

September 25, 2019 - February 17th, 2020

open daily
10 am - 6pm
Free Admission

resident alien Austrian Architects in America

Raimund Abraham
Ella Briggs
Elizabeth Close
COOP HIMMELB(L)AU
Josef Frank
Paul T. Frankl
Victor Gruen
Erwin Hauer
Haus-Rucker-Co
Hans Hollein
Christoph Kapeller
Frederick Kiesler
Adolf Loos
Mark Mack
Richard Neutra
Carl Pruscha

Bernard Rudofsky
Rudolph Schindler
Friedrich St. Florian
Joseph Urban
Liane Zimmler

Herwig Baumgartner
Matias del Campo
Liquifer Systems Group
Hubert Klumpner
Julia Koerner
Duks Koschitz
Christoph a. Kumpusch
Andrea Lenardin
Sandra Manninger
Axel Schmitzberger
Peter Trummer
Bettina Zerza
Susanne Zottl

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PROJECT: A STYROFOAM LOVER WITH (E)MOTIONS OF CONCRETE



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>> primitive domains

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#5 Metamorphosis, 1936, Herbert Bayer

Primitive Domains

Three-dimensional architectural form is most commonly derived from geometric primitives: squares, spheres, cones, and cylinders. They are fundamental building blocks. In his photograph *Metamorphosis* (1936), Herbert Bayer emphasizes through surrealist collage how these basic solid geometries are situated within the natural domain.

Architecture and its relationship to the natural environment is a common theme in modern and postmodern design. Adolf Loos's buildings often appear from the exterior as simple geometric primitive figures with a lack of ornament. Ella Briggs brings a similar geometric simplicity to her modern social housing projects. Both Rudolph Schindler and Richard Neutra, however, upon arriving in Los Angeles, worked on dissolving primitive geometric volumes – similarly to Loos and the complex interiors of his famous *Raumplan* or space plan.

Neutra's and Schindler's approaches however, differ greatly from each other. Neutra constructs his *Stone-Fisher Platform Houses* (1962-1966) as simple boxes cantilevered off hillsides, whereas Schindler's earlier *Wolfe House* (1928-1931) epitomizes his idea of cascading buildings into the landscape with more integration. Schindler's more sensitive environmental approach preceded Frank Lloyd Wright's *Fallingwater* (1939). The *Schindler House* (1922), the *Lovell Beach House* (1926), and the *Lovell Health House* (1927-29) are some of the earliest iconic precedents of modern design. They inspired mid-century modernists, such as Elizabeth Close (*Duff House*, 1955), Liane Zimmler (*Candianides Residence*, 1961), and Charles Paterson (*Boomerang Lodge*, 1961), among others.

This focus on primitive geometry and its relationship to the environment is also crucial for postmodern generations. Both Carl Pruscha's housing designs (1970-72; 1988-91) and Raimund Abraham's *For Una* (1995) utilize minimalist geometry to signify that architecture can appear both sacred and profane. Mark Mack's rectilinear constructions for his *Watertables & Other Nature Constructions* (1980), also challenge modern notions that human construction can dominate the sublime natural landscape.

With the advent of computer technology, architects found new ways to develop these ideas. Today, all digital-design software offers a full menu of geometric primitives. Where Frederick Kiesler, for his 1947 *Paris Endless*, attempted to model primitive geometries through analog drawing methods of stretching, folding, and bending, contemporary architects now use software to streamline these techniques. For instance, Axel Schmitzberger (*domaen*) elaborates new formal permutations to design buildings as artificial landforms, while Susanne Zottl uses new material natures to design and construct innovative primitive domains.

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