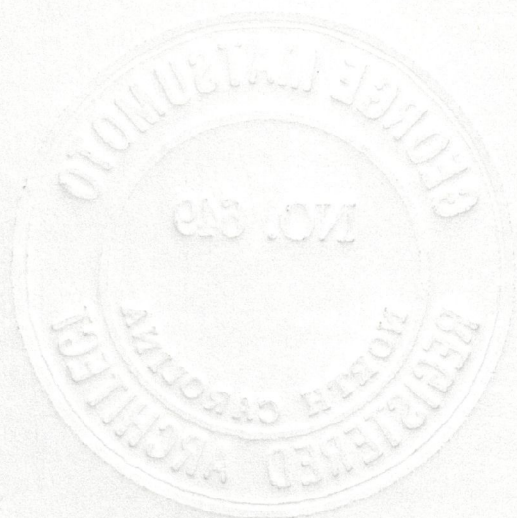


THE WORK OF GEORGE MATSUMOTO FROM
THE NCSU LIBRARIES' SPECIAL COLLECTIONS

Simplicity, Order, and Discipline





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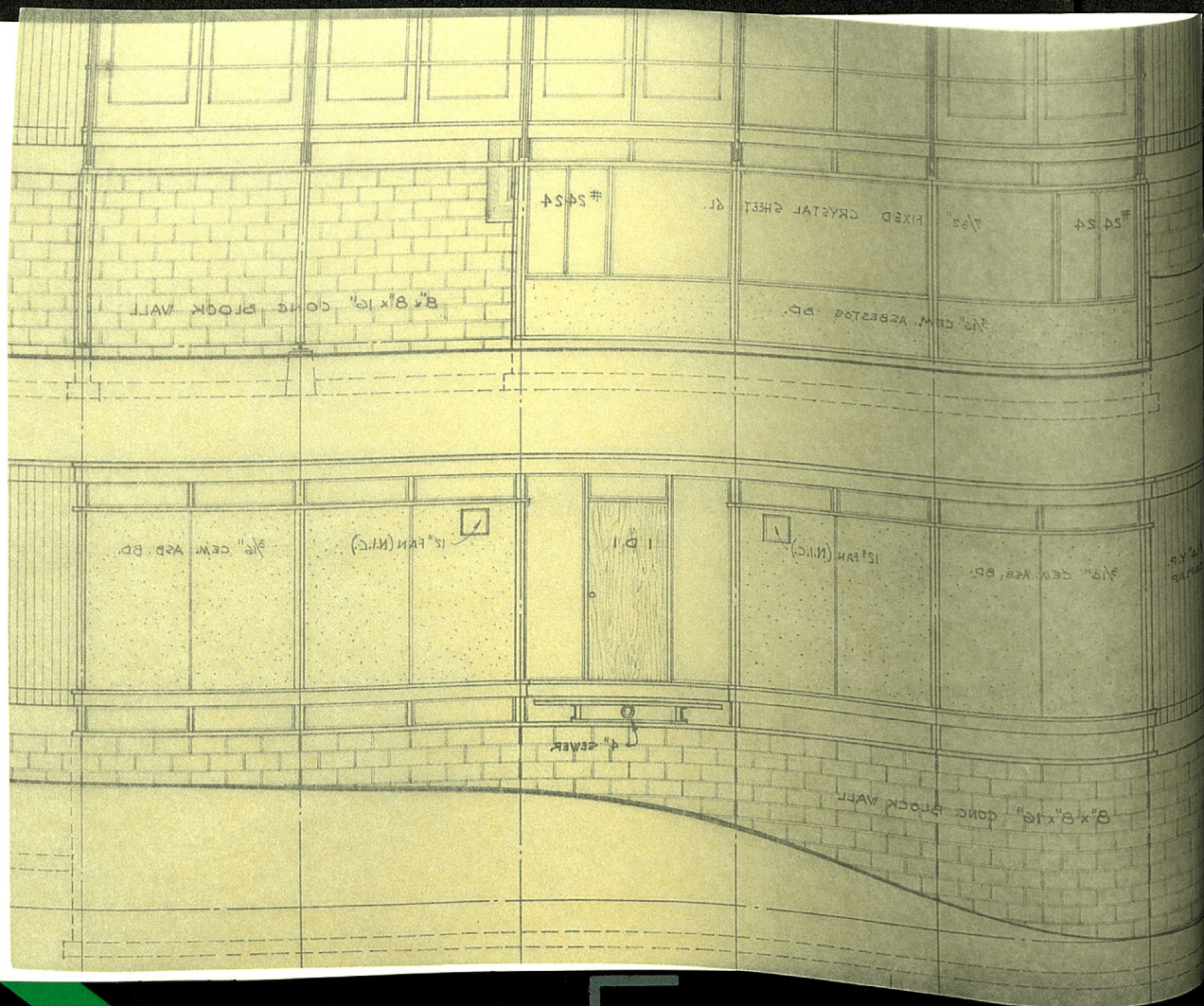
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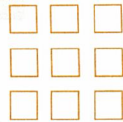
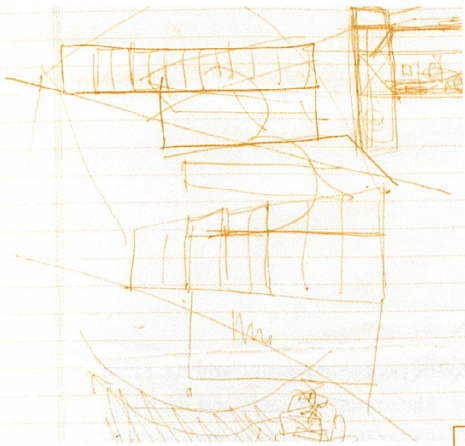
Joseph Kohn

THE WORK OF GEORGE MATSUMOTO FROM
THE NCSU LIBRARIES' SPECIAL COLLECTIONS

Simplicity, Order, and Discipline



FIRST PAGE: Front Elevation at night,
c. 1954, Maizumoto Residence,
Raleigh, North Carolina.



1

RESPONSIBLE STEWARDSHIP:
AN INTRODUCTION

When I accepted the appointment as director of Libraries at North Carolina State University in 1987, I did so with a determination to work with library staff, faculty, students, university administrators, and friends to ensure that the NCSU Libraries achieved its full potential as a research library, including the development of an appropriate and strong special collections program. Among the great strengths of North Carolina State University that attracted me to this institution was its legendary School of Design established by Henry Kamphoefner in 1948. After my first few months here, I began to investigate the status of the architectural records of the design faculty and of the state of North Carolina in general. What had happened to the personal records of Dean Kamphoefner, for example? Was anyone saving unique architectural drawings of buildings in this state and region?

This search led me to make the acquaintance of Charlotte Brown, and she, in turn, introduced me to some of the local members of the North Carolina Committee for

the Preservation of Architectural Records (COPAR). COPAR is made up of individuals from throughout the state—architects, preservationists, and university and state archivists—who share a love of North Carolina architecture and a strong commitment to preserving its records. What I learned from this informal subset of COPAR was that, while some records had been collected or identified, no single organization in the state was performing the critical function of systematically gathering, organizing, and preserving these valuable materials. Disheartening though this news was, I was struck by the mutual, unselfish concern of these individuals that these records should be collected and housed in one location and made available for use. They agreed that the existence of NC State's School of Design provided a programmatic context for such a collection, and there was no question on all our parts that this institution's Libraries was the obvious choice for these records. At the time, however, the NCSU Libraries was not staffed or

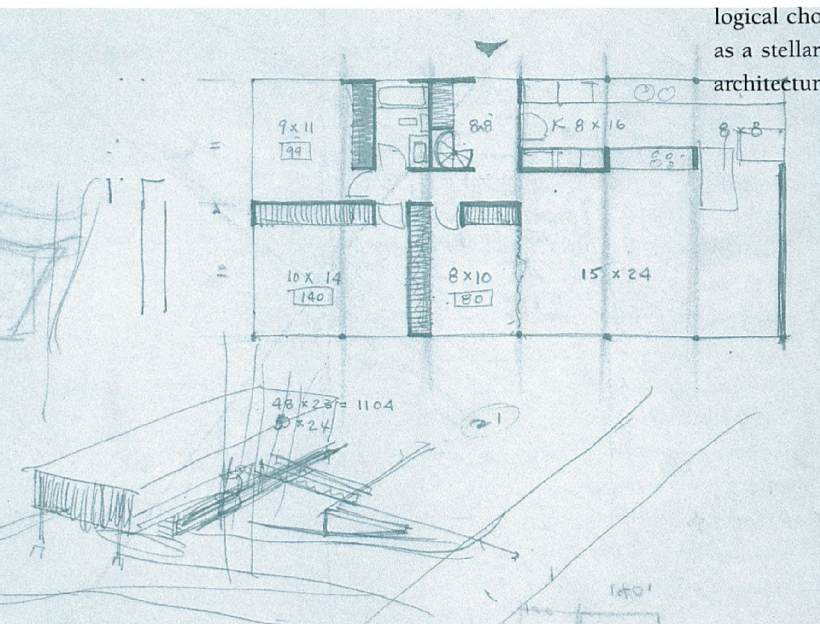
Matsumoto's papers and drawings were an appropriate first step in building an architectural archive because they support an area of unique programmatic strength, with graduate and research programs.

by Susan K. Nutter

PAGE FIVE: Conceptual Sketch, 8 1/2" x 11" ink on tablet paper, c. 1955. Lipman Residence, Richmond, Virginia.

RIGHT: Conceptual Sketch and Floor Plan, 8 1/2" x 11" ink on tracing paper, c. 1952. Matsumoto Residence, Raleigh, North Carolina.

PAGE SEVEN: Conceptual Rendering, Livestock Judging Pavilion (now Dorton Arena) by Matthew Nowicki, c. 1949. From the Nowicki Drawing Collection, Visual Arts Center, North Carolina State University. Transfer from the North Carolina Museum of Art.



equipped to take on this new responsibility. Regardless, I made what now appears to me to be a rather bold promise that the NCSU Libraries would, in time, assume this responsibility, and I asked for the right of first refusal of architectural records, should any become available.

