2001 Bullock’s Westwood was converted into a Ralphs supermarket and
several other stores. The conversion and redevelopment was undertaken
by developers Madison Marquette Company under the direction of supervis-
ing architect Stephen Kanner. The L.A. Conservancy award-winning
conversion kept many of the original features of the building including the famous display window boxes along Le Conte Avenue.

**BULLOCKS PALM SPRINGS**
1947, Demolished
Wurdeman & Becket, Architects
151 South Palm Canyon Drive, Palm Springs, California

This magnificent modern temple of shopping was destroyed in the early 80's and the lot stood vacant for over 15 years. The building was sited beautifully on the west side of Palm Canyon. It was always bathed in sunlight and stood out in sharp relief against the rugged mountain backdrop. Symmetrically placed wings enclosed an entrance patio and vertical louvers protected the windows from the sun.

Other significant Bullock's Stores by Welton Becket and Associates include:

**BULLOCKS PASADENA**
1946 (See page 10)

**BULLOCKS DEL AMO**
1961

**BULLOCKS FASHION SQUARE**
1963, Intact
Sherman Oaks, California

**BULLOCKS LAKEWOOD**
1965

**BULLOCKS NORTH RIDGE**
1971, Altered

**BULLOCKS LA HABRA**
1969
1955, Intact
Welton Becket and Associates, Architects; Louis Naidorf, Designer
Barry Milofski/M2A Architects, additions
1750 Vine Street, Hollywood, California

Southern California’s most recognizable office building and Hollywood’s most spectacular Mid-Century Modern icon was the world’s first circular office building. The earthquake resistant reinforced-concrete structure was the first fully air conditioned office building. Sunshades of porcelain enamel, a trademark of Becket Buildings, protect the building from receiving too much sun and glare. The underground recording studios were the first ever built for high fidelity. On the roof, the beacon at the tip of the 90-foot aluminum spire blinks out H-O-L-Y-W-O-O-D in Morse code. Each December the spire supports Hollywood’s tallest Christmas tree.

In 1942 songwriter Johnny Mercer, movie producer Buddy DeSylva and music retailer Glen Wallichs, of Wallich’s Music City, began Capitol Records at Sunset and Vine. In 1955, The Electric and Musical Industries (EMI) of England acquired Capitol Records for $8.5 million and committed to build a new state-of-the-art studio in Hollywood equal to the Abbey Road studio in London. Over the years many timeless records were made here by legendary entertainers including Nat King Cole, Frank Sinatra, Peggy Lee, Dean Martin, The Beach Boys and Keely Smith.

After a 2001 expansion and renovation, the exterior and many of the original recording studios remain pristine.
1955, Exterior Slightly Modified, Interior Altered
Welton Becket and Associates, Architects
Bernard Rosenthal, Fountain Sculpture
Lambert Landscape Company, Landscape Architects
9876 Wilshire Blvd. at Santa Monica Blvd., Beverly Hills, California

Built at a cost over $13 million, this classic Mid-Century Modern resort hotel is seven stories tall, and has over 500 rooms, including penthouse suites. In many ways Hilton's tropical resort hotels in Puerto Rico and Hawaii influenced its design. Each of the luxurious rooms have private balconies, which had all but died out in American hotels at the time. Originally these balconies were divided with bright colored panels which against the white building gave the hotel a progressive modern artistic look. A large cantilevered circular dining room and terrace extend out over the swimming pool area. Included in the lush tropical landscaping both inside and out, were over 200 large-scale modern pots and planters made by Architectural Pottery.
Today, with the exception of the motor entrance, the color scheme and reduced balconies, the exterior is intact. The interior has changed many times but basically retains its original layout.

Welton Becket and Associates had a long and productive association with Conrad Hilton and Hilton Hotels.

Other significant Hilton Hotels by Welton Becket and Associates include: Manila Hilton (now Holiday Inn), 1968; Beirut Hilton, 1975; Baghdad Hilton; Athens Hilton; London Hilton; Long Beach Hilton; Hilton Hawaiian Village, 1955; Puerto Rico Hilton; Hilton Havana (now Habana Libre Hotel), 1958; and The Nile Hilton, 1959. The Nile Hilton is the most fanciful of all the Hilton Hotels and featured the world’s largest mosaic tile mural.
Police Administration Building
1955, Intact
Welton Becket and Associates, Architects;
Director of Design, Maynard Woodard; Project Architect, Francis Runey
J.E. Stanton, Associated Architects
150 Temple Street, Los Angeles, California

Few police buildings are known for their architectural merit and even fewer for use of the related arts or their landscaping. In all these respects, Parker Center is an exception. A Bernard Rosenthal bronze sculpture, "Family Group," is mounted on a tile wall beside the main entrance. Featured in the lobby is a 36-foot long, 6-foot high tesserae mosaic depicting the architectural history of Los Angeles, including City Hall, The Chinese Theater and Angel's Flight. The cantilevered mural created by Joseph Young in 1955 was, at the time, the world's largest.

