



An Everyday Modernism: The Houses of William Wurster

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William Wilson Wurster (1895-1973) has been widely recognized as the foremost proponent of a distinctive Bay Area architectural style. But his ideas extended far beyond California: In private practice and as head of architecture schools at the University of California at Berkeley and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Wurster shaped an entire generation of architects and city planners.

An Everyday Modernism: The Houses of William Wurster documents Wurster's fifty-year career and his important place in contemporary American architectural thought. Along with his wife, city planner Catherine Bauer, and landscape architect Thomas Church, Wurster was intimately involved in the rise of modern city planning and landscape design in the United States. In keeping with the social and economic conditions of the late 1930s, Wurster encouraged the development of small houses that offered the livability of those of greater scale, and he influenced the building of affordable mass-produced housing. His designs embodied principles of simplicity and economy, yet incorporated complex human needs. Wurster's legacy is especially relevant today, as uncertain economic conditions and social dislocations affect housing for Americans at every level.

Over fifty of Wurster's projects are featured here, with photographs, drawings, and plans, along with numerous projects by his contemporaries. Essays by distinguished architectural historians and critics—several of whom knew or worked with Wurster—provide insights into his personal as well as professional life. Abundantly illustrated, this first large-scale examination of William Wurster's architectural enterprise offers a full appreciation of the man and his work.

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