In the intervening years, the Libraries laid the groundwork for developing the resources it would need for responsible stewardship of such a program. In 1993 we created a Special Collections Department, began recruiting for and hiring needed staff, and started improving the physical space. In 1997 these efforts have culminated in the public presentation of the first major collection and exhibition of the Special Collections Department: The George Matsumoto Papers and Drawings.

It is altogether fitting that George Matsumoto's works comprise the NCSU Libraries' first major acquisition. This founding faculty member of the School of Design was the logical choice for our first major exhibition, which serves as a stellar opportunity to introduce the collection to the architectural and historic preservation communities, to NC

State University, and to the people of North Carolina. From the library perspective, Matsumoto's papers and drawings were an appropriate first step in building an architectural archive because they support an area of unique programmatic strength, with graduate and research programs. Architectural records are also a perfect fit for a library whose special collections program is founded upon the university's land-grant, outreach heritage.

Many individuals have worked hard to bring about this achievement. I would like especially to thank Charlotte Brown (director of the Visual Arts Center, North Carolina State University) and those other local COPAR members: Catherine Bishir (senior architectural historian, North Carolina Division of Archives and History), Bob Burns (professor of architecture at North Carolina State University), Myrick Howard (executive director of Preservation/ North Carolina), and the late Milton Small (a noted Raleigh architect). It was only with their vision, fierce determination, and spirit of cooperation and partnership that the dream has become a reality. □

Susan K. Nutter is
Vice Provost and
Director of the
NCSU Libraries.



2 | ART, ARCHITECTURE, AND SPECIAL COLLECTIONS: AN ARCHIVE FOR NORTH CAROLINA ARCHITECTURE

One of the goals established for the curator of art (now director, Visual Arts Center) by the University Art Acquisitions Committee in 1983 was to collect and archive architectural drawings, models, and other materials related to the design processes with special attention given to work by faculty and students of the School of Design at NC State. In 1991, when work began on the Visual Arts Center, this goal came within reach because archival storage space would be available in a new addition.

At that time, the North Carolina Museum of Art generously transferred its collection of ninety-eight Matthew Nowicki drawings to the Visual Arts Center because Nowicki was the first head of the Department of Architecture at the school and designer of the internationally renowned Dorton Arena. Nowicki's design talent placed him as a national leader in the modern design movement of the mid-twentieth century. In 1993 the Visual Arts Center exhibited a selection of the drawings. These vital, elegant drawings, depicting bold new experiments in building, permitted students and the community to study

documentation of Nowicki's creative process while speculating about the nature of his vision and the great loss experienced with his untimely death in 1950 at the age of forty.

Archival material, such as the Nowicki drawings, represents a vital resource for understanding the past and one highly appropriate to NC State's research status. To begin to uncover other research materials that document the built environment, the Visual Arts Center, with the State Historic Preservation Office, sponsored a statewide survey of architectural records during the summer of 1994. While the architectural records survey indicated that many collections were safely placed in North Carolina libraries and archives, many records and collections in the state remained unavailable for research.

Since her arrival at NC State, Susan K. Nutter, director of the NCSU Libraries, had envisioned a new library Special Collections Department that would include among its holdings archival collections of architectural records as a research strength of the university. The new department would take an aggressive approach to collecting and docu-

by Charlotte V. Brown and C. David Jackson

1. Conceptual Sketch, 8 1/2" x 14", ink on tablet paper, c. 1955. Lipman Residence, Richmond, Virginia.
2. American Institute of Architects (A.I.A.) Form 105, "A Form of Agreement between Contractor and Owner, Architect's Copy." This agreement between the Lipmans and Kayhoe Construction Corporation detailed the terms and conditions for construction of the Lipman's residence.
3. George Matsumoto (right) with his client Eric Lipman at the construction site of the Lipman Residence, Richmond, Virginia, c. 1956. Courtesy of Jeanette Lipman.

menting the history of architecture in the state, especially as it related to the influences of the School of Design.

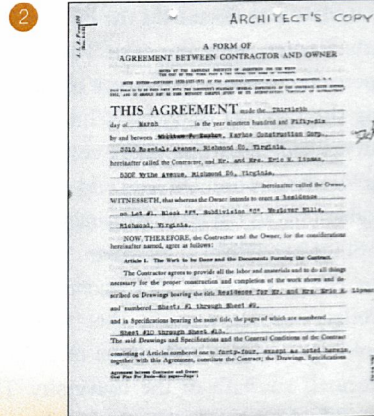
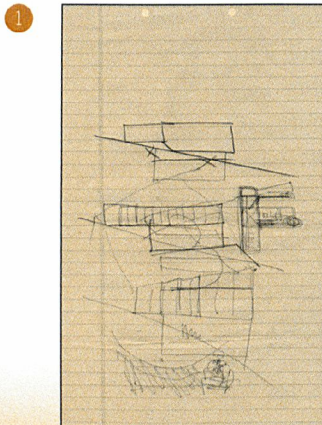
Nutter responded to the clear need for a repository for architectural materials in the state and region. The volume of material identified by the survey project was acute and was beyond the scope of the Visual Arts Center's collecting abilities. At a 1994 meeting of the North Carolina Committee for the Preservation of Architectural Records (COPAR), made up of architects, preservationists, and university and state archivists, it was generally agreed that North Carolina State University was the logical repository for the state and region with certain exceptions, notably the work of architects working in and near Charlotte, North Carolina, and the work of graduates of that university's College of Architecture. Through this cooperative effort, newly discovered collections will be placed in archival repositories to make architectural resources available to the researching public.

With the North Carolina Architectural Records Survey Project completed, the Special Collections at the NCSU Libraries will develop a documentary strategy to identify

potential collections to acquire. A documentary strategy is a proactive approach to collecting that strives to assemble a corpus of research materials that offers thorough documentation of a specific discipline—in this case, North Carolina architecture. The strategy posits: what events, activities, and accomplishments from the past are important to today? What types of materials contain documentation of these activities? Which materials survive? Who owns it? Can it be placed in a library or archive? Accordingly, the documentary strategy permits the library to be selective in acquiring collections. By knowing what materials are currently available to researchers, the architectural records program can selectively acquire collections that "fill in the gap" to complete a record of the past.

A documentary strategy is a proactive approach to collecting that

Now, through the vision of Nutter, and as a major participant in COPAR, the new Special Collections Department will provide access to materials that document all aspects of building and design. Students of architecture, design, the history of building, the design professions, and



social or cultural history will be able to study the complex circumstances that surround creation of the built environment through access to letters, diaries, daybooks, specifications, photographs, and other materials, as well as drawings. Whether the subject is the architect, the client, or the building process, each contributes to knowledge of the other two and the combination results in a demand for artifacts of paper as well as actual buildings.

Beginning the Archive: The Matsumoto Collection

As the first major acquisition for the new Special Collections Department, the George Matsumoto Papers and Drawings Collection is an excellent example of thorough documentation of an architectural practice. Within the col-

llection are Matsumoto's correspondence with clients and vendors, his design sketches, publications of his work, his preliminary and working drawings, and photographs of the finished building. The archival records of Matsumoto's Lipman House (1957) in Richmond, Virginia, illustrate the

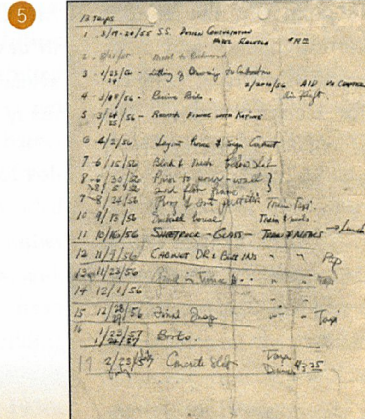
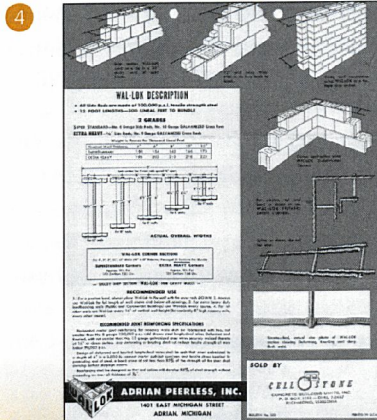
significance of each different type of architectural record to documenting the building process on paper.