In 1955, Parker Center was the most modern police building in the world, with all the latest equipment and gadgets. The building was also innovative in its use of glass walls rather than steel bars to separate some criminals, mostly juveniles, from the law abiding public.

The design of Parker Center was predicated on the philosophy that a city police department should be made inviting rather than forbidding to the citizens. Oriented toward the street, the public entrance is surprisingly
welcoming with landscaping and fountains. Blue mosaic tile covers the ceiling and columns at the entrance and creates a calming effect on visitors. A spacious, lavishly planted plaza, with a pool and modern sculpture, add to the informal atmosphere. All police departments of concern to the general public – such as missing persons, traffic, and information desk were located off this main entrance.

Upon Chief Parker’s death in 1966, The Police Facilities Building was renamed for William H. Parker, the creator and father of the modern Los Angeles Police Department. Parker is credited with transforming the force into an efficient, modern police department. This building has an extraordinarily high degree of architectural integrity. All public spaces are virtually unchanged from its opening nearly fifty years ago.
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1959, Intact
Welton Becket and Associates, Architects and Engineers
Brandow and Johnson, Structural Engineers
3939 South Figueroa, Los Angeles, California

The Sports Arena was initially planned by the architectural firm of Morgan Walls and Clements (Wiltern Theater). Despite being far along in the design and construction process, Clements’ firm lost out in the bid process to design the arena. Utilizing the existing excavated site, Welton Becket and Associates won the job and developed working plans in an amazing 14 weeks.

The oval bowl shaped arena, the exterior of which is covered in aluminum panels, was an engineering marvel. In order to give every seat a good view, Welton Becket and Associates eliminated interior columns in this arena requiring steel trusses as long as 315 feet. When built, these were the longest steel building trusses ever used in an American building. In a revolutionary design, spectators entered the building at the middle of the seating and walked up or down to one of the 22,400 seats. Half of the seating rows were located below grade.

The first major event held in the new arena was the Democratic National Convention of 1960 during which John F. Kennedy won the party’s presidential nomination.

Welton Becket had several other presidential connections. He was a good friend of President Dwight D. Eisenhower and went on to design the Eisenhower Museum in Abilene, Kansas, as well as the Eisenhower House in La Quinta, California. Most intriguing, though, was his role in the Nixon/Khrushchev “Kitchen Debate.” Welton Becket and Associates had designed the dome and pavilion for the 1959 American National Exhibition in Moscow. On July 24, 1959, Vice-President Richard Nixon and Soviet Premier Nikita Khrushchev held a public discussion in the pavilion comparing the technologies of the two super powers.
(now Petersen Automotive Museum)
1962, Altered
Welton Becket and Associates
The Russell Group, Remodeling Architects
6060 Wilshire Blvd., Los Angeles, California

Seibu was the last department store built on Wilshire Boulevard’s Miracle Mile. Seibu Department Stores were a chain that specialized in exotic products from Japan. The stores were designed to feature traditional Japanese touches often interpreted in a Mid-Century Modern vocabulary. The store was short lived and closed after only a few years.

On opening day, the Japanese Modern style of the four-story store was recognized with a design award from Los Angeles Beautiful, a civic group. An unusual feature of this store was the restaurant, located on the roof, and surrounded by a Japanese garden and reflecting pool. The restaurant was linked by a bridge to a penthouse cocktail lounge.

In 1965, Orbach’s department store moved from Prudential Square into this building. The Russell Group added the soaring car-wash style fins when the facility was acquired by The Petersen Automotive Museum in 1994. The Petersen is currently planning a major renovation of this building.
SALINAS CIVIC COMPLEX
1957, intact
Welton Becket and Associates, Architects
200 Lincoln Avenue, Salinas, California

The Salinas Civic Complex is similar to the Pomona Civic Complex but on a more modest scale and perhaps acted as a testing ground for the ambitious Pomona project. A rectangular city hall with circular council chambers is adjacent to a civic plaza.

POMONA CITY HALL & COUNCIL CHAMBERS
1968-69, Intact
Welton Becket and Associates, Architects
B.H. Anderson, Associate Architect
505 S. Garey Ave., Pomona, California

Only six of the planned 12 buildings in the Pomona Civic Center complex were completed. Despite not being fully realized, the Pomona Civic Center can claim the title of largest concentration of Welton Becket designed architecture in the country. The planned monorail station, downtown heliport, shopping mall, civic auditorium, and residential high-rises were never built. All of the buildings that were built were carefully related to each other and feature similar building materials, especially exposed aggregate concrete. Spatial variation in the complex is created by a unifying pedestrian plaza that changes levels and ties the complex together. Completed buildings in the civic complex include: City Hall, Council Chambers, Public Library, Police Department, Superior Courts Building, and the Public Health Building.

