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RECORD HOUSES OF 1978
PLUS APARTMENTS OF THE YEAR

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ARCHITECTURAL RECORD

MID-MAY 1978
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Al Throckmorton, President, Sunheat Solar Systems

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Record Houses

1978

"Away from mainstream Modern" may seem like one of the subthemes of this year's issue, and perhaps it is, but no reader need worry that all the old channel markers are in imminent danger of being swept away. They are not. Examples of neo-Corbusian, Wrightian and Miesian houses appear here in surprisingly undiluted form and, more important, most of the submissions—whether selected or not—responded to widely held and long familiar feelings about visual order.

But a few of the houses come as signals and hint at something new in the air. After examining the designs by Trout Architects (page 74) or the Riley house by Moore, Grover, Harper, (page 92) the reader may well ask if vernacular—even regional—themes are reentering American residential design with increasing force. He may also note that this issue includes fewer "white boxes" in their infinite variation than earlier issues and fewer glamorous, high-style designs of any type.

What we sensed among this year's 200-plus submissions was an incipient diversity of approaches, and with this diversity a slackening interest in formalism, a gentle relaxation of design credos, and a renewed interest in solving functional and site problems directly and without fuss.

Energy concerns are apparent in most of these designs, though very few active solar houses were submitted and only one was selected. Many architects said that solar collectors of one kind or another had been considered early in design but abandoned later on for high initial costs and some reservations about efficacy. A few added that collectors are not easy to manage from the design standpoint and, owing to their own precise requirements, impose a heavy restriction on other design and planning options. In most cases, therefore, architects concentrated on tightening their details, insulating heavily, siting their houses with more care, and taking advantage of passive solar possibilities wherever they occurred.

An added thought about regionalism: if, as some believe, a new interest in regionalism is developing, and if diversity and vernacular references are two of its harbingers, then we must be as certain as possible that it is not a regionalism that carries too vividly the burdens of a remembered past—of roof forms, of plan anomalies, of finishes that once gave the buildings of an area a distinctive, homogeneous look. Nor can it be an eclectic reassembly of historical elements held together by sentiment and nostalgia, or by a hankering after times past when the valleys were more peaceful and a man's word was his bond. Was there ever such a time? Today's regionalism—if that is indeed the appropriate term—must be a hard-as-hickory regionalism based on thorough analysis of site, elevation, wind conditions, sun angles and environmental stability. It must generate its own design grammar and reflect its own unique circumstances in time and place. Perhaps most important, it must be a regionalism that stirs an emotional response that is broad, deep, and keenly felt. —Barclay F. Gordon
Hall House
Napa, California
Roland-Miller, Architects

The owners asked for a small, year-round house that looked and felt like a vacation house. That is exactly what they got—and more. The site is a dramatic, six-acre hillside dropping down to a creek. Overhead is an almost complete canopy of tall redwoods. Making sensible use of the limited building space and dodging tree trunks with the utmost grace, the house stacks itself into two 20- by 20-foot units connected by a split-level stair (see plans overleaf). The uppermost level contains the master bedroom and bath as well as a private deck. The middle levels include living and dining spaces, kitchen, wrap-around deck and entry. The lowest level provides an additional bedroom and large recreation space. All these elements are brought together in plan and especially in section with really extraordinary sensitivity. Nowhere is there a sense that the site has been violated or that the plan is forced in its search for accommodation with these lovely surroundings. The surroundings, in fact, are keenly felt in every space through glass walls that provide only the merest hint of enclosure. Even the roof is opened in several places to provide occupants with views directly up into the towering treetops.

Finishes in the house are simple and appropriate: glass and exterior grade plywood for most wall surfaces; painted gypsum board inside. Structural bracing is added where needed over the glass. A mild climate, coupled with almost total shading from the vertical sun, makes the extensive use of glass practical. It remains pleasant and cool in the summer. In winter heating is provided mostly by wood stove and fireplace, supplemented occasionally with electric hot water and whatever radiated heat is furnished by a low-angle sun.

It is a splendid house, crafted to the site and the needs of its owner with exemplary success.

Architects: Roland/Miller Associates
666 Seventh Street
Santa Rosa, California
Owner: Clarence and Kay Hall
Contractor: Charles Centry
Photographer: Barbeau Engh
The interior spaces, though modest in scale, are exceptionally open and airy. The kitchen and dining area (photos this page) feel almost uncontained. The bedroom (photo opposite) offers view in every direction—including toward the night sky—and the ladder leads to a small half hidden loft.

At about $30 p.s.f., the house was surprisingly inexpensive to construct.
Hobbs Residence
Seattle, Washington
Hobbs Fukui Associates, Architects

A steep, urban site sloping to the east with a view of woods, Lake Washington and the Cascade Mountain Range in the distance. Space for functions both common and private for two parents and three children. Architect Richard Hobbs brought these together in a 16-foot by 46-foot rectangular plan that distributes its functions over six interior levels. The entry level leads down to the children's areas or up to the main spaces of the house. Off these main spaces, and facing the view, is a narrow greenhouse that provides—in addition to a profusion of house plants—a fine sense of openness to the deck and woods beyond (photo below right).

Only from the downhill side does the verticality of the scheme reveal itself completely. From this vantage, the elaborately sculpted wood forms reach right to the tree tops giving the occupants of the upper levels a remarkable sense of privacy and an exhilarating feeling of elevation.

The interiors are carefully worked out and considerable spatial interest is achieved by powerful diagonal forms and by graceful circular projections into the main spaces. The extraordinary variety of openings also enriches the spaces, filling the interiors with daylight and broad streaks of sun that are especially welcome in the Northwest.

Heating is provided by a four zone system employing both electric baseboard and forced air units controlled from a central location. The principal finishes are cedar siding, anodized aluminum window frames, and gypsum board on ceilings and interior walls.

Architects: Hobbs Fukui
1501 Belmont Avenue
Seattle, Washington
Owner: Richard Hobbs
Engineers:
Robert G. Albrecht (structural)
Neil H. Tweelker (foundations)
Martin/DaTaCom Associates (mechanical)
Interiors: Dallas E. Zeiger
Landscape: Thomas L. Berger
Contractor: Stike Building Co.
Photographer: Art Hapy
Barn Renovation
Maryland Eastern Shore
Moore Grover Harper, Architects

The owners of this old barn placed some unusual constraints on the architects they commissioned to convert it to a second home. Certain of the constraints, in addition, seemed in a sense to conflict. The owners wanted the renovation to be energy-efficient, for instance, but they also wanted the original siding and roofing to be retained and remain visible from within. They wanted the first-floor structure of stone walls (circa 1850) and hand-hewn timbers to be celebrated, but they also wanted the barn highly receptive to the sun.