Letters and notes between Matsumoto and the Lipmans chronicle the careful negotiation between architect and client. Preliminary sketches reveal the creative process in architectural design work. Advertisements from vendors kept in the job files hint at the variety of materials and appliances available at mid-century to Matsumoto and to the Lipmans. Working drawings and specifications translate conceptual ideas into reality, allowing contractors to execute and make real Matsumoto's ideas. Additional letters between architect and contractor preserve the complexity of the building process and the continued role an architect plays during construction. Photographs throughout

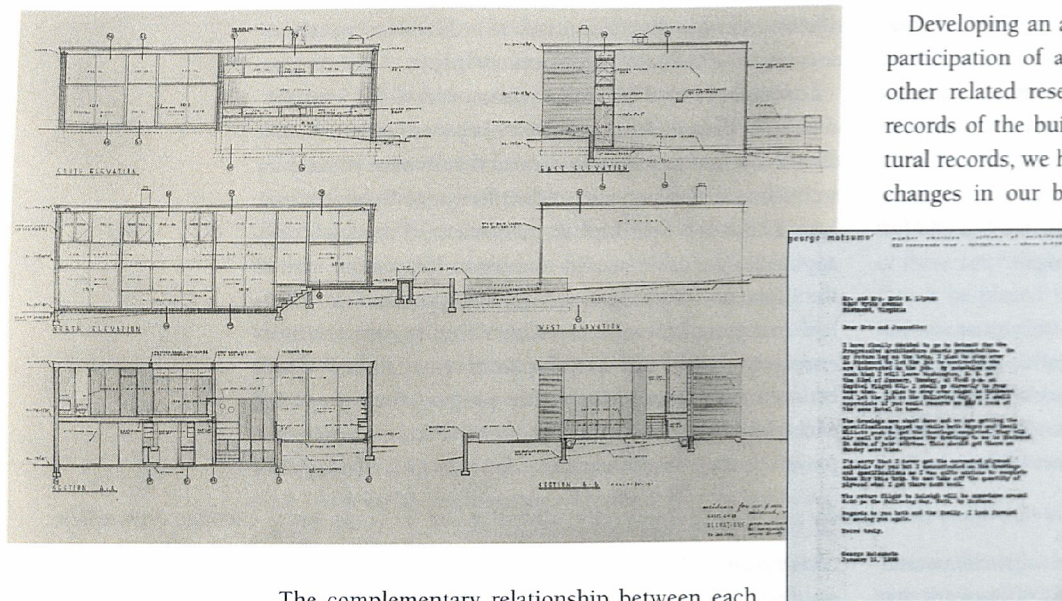
4. Advertisement for "Wal-Lok" steel reinforcements for masonry-and-concrete blocks manufactured by Adrian Peerless, Inc., Adrian Michigan.
5. Architect/Client/Contractor Meeting and Construction Schedule for the Lipman Residence, Richmond, Virginia. Matsumoto kept detailed records of meeting and construction schedules for each project.
6. Front Elevation, c. 1959. Lipman Residence, Richmond, Virginia.

lection are Matsumoto's correspondence with clients and vendors, his design sketches, publications of his work, his preliminary and working drawings, and photographs of the finished building. The archival records of Matsumoto's Lipman House (1957) in Richmond, Virginia, illustrate the

construction document the process and the finished product. News clippings and magazine articles place Matsumoto's work in context and suggest the significance of his accomplishments.



Joseph Muller



RIGHT: A Residence for Mr. and Mrs. Eric M. Lipman. Elevations, sheet 4 of 13 working drawings. 20 January 1956. 36" x 24" pencil on tracing paper.

BELOW RIGHT: Letter from George Matsumoto to Eric M. Lipman, 13 January 1956. The letter conveys Matsumoto's careful oversight of all aspects of the design and construction project.

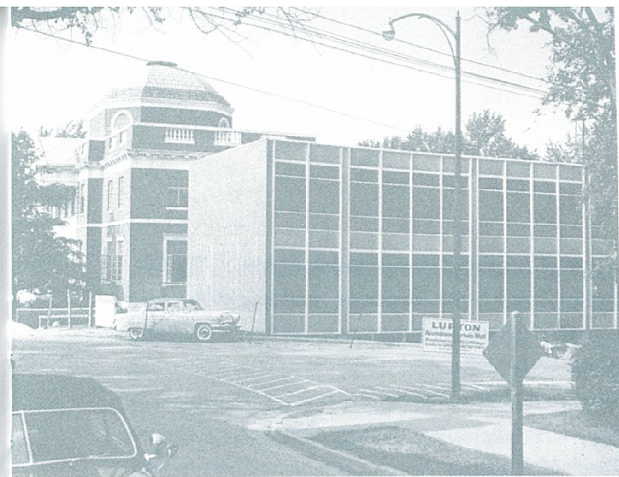
The complementary relationship between each kind of archival record is made clear in this exhibition. While each letter or sketch from the collection may only give limited information, placing the variety of materials in linear progression illuminates the entire process of design and construction. Drawings alone provide details and measurements about a building, but the reasons behind its design depend on correspondence and other written records. Correspondence lacks a visual perspective, and photographs want for technical information about a building. Accordingly, collecting architectural records means acquiring and preserving a variety of closely related materials.

Developing an architectural archive will depend on the participation of architects, historic preservationists, and other related researchers to uncover all types of paper records of the built environment. By preserving architectural records, we have the resources to study and interpret changes in our built environment. We can ensure that amid rapid change in the landscape, the origins of our present remain known, affording us continuity with what came before.

The Visual Arts Center is therefore privileged to serve as a resource for the exhibition of archival materials from the holdings of the new Special Collections Department at the NCSU Libraries. Through this collaborative exhibition, "Simplicity, Order, and Discipline: The Work of George Matsumoto from the NCSU Libraries' Special Collections," and future exhibitions of similar material, the Visual Arts Center fulfills an important aspect of its mission as an exhibition space for the design and decorative arts. At the same time, the Visual Arts Center will support the NCSU Libraries in its mission to develop special collections and to make its resources available to students, faculty, and the community in as many ways as possible. □

Charlotte Brown
is director of the
Visual Arts Center at
NC State University.

David Jackson
is interim head of
Special Collections at
the NCSU Libraries.



3

A NEW BREEZE AT MID-CENTURY: MODERN ARCHITECTURE AND NORTH CAROLINA, 1930s TO THE 1960s

When George Matsumoto came to North Carolina in 1948, architecture and building in the United States were undergoing an unprecedented upheaval. Freed of the constraints imposed by war shortages and with an economy more robust than it had been in nearly two decades, forward-thinking architects had the opportunity, it seemed, to reshape the physical and social fabric of the country, liberating it from a tired eclecticism while they revamped its living patterns. By default, the post-war focus of the diffuse architectural movement called Modernism had shifted from Europe to the western hemisphere. Although varied and regionally inflected, Modernism was generally characterized by certain attributes. It was an architecture of volumes defined by the planes of roof and walls; it avoided applied decoration; it relied on a balancing of forms rather than axial symmetry as a means of ordering designs; and, most importantly, its basic tenets called for a fresh approach to every design problem, including new building types and materials.

Modern architecture in the United States from the 1930s

to the early 1950s was centered largely in the urban centers of the Northeast, where Bauhaus figures like Walter Gropius and Marcel Breuer exerted a European influence, and in California, where William Wurster and Harwell Harris had combined Wrightian and European ideas with a regionalist tradition. A third center was the Midwest, where the earlier Prairie School was gradually supplanted by a mix of hard-edged Miesian glass-and-steel architecture and the more lyrical, organically derived forms that Eero Saarinen had extracted from Scandinavian Modernism.

These centers greatly extended and magnified their impact through the medium of magazine photography. A key instance is the Case Study House designs published in *Arts and Architecture* magazine, beginning in 1945. These designs, including houses by Charles Eames and Ralph Rapson (both, like Matsumoto, former students at Cranbrook Academy), exerted a profound influence on the spatial concepts and choice of materials for the single family residence. By synthesizing a variety of foreign and domestic concepts and applying them with a distinctly American freedom and inventiveness, they created an

by David Black

example that was overwhelmingly attractive to young architects.

Although still solidly dominated by the Colonial Revival and other period revival styles, North Carolina in the late 1940s was not without its own modest tradition of Modernism in architecture. The earliest manifestation in the state was the Weyman Biological Laboratory at Southern Highlands, built in 1931 to the design of Oskar Stonorov, in collaboration with Tucker & Howell of Atlanta. The tiny lab was one of a limited number of American buildings chosen for illustration by Hitchcock and Johnson in *The International Style*, and it was published in *Architectural Record*. Being located in a distant area of the state, however, it passed largely unnoticed in North Carolina.

The first substantive influences on North Carolina came through Black Mountain College, near Asheville. Formed in 1933, the experimental college attracted a stream of former Bauhaus professors and students, beginning with Josef Albers, who developed art and architecture programs at Black Mountain that were similar to those at the Bauhaus. In 1937 the college purchased a site on Lake Eden for a new campus and hired Walter Gropius and Marcel Breuer to produce designs for a central complex of buildings whose plan and detailing were in the mainstream of the Modern Movement. Unfortunately, the outbreak of the war in Europe made fund raising difficult, and the plans were put on hold. A. Lawrence Kocher did devise a more Spartan, International Style design for a Studies Building at the college, which was constructed by students and faculty from 1940 to 1944.

Black Mountain College attracted important designers to North Carolina for short periods, but the remote location of the campus limited the impact of their ideas on the state's architectural community. Black Mountain's Bauhaus influence is most tangible in the Dr. Sprinza Weizenblatt House (1940-41) designed by Marcel Breuer, with

Anthony Lord of Asheville as supervising architect. The flat-roofed, duplex house, with its planar, random-ashlar stone walls inset with panels of frame construction containing strip windows and cantilevered wood decks, was in marked contrast to the surrounding period houses of Asheville's Lakeview Park subdivision. Probably the greatest significance of Black Mountain to North Carolina architecture was that it created outside the state a sense of North Carolina as a host to innovation and experimentation.

Beginning in the mid-1930s, a sprinkling of International Style-influenced buildings began to appear in North Carolina towns and cities, primarily houses constructed for relatively wealthy clients who were interested in modern art and architecture and could ignore the social stigma that might come with having a house so different from its neighbors. Perhaps the best, and one of the earliest of these homes, was the Howard Gamble House, built in Durham in 1935. It was designed by W. Stewart Rogers of Asheville, who had studied at Harvard under Walter Bogner, an Austrian architect. As originally constructed, the Gamble House was a composition of one- and two-story stuccoed concrete rectangles with flat roofs, creating much the same feeling as the Masters' houses by Gropius at Dessau. The degree to which the plan was organized on functional lines was revolutionary for North Carolina in the period, particularly in the location of the kitchen at the front of the house.