CITY OF ORANGE CIVIC CENTER
1963, Intact
Welton Becket and Associates, Architects
300 East Chapman Avenue,
Orange, California

Mission Modern, this building gives a winking nod to California's Mission heritage. With slumpstone bricks and mission arches it echoes the past but is unquestionably modern.
SANTA MONICA CIVIC AUDITORIUM

1958-59, Intact
Welton Becket and Associates, Architects
1855 Main Street, Santa Monica, California
Santa Monica City Landmark

This building seems ready to take off from its site. An icon of the “Jet Age” with its 72-foot concrete masts, parabolic colonnade, and perforated concrete screens; it is a perfect example of architecture of its period. It was also functional, with an innovative hydraulic floor, the largest ever built, which could be reconfigured to accommodate everything from concerts to athletics. With the help of the Modern Committee, the Santa Monica Civic Auditorium was recognized in 2002 as a Santa Monica local landmark.
1959 and later
A four block by six block area bound on the east and west by Century Park East and Century Park West, Santa Monica Boulevard on the north, and Pico Boulevard on the south.

Built on 148 acres, the former site of the historic 20th Century Fox Studio backlot, this stylish master planned utopian community was envisioned as a self contained, "city within a city." Developed by Alcoa Aluminum and William Zeckendorf, the upscale residential, retail, entertainment, and office park is in a lush garden setting with large plazas decorated by fountains and public artworks. The mile wide "city" is divided by the "Avenue of the Stars," which is planted with trees saved from the old movie backlot. Ironically Century City has been featured in several films, most prominently, Conquest of the Planet of the Apes.

Significant Welton Becket and Associates buildings in Century City include:

WELTON BECKET
AND ASSOCIATES BUILDING

1960, Altered
(now Fox Television)
Welton Becket and Associates
10000 Santa Monica Blvd., Century City, California

The first building constructed in Century City. This four-story concrete building featured a rooftop pavilion and floated over a reflecting pool with
fountains. The mosaic art that covers the façade was created by John Smith, and is intact, although there have been major interior alterations to the building.

**GATEWAY BUILDINGS**

*West, 1962; East, 1964; Intact*
Welton Becket and Associates
1800 Avenue of the Stars, Century City, California

**CENTURY CITY SHOPPING CENTER**

*1964; Altered*
10250 Santa Monica Blvd., Century City, California

Open-air suburban-style shopping center in the shadow of the Century City highrises, featuring a 3-level Broadway department store anchoring the center of the complex and a Mayfair market.

**NORTHROP BUILDING**

*1970 and later, Intact*
Welton Becket and Associates
1800 Century Park East, Century City, California

The first tower from 1970 was followed by another, taller neighbor in the early 1980s. Both are in the brutalist style with intact exteriors.
1963, Intact
Welton Becket and Associates, Architects;
Louis Naidorf, Principal Designer; Pierre Cabrol, Designer;
Richard Prebble, Interiors
Geometrics Inc., Engineering
6360 West Sunset Blvd., Hollywood, California
Historic Cultural Monument #659

Originally this ultra modern architectural icon was built as a prototype for 600 proposed theaters. It was to be a showcase for the three-camera Cinerama process. Ultimately few Cinerama theaters were built. The Cinerama process, first developed in 1952, requires 3 projectors and a curved 90-foot screen. Before the dome was finished, the process was abandoned because of expense and technical difficulties.

This is the only concrete geodesic dome in the world. Becket licensed the patented technique from Buckminster Fuller’s Geometrics, Inc. and utilized the design in an innovative 856-seat theater.

Construction cost half as much as most conventional theaters and was built in half the time. 316 pentagonal and hexagonal panels each averaging 80 square feet and weighing 3,200 pounds were bolted together creating the dome which is more than 70 feet tall and weighs more than 700 tons. The 16-foot-high circular concrete base is almost a foot thick.

The grand opening celebration at the Dome was the star-studded premiere of It’s a Mad, Mad, Mad, Mad World which ran at the theater for 66 weeks. In 2002, after a preservation effort by the Los Angeles Conservancy, Hollywood Heritage and Friends of Cinerama, the historic dome was restored as it became the centerpiece of the new Arclight/Cinerama Dome Entertainment Center. Oddly enough it wasn’t until 2002 that the Cinerama Dome actually screened a film shot in the Cinerama process.
As master planners of Civic Centers and Universities, the Becket firm was involved in a number of libraries, including the following:

**POMONA PUBLIC LIBRARY**

1965, Intact, Interior Altered
Welton Becket and Associates
Everett & Tozier, Associate Architects
625 South Garey Avenue,
Pomona, California

The Pomona Public Library is an International Style building. The Library is especially dramatic at night because with no internal columns the massive roof seems to float on light.