To accomplish these priorities, the architects begin by building new exterior walls, fastening them by means of ledger strips to the old plates. New rough siding was also applied and left to weather. Because the old rafters could not support another layer of roofing, the architects nailed 2x6s through the existing metal roof into the rafters creating a “T” section that would support new horizontal members and a new metal roof. The cavity this created was filled with insulation.

Along its south wall, the old barn had been built with an integral shed. But the shed cut off long views to the Choptank River as well as winter sunlight, so the architects stripped it of its siding, removed sections of its roof and in this manner created a trellised structure (photo right) that adds enormously to the character of the renovation.

Five solar collectors on the south-facing section of the roof provide domestic hot water, while a conventional oil burner is used for space heating. When the house is unoccupied, the two systems are set in tandem and the thermostat set way down.

“We worked hard,” says Mark Simon, “to retain and even enhance the rough-hewn character and yawning openness that makes this building a barn, while at the same time giving attention to special places where the inhabitants live and play.”

A marvelous renovation.

Architects: Moore Grover Harper
Essex, Connecticut
Charles Moore, Mark Simon: project architects
Engineer: Ronald Schaeffer (structural)
Interiors: Samuel Varnum
Landscape architect: Lester Collins
Contractor: LGR, Inc.
Photographer: Norman McGrath
Private Residence
Atlanta, Georgia
Porter/Kelly, Inc., Architect

The key element to the design of this house in suburban Atlanta is its interior organization—an excellent plan of open, flowing spaces focused on a dramatic, skylit, 22-foot-high foyer. The foyer is the hub, from which the rest of the house flairs outward, stepping down the site in accordance with the topography. The main living areas are immediately seen from this point at the entrance and because of extensive use of glass windows, views are opened up to the heavily wooded site in all directions. Few partitions exist in the house to maintain this open feeling, with none used in the main living areas. Each room is, nevertheless, defined by a change in levels, and could easily be closed off if necessary. The upper floor is the opposite, with many partitions for privacy, but the master and guest bedrooms are open to the foyer to receive natural light.

The clients are both interior designers and they commissioned local artisans to design art work displayed throughout the nearly 5,000-square-foot house, specifically in the foyer and living room.

The house is rather isolated from its neighbors, and can hardly be seen on the two-acre site. Orientation of the house to the north and west was a logical solution due to the land terracing in that direction and geological studies which indicated positioning the pool and tennis courts in the western section of the site.

The exterior is highly articulated and a contrast of forms which "relate to the varying nature of the site," explains architect Philip Porter. In addition, the forms reflect the spatial arrangement, jutting out wherever there is a room, and are curved or angular in correlation to the interior functions. The entrance (top right) demonstrates this diversity, and is particularly pronounced: some of the openings on the southern elevation are framed and have large overhangs shading their respective rooms from the sun, while others (like the upper stairwell) are glass enclosed to permit an uninterrupted view to the trees.
The interiors of the Jensen residence are open from room to room but do appear semi-private due to variation in ceiling height and floor level. Windows abound but some are playful half-circles, from master bedroom looking through a stairwell (below) or in the dining area (bottom, second from left).
House on Lake Michigan
Glencoe, Illinois
Booth Nagle & Hartray, Architects

Located on a high bluff some 20 miles north of Chicago, this beautifully transparent house opens on three sides to sumptuous views of woods and lake. The lower floor, countersunk into the hillside, contains children's and guest quarters. The upper level, linked to the garage in an "L" configuration, houses all the main living spaces and disposes them toward the various views.

The structural discipline is imposed by five, 27-foot-square bays framed in steel within which the interior functions are loosely and graciously contained. The hard-edged esthetic is softened inside by occasional curved surfaces and by exquisitely refined detailing throughout.

In order to justify the vast expanse of glass, the architects tightened the glazing details to all but eliminate infiltration. The heavy earth insulation on three sides of the lower floor is another energy conservation feature, and this device simultaneously produced a lower profile on the storm side of the house. The glass itself is 1-inch-thick double glazing and all other elevations are stucco-covered concrete block heavily insulated. During the first year of occupancy (with an especially bitter winter), the architects note that operating costs for gas and electricity were well within acceptable levels and, in fact, compared favorably with other new houses in the region that were designed with considerably less glass.

The spaces of this house are so gently modulated that only the broad ceiling gives any real feeling of containment. From almost every vantage point the eye is drawn out through the walls to the site which has been left as natural as possible. The sun, the wind, the rain, the changing color of the seasons are more than just welcome visitors; they are a big part of what this house is about.

Architects: Booth Nagle & Hartray
230 East Ohio Street
Chicago, Illinois

Contractor: H.O. Schultz Co.
Photographer: Philip Turner
Private Residence  
Old Westbury, New York  
Norman Jaffe, Architect

In plan, this house for a family of six brings together three radial elements into a fluid, loosely-ordered composition. The elements are joined in a rush of space at the entry—the only volume with a busy, cross-axisal, no-traffic-light feeling. The other main spaces are serene volumes that occur most often at the ends of long circulation routes purposefully turned into passageways that give the spaces they serve maximum privacy.

The house is built upon a strong base of heavily-battered stone walls that carry in their timeless forms a message from every generation of builders from Adam down. Posed above the stone, and setting up a powerful contrast, are elegant wood enclosures of contemporary form and detail. A thin ribbon of glass sets the two materials apart.

Jaffe felt that the site's soft but insistent undulations and its very tall row of silver beeches invited a ground plan that was dynamic, angular and strongly horizontal. He achieved this by asymmetrical arrangement of parts and by retaining right-angle reference points only where he felt they were necessary or helpful in establishing functional relationships.

The house has many personal, idiosyncratic touches, no doubt, and the architect's compositional urge has been give free play, but the design is far from indulgent. The skewed walls, the softly-curving soffits, the free form of spaces all work. And more than that, they manage to come together in a unified visual whole that is expressive and exciting. The forms move well across the site, making reference to the rise and fall of the land and to the file of trees between house and road. This reconciliation between house and site has been aided importantly by landscape architect James Rose, who selected and planted plant materials with exemplary sensitivity and subtlety.