The most prolific proponent of Modern architecture in North Carolina in the late 1930s and 1940s came in the unlikely form of a classically trained Raleigh architect named William Henley Deitrick (1895-1974). Dietrick's first major commission as an independent architect was the Lombard Gothic Broughton High School in Raleigh in the late 1920s, and through the 1930s and 1940s he continued to produce eclectic designs. However, beginning in 1938 with the Raleigh Little Theatre, his office also carried out a number of commissions around Raleigh that reflected the

PAGE ELEVEN: Addition to Brooks Hall, or "Matsumoto Wing," 1956. School of Design, North Carolina State University. From the University Archives, NCSU Libraries.

influence of the Modern Movement. The 1939 Rex Hospital Nurse's Home, with its flat roofs, rectangular brick massing counterplayed against a vertical entrance bay, strip casement windows, and random-ashlar stone base and terraces, is a relatively clear statement of the basic formal elements of the International Style. His Crosby-Field School (1940) was a radical departure from the typical North Carolina public school of the 1930s. In an age when public schools almost always retained some vestige of the traditional styles, it was completely bare of ornament, with spare, rectangular, flat-roofed brick and concrete forms and an auditorium pushed to the front.

Deitrick also broke from common practice in his designs for the Halifax Court and Chavis Heights housing projects of 1939 to 1940. Devoid of any historical references, the buildings were unornamented, flat-roofed brick boxes with crisp-cut window openings and small entrance porches with flat roofs supported by pipe columns.

The establishment of a School of Design at North Carolina State College (later North Carolina State University) in 1948 under the deanship of Henry Kamphoefner (1907-1990) projected North Carolina, and particularly Raleigh, into the mainstream of the Modern Movement almost overnight. The school's faculty and visitors not only brought the latest European and South American ideas about architecture to North Carolina, but they also introduced the state to the work of America's foremost architect of the early twentieth century, Frank Lloyd Wright, whose influence on North Carolina architecture to that point had been negligible.

Among the earliest works of the new faculty at the School of Design was a series of residences designed for themselves, for other faculty members, and for a small group of clients interested in new ideas in architecture. The first of these houses was strongly influenced by the ideas and works of Wright, but in the early 1950s the design

concepts of Mies van der Rohe, Marcel Breuer, and Eero Saarinen became increasingly important. The houses typically included experiments in structure and in the use of new materials. They are notable for their careful organization of space and definition of roof, wall, and floor planes, as well as a sensitive relation of building to site and a concern for passive climatic control.

Dean Kamphoefner was the first faculty member to build in Raleigh—a house for himself in Country Club Hills, designed and built in 1949-50 in cooperation with George Matsumoto. It was followed by the Fadum House and the Paschal House, both designed by James Fitzgibbon and built in 1950, and the Ritcher House by Matsumoto, constructed in 1951. These residences exhibited Frank Lloyd Wright's romantic, organic approach to architecture, combined with the spare functionalism of his Usonian houses of the 1930s and 1940s.

Contemporary with the Wrightian houses was the more Miesian residence of G. Milton Small, built in 1951. A former student of Mies van der Rohe at the Illinois Institute of Technology, Small designed a series of dwellings during the 1950s and early 1960s that showed a Miesian concern for articulating space with horizontal and vertical planes; for exposed structure; for a classical definition of base, body, and roof; and for the integration of outdoors and indoors through large expanses of glazing.

The most daring of all the houses by School of Design architects was the residence built in 1954 by Eduardo Catalano, head of the architecture department. Called the "House of the Decade" by *House and Home* magazine and publicly praised by Wright, the Catalano house employed a thin, swooping hyperbolic paraboloid roof to span between two buttresses, sheltering a glass-enclosed, column-free living space underneath.

As important as their contributions to residential architecture were, the institutional and commercial buildings

The establishment of a School

of Design at North Carolina State

College (later North Carolina

State University) in 1948 under

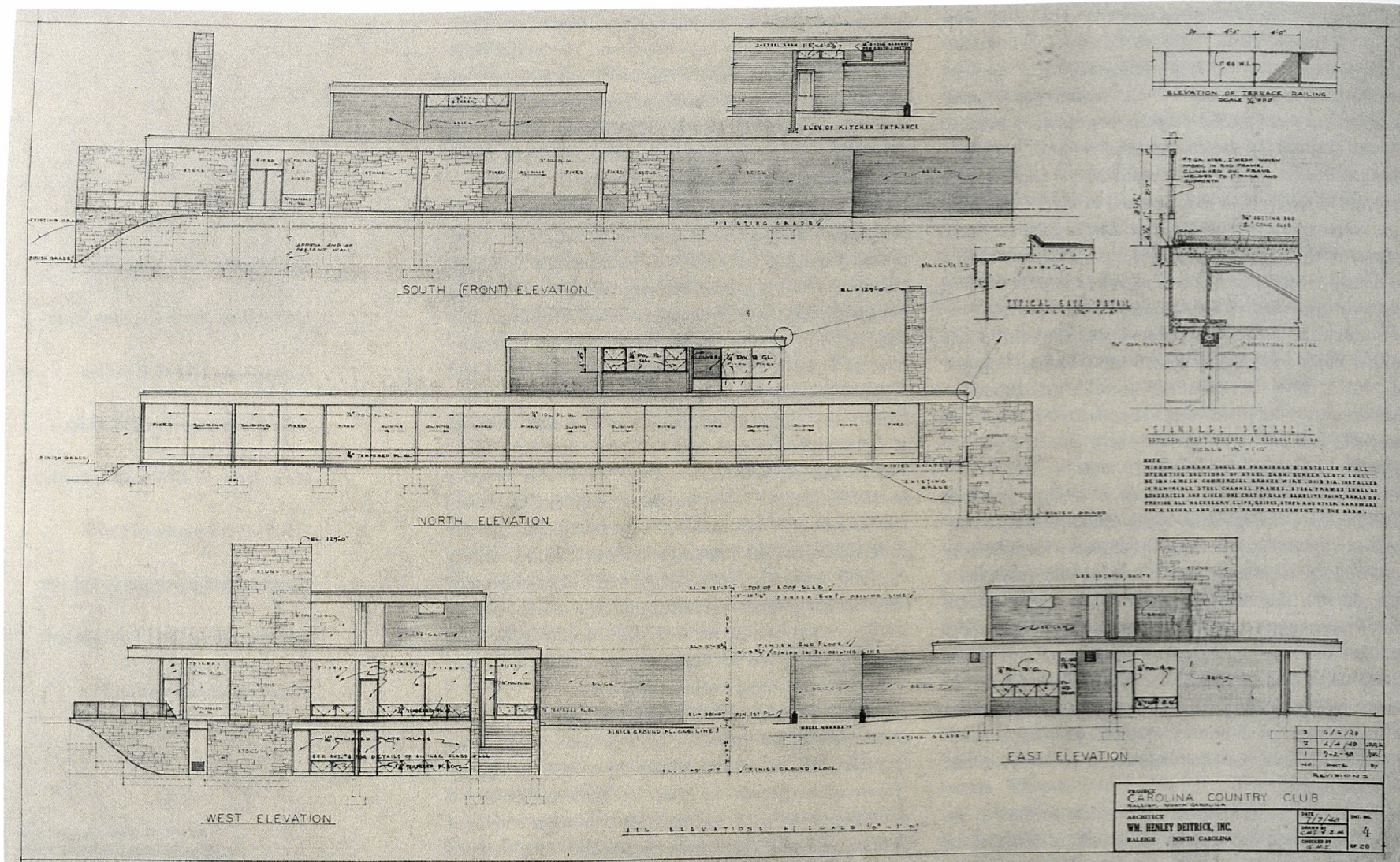
the deanship of Henry Kamphoefner

(1907-1990) projected North

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Movement almost overnight.



designed by faculty or former faculty in the 1950s attracted even more attention. The most celebrated was Dorton Arena, intended as a livestock-judging facility for the state fairgrounds in Raleigh. The building's revolutionary conceptual design by émigré Polish architect Matthew Nowicki called for a network of tension cables strung between intersecting concrete parabolic arches, forming a unique, saddle-shaped roof. Nowicki was in the preliminary design stages of the building when he was killed in a plane crash in 1950, leaving the arena to be completed in 1953 by Deitrick.

Another ground-breaking form pioneered by School of Design architects was the geodesic dome. Buckminster Fuller formulated the basic dome concept while at the University of Chicago and Black Mountain College in the late 1940s, but much of the developmental work was carried out in Raleigh by Fitzgibbon, Duncan Stuart, and a student named T. C. Howard. Geodesics, Incorporated, later Synergetics, engineered and manufactured a wide variety of geodesic applications, from radar domes on the DEW line in Alaska to a series of demountable exhibit buildings used for international exhibitions.

While heading William Henley Deitrick's office in the late 1940s, G. Milton Small introduced European Modernist ideas into the design of the Carolina Country Club's new clubhouse on Glenwood Avenue, begun in 1948. Though somewhat Modernist country clubs had been built in California and the Midwest in the late 1930s, the flat-roofed, steel, glass, brick, and stone form of the Raleigh clubhouse, with its interiors by Matthew and Stanislowa Nowicki, was unique to the Southeast. It was much-admired nationally, being published in *Life* magazine and *Progressive Architecture*.

Some of the most important contributions of the School of Design to North Carolina came in the area of school design. Workshops on modern school design sponsored by

the School of Design and the state's Office of Schoolhouse Planning in 1949 and 1950, and the presence of former faculty member Edward Waugh as the state's schoolhouse planning director, helped steer a massive wave of school construction in the late 1940s and early 1950s toward Modern concepts of space, construction, and materials.

Not all of the Modernist architects in North Carolina had some association with the School of Design. The post-World War II boom in North Carolina's cities created many opportunities for architects, attracting talent from other parts of the country. Pratt-educated, New Jersey native Leif Valand was the principal architect for Cameron Village, begun in 1948 by J. W. York, which would become the Southeast's first regional-scale shopping center. In the 1950s and early 1960s, Valand also designed a number of office buildings around Cameron Village and a new YMCA for Raleigh, all in the International Style. Though born in North Carolina, A. G. Odell, Jr., received his architectural education at Cornell and the École des Beaux Arts. During the 1950s and 1960s, the Modern buildings designed by his firm, including Wilson Junior High School, the Charlotte Auditorium and Arena, and the Charlotte Public Library, won a number of awards.