**KNOX LIBRARY**

U.S. Naval Post Graduate School
1968
Welton Becket and Associates, Architects
Monterey, California

This large research library is part of the U.S. Naval Post-Graduate School. It was designed to complement the Becket designed academic buildings at the Naval School.
GLENDALE PUBLIC LIBRARY

1973, Intact
Welton Becket and Associates, Architects
Fong, Jung and Nakaba, Landscape Architects
222 E. Harvard St., Glendale, California

Typical of the Neo-Brutalist Modern style of the early 1970s, the exterior was finished in rough textured concrete. At the entrance the plaza is an outdoor sunken living room. The interior features rare African hardwoods, Herman Miller furniture and Jens Risom designed card catalogs. The ceiling features waffle slabs which absorb sound.

When built, the library had a wonderful view of the Verdugo Hills through a two-story wall of windows. Now, the view is blocked by a retail building across the street.

Other Becket designed Libraries include La Sierra College Library in Riverside California, Salinas Public Library, UCLA Medical Library.
LOS ANGELES INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

1959 and later
One World Way, Los Angeles, California
Group Commission:
Welton Becket and Associates
Pereira & Luckman
Paul R. Williams
Airport Theme Building, Historic Cultural Monument #570

Located on 265 acres, the 46 million dollar Los Angeles airport expansion was built to accommodate the new jet-age, and promoted as “The Gateway to the World.” Seven ultramodern ticketing buildings, lining the perimeter of the 5,000 car parking lot, were connected via underground passenger and baggage channels to eight satellite buildings, each with 10 jet loading positions. Each terminal had landscaped “Southern California-style” patios. A 172-foot control tower atop the administration building, covered in aluminum louvers, marked the airport’s main entrance.

The new airport’s centerpiece and crowning touch was the futuristic Theme Building. It is a modern marvel of engineering and design – one of the most spectacular space age structures in the world. Construction began in April 1960 and was completed in August 1961. On the ground floor visitors entered through the Court of Stars, with a floor of terrazzo stars and a series of huge color transparencies of faraway galaxies. Seventy feet above, the round, split-level “sky-high” restaurant and cocktail lounge provided travelers a bird’s eye view of airport activities. The Airport Theme Building was remodeled by Disney Imagineering in 1997 and currently houses the “Encounter” restaurant. Though Becket, Pereira, Luckman and Williams shared equally in the airport project, it is Pereira’s office that is generally credited with the Theme Building.
1954, Intact, ground floor altered
Welton Becket and Associates, Architects
601 Wilshire Blvd., Los Angeles, California

Standard Federal Savings is a narrow office tower sheathed in blue glass and grey blue enameled steel. It also holds the distinction of being one of the earliest glass curtain wall buildings in America. It became known as the "narrowest little skyscraper in the West."

CITY NATIONAL BANK

1956
Welton Becket and Associates, Architects;
Maynard Woodard, Design Director; Clyde Whitlow, Project Architect;
Robert H. Carter, Landscape Architect
400 North Roxbury Drive at Wilshire Blvd.
Beverly Hills, California

City National Bank was a colorful addition to Wilshire Boulevard with its "Becket White" structural uprights and spandrels covered in aqua-colored Italian glass mosaic tiles. Projecting aluminum "eyebrows," since removed, originally protected the windows from the sun. Sunshades, a character-defining element of many Mid-Century Modern buildings in Southern California, are rapidly being lost to renovations.
1960, Intact
Welton Becket and Associates
3600 Wilshire Blvd., Los Angeles, California

Twenty-two story office tower with 100,000 square feet of blue Venetian glass mosaic tile on the facade. A stripe of light blue tile runs down the middle of each blue-gray tile spandrel section, set between white pre-cast quartz aggregate columns. An 88-foot-wide approach to the front entrance between twin single story wings forms a plaza area which contains fountains and reflecting pools.

The main lobby features a mosaic mural by Gyorgy Kepes. The mural is 12 feet high and 57 feet long in 4 sections and abstractly portrays the human life span.

FLUOR CORP BUILDING

1973-1976, Intact
Welton Becket and Associates, Architects
Fong, Jung, Nakaba, Landscape Architects
3333 Michelson Drive, Irvine, California

Wurde man and Becket had a long connection with the Fluor Corporation, beginning with their design for the Fluor corporate offices at 2500 Atlantic Boulevard in Los Angeles in the 1940s. Later, in the early 1970s they designed the Irvine building which was possibly the last project in which Welton Becket had direct involvement. When built, the Fluor Headquarters in Irvine was an early mirrored glass building and a model of energy efficiency. The building is a series of boxes sheathed in silver reflective material with a series of semi-independent stainless steel pods protruding around and above the massive building. These pods house the building’s mechanical systems.
PAN PACIFIC AUDITORIUM

1935, Demolished
Plummer, Wurdenman and Becket, Architects
7600 Beverly Blvd., Los Angeles, California

Four Streamline Moderne flagpole towers marking the entrance of this exhibition hall and auditorium made this one of Los Angeles' most beloved architectural icons. The Pan Pacific's style was influenced by the aesthetic of the 1933 Chicago Worlds Fair. It was the result of an architectural competition for the 1935 National Housing Exposition and the first significant commission for the young architectural firm of Plummer, Wurdenman and Becket. It brought the firm a flood of new architectural commissions and an Honor Award from the Southern California Chapter of the AIA.