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Architect: Norman Jaffe  
125 East 80th Street  
New York, New York  

Engineer:  
John Grammis (structural)

Landscape architect:  
James Rose

Contractor: Donald Cappy  
Photographer: Bill Martin
The section at right shows how floor levels have been modulated and how the second-floor master bedroom relates to the rest of the house. It is reached by a stair from the entry. The small library that shares the upper level with the bedroom is sheltered by a sloping glass wall.
Private residence  
Central Arkansas  
E. Fay Jones, Architect

Long, low lines with deeply sloping roofs, cantilevered overhangs and an expansive open plan, all combined with a sensitive respect for landscape and reverence for the nature of materials, powerfully recall Frank Lloyd Wright's Prairie Style; and indeed architect Fay Jones, who designed this house in central Arkansas, did study for a time at Taliesin. Closer observation, however, tempers the initial impression and suggests rather that a proper application of Wrightian principles allows an architect to remain very much his own man and to design buildings of individuality. (Mr. Jones, queried about the Wrightian aspects of his design, demurred politely while granting certain "intangible" influences. "As a matter of fact," he said, "those service cores remind me a little of Louis Kahn's servant spaces.")

The house, built for a couple with two young sons, is partially sunk into the shore of a private man-made lake and extended over the water on concrete pilings. Its cruciform plan places a two-story living room at the crossing, from which radiate living spaces downstairs and children's rooms upstairs. The strongest defining elements of the plan are four large structural service cores, sheathed with plywood and battens, which support the truss-like cantilevers of the radiating bedrooms and a second-floor gallery that encircles the living room.

Though the steep sheltering roofs suggest from the exterior a perhaps darkened house, the interior is in fact extraordinarily open to light and views of the water and landscape. Entertainment areas on the first floor beneath the cantilevers are glazed on three sides, affording the living room a 180-degree view interrupted only by the square columns. Upstairs, triangular glass end walls open each bedroom on two sides. Extensive skylights above the central well and master suite admit additional daylight, as do clerestories connecting the four towers. To reinforce this openness, glass is mitered at the corners of the downstairs rooms and at the ridge of the skylights.

The entry and the second-floor gallery provide exhibition space for the owners' collection of Indian art and relics.

Architect: E. Fay Jones  
1330 North Hilcrest  
Fayetteville, Arkansas  
Project assistants: John Womack and Maurice Jennings  
Engineer: James Weltons (mechanical)  
Landscape architects: Landscape Associates, Inc  
Contractor: Herb Davis  
Photographer: Richard Payne
Hulse House
Atlanta, Georgia
Anthony Ames, Architect

Here is a jewel, a guesthouse and pool built behind the owner’s existing house on a suburban street in Atlanta. Though small, the plan provides a rather full range of functions: living room, bedroom, kitchen, dining, two baths, study and storage. But for the fact that it has only one bedroom, the house is comparable in program to a typical vacation house. A two-story scheme was selected to conserve as much of the site as possible for other activities.

The most desirable view is to the north, overlooking the pool, and therefore this elevation is almost entirely open. The other elevations, by contrast, are essentially windowless to ensure privacy and to reduce solar buildup during warm summer days.

There is considerable tree cover over the house and the neo-Corbusian features of the design—the white wall surfaces in particular—catch the heavy shadows in endlessly shifting patterns. Solar collectors were considered for heating the pool but it was this same tree cover that made the panels impractical.

The structure of the house is brick veneer over a standard wood frame except that 2x6 studs were used to accommodate additional insulation in all exterior walls.

The interiors are delicately scaled and detailed with consummate care. Bold primary colors offer powerful contrasts to the white-painted gypsum board partitions and ceilings. So do the brick pavers over the first floor slab and around the pool.

Inside and out, the Hulse house is invested with fine proportions, rich detail, and the unmistakable stamp of thoughtful design.

Architect: Anthony Ames
Box 5484
Atlanta, Georgia

Owner: Frank W. Hulse IV

Engineers:
Smith and Freeman (structural)

Contractor: J.B. Hiers

Photographer: E. Alan Mc Gee
Desberg House  
Central Ohio  
Trout Architects, Inc.

In a rural Ohio setting—a small clearing partially masked by trees—Trout Architects designed this modest, year-round house, cladding it with siding recovered from a fallen barn nearby. The simple, vernacular quality of the exterior gives the house its appealing folk image, but the interior spatial development is considerably more complex. The main entry is at a mid-level solarium, a high, skylighted space filled with planting. Half a level below are the children's bedrooms and family room, while half a level above are the main living spaces. Half a level up again is the master bedroom suite. Above the bedroom is a small “retreat” (reached by a ship's ladder) that overlooks the living room. Spatial definition is apparent throughout the house but the volumes flow together through arched openings.

Finish materials have been selected for their ease of maintenance, and the detailing, though it is far from slapdash, heightens the sense of informality. Throughout the house, in fact, invention substitutes for visual refinement and the result is a design that is fresh and enriched with wit. The mirrored wall of the bathroom (photo below right) is fitted with a porthole that appears at first to be part of the mirror but actually opens to an unexpected view of the roof trusses. The house is fully insulated and equipped with three fireplaces that augment a gas-fired heating system, keeping fuel bills down during the cold months of winter.

Architects: Trout Architects, Inc.  
1901 Lake Road  
Rocky River, Ohio  
Owners: William and Karen Desberg  
Engineer:  
Williams & Hach (structural)  
Contractor: Melbro, Inc.  
Photographer: Alan Holm
Opp Residence
St. Paul, Minnesota
Design Consortium, Architects

An aging but still substantial brick rowhouse at the end of a residential block in St. Paul was the starting point for this elaborate residential renovation by the Design Consortium. Of the original interior, only the ornamental mantle, the stair to the upper level and the bathroom plumbing connections were retained. All else is new. The architects began by creating an upper and lower apartment, the lower making splendid use of what had been the 11-foot-high basement space (photo opposite). To make this basement volume fully habitable, the architects threw it open to the level above and borrowed light from the first floor windows. The result is a beautiful space keyed to all the other smaller spaces by carefully studied transitional elements. The delicacy of touch in this renovation is remarkable as is the intelligent use of color to reinforce the linear character of the design and the skilful development of secondary circulation on the raised gallery above.

The upper (entry) level provides a private bedroom at the rear, a more open bedroom overlooking the living room, and a private study reached by a warp in the line of the gallery (see photos).

The upper level apartment, when complete, will be a rental unit.

Renovated at a cost of about $24 p.s.f., the Opp residence is another superb reminder that re-use can produce important economies at no sacrifice to comfort or high visual impact.