The construction of the new Legislative Building in Raleigh in 1963 represented in one sense a triumph of Modernism in the state—a major public building embracing the movement and consolidating a consensus for Miesian or European Modernism in at least the state's commercial and institutional architecture. However, the design by New York architect Edward Durrell Stone also reintroduced a degree of symmetry, Neoclassicism and surface decoration to North Carolina's public places. While some of the state's best Modernist building was still to come in the later 1960s, the seeds of Post-Modernism had been sown. □

LEFTHAND PAGE: Carolina Country Club, Raleigh, North Carolina. Elevations and Details, sheet 9 of 11 working drawings, 32" x 20" pencil and ink on tracing paper. William Henley Deitrick, Architect. From the Guy E. Crampton and William Henley Deitrick Drawing Collection, Special Collections Department, NCSU Libraries.

David Black is an architectural historian and architectural intern in Raleigh, North Carolina.



4

"PERFORMANCE COUNTS"

AN ESSAY WRITTEN ON JANUARY 9, 1997

by Robert Burns



Henry Olson

Between the years 1948 and 1961, George Matsumoto taught and practiced architecture in Raleigh. Along with his soon-to-be celebrated colleagues, Henry Kamphoefner, Matthew Nowicki, Duncan Stuart, Eduardo Catalano, James Fitzgibbon, and others, Matsumoto helped establish at North Carolina State a design school of such heightened creative fervor that it quickly gained an international reputation. His constructed work of this period and prize-winning competition designs, widely published and acclaimed, added luster to the school's growing stature and marked Matsumoto as one of the post-war generation's brightest design talents. This exhibition offers a rare opportunity to examine the works of a gifted individual and to assess the nature of his accomplishments and his special contributions to the state of architecture in North Carolina.

How George Matsumoto initially acquired his "gifts" and his determination to exercise them with such zeal in architecture is not clear. Born in California in 1922 of Japanese immigrant parents, he began the study of architecture at

the University of California at Berkeley in 1939. There he encountered a program that had remained steadfastly committed to the principles and methodology of the École des Beaux Arts. He found its formulaic approach and preoccupation with meticulous rendering of the classical orders tedious. After three-and-a-half years, his Berkeley ordeal was abruptly terminated. Like most other Japanese nationals and Japanese-Americans living on the West Coast, the young student together with his family was uprooted and relocated in an internment camp in Arizona.

Whatever emotional impact this experience may have had on the youth, Matsumoto described it without bitterness in a recent interview. He was more fortunate than most. He had applied to several architecture schools, and he selected Washington University in St. Louis to complete his architectural education. This time his luck was better. The educational approach was progressive and his teachers were a great improvement over the classicists he had encountered at Berkeley. In this congenial environment, he advanced rapidly and by graduation had won a fellowship

graduate study at the prestigious Cranbrook Academy of Art. Cranbrook was headed by the famed Swedish architect and planner Eliel Saarinen, who cultivated a spirit of creative freedom in which architecture and the visual arts joined in an easy alliance. It also had a reputation for producing brilliant young designers such as Charles Eames, Harry Bertoia, Ralph Rapson, and Harry Weese. The Cranbrook experience was an indelible one. Matsumoto remembers that Saarinen, while allowing students unusual latitude in their subject of study, was a tough and incisive, but amiable, critic of their designs. To train the student carried within himself the seed of greatness (or mediocrity), while the school could be likened to soil and the teacher to mere fertilizer. So much for academic illusions of grandeur.

After receiving his master's degree in 1945, Matsumoto apprenticed in some of the leading architectural offices of the time—Skidmore Owings and Merrill in Chicago and Saarinen's own office in Birmingham, Michigan. When he joined forces with other Saarinen alumni to establish a partnership in Kansas City, Missouri, in 1947, while on a motor tour of the American Southwest, Matsumoto had his first encounter with Henry Kamphoefner at the School of Architecture in Norman, Oklahoma. The man who was to become the founding dean of the School of Design was so impressed with the young Matsumoto and his traveling companion, Edward (Terry) Waugh, a transplanted South African, that he immediately offered them teaching positions on the architecture faculty at Norman. A year later Kamphoefner was named dean at NC State, and he brought with him to North Carolina a cadre of brilliant young faculty from Oklahoma, including Matsumoto and Waugh.

When George Matsumoto and his colleagues arrived in Raleigh in fall 1948, North Carolina was ripe for a design

revolution. The nation as a whole was readjusting to a peacetime economy, and the state of North Carolina, guided by canny political and educational leadership, was seeking to position itself as an enlightened, progressive beachhead in the old South. Its furniture and textiles industries were becoming major actors on the national economic scene. The new School of Design, with enthusiastic backing on campus, within the architecture profession, and in the state legislature, would play a critical role by producing graduates equipped with the necessary creative and technological skills for this new industrialized era.

The leaders of the new school seized the opportunity and set out on a broad agenda of design innovation. Dean Kamphoefner supplemented the talents of his young faculty by initiating a program of distinguished visitors who came to the school for public lectures and extended workshops. In the early years it included such international luminaries as Frank Lloyd Wright, Walter Gropius, Mies van der Rohe, and Buckminster Fuller. Noted cultural historian Lewis Mumford was a part-time faculty member at the time and helped set the school's philosophical directions. The students of the school published a journal of architectural ideas that carried the school's standard around the world. Faculty and students began to capture major design competitions, which further burnished the school's reputation.

Most dramatically, the hoped-for alliances with the state's economic and industrial forces came to early fruition in the planning and construction of a remarkable livestock judging pavilion at the North Carolina State Fairgrounds—the Dorton Arena (called by one wag the "Paraboleum"). This exhilarating structure with its bold intersecting arches and saddle-shaped suspension roof captivated onlookers and earned for its designers, principally Polish-born architect

His constructed work of this period and prize-winning competition designs, widely published and acclaimed, added luster to the school's growing stature and marked Matsumoto as one of the post-war generation's brightest design talents.

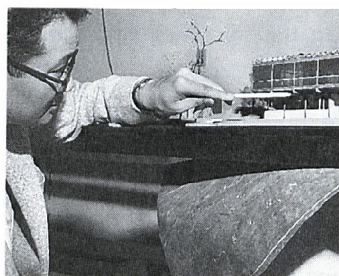
LEFTHAND PAGE: George Matsumoto (far right) as a student at the Cranbrook Academy of Art, Bloomfield Hills, Michigan, c. 1944. Eliel Saarinen is pictured to the immediate left of Matsumoto. At the far left are students Fuad Hasson (left) and Charles Granger (right). Negative Number AA-435. Courtesy of Cranbrook Archives.

LEFTHAND PAGE: George

Matsumoto examines a model of his residence in Raleigh, North Carolina, 1958. Matsumoto's residence was selected for display at the U.S. Pavilion of the 1958 World's Fair in Brussels. Matsumoto chose this model to be exhibited at the World's Fair.

RIGHTHAND PAGE: Residence for Kimi and George Matsumoto. Plan and Details, attachment to sheet 2 of 11 working drawings, 24" x 18" pencil on tracing paper, 15 November 1952, George Matsumoto, AIA, architect.

RIGHTHAND PAGE INSET: View of the rear porch. Residence for Kimi and George Matsumoto, Raleigh, North Carolina, 1956. This feature of Matsumoto's design was repeated in the Julian Residence in Chapel Hill (1954) and the Poland Residence in Raleigh (1954).



"I always used to look to the industrial buildings for inspiration in terms of advances in architecture . . . they're [not] concerned with any romantic notion of what a building should look like, but [instead they are concerned with] its performance. Performance counts."

Matthew Nowicki, and for the school itself instantaneous celebrity. (Tragically, Nowicki, the first head of the school's architecture department, was killed in a plane crash in 1950 and never saw his vision completed.)

These events and achievements catapulted the school and its faculty into public awareness. Here was a freshness of vision and vitality of spirit that had never existed before.

At another, less public level, the new school began to reshape the creative landscape within the state. Faculty members—architects, painters, sculptors, and landscape architects—steeped in the principles of the modern movement, led a quiet revolution in the design of public and private buildings, in art galleries and exhibitions, and in public spaces and gardens. At the forefront of this revolution was the youthful Matsumoto. Only twenty-six years old and three years out of graduate school when he arrived, he was to create a body of architectural work in the ensuing thirteen years that has rarely if ever been equaled in this state's history. As a teacher he had a profound influence on a large group of graduates, many of whom now head North Carolina's most successful architectural firms.

The ideas that mattered most to George Matsumoto as a designer and as a teacher

were those that served as the focal themes of the modern movement: strict adherence to functional demands, clarity of plan, structural logic and expression, economy of means, perfection of detail, and the rationalization of construction processes tending toward industrialization. He explained, "I always used to look to the industrial build-

ings for inspiration in terms of advances in architecture . . . they're [not] concerned with any romantic notion of what a building should look like, but [instead they are concerned with] its performance. *Performance counts.*" [Emphasis added.]¹

These were the founding principles of Modernism, hammered out in the workshops of the Bauhaus and in the offices of the European avant-garde in the 1920s, imported to America in the 1930s and 1940s, and accepted as dogma in virtually all the leading architectural offices and schools by the early 1950s. Its most rigorous practitioner was the German-born master Mies van der Rohe, whose American work set the standard for the best Modernist work of the period. Matsumoto acknowledges a deep admiration for Mies whose work he knew intimately. With Mies, Matsumoto shares a quality that few of the master's followers can claim—a faultless sense of proportion. This characteristic distinguishes a Mies or a Matsumoto design from the multitude of superficially similar projects, adding an esthetic dimension that the more pragmatic Modernist principles failed to acknowledge.

The other modern architect whose work Matsumoto's most closely resembles is Marcel Breuer. Breuer, a Hungarian who both studied and taught at the Bauhaus, immigrated to the U.S. in the late 1930s. Before moving on to large commercial and institutional commissions later in his career, Breuer designed numerous innovative and elegant modern residences. He invented, or certainly popularized, the "butterfly" roof and the "bi-nuclear" house. His elevated long houses, hovering over a masonry basement, offered a compelling model that many architects, including Matsumoto, incorporated in their own design repertoires.