For many years the Pan Pacific was Southern California's premiere special events center. Ice shows, roller skating competitions, home shows, car shows, rodeos, sporting events and political rallies attracted huge crowds. In 1952, during his election campaign, General Dwight D. Eisenhower addressed an audience of 20,000 people. In 1957 Elvis Presley rocked the house with two sold-out concerts. In the mid 1960s, when the Convention Center was built in downtown Los Angeles, the Pan Pacific fell out of favor and into disrepair. It stood empty for many years. In the early 1980s the auditorium was demolished, but the legendary pylons were saved and slated for restoration. In 1989 just weeks before restoration was to begin, the famous facade caught on fire and was completely destroyed. It is however preserved on film, in Funny Lady and Xanadu.

JAI ALAI BUILDING

1940, Demolished
Wurdenman and Becket, Architects
Taft Avenue, Manila, Republic of the Philippines

One of Wurdenman and Becket's earliest works and similar in style to the Pan Pacific Auditorium, this building has suffered a similar fate. After a local preservation effort, it was razed in 2002. This was the only example of Art Deco in Manila.
LEVER BROTHERS
1951, Demolished
Welton Becket and Associates, Architects
6300 Sheila Ave., City of Commerce, CA

This iconic building on the Santa Ana Freeway in Commerce was razed in 1996. The building was one of the first structures built in the industrial City of Commerce and was probably best known for its glass wall fronting the freeway affording a view of the interior free floating 10-story staircase. Before teaming with William Pereira, Charles Luckman was president of Lever Brothers Soap and was responsible for Becket's commission.

BECKET RESIDENCE
1952, Demolished 2002
Welton Becket and Associates, Architects
George Hasslein, Project Architect
248 S. Mapleton Drive, Holmby Hills

Welton Becket's own home in Holmby Hills. It featured heavy timbers and walls of Arizona quartz in a tropical Polynesian setting.

SECURITY FIRST NATIONAL BANK
1960, Demolished
Welton Becket and Associates, Architects
Los Angeles Airport

Security First National Bank was built by the Del Webb Construction Company. Del Webb, famous for Las Vegas casinos and the Sun City retirement communities, was at that time one of the largest construction companies in the US. This circular pre-cast bank was notable for its striking 80-foot diameter main lobby surrounded by glass panels suspended from the roof. The roof was supported by a single, large central core or pillar. Access was via a 64-foot bridge over a sunken plaza.


(1964). Vision ... through supervision, Corp Author(s): Welton Becket and Associates, Los Angeles.


(2003). “Fritz B. Burns and the Palsades del Rey” Department of Archives & Special Collections, Loyola Marymount University.
SELECTED PROJECTS