Architects: Design Consortium
1012 Marquette Avenue
Minneapolis, Minnesota
James Candler, project architect
Owner: Roger Opp
Photographer: Philip MacMillan James
Private Residence
Napa Valley, California
Bull Field Volkmann Stockwell, Architects

This vacation house is set in the midst of a vineyard, shaded by oaks and set off by a small grove of walnut trees. The house, designed by Daniel Volkmann and Daniel Chung, somehow looks as if it too grew there; and it seems to say we have plenty of time and plenty of space so let’s be relaxed and enjoy it.

Part of this sense of relaxation grows from the planning/massing concept: the house is pulled apart into three sensible sections: a bedroom wing (left in big photo), the larger living-dining-kitchen space, and (right in photo) a separate bedroom-entry-garage component.

These three pavilions are connected only by a trellised open porch, which offers an outdoor space for every room and an immense area shaded from the intense summer sun. Beyond the roof and trellis line, this shaded outdoor space opens in turn to the pool area, outlined by the house and stone walls and defined by the only landscaping and grass area of the complex.

There is a becoming modesty about the forms that make up the house—while they are quite clearly contemporary, they seem to share a character with the barns and hops storage buildings of the area. The major living space is set apart from the others by the long clerestory—a clear signal that this space is different and more important than the others, with their truncated ridges.

And there is an appropriateness to the choice of materials—fieldstone fences, vertical redwood board siding, red cedar shakes on the roof.

While the architects have made all this look easy, there is of course nothing easy about it. If this is a casual house, it is carefully casual—the detailing is trim and precise, and the clerestory and metal chimney are suggestions of a rather more sophisticated interior—which is shown in photos and plan on the next pages.

Architects: Bull Field Volkmann Stockwell
330 Pacific Avenue
San Francisco, California
Daniel Volkmann, partner-in-charge
Daniel Chung, designer

Engineers:
L.F. Robinson & Associates (structural)
Harding-Lawson (foundations)
Marion-Centurio and Tomasi (mechanical)

Landscape architect: Thomas Church

Contractor: Edward R. Palmer
Photographer: Karl Reik
The stretched out plan creates through ventilation in every room and opens almost every room to a shaded terrace and the pool courtyard. In the living-dining-kitchen pavilion, see photos, the clerestory provides constantly shifting patterns of light throughout the space. The walls and ceiling are resawn cedar set off by white painted gypsum board on the end walls. The floor is brick — and this finish carries through the sliding glass doors to the terraces.
Private residence  
Northern Connecticut  
Johansen-Bhavnani, Architects

The principal influence on this design was the site itself—a beautiful but sharply sloping hillside vexed by massive rock shelves and outcroppings that left only three small areas suitable for building. Using these spots as shoulders, Johansen developed a fragmented plan, piling up rock foundations for each of the three main elements of the plan, then cantilevering the house over these foundations to save as many root systems of close-in trees as possible.

Bringing the parts of the house together—and giving due visual importance to circulation in so decentralized a scheme—are tubes designed in what architect and owner smilingly call "a Budd Car aesthetic." These wonderfully expressive elements are made structural by bar joists under the floor, and are finished in corrugated aluminum sheet that serves as a foil against the site—a site on which Nature appears to have pulled out all her stops. Where tube and glass wall intersect, a neoprene gasket is introduced to create a seal and water shields keep run-off along the corrugations from reaching the glass wall. Gaskets, shields, grommets and associated hardware are all stock industrial items. Inside (see photos next pages) the tubes are finished, insulated, and fitted with concealed lighting.

The house is framed in a combination of light steel and wood stud and clad in an asbestos-cement panel with a factory finish used here in several contrasting colors.

The interiors of the main spaces are dressed in gypsum board, slate, field stone and wood plank, materials that return us to the realm of the familiar. More than anything else, perhaps, it is this conjunction of the familiar with the unfamiliar that gives this house its richness, its strength, its fun and, above all, its special claim on the attention of the profession.

Architect: Johansen-Bhavnani  
401 East 37 Street  
New York, New York  
Engineer:  
Benser & Gibble (structural)  
Flack & Kurtz (mechanical)  
Contractor: A. and L. Zavagno  
Photographer: David Hirsch
The closed character of the tubes is in marked contrast to the rest of the house, which is opened almost everywhere to views of the site and the Connecticut countryside beyond. Double glazing is used in all major openings.
Private residence
Park County, Wyoming
Moulton Andrus, Architect

It’s a Rocky Mountain kind of high, at this ranch, called Brown Thomas Meadow, where a new house of cedar siding, cedar decking, and cedar shakes has been made to feel right at home at the end of a long, deep river valley full of cottonwood groves and wonderful views.

A cluster of activities has been created. Just across the open deck from the main house, are a studio, a guest house, and, beyond these, at the end of a stretch of more decking, is the ranch office.

Sliding glass doors, of generous dimension, open these buildings to the outdoors, and to each other. Sliding barn doors, insulated with foam, allow them to be closed up, independently of each other, accounting for variations in season and occupancy.

While the positioning of this cluster is meant to soften the effect of the prevailing southerly winds, which really howl around here, the positioning of the windows in the loftier spaces is meant to ensure the pleasurable southerly sunlight, which is rather hard to catch as it is, what with the mountain slopes that enfold the valley. Views of these, nearly straight up, are also caught. So while the disadvantages of the setting, and there aren’t many, are kept out, the advantages of the setting, as serene as it is spectacular, are let in.

The main house, on two levels (the ranch office also is), has a singular flowing space around a core of fireplaces, services, and stairs. Structural elements or surfaces emanating from this core are panelled with wood. Other walls are gypsum board, painted. This contrast between the core and the shell deepens the identity, unity, and drama of the space. The guest house and the studio, both on one level, though each also has a loft, are tidy, connective variations on the main material theme of the main house.

That saucer-shaped contraption on top of the ranch office is the antenna of a microwave radio, but other kinds of signals are being sent, too—saying a lot about the enchantment and efficiency of a plain-spoken, honest, handsome architecture. It’s not hard to stay a spell, but then, Brown Thomas Meadow is one.