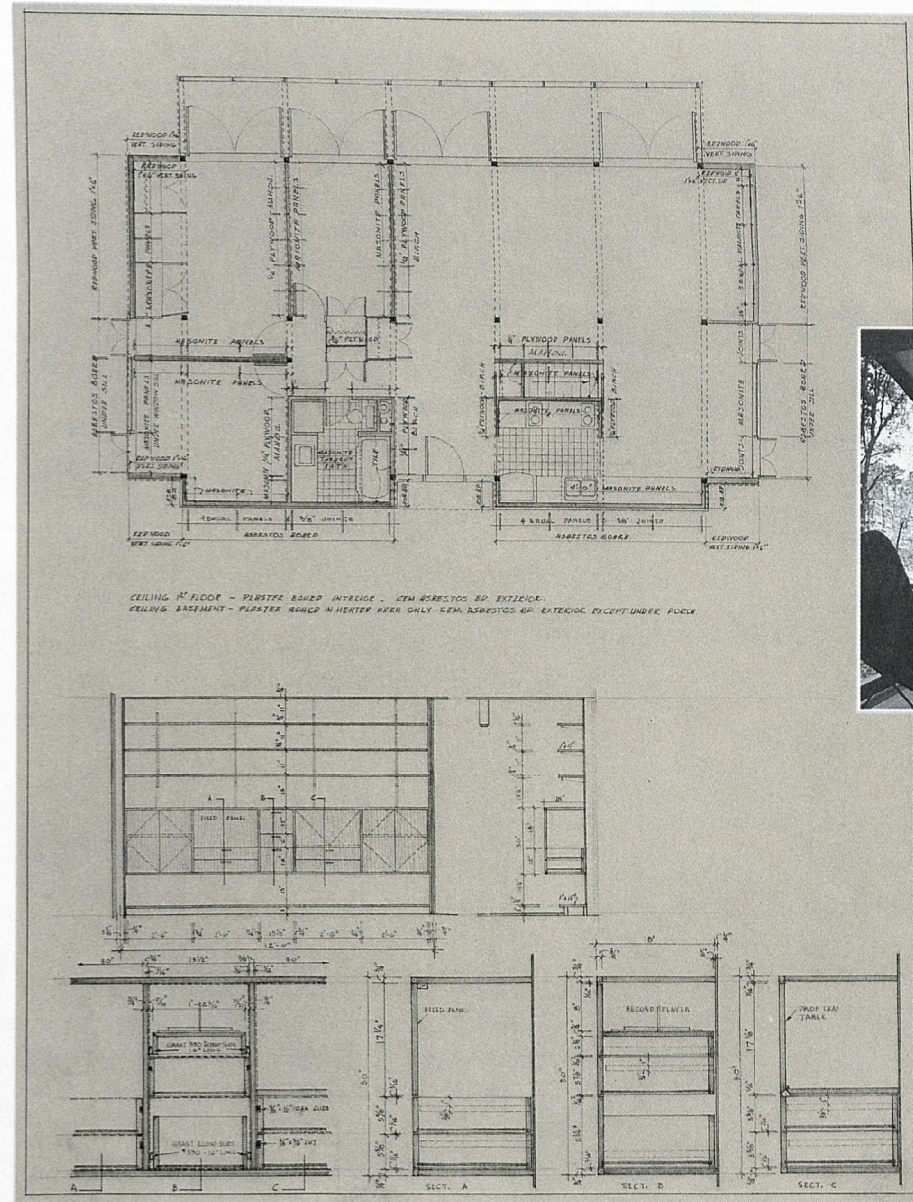
It should be understood that in the late 1940s Modernist design principles had not been fully tested, and the language—the visual expression—of most "modern" build-

ings of the period was schematic and unrefined. Only a small number of architects here and abroad such as Matsumoto were fluent in the new style and able to express in their designs the emerging patterns of contemporary life with conviction and refinement.

The ideas that guided George Matsumoto's own design practice were the foundation of his teaching as well. He advocated rigorous training in design graphics (his own drawings are exquisite) and taught courses in construction materials and processes. The latter offered him the chance to introduce students to the concepts of industrialized construction, modularity, and materials efficiency that meant so much to him.

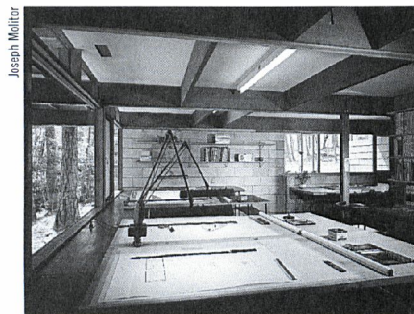
As a studio critic he was a formidable figure—tall, formal, and graceful. He rarely betrayed his emotions or engaged students on a personal level. No hint of insecurity or uncertainty darkened his visage: he appeared ageless, confident, totally focused. As a result, the atmosphere in the studio was business-like if not subdued, and students, boisterous in other situations, kept their eyes on their drawing boards or warily appraised the approaching figure of the professor as he moved about the studio. (Many of us were later to discover the warm and engaging personality that lay behind that seemingly opaque exterior. He is well known as a generous host and his parties are the stuff of legend.) His critiques were clear and concise, and his expectations of his students were unusually high. That we recognized what a superb designer he himself was added weight to his comments.

For many students Matsumoto's fourth-year studio, the gateway to the final year and then on to professional life, represented a daunting challenge. Quite frankly, some were not up to the challenge. As they dropped by the way, Matsumoto acquired a reputation as the screen through which the inadequate could not hope to pass. It is remark-



¹ George Matsumoto Interview March 20, 1996. Papers and Drawings of George Matsumoto, FAIA. Special Collections Department, NCSU Libraries.

LEFTHAND PAGE: View of the lower level studio, c. 1956. Residence for Kimi and George Matsumoto, Raleigh, North Carolina.



Joseph Molitor

able how many survivors of this rigorous experience cite him as their most influential professor, the one whose teachings have proved the most lasting and valuable in their professional lives.

He taught even more effectively by example. The constant stream of prize-winning designs, many built in the immediate area and published in the journals we were devouring, spoke directly to us and offered compelling guidance on the making of a true modern architecture. It was not uncommon for the building sites of Matsumoto's current projects to be overrun with architecture students on weekends.

The suburban house for young families was Matsumoto's primary source of commissions during his Raleigh years. He acquired a reputation as an architect attentive to the needs and lifestyle of his clients and able to produce economical, highly efficient designs. None satisfied these expectations more exactly than did the house he designed for his own growing family. Built on a sloping site on Runnymede Road, the structure comprises a cantilevered upper volume

houses are built nowadays that make a major contribution to architecture as an art. This, however, is such a house."

His own house represents one form-type—the elevated house consisting of a dominant upper volume in which the main living spaces are located and a suppressed lower floor accommodating secondary functions—to which Matsumoto was drawn, particularly when designing for a sloping site. Other notable examples include the George Poland House (Raleigh), the Milton and Virginia Julian House (Chapel Hill), and the house for Mr. and Mrs. Gregory Poole (Raleigh), designed with G. Milton Small. A second type that he explored with numerous variations is the compact pavilion, one-storied or split-level, in which masonry walls are employed to extend the house into the landscape to form terraces and courtyards. Prominent examples include the E. K. Thrower House (Greensboro), the E. M. Lipman House (Richmond, Virginia), and the K. F. Adams House (Roanoke Rapids).

Matsumoto's work was not limited to custom houses. He also designed numerous low-cost and experimental houses for design competitions and building industry groups.

AUTHOR'S NOTE: At the conclusion of my architectural studies at NC State, I received a fellowship for advanced study in Paris. On my arrival in the fabled City of Lights in August 1957, one of my first sights was that of the Matsumoto House featured on the cover of *Architectural Record*, prominently displayed in the window of a Left Bank architectural bookstore.