The following is a sampling of Becket projects not listed elsewhere in this booklet. Information is as accurate as possible.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Building</th>
<th>Condition</th>
<th>Address</th>
<th>Associated Architects/Partners</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1935</td>
<td>M.C. Taylor Residence</td>
<td></td>
<td>254 McCarty Place Beverly Hills, CA</td>
<td>Plummer, Wurdemann &amp; Becket</td>
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<tr>
<td>1935</td>
<td>Clifton's Brookdale Cafeteria</td>
<td>Altered</td>
<td>648 South Broadway Los Angeles, CA</td>
<td>Plummer, Wurdemann &amp; Becket</td>
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<td>1936</td>
<td>Tilford's Restaurant (Now MTA Building)</td>
<td>Altered</td>
<td>5301 Wilshire Blvd. Los Angeles, CA</td>
<td>Wurdemann &amp; Becket</td>
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<td>1941</td>
<td>Frontier Club</td>
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<td>Las Vegas, NV</td>
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<td>1940's</td>
<td>William Goetz Residence</td>
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<td>411 3/4 Spalding Drive Los Angeles, CA</td>
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<tr>
<td>1940's</td>
<td>Robert Montgomery Residence</td>
<td></td>
<td>Los Angeles, CA</td>
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<tr>
<td>1940's</td>
<td>Henry Morgan Residence</td>
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<td>Los Angeles, CA</td>
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<td>1940's</td>
<td>James Cagney Residence</td>
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<td>2043 Coldwater Canyon Dr. Beverly Hills, CA</td>
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<td>1940's</td>
<td>Walter Wurdemann Residence</td>
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<td>228 Copa De Ora Road Los Angeles, CA</td>
<td>Wurdemann &amp; Becket</td>
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<td>1940's</td>
<td>Berce Tobacco Shop/Mobil Bldg.</td>
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<td>Los Angeles, CA</td>
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<td>1940's</td>
<td>Fluor Corp. Executive Offices</td>
<td></td>
<td>2500 Atlantic Los Angeles, CA</td>
<td>Wurdemann &amp; Becket</td>
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<td>1940's</td>
<td>Barker Brothers Dept. Store</td>
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<td>3700 W. Santa Barbara Los Angeles, CA</td>
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<td>1940's</td>
<td>Hollywood Memorial Cemetery (Hollywood Forever Cemetery)</td>
<td>Intact</td>
<td>6000 Santa Monica Blvd. Los Angeles, CA</td>
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<td>1948</td>
<td>Mausoleum</td>
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<td>Wurdemann &amp; Becket</td>
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<td>1950's</td>
<td>Lobby</td>
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<td>Wurdemann &amp; Becket</td>
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<td>1945</td>
<td>Hillcrest Country Club</td>
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<td>10000 West Pico Blvd. Los Angeles, CA</td>
<td>Wurdemann &amp; Becket</td>
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<td>1945</td>
<td>Lerner's Dept. Store</td>
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<td>Los Angeles, CA</td>
<td>Wurdemann &amp; Becket</td>
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<td>1945</td>
<td>Elementary School</td>
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<td>Manhattan Beach, CA</td>
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<td>1945</td>
<td>Wurdemann &amp; Becket Office</td>
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<td>3757 Wilshire Blvd. Los Angeles, CA</td>
<td>Wurdemann &amp; Becket</td>
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<td>1946</td>
<td>Buffum's Department Store</td>
<td>Altered</td>
<td>Pine &amp; Broadway Long Beach, CA</td>
<td>Wurdemann &amp; Becket</td>
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<tr>
<td>1946</td>
<td>Buffum's (Superior Court &amp; Probation Dept.)</td>
<td>Altered</td>
<td>Main Street &amp; 10th Santa Ana, CA</td>
<td>Wurdemann &amp; Becket</td>
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<td>1948</td>
<td>Cock 'n Bull Restaurant - Interiors</td>
<td>Lost</td>
<td>Sunset Blvd. West Hollywood, CA</td>
<td>Wayne D. McAllister</td>
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<td>1948</td>
<td>Van De Kamp's Restaurant</td>
<td>Lost</td>
<td>Wilshire Blvd. Los Angeles</td>
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<td>Year</td>
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Los Angeles, CA             | Wurdeman & Becket                  |
| 1950 | B.D. Howe & Sons Jewelers (Jim Dickson Realtors) |           | 336 S. Lake Avenue  
Pasadena, CA                     |                               |
El Segundo, CA                   |                               |
| 1950 | General Insurance Company of America           |           | Wilshire Blvd.  
Los Angeles, CA                   |                               |
| 1950's | Veteran's Hospital                            |           | 5901 East 7th  
Long Beach, CA                     |                               |
| 1950's | Mariposa Apartments                           |           | El Monte, CA                         |                               |
Panorama City, CA                  |                               |
Burbank, CA                        |                               |
| 1952 | Abbey Rents Showroom & Warehouse              |           | Los Angeles, CA                     |                               |
| 1952 | Hollywood Bowl (Remodel)                      |           | Hollywood, CA                       |                               |
| 1953 | Hilton Hotel Offices                           |           | 9990 Wilshire Blvd.  
Beverly Hills, CA                   |                               |
| 1953 | Post Office                                   |           | Los Altos Village  
Los Angeles, CA                   | Wayne D. McAllister             |
| 1953 | Hody's Restaurant                              |           | Long Beach, CA                      |                               |
| 1954 | Mess Hall & Recreation Building               |           | Calif. Air National Guard  
Van Nuys, CA                       |                               |
| 1954 | Office & Recreation Center                     |           | Palm & Lemon  
Orange, CA                        |                               |
| 1955 | Anaconda Wire & Cable Company                 |           |                               |                               |
| 1955 | Robert McCulloch House                         | Threatened| Thunderbird Country Club  
Rancho Mirage, CA                  |                               |
Panorama City                      |                               |
| 1955 | Hospital and Dental Clinic                     |           | Mojave, CA                         |                               |
| 1955 | Marine Corps Auxiliary Air Station             |           |                               |                               |
| 1955 | Western Geophysical Co. Office Bldg.           |           |                               |                               |
| 1955 | American Airlines Building                     |           | Los Angeles, CA                   |                               |
| 1956 | Mount Sinai Hospital (Cedars Sinai's 1st Bldg) |           | 8712 Beverly Blvd.  
Los Angeles, CA                   |                               |
| 1957 | Interscott Realty Company                      |           | Beverly Hills, CA                 |                               |
| 1958 | Clark Center                                  |           | Los Angeles, CA                   |                               |
| 1958 | Santa Monica Beach Facilities                 |           | 1642 The Promenade  
Santa Monica, CA                   |                               |
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<td>Pico Blvd. &amp; Overland Ave.</td>
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<td>Airport Marina Hotel - Tower</td>
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<td>Linda Isle</td>
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<td>3 Del Amo Fashion Square</td>
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<td>1955-59</td>
<td>Consolidated Electrodynamics</td>
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<td>(Remodel of existing building)</td>
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<td>8th &amp; Broadway</td>
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<td>Burbank, CA</td>
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<td>1950 Century Park East Century City, CA</td>
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<td>U.S.A.F Medical Facility</td>
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<td>Los Bonitos Way Los Angeles, CA</td>
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<td>Bachelors Officer’s Quarters</td>
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<td>Vandenburg Air Force Base Vandenburg, CA</td>
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<td>1901 Avenue of the Stars Century City, CA</td>
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<td>KTLA-5 TV Additions</td>
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<td>5800 W. Sunset Blvd. Los Angeles, CA</td>
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<td>Monterey West</td>
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<td>Los Angeles Street Los Angeles, CA</td>
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<td>6th &amp; Los Angeles Sts.</td>
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<td>Fashion Island Shopping Center (Newport Center)</td>
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<td>401 Newport Center Drive</td>
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<td>Bullock's Department Store</td>
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<td>1960s</td>
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<td>Wilshire Medical Arts</td>
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<td>El Toro Marine Hospital</td>
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<td>Olive View Hospital Medical Treatment &amp; Care Facility</td>
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<td>Security Pacific Bank Operations Center</td>
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<td>Avco Financial Tower</td>
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<td>Mechanics Bank Building (Mechanics Tower)</td>
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<td>Crocker Citizen’s Bank</td>
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<td>Tishman Building</td>
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<td>Western Federal Savings and Loan</td>
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<td>1970s</td>
<td>Downtown Riverside master plan</td>
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<td>La Sierra College Library</td>
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<td>El Segundo, CA</td>
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<td>1970s</td>
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<td>1970s</td>
<td>Newhall Civic Center</td>
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FEATURED SPEAKERS