Architect: Moulton Andrus
1421 S.W. 12th Avenue
Portland, Oregon

Engineers:
Burghardt, Holmes, Carlson (structural)
Ron Niwander (mechanical)

Contractors:
Don Hicks
K.C. Patrick (ranch office)

Photographer: Moulton Andrus

ARCHITECTURAL RECORD HOUSES OF 1978
The congenial, clustered character of the ranch is quickly, quietly confided, moving up the entrance steps (above), and through an unpretentious portal between the studio on the left and the guest house on the right. The main house is beyond these (left), across the wood-decking which runs between, connects, and integrates all the buildings. Built on two levels, the main house, which is one space around a core of fireplaces, services, and stairs, is both cozy and cosmic. The study, for example (right), lets on to the material and structural nature of the architecture in a plain-spoken way while letting out to the natural elements with restrained, strategically placed openings. Without any cloying rusticity, it is a place of its place, with both a memory and a vision.
Klein Residence
South Miami, Florida
Donald Singer, Architect

For a heavily wooded and irregularly-shaped site of two acres, architect Donald Singer has designed an 8,000-square-foot house, which (along with a tennis court and swimming pool) fits into the lush subtropical vegetation with the least possible disturbance. Indeed, this vegetation so completely surrounds the house and its adjuncts that they are virtually invisible from the street and the neighbors.

An initial decision was to place all of the rooms on one floor to maximize contact with the outdoors, despite the large ground coverage that this decision entailed. The floor is gently stepped away from the foyer (middle photo) and down the site—which slopes eight feet from end to end. This arrangement not only accommodates the natural conditions, but allows increased height for the large living-dining area (photo, opposite) under the single-level roof.

There are three distinct zones for the various rooms and these house bedrooms for the children, a large guest-parent suite (which with its own kitchen can function independently from the rest of the house) and a large living-dining area for an active social life and entertainment schedule. In the latter area, the adjacent swimming pool is extended inside a sliding glass wall (bottom photo) to enhance a sense of festive contact with the outdoors. Similar contact is provided by the many decks which surround the house and extend into the dense foliage—such as the deck between the owners’ sitting room and the living room (top photo).

The structure of the house is an adaptation of the local usage which is a concrete frame with concrete block infill and a stuccoed finish. Instead a deep exposed concrete beam extends around the structure and rests directly on the exposed concrete block walls. The beam spans openings and provides a structural tie for the walls. Laminated wood decking spans between the concrete beams except in the 40-foot-wide living room, where laminated wood beams are used. The suspension hardware for the sliding glass wall at the swimming pool was specially fabricated to eliminate a bottom track and form a weather seal with the water.

Architect: Donald Singer
224 S.W. First Avenue
Fort Lauderdale, Florida
Owner: Mr. & Mrs. Joseph Klein
Engineers:
De Zarraga Donnell, Inc. (structural)
C.E. Bailey Associates (mechanical)
Landscape architect:
W.T. Bradshaw
Contractor: Edwin Vihlen
Photographer: Dan Torer
Riley house
Guilford, Connecticut
Moore, Grover, Harper, Architects

For this evergreen, stone-choked New England site, architect Jefferson Riley designed his own house using traditional materials and time-honored building techniques. It is a tall house (four stories including basement) and it rises in a complex profile of setback and projection in each elevation. Dormers protrude from the sleepy pitched roof, adding to this sense of complication, and all exterior surfaces are richly mottled with shadow.

The south-facing gable end of the house is opened generously to the sun. The greenhouse below and the varied openings above fill the tall space behind with natural light and warmth. Surplus solar heat collected in the greenhouse is circulated along the insulated foundation wall and stored for radiation at night. The second and third floor bedrooms are set back from the exterior wall but open through windows to the tall space, thus taking advantage of light and view without additional heat loss. Supplementary heating is provided by wood stoves in the kitchen and living room. These stoves vent through the roof and the tall flues accent the verticality of the design.

The volumetric liveliness of the Riley house comes from the interplay of intimate spaces with the unexpectedly tall central space and additional fun is provided by unlooked-for details for double-hung windows on interior walls or a paneled wood door leading to the greenhouse.

Of his non-mainstream approach to design Riley says: "The house with its long gable roof, its double-hung windows, its red-stained clapboards, its central chimney, its over-all bilateral symmetry offset by asymmetrical parts, makes numerous allusions to colonial houses indigenous to its New England context. Yet we did not reproduce these traits by rote, but found joy in assembling them into a unique composition with contemporary strivings of its own."

Architect: Jefferson Riley
Moore, Grover, Harper
Essex, Connecticut
Contractor: Essex Builders
Photographer: Norman McGrath
Marcus House
Chappaquiddick Island
Myron Goldfinger,
Architect

Three vertical shafts and a narrow, projecting deck give this Massachusetts vacation house its lively, characteristic massing. The shafts contain stairs, baths and triple-stacked flues, together arranged in a triangular plan that forms a rigid structural frame. It is a tall house, closed on two sides against weather and open to a panoramic water view on the third. The main living spaces are on the middle level lifted just above surrounding treetops and the parents' bedroom (designed as a pair of intersecting bridges) is located on the level above. The long deck, which steps out so purposefully over the landscape, is an extension of one of these bridges and points directly toward Nantucket Island in the distance.

The play of triangular and right angle forms gives the massing unusual energy. The interior spaces derive much of their sculptural excitement from the intersection of bridges and the lines of force they generate so freely. The master bedroom, more of a spatial event than a room perhaps, is the climax of the design and celebrates its importance by opening to almost everything: the main living spaces below, the view to the horizon, the sky above.

The detailing throughout is clean-edged but explicit. The structure is wood frame over a concrete foundation using self-bracing forms as protection against high winds. The exterior finish is weathered cedar laid up vertically throughout. Gypsum board is used for partitions and ceilings, quarry tile for all floors, fir plank for all decking.

Future expansion, if necessary, will be in the form of a half-unit attached to the house at the stair shaft.

Architect: Myron Goldfinger  
333 East 30th Street  
New York City  
Owner: Ira Marcus  
Engineers:  
Richard Baker (structural)  
George Casper (mechanical)  
Contractor: K.T. Galley Co.  
Photographer: Norman McGrath  
Courtesy of House and Garden
Photo above (also on cover) shows the upper level master bedroom formed by the intersection of the two bridges. The architect reports that the owners do not mind the unrestricted sunlight from the plastic vault over the space. The view of the night sky is more than compensating.
Whitton/Dailey Residence
Watermill, New York
Alfredo De Vido, Architect

The owners of this Long Island house are two women, one of whom operates a house plant consulting firm. The greenhouse is therefore both a business necessity and a center of domestic activity. It forms an extension to the living room on the second level facing south, and can be isolated at night from the rest of the house by sliding, double-glazed windows and doors to prevent excessive heat loss. Many plants, tolerant of temperatures in the mid-forties, endure the nightly temperature drop without difficulty.