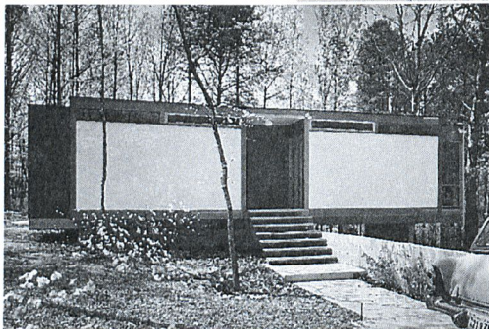
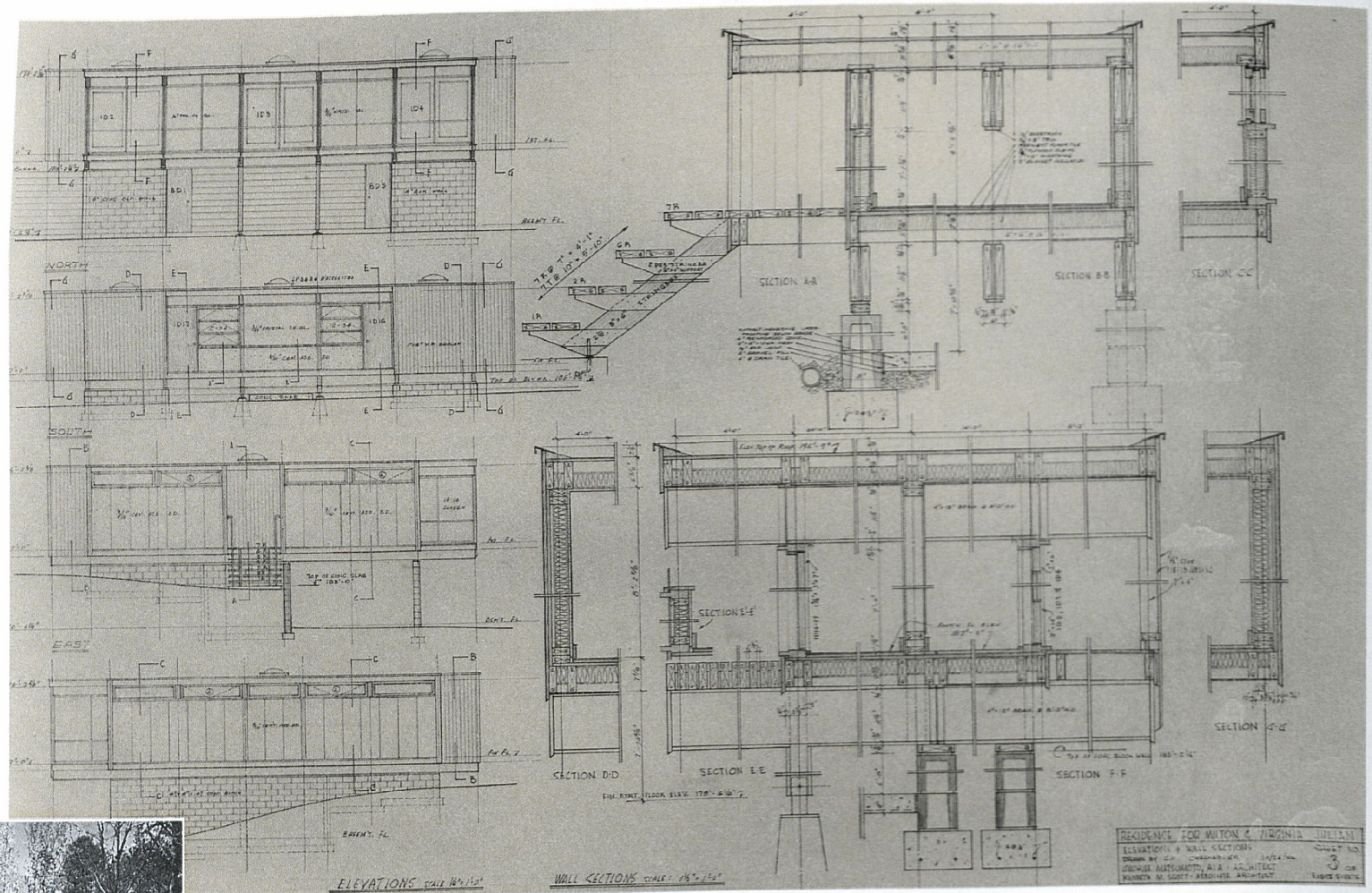
containing the residential quarters, which appears to float freely above the recessed studio basement. The precise articulation of the post-and-beam structural grid, infilled with light panels and glazed openings, suggests the spatial order of the interior. The plan itself is a work of perfection: one cannot imagine any change that would not lessen its effect. The rich wood trim and plywood finishes throughout, for which every joint and detail has been considered, gives the whole the impression of fine, hand-crafted cabinetry. And, astonishingly, it was built for \$9 a square foot! Little wonder that *Architectural Record* could state in 1957: "Not many

Some were aimed at exploiting the emerging technologies of "all-electric" convenience features, and others, at the potentials of newer building products. One of his many prize-winning designs was a charming, gable-roofed lake-side cottage for the Douglas Fir Plywood Association, which was billed as a "low-cost Dream House" when published in *Woman's Day*.

A persistent quality of Matsumoto's design approach that links him more closely to the present than to the 1950s was his sensitivity to the place of the building in the landscape. His subtle adjustment of the structure to the

RIGHTHAND PAGE: Rear and side elevation. Residence for Milton and Virginia Julian, Chapel Hill, North Carolina. c. 1956.



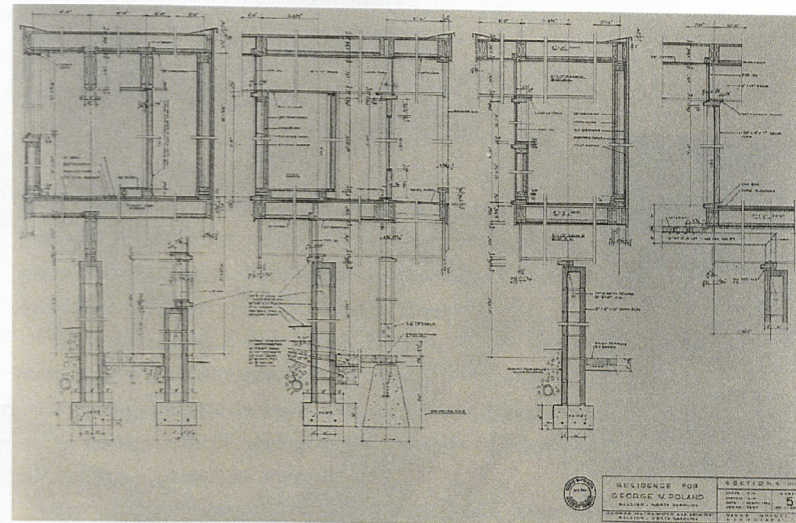
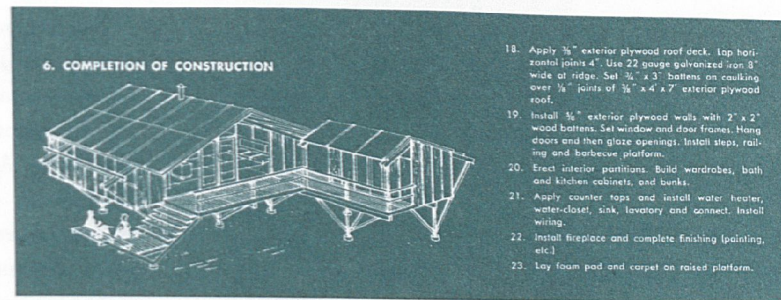


Joseph Muller

topography, the incorporation of gardens and terraces as extensions of the interiors, and capturing views of nature from elevated living spaces reveal a deep appreciation for the environmental context.

His commercial and institutional work, less extensive than his residential output, was nevertheless noteworthy. He undertook planning studies and designed office buildings and academic facilities, frequently collaborating with other architects on larger projects. The Gregory Poole Equipment Company, a showroom and service structure for heavy equipment that he designed with his friend Milton Small, received several design awards in 1955 and 1956. With its exposed steel frame, large plate-glass show-windows, and buff-colored brick, it presented an uncompromising image of Modernism and reflected an esthetic debt to Mies van der Rohe, with whom Small had studied.

His 1955 addition to Brooks Hall, designed as a consultant to F. Carter Williams and Associates, won recognition as a sympathetic modern addition to the older Neoclassical revival structure. This three-story structure, which houses studios, offices, and workshops of the School of Design, is today referred to as the Matsumoto Wing or often simply as "Matsumoto"—an almost unconscious tribute to the architect whose early contributions had such a significant impact on the school he served for thirteen years.



LEFTHAND PAGE: Residence for Milton and Virginia Julian, Chapel Hill, North Carolina. Elevations and wall sections, sheet 3 of 8 working drawings, 36" x 24" pencil on tracing paper, 26 October 1954. George Matsumoto, AIA, architect, Kenneth M. Scott, associate architect.

LEFTHAND PAGE INSET: View of front elevation. Residence for Milton and Virginia Julian, Chapel Hill, North Carolina. c. 1956.

TOP RIGHTHAND PAGE: Instructions for construction. Vacation cabin for Douglas Fir Plywood Association, negative print. c. 1958.

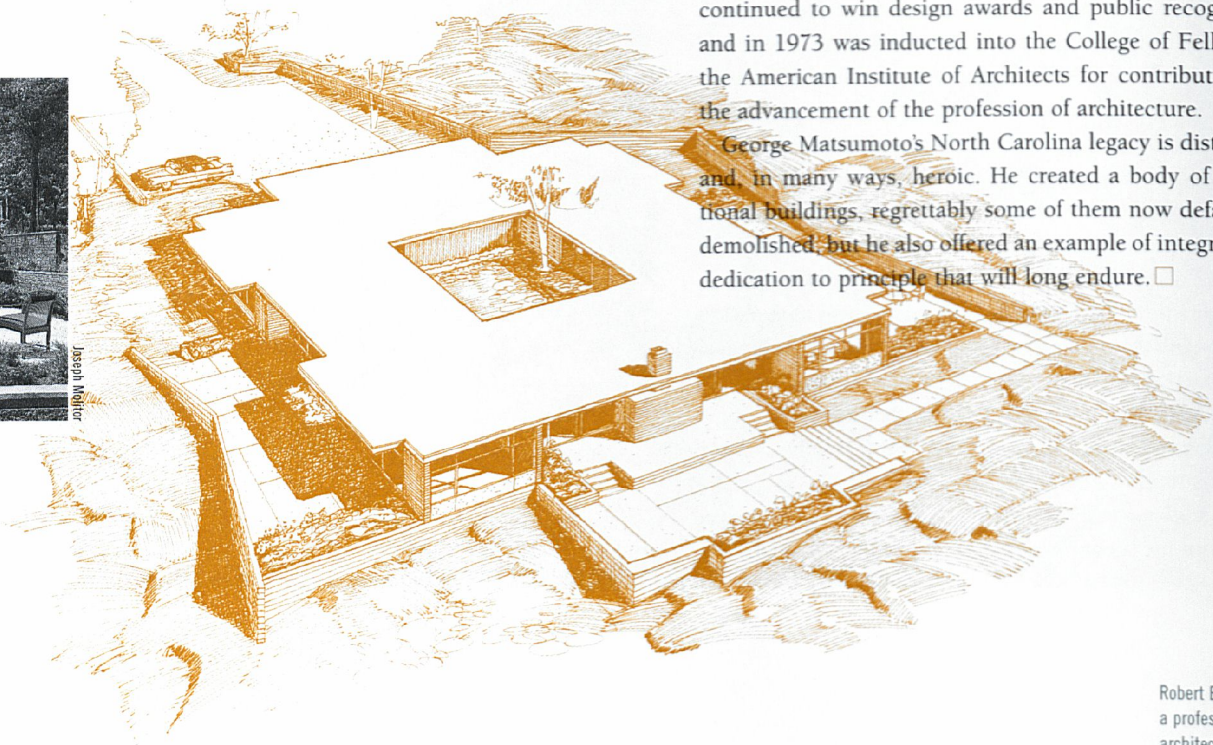
LOWER RIGHTHAND PAGE: Residence for George W. Poland, Raleigh, North Carolina. Details, sheet 4 of 10 working drawings, 36" x 24" pencil and ink on tracing paper, 10 November 1954. George Matsumoto, AIA, architect, Wayne Koontz, associate.