ALAN HESS
Alan Hess is an author of *Palm Springs Weekend* and the architecture critic for the San Jose Mercury News. His landmark books include *Google* and *Viva Las Vegas*. He divides his time between Detroit and the San Francisco Bay Area.

LEO MARMOL
Leo Marmol, AIA is managing principal of Marmol Radziner + Associates in Santa Monica, a unique design-build practice led by architects. With a passion for Mid-Century Modern residences, Marmol's extensive research and creative construction methods have resulted in numerous awards for Marmol Radziner + Associates' renovation and restoration work. Several noteworthy examples include the restoration of homes by Frank Lloyd Wright, Richard Neutra and R.M. Schindler.

MARTIN BROWER
A native of Los Angeles, Martin Brower graduated from UCLA where he was editor-in-chief of the *UCLA Daily Bruin*. Brower was with Welton Becket and Associates as Vice President in charge of Public Relations from 1959 through 1973. In 1973, Brower left Becket to become director of Public Relations for the Irvine Company. Today, Brower writes a monthly column for *Coast* magazine in Orange County.

STEPHEN KANNER
Stephen Kanner, FAIA, President of Kanner Architects, received his Masters Degree in Architecture in 1980 from the University of California at Berkeley. He became the firm's president in 1998 with the passing of his father Charles Kanner, FAIA. He is the chairman of the new A+D (Architecture+Design) Museum in Los Angeles. Kanner Architects recently won the 2002 Los Angeles Conservancy Historic Preservation Award for the Bullock's Westwood/10861 Building.

LOUIS NAIDORF
Louis M. Naidorf, FAIA was Director of Design for Welton Becket and Associates. He was with the firm from 1950-1993. From 1990-2000 he served as dean of the school of Architecture at Woodbury University. Some of his major Los Angeles projects for Becket include: Capitol Records, Santa Monica Civic Auditorium, Los Angeles Memorial Sports Arena and the Becket office building in Century City.

RUTH SHELLHORN
Ruth P. Shellhorn graduated from the Landscape Architecture program at Cornell University in 1933. Her landscape projects for Wurdeman and Becket include: Bullock's Pasadena and Palm Springs, Prudential Square and the Santa Monica Civic Auditorium. In 1955, Shellhorn was consulting landscape architect and site planner for Disneyland in Anaheim and the *Los Angeles Times* named her "Woman of the year."