The house is opened extensively to the south and east, but virtually closed to the north. The carefully-studied pattern of openings results in a passive solar system in which sun-warmed air is collected through the greenhouse and other windows facing south or east to be released—slowly—at night.

For summer cooling, roof lines are sloping to permit venting of the house through several operable roof windows on the west side. Heated air is also drawn out through lower windows by a negative vacuum which results in a natural draft through the house on warm summer days.

Like other houses by this architect, the design is a lively exercise in wood construction. Projections and setbacks animate the exteriors and give the feeling that a lot is going on inside. And so it is. The interior spaces are particularized, each carefully shaped around its primary function and all are brought together into easy, comfortable spatial relationships—the relationship between living room, greenhouse, dining area and kitchen being especially happy here.

The selection of finishes and the detailing are carried out with a sure hand, and with careful attention to both maintenance requirements and budget limitations.
The interior spaces of the Whitton-Dailey house are energetically expressed. The separations between rooms are often more implied than real: ceiling slopes, counters and columns being used as elements of definition (see photos this page and right). House plants are used effectively to add color and richness to most of the spaces. Up and down lighting fixtures were architect designed.
Cohen Residence
South Orange, New Jersey
Marcel Breuer and Associates

Despite an architectural axiom that difficult sites stimulate good design, this site remained empty in an established residential section of South Orange, New Jersey, because prospective builders found the topography discouraging. The terrain slopes sharply upward from the front of the lot, and a ravine that accommodates run-off from uphill neighbors runs across the site near the street. Any solution necessitating infill and drainage would have been expensive as well as damaging to the natural beauty of the rather rugged landscape.

By placing the house at the top of the slope, architect Herbert Beckhard managed to kill two birds with one stone: he avoided the problem of the ravine by simply letting run-off flow through a culvert under the driveway, and he satisfied the owners’ request for visual privacy from the street by screening the house with the numerous mature trees already on the site.

The owners also requested the separation of adult and children’s activities so as to allow both generations to entertain guests at the same time and in their own fashions. The binuclear plan places the more formal adult wing on the lower slope, while the rear wing, which meets grade at the back yard, contains common family areas and children’s rooms. These wings are joined by a glass-walled link that serves as both entry and circulation hall.

The architect positioned glass areas carefully to maximize privacy and to minimize the material on exterior walls (an energy-conservative measure). Glazing is generally screened by baffles or is set well back into the building volume and thus protected by walls and overhangs.

The placement of glass also offered a number of esthetic opportunities for massing, for modeling and, on the interior, for natural lighting. Apart from the visual interplay of plain white walls and voids created by recessed decks and glass walls, clerestories give an ordered complexity of form to the roof line and balance interior daylight.

Finish materials reflect the easy elegance and graceful comfort characteristic of the design. Interior walls are white plaster accented with natural cedar siding on some walls and ceilings.

Architect: Marcel Breuer and Associates
635 Madison Avenue
New York, New York

Partner-in-Charge: Herbert Beckhard
Associate: Donald Cromley

Owners: Mr. and Mrs. Arthur Cohen
Interior design consultant: Jane Yu
Contractor: Stephen Scott Co.
Photographer: GI Ambiga
Private residence
The Sea Ranch, California
Donald Jacobs, Architect

This new house at The Sea Ranch (100 miles north of San Francisco) was designed to focus all views from the interior on the domineering natural elements of the region—the Pacific Ocean and the California coastline. Orienting the house to this prime view also created privacy, visually blocking from sight a well-trodden trail to the east, a neighboring house only 20 feet to the west and a less interesting view to the north. The entrance, therefore, was located (along with the garage, partially sunken into the knoll site to minimize its bulk) on the north, highlighted by operable wooden barn doors (not shown), reminiscent of older structures in the area and early designs at The Sea Ranch. Two decks were also positioned with southerly exposure; these are very private, partially hidden by the building’s frame which, in addition, cuts out strong winds from the northwest.

The owners wanted open interiors with a “gutsy” structural feeling, a criteria which led to the development of a strongly expressive series of interior spaces. These were organized around an open, central spine, 16 feet high (the maximum height limit in the development), and the rooms overlooking the corridor have framed views through the main living space. Trusses were employed to span broad spaces in the living, dining and kitchen areas, not only to create spaciousness but to lend the proper ambiance the clients desired. (Track lights mounted on the trusses cast shadows across the main living area when lighted at night.) Spatial variety is subtly handled by roof pitch and a variation in floor levels, devised despite no appreciable slope on the site.

With 80 per cent of the glass on the southern elevation and the open nature of the spaces, the house acts as a solar energy collector, measurably reducing energy consumption. Typical roof, floor and wall insulation, and dark tiled or carpeted floors retain the sun’s heat—so much so that the clients say the house rarely needs more than a fire in the central fireplace to maintain warmth throughout. The exterior is of California redwood, the interior of Douglas fir.

Architect: Donald Jacobs
1000 Annapolis Road
The Sea Ranch, California
Structural engineer:
Fook Z. Lee
Contractor:
Robert Miller Construction Co.
Photographer: Merg Ross
The whole house is designed to focus on the ocean views to the south—and by spreading out the spaces along a central spine every room (except baths) has such a view. The spine also enhances efficient circulation from the entrance (above), passing the pool room to the loft (top right), to the master bedroom (right), or to the main living area (bottom and opposite page). The open interior and subtle level changes frame these views from all points.
Private Residence
District of Columbia
Hugh Jacobsen, Architect

This Washington, D.C. house for a retired couple is erected on the last vacant lot in an established residential district just a few blocks from the city's ceremonial center. The triangular site—used for years as a dump for fill by contractors of neighboring houses—falls off rather abruptly at one edge, and Jacobsen used these contours to advantage. He sited the house along that edge to elevate one long facade. The segmented massing responds to the property line and the offsets (each one half the unit width), give the house an agreeable scale.

In its 2000-square-foot area, the house accommodates all the basic residential requirements except a garage and provides, in addition, a painting studio that can double in the future as an extra bedroom and bath. To conserve space in a plan that is already efficient, Jacobsen introduced a counter-weighted trap door in the living room floor (next page) that opens to a basement stair. The openings in the walls are generous, but each is carefully oriented to avoid sightlines to surrounding houses that crowd in closer around this site than the photos seem to suggest.

Of the detailing, there is little to say except that it is Jacobsen at his best—which is very good indeed and very imaginative. The narrow line that defines the roof joints is a continuous eave vent. The "pop-out" kitchen window is made of a single sheet of clear plastic bent at 45 degrees and installed without mullion at eye height or other visible trim.