BELOW: Residence for Mr. and Mrs. E. K. Thrower, Sedgefield (Greensboro), North Carolina. Aerial perspective, ink and pencil on tracing paper, undated c. 1958.

BELOW INSET: View of patio. Residence for Mr. and Mrs. E. K. Thrower, Sedgefield (Greensboro), North Carolina. c. 1960.



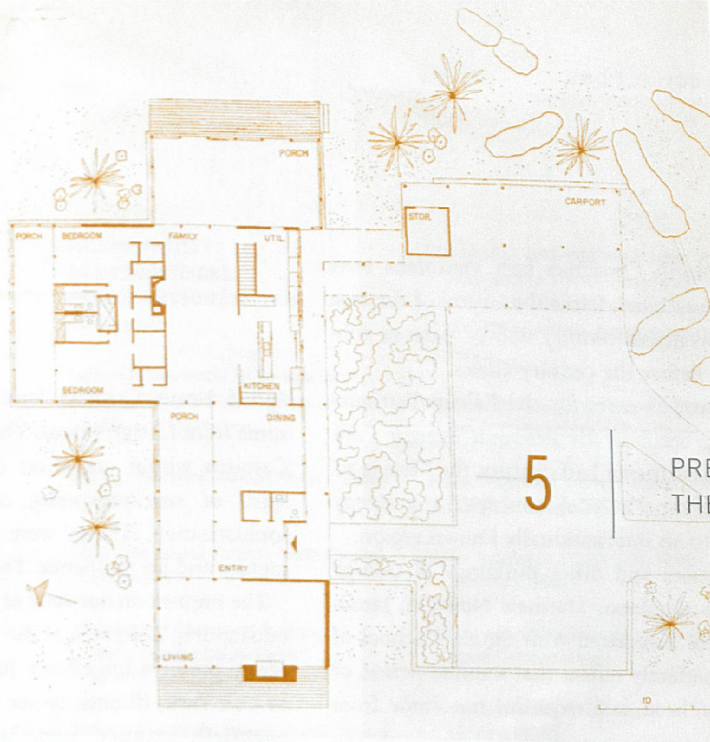
Joseph Muller



When George Matsumoto returned to the California Bay area, he embarked on a new architectural practice and on a second teaching career at the school where he had begun his professional education, the University of California at Berkeley. After six years he withdrew from teaching, as his practice demanded his full attention. His portfolio reveals a diversified practice that included commercial and office structures, research laboratories, housing projects, swimming pools and other recreation facilities, industrial buildings (the building type to which he had once looked to for inspiration), and a number of private residences. He continued to win design awards and public recognition, and in 1973 was inducted into the College of Fellows of the American Institute of Architects for contributions to the advancement of the profession of architecture.

George Matsumoto's North Carolina legacy is distinctive and, in many ways, heroic. He created a body of exceptional buildings, regrettably some of them now defaced or demolished; but he also offered an example of integrity and dedication to principle that will long endure. □

Robert Burns is a professor of architecture at the School of Design, North Carolina State University.



PRESERVING BOLD INNOVATIONS IN ARCHITECTURE: THE LEGACY OF THE PAINTED LADIES

by J. Myrick Howard

Right now, Raleigh's post-World War II architecture has to be high on anyone's list of endangered historic properties. "Historic?" you may ask. "Yes, historic," I would reply in a heartbeat. "Endangered?" Absolutely.

Why are these early modern houses at risk of extinction? Simple. Standards have changed. Inside, their spaces, especially kitchens and bathrooms, are small by today's standards and seem cramped to more affluent home purchasers. Some of their innovative materials have failed and replacement is easier than repair. Because they are sited handsomely on large suburban lots, they have become known as "tear downs" in the real estate business—houses worth more for their land than for their value as homes.

And many would reject the modern buildings of the 1950s as "ugly," not worthy of preservation. However, "ugly" is subjective. Its definition changes dramatically with time. A few years ago, in a meeting where the remodeling plans for Cameron Village Shopping Center were being presented, I suggested that the owners should save themselves lots of money and boldly restore the original

1950s appearance rather than cover it up with plastic. From the response I received, you would have thought that I was from the moon. The buildings were ugly, I was told. Anything would improve their looks. Even plastic.

I have heard it said that people hate what their parents built, love what their grandparents built, and revere what their great-grandparents built. We may be too close in time to the houses, offices, and shopping centers of the 1940s and 1950s to appreciate them.

Why should it matter to a preservationist? After all, these buildings haven't even reached the fifty-year threshold to be placed on the National Register of Historic Places.

They represent an important era in our state's history and in its architectural history.

I vividly remember seeking approval in 1979 from Preservation/North Carolina's board for an option on a flamboyant 1885 Victorian house, and having older board members grumble about why we were trying to save it. They saw nothing historic about the house, and besides, it was just plain ugly. They had grown up in a house like that, and so it wasn't all that old.



PAGE TWENTY-FIVE: Preliminary plan for the Poole Residence, Raleigh, North Carolina, c. 1958.

Just as many of North Carolina's best Victorians were torn down before I was born, I fear that many of the best houses of the mid-twentieth century will be gone or substantially remodeled before the century closes.

The 1950s were critical years for the Raleigh/Durham/Chapel Hill area. The seeds of the Research Triangle Park were being sown. In less than a half century, the "Triangle" has grown from an experimental concept in a sleepy Southern backwater to an internationally known region.

The Modernist houses and other buildings of George Matsumoto, Eduardo Catalano, Matthew Nowicki, James Fitzgibbon, and others associated with the new School of Design at NC State perfectly reflect that seminal period of our region's history. These architects did not come from

"good North Carolina families." They came from afar, some from foreign places. They made their mark on North Carolina within one short decade, ushering in a bright spirit of new prosperity, optimism, and cosmopolitan sophistication. Things were changing in North Carolina, rapidly and for the better. Their buildings tell that story.

The imprint on our state of George Matsumoto and other outstanding designers of the period deserve the most concerted preservation efforts. Just as thousands of visitors go to Oak Park, Illinois, to see the architecture of the early-twentieth century, someday thousands will come to Raleigh to see the modern homes of the 1950s and 1960s, if only they survive. □

J. Myrick Howard is executive director of the Historic Preservation Foundation of North Carolina, Inc.

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LIST OF PROJECTS AND COMMISSIONS GEORGE MATSUMOTO, FAIA 1948-1961

Demonstration House for General Electric
Corp., Raleigh, North Carolina (1949)
w/ H. L. Kamphoefner

Ritcher Residence, Raleigh, North Carolina
(1949-1950)

Poole Lake House, Raleigh, North Carolina
(1949-1950)

Kamphoefner Residence, Raleigh,
North Carolina (1949-1950)
w/ H. L. Kamphoefner

Jackson Residence, Raleigh, North Carolina
(1951) w/ Holloway, Weber & Reeves

Matsumoto Residence, Raleigh, North
Carolina (1952-1954)

Taylor Residence (project), Chapel Hill,
North Carolina (1952)

Kelly Residence, Southern Pines, North
Carolina (1952)

Aretakis Residence, Raleigh, North Carolina
(1953)

Total Electric Demonstration Houses for
Westinghouse Electric Corporation
(1953) Little Rock, Arkansas; Jackson,
Mississippi; Atlanta, Georgia; Tampa,
Florida

Johnson Company Tract Homes, Glen Ellen,
Illinois (1953-1954) w/ Gyo Obata

Weber Residence, Raleigh, North Carolina
(1954) w/ William Weber

Julian Residence, Chapel Hill, North
Carolina (1954)

Poland and Walser Residence, Raleigh,
North Carolina (1954)

Hicks Residence, Rocky Mount, North
Carolina (1955)

Koontz Residence, Raleigh, North Carolina
(c. 1955)

Gregory Poole Equipment Company,
Raleigh, North Carolina (1955)
w/ G. Milton Small, Jr.

School of Design Addition, North Carolina
State University, Raleigh, North Carolina
(1956) w/ F. Carter Williams

Community Church of Chapel Hill, Chapel
Hill, North Carolina (1957) w/ C. D. Elliot

College Union (Erdahl-Cloyd Wing) Interiors,
North Carolina State University, Raleigh,
North Carolina (1957)

Paschal Studio Addition, Durham, North
Carolina (1957)

Lipman Residence, Richmond, Virginia
(1957)

Vacation Cabin, Douglas Fir Plywood
Association, Takoma, Washington (1958)

Adams Residence, Roanoke Rapids, North
Carolina (1958)

Thrower Residence, Greensboro, North
Carolina (1958)

IBM Office Buildings, Winston-Salem, North
Carolina (1958), Raleigh, North Carolina
(1961)

Dewitt Residence, Chapel Hill, North
Carolina (1958-1959)

Pitt Medical Associates Office Building,
Greenville, North Carolina (1958-1959)

Poole Residence, Raleigh, North Carolina
(1959) w/ G. Milton Small, Jr., consultant

Tate Residence (project), Winston-Salem,
North Carolina (1959)

Hudson Residence, Richmond, Virginia
(1959)

Pi Kappa Alpha/Sigma Phi Epsilon Fraternity
Houses, North Carolina State University
(1960)

Watkins Residence, Raleigh, North Carolina
(1960-1961)

Projects and Commissions

Acknowledgments

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