ROBERT TYLER
Robert Tyler, FAIA graduated cum laude first in class from USC School of Architecture in 1952. Later that year he went to work for Welton Becket and Associates as a designer; he went on to become design director and design principal. Some of Mr. Tyler's projects include: Equitable, Travelers and Texaco buildings on Wilshire Blvd., as well as the master plan and Contemporary Hotel at Walt Disney World.
BRUCE BECKET

Mr. Becket's son, Bruce David Becket, A.I.A. is an architect and President of the firm of Bruce Becket and Associates practicing in California with offices in Los Angeles. In addition, Mr. Becket provides real estate development services for clients under the Becket Development Corporation. His education includes the University of Washington, California State Polytechnic University (SLO), and the Ecole Des Beaux Arts in Fontainbleau, France. He holds a Bachelor of Architecture degree and a Bachelor of Science in Architectural Engineering. His spare time is spent on his own hands-on construction projects.

His wife Sharon manages a ranch property owned by Becket Development Corporation. His daughter Alisa is currently travel program manager at the Museum of Contemporary Art in Los Angeles, daughter Alexandra is a textile designer. Alisa and Alexandra are active in the Los Angeles Conservancy. Son Mark recently graduated from Colorado State University.

WELTON M. BECKET

Mr. Becket's son, Welton MacDonald Becket, graduated from Chouinard Art School in Los Angeles. He is a Project Manager at Meeks and Partners in Newport Beach, California. He and his wife, Karen, live in Laguna Beach where Mrs. Becket has an antique shop. Their children are: Welton Becket, Associate Director with Susquehanna International Group in Philadelphia; Cayce Becket, Project Manager with INARCH, LLC in New York City; Heidi Becket, an independent Graphic Designer in Chico, California; Dr. Marc Taub, Medical Director of Emergency Services at South Coast Medical Center in Laguna Beach; Dr. Lora Taub-Pervizpour, Professor of Communications at Muhlenberg College in Allentown, Pennsylvania.

The Conservancy is grateful to the entire Becket family for their assistance in this program and for opening their extraordinary archives to us.
MARCH 4, 2003 EVENT

Executive Producer ............... Chris Nichols
Producer ........................... Alan Leib
Panel Moderator ................... Leo Marmol
Keynote Speaker ................. Alan Hess

FILM
Produced, directed and written by ............... Alan Leib
Edited by .......................... Dan Reed
Original Music by ................. The Millionaire
Narration by ........................ Alan Leib
Archival Film Transfer by .......... A. Lori Tucci and Jim Tucci
A/V Technical Support by ........... Paul Mulder

EXHIBIT
Alexandra Becket  Michael Palumbo
Bruce Becket  Leah Tadena
Welton M. Becket

BUILT BY BECKET COMMITTEE
Alexandra Becket  Alan Leib
Alisa Becket  Leo Marmol
Bruce Becket  Jane McNamara
Sharon Becket  Tony Merchell
Welton M. Becket  Chris Nichols
Adriene Biondo  Michael Palumbo
Bruce Emerton  Daniel Paul
John English  Marvin Rand
Charlene Gould  Julia Rose
Chris Green

MARCH 8, 2003 TOUR
Bullock's Pasadena
Site Captain ...................... Adriene Biondo
Music Center
Site Captain ...................... Daniel Lynch Millner
Post-War House
Site Captain ...................... Chris Nichols

THANK YOU
Ron Avery/MPTV
Robert Brugeman, Michael Forman,
Christopher Forman, and Amy Wood,
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Luis De La Cruz, Music Center/Performing Arts
Center of Los Angeles
George Ellison, Glendale Public Library
Sandra Evers-Manly and Richard Racklin,
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Charles Phoenix
Jerry Rubin
Julius Shulman
Social Blueprint
Larry Underhill
Martin Eli Weil
Mary Alice Wollam
and of course, the
Los Angeles Conservancy Volunteers

It is believed that the information, quotations, and dates contained in this booklet are reasonably accurate
THE LOS ANGELES CONSERVANCY MODERN COMMITTEE

is a volunteer group formed in 1984 in response to the rapid destruction of a generation of postwar buildings. The Modern Committee's focus is 20th century architecture and related fields which reflect the heritage of Modernism and popular culture. The Modern Committee plans tours, exhibitions and lectures, researches and nominates buildings for landmark designation, and serves as an advocate for Modern design.

Why a Modern Committee?
Recently there has been a tremendous resurgence of interest in the Modern era: furniture, décor, fashion and music. Modern buildings are also popular again: homes, motels, hotels, restaurants, cocktail lounges, offices, retail shops, banks, supermarkets, bowling alleys, and theaters.

But the real world of tomorrow has been less than kind when looking back at its own first steps. Tragic remodeling and wanton demolition of many of our greatest Modern buildings has already taken place. The few remaining examples of this period are often endangered by new development.

"ModCom" holds regular monthly meetings to plan educational events such as tours, exhibitions and lectures; research and nominate landmarks; organize field trips; and serve as advocates for Modern design.

Contact the Los Angeles Conservancy for more information at:

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