The house is wood frame, clad mostly in plywood sheets that were site-scored to match the 1 × 6-inch siding used in the gable ends to simplify flashing. The transition from plywood to plank, as you can see for yourself, is practically invisible.

The entire exterior is cloaked in white, a "color" that carries its purity through to the interiors where it contrasts richly with quarry tile and brighter-colored furnishings.

Architect: Hugh Newell Jacobsen
1427 27th Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C.

Engineer: Alfred Kraas (structural)
Contractor: E.J. Smith
Photographer: Robert Lautman
The high ridge lines and the large openings give the interiors only the gentlest sense of containment. Furniture groupings become islands, static interludes in an otherwise lively spatial flow. The pattern of offsets produces decks on both long sides of the house. On the entry side the deck is only about a step above grade, but here, as the photos show, the slope of the site gives the deck users considerable elevation and view.
Apartments of the Year

Enlarging the scope of this issue and, like a caboose, rolling past at the end are six high-density projects that offer buyers the conveniences and shared burdens of that way of living. But like the houses they follow, these designs are carefully tailored to their sites and respond with more than ordinary aptness to the complications of their individual programs. Each, in addition, is designed with an attention to image that makes it attractive in a highly competitive marketplace.

The first (next pages) is a superb instance of infill housing, by architect James McNeely, designed to fit snugly on a landmark street in old Boston. Its sensitivity to its surroundings made it an immediate favorite with RECORD's editors. The sixth, a nine-unit condominium designed by Murray Milne to overlook the Pacific, is a marvelous example of hillside development, fresh in its forms, and financed in an unusual and interesting manner.

Between these two are four others, each taking shape around a clear design idea and all taking maximum advantage of whatever amenities were at hand or could be created on the site.

But as lively and inventive as these projects are—and as well tuned to their sites and purposes, they only begin to suggest the largely unexplored possibilities inherent in cluster housing. As public acceptance increases, as architects like these get a crack at its design, cluster housing may slough off its encumbering, second-class image and earn the place in residential design to which its potential virtues have long entitled it.

—Barclay F. Gordon
Beacon Street Apartments  
Boston, Massachusetts  
James McNeely, Architect

Fire destroyed one of a pair of Beacon Hill rowhouses in 1967, leaving a charred, gaping hole in the street facade until 1972 when architect James McNeely, in partnership with a local attorney, purchased the empty site and the undamaged bowfront next door.

The partners developed a plan to unite the two structures by serving both with a common elevator, stair and fire escape. Floor alignments could not be reconciled for the older structure had ceiling heights up to 14 feet. The new structure was designed with more standard eight foot ceilings (see section above). As a result, the elevator cab opens in both directions and stops within the shaft at different levels to serve either side.

In final form, the project includes 12 two bedroom apartments, two single bedroom apartments and three studio apartments all sold as condominiums during construction or soon after. Those who purchased during construction had many choices in finish materials so the interiors vary considerably, reflecting a wide range of individual tastes. Common areas are kept to a minimum and maintenance charges, the architect reports, are among the lowest in Boston.

What is perhaps most important is that this well designed infill housing—the first of its kind in this Boston district—is housing of a type so many American cities desperately need. The new construction does not shoulder aside its older neighbors. It fits snugly into position respecting the scale, form and finish of adjoining buildings but keeps its own personality intact as it completes the street scene in a venerable but still handsome Boston neighborhood.

Architect: James McNeely  
16 Joy Street  
Boston, Massachusetts  
Owners:  
Phoenix House Partners  
Engineers:  
Craig Baines (structural)  
Leo Brissette (mechanical)  
Contractor: for building shell  
John R. Clark & Associates  
Photographer: William Owens
Concord Greene Apartments
Concord, Massachusetts
Huygens and Tappé, Architects

The site is 24 acres of orchard land bounded by a commuter rail line to the north, a major highway to the east and a group of single-family houses to the south. The Township, with its proud Revolutionary associations, was sensitive to the potential impact of this 220-unit cluster on the community. Huygens and Tappé therefore worked especially closely with the Township to accommodate their wishes in matters of siting and development.

Paved and built-upon areas were arranged to preserve the existing landscape wherever possible. Finish materials and building forms were designed to respond to the region’s historical character. Two entrances have been provided to reduce on-site vehicular traffic and apartment units form cul-de-sac clusters off the main loop road. The original farmhouse was retained to give the new community a firm historical centerpiece.

The orientation of the apartments is away from the railroad and the main highway and toward a brook that runs through the site.

Fences and other external enclosures are stained, rough-sawn plywood with battens. The living units are of conventional wood construction, clad in narrow clapboards with corner boards and wood trim—all designed to evoke the traditional village image of New England but provide for these owners many of the amenities of contemporary life. Two features stand out: the saltbox profiles and the unambiguous, no-nonsense relationship of building to site. Both are old New England virtues.

Architects: Huygens and Tappé, Inc.
402 Boylston Street
Boston, Massachusetts

Owner:
Concord Junction Realty Trust

Engineers:
Stecco Engineering (structural)
Comfort Air Systems (mechanical)
R.D. Nelson (site)

Landscape consultant:
Gerald F. Michel

Contractor: E.A. Comeau, Inc.

Photographer: Steve Rosenthal
The Fairways
Coquitlam, British Columbia
R.E. Hulbert & Partners,
Architects

The brightly-painted and scalloped elevations of this 58-unit complex tend to belie the impressive amount of sober thought that went into its planning and design. Located on a 2-acre site in a Vancouver suburb, the buildings are carefully view-oriented to a golf course and park lands on three sides, and access to the surrounding grounds is easy.

All units are either split-level, two-story townhouses or corner "bungalows." Each type is designed to provide an unusual degree of amenity. Automobiles are accommodated on a parking deck that gives directly to the split-level units. The townhouses are entered from a third-floor pedestrian street that is paved, enclosed from the weather, and landscaped with hanging plants and potted shrubs (see photos next pages). It is a remarkably pleasant access space. The breakfast spaces of each townhouse project into this corridor and are skylighted.

In this way, each space borrows light from the corridor skylights above. Another thoughtful planning feature: the townhouse units are zoned vertically with main living spaces on the entry level and sleeping spaces below. This device provides a sound buffer and reduces unwelcome noise between units. The (lower) bedroom levels are reached by interior stairs from the living level above or can be entered directly from a semi-private corridor below, thus providing a second means of egress. Most of the townhouses have a small loft space above the living areas; others have roof decks as an option to the lofts. The planning throughout is tight and efficient.

