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The Harvard Five In New Canaan: Midcentury Modern Houses By Marcel Breuer, Landis Gores, John Johansen, Philip Johnson, Eliot Noyes, And Others



Synopsis

A virtual tour of thirty-five landmark houses, 1947-1966, built in a quiet New England community. Since the fifties, "the Harvard Five" has been the catchphrase for the five architects featured in this book, who all built houses for themselves and for clients in New Canaan, Connecticut. Other architects, well known (Frank Lloyd Wright, for example) and not so well known, also contributed significant modern houses that elicited strong reactions from nearly everyone who saw them and are still astonishing today. An introductory essay by Jean Ely, "New Canaan Modern" (reprinted by permission of the New Canaan Historical Society), recounts the history of the area and how New Canaan came to be the locus of the modern movement's experimentation in materials, construction methods, space, and form. The book is done as a "house tour" in chronological order, with photographs and floor plans. 50 color, 50 black & white illustrations

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

“Comments from the period, pro and con, from critics and some of the architects, add spice and insight” Recommended. - C. W. Westfall, University of Notre Dame, Choice

“[A] valuable contribution to the literature of Modern architecture” key and fascinating chapter in the history of America. - Kyle Johnson,

DocuMomo “[Y]our chance to step inside some of the most important homes created in the United States in the last 60 years.” - John Denniston, FiftyPlus

“The coverage is exemplary, with vintage photography and floor plans.” - Interior

Design “For the attention paid to Modern homes in New Canaan, one

might think there were a few books. Until now, there was no such book. - John Mordecai, New Canaan News-Review
"Of interest to anyone with a love of mid-century modern houses and their architects. - New England Antiques Journal
"Provides a fascinating tour of the influential and beautiful structures. - Vince Cosgrove, ReadyMade
"[S]o satisfying. With well-rendered black-and-white plans, the reader can walk through each of the homes. - The Voice, AIA Cleveland Newsletter

William D. Earls, A.I.A. received a bachelor of science degree in business administration from the University of Connecticut, a bachelor of architecture degree from the New York Institute of Technology, and a master of architecture degree from the University of Texas at Arlington. A registered architect who primarily designs custom residences, he has also worked on corporate, commercial, municipal, and religious buildings in Connecticut, New York, and Vermont. He lives in Wilton and works in New Canaan, Connecticut.

Good content, but the photos, while abundant, and well shot, are not printed crisply. The paper quality is so-so. I hate giving poor reviews but I felt let down thinking what could have been ..

I spent a lot of time with Philip Johnson in the '70s, even working on building a pipe organ for his sculpture gallery. John Johanssen built a house for my aunt and uncle in New Canaan made of telephone poles. His parents paid for his tuition at Choate by painting portraits of Rev Dr George St John and his wife.

I enjoyed this book and return to it often. The beautiful photos offer one a glimpse into the way it was (and should still be) along with excellent descriptions and floor plans of many of the houses. The only thing I would have loved to have is more current pictures of the best kept houses, along with more biographical information on some of the lesser known architects in the book, such as Christ-Janer, whose houses truly piqued my interest and left me wanting more. I took this book with me to New Canaan and it was very helpful in my meanderings through the town. If you live in the NYC area or plan to visit, I wholeheartedly encourage you to buy this book, take a day to drive to New Canaan, drive around the town, and take a tour of Philip Johnson's Glass House (buy tickets in advance).

Loved it. Gave some as gifts and friends were thrilled with it also. Great photos and history. Great coffee table book.

Being a New Canaanite, I loved this book and found it really informative. I would wish for more detail, however, in the sequel – should there be one.

This book was offered with another for a lower price, and therefore I bought it without being really passionate. Only B/W pictures ... But in fact it is really interesting, even fascinating, to discover the history of these controversial houses in New Canaan (some of them being destroyed since then, the book remains as their unique and fragile souvenir). It reminds me of the Weissenhofsiedlung in Stuttgart, another fascinating place where founders of modern architecture have created something that has experienced lots of problems with the time being. Too modern, too revolutionary! I would love to visit New Canaan to discover these houses, but I have the impression that the book allows for a better visit. The book does not look so fine, it is not very "sexy" but it deserves interest!

Gorgeous book that makes a great gift.

I was taken aback with this book, it was more than I expected and truly demonstrates innovative design and forward thinking which even outshines what is done today under the banner of modern.

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