The lively elevations grow out of the desire to articulate each apartment in the mass, giving each an identity as well as a clear relationship with the others. The site organization permits the surrounding parkland to be drawn into the plan at the center to create a landscaped green shared by all.

Architects: R.E. Hulbert & Partners
215 14th Street
West Vancouver, British Columbia
Eugene V. Radvanski—design
John C.H. Porter—technical coordination
Owner: H.A. Roberts Group, Ltd.
Engineers:
David Naime & Associates (structural)
Cook, Pickering, Doyle (foundations)
Perkelk Design Ltd. (mechanical)
Interiors: public spaces by architect;
unit interiors by Peter Garret
Landscape architects:
John Lentzus & Associates
Contractor: Bidwell Construction Ltd.
Photographer: Simon Scott
The structure is a three-story wood frame over a concrete foundation and parking deck. Cedar siding, placed horizontally and diagonally, is the principal exterior finish. Chimney flues are baked enamel over stainless, roof finish is metal sheet with standing seams.
Walnut Hill Apartment
Haverstraw, New York
Smotrich & Platt, Architects

Financed under Federal Section 236, this 180-unit cluster housing project is designed for low- and moderate-income families (the majority of them elderly) and is located on 7.75 acres north of New York City.

The eight two-story structures that make up the project step down the sloping site in a linear pattern that generally parallels the contours so that each ground floor unit has an on-grade entrance, convenient access to automobiles, pedestrian ways and community facilities. This arrangement also provides views of the Hudson River Valley from most of the upper-level apartments.

The units themselves consist of an upper and lower apartment; the upper apartment provided with a bridge entrance and a balcony, the lower with a small garden area to be planted at the tenant's option. All units have through ventilation.

A prime concern for designers—and one they solved with considerable success—was the establishment of a community identity and a village scale. The ring road, the pedestrian spine and the community building (photos below right) all contribute to this success. The design vocabulary is simple but used so consistently that the project "reads" as a village—and a nice one. The repetition of units does not pall because the designers have maximized their opportunities to articulate differences in grade and landscape form.

The principal exterior finish is plywood over a wood frame structure. Construction costs came to $3,785,000 or about $21,000 per dwelling unit including the community building, site work and final landscaping.

Architects: Smotrich & Platt
12 East 44th Street
New York, New York
William Eisenberg, project architect
Owners: Haverstraw Associates
with New York State Urban Development Corp.
Engineers: Atlas-Baugh Associates (structural)
Woodward Clyde (soils)
Robert Ettinger Associates (mechanical)
Landscape design
Environmental Systems Planning
Contractor: Helmer-Cronin Construction
Photographer: Thomas P. Palmer
Cooper Street Lofts
Aspen, Colorado
Copland Finholm Hagman Yaw,
Architects
This 60- by 100-foot corner lot was the last undeveloped property in a residential neighborhood largely characterized by small scale, late-19th-century Victorian buildings. The architects' task was to provide six studio apartments of simple and economic design that were compatible with the Victorian "feel" of the community.

The six units at 600 square feet each are minimal in program but are designed with concern for both site and occupants. The plans are staggered along the front facade to heighten its sense of three-dimensional depth and to preserve an open space of modest scale at the corner of the site. Within the severe restrictions of budget, each apartment has a measure of outdoor space as well as a fireplace and a 13-foot ceiling.

The structure is concrete block bearing walls, exposed inside and out, wood floor and roof joists and a built-up roof. Gypsum board is used inside for ceilings and some wall surfaces, and outside cedar siding is used to contrast warmly with the block. Painted metal railings and flues provide added visual interest.

What seems especially commendable—and perhaps this is the lesson—is that the restrictions of program, budget and site did not become excuses for a design devoid of any interest. Instead, the architects achieved considerable sculptural interest, significant and welcome interior comfort and a building cluster that sits well on its site—a site near the ski lifts and only a short walk from shopping.

Architects: Copland Finholm Hagman Yaw
Box 2736
Aspen, Colorado
William Campbell, project manager
Owner: Cooper Street Partners
Engineers:
Anderson & Hastings (structural)
McFall and Konkel (mechanical)
Contractor: Wilbur, Carlson, Inc.
Photographer: William Lukes
Coastline Condominiums
Malibu, California
Murray Milne, Architect

On a hillside facing south and overlooking the Pacific Ocean at Malibu, architect Murray Milne and eight friends pooled their resources to establish the kind of living accommodations that none could have afforded without the others. "The eight friends," says Milne, "filed as a California real estate limited partnership with the architect and attorney as general partners. Each of the six limited partners contributed $10,000 and each partner agreed to buy and live in one of the eight units. With this initial capital, they purchased the land, paid architectural fees, legal fees and building permit fees. Because the project was completely presold, the bank's appraisal was very generous and the construction loan was more than adequate. When the project was completed eight individual mortgages were taken out, the construction loan was paid off, and the partnership was dissolved."

The happy outcome of this unusual arrangement is a pair of narrow structures, each containing four 3000-square-foot units, parking for 16 cars, and a community-owned swimming pool.

The precipitous slope was ideal for a stepped section, giving each unit privacy as well as a panoramic view. To solve the problem of vertical transportation (where nine flights of steps separate the lowest from the highest level) Milne cantilevered a funicular system on the outside of the building at the second-story. Powered by a standard traction motor, the path of the funicular just clears the front door to each unit and can be summoned by a call button. The cab carries four passengers on what the architect describes as "one of the most exciting rides west of Disneyland."

To reduce solar heat gain and glare, the large glazed areas are protected by a generous overhang. Each unit is insulated: 6 inches in the ceilings, 3½ inches in the exterior walls. The result of careful sun control and insulation is that, even on this southern California site, no air-conditioning is required.

Architect: Murray Milne in association with
Kamitke, Marks, Cotton and Vreeland
18007 Coastline Drive
Malibu, California

Engineer:
David Taubman and Associates

Contractor: Frank Ashley Construction

Photographer: Jason Nishi
MURRAY MILNE

Milne established the basic three-bedroom floor plan, then each owner designed the interior of his own unit, selecting finishes and adding as many or as few options as he wished. In final form, no tow units are alike. The architect's own space—including a 1000-square-foot sundeck—is shown in the photos at left.
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1. By having the Bar overhead, it is out of the way. Furniture and other objects can be placed directly in front of the window, providing more flexibility in the use of floor space.
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