



THREE SPECULATIVE HOUSES (1940)

One of the many desirable residential streets in Inglewood, is West Ellis Avenue. Much of the Avenue's charm comes from the three modernist houses designed by Rudolph Schindler.

Schindler believed that the inside and outside of structures should blend into each other, and that gardens and natural light should be incorporated into residential designs. Schindler was very interested in building affordable housing. He looked for creative ways to use inexpensive materials. He adapted wood frame construction into what is now called 'Schindler Frame' construction. He frequently used the same materials inside and outside. For instance, plywood was used for outside walls and built-in furniture inside many of his homes. For the three speculative houses, built without a prospective buyer, Richard Lind acted as the project architect for Schindler.

Architect Stephen Ehrlich bought one of the West Ellis Avenue houses in 2009. Ehrlich oversaw a complete restoration of the building. The house is now owned by Ehrlich's daughter, Onna Ehrlich-Bell, and her husband, Joel Bell. The adjacent house, purchased by Kali Nikitas and Richard Shelton, uses the same landscape architect, Stefan Hammerschmidt, as the Ehrlich-Bell home. He removed existing plantings and created a more natural desert-type landscape.

Original Architects

Rudolph Schindler + Richard Lind

Renovation Architect

Steven Ehrlich Architects

Landscape Architect

Stefan Hammerschmidt Landscape Design

Awards

California Preservation Foundation Award 2010

423, 429, 433 West Ellis Avenue
Inglewood, California

Schindler also designed several iconic area houses, including the Lovell Beach House in Newport Beach, California.

Rudolph Schindler

Rudolph Schindler was born in Vienna, Austria in 1887. Studying architecture there, he was influenced by the architects Otto Wagner, and Adolf Loos. His teachers believed in modernity, using modern materials and methods, not historical styles, as the source of contemporary architectural form. In 1911, Schindler discovered American architect Frank Lloyd Wright's Wasmuth portfolio, which had been published in 1910. This two-volume folio of 100 lithographs of Wright's work showed Schindler, an architecture of space more advanced than that of his teachers. Schindler decamped for Chicago in 1914, hoping to work for Wright

In 1918 Schindler was hired by Wright's firm as they started the Imperial Hotel commission in Tokyo. Wright, relying on Schindler, left the younger architect in charge of the Chicago office during his travels to Japan. Two years later, Wright sent Schindler to Los Angeles to supervise construction of his most important American commission of the time, the Hollyhock house for oil heiress Aline Barnsdall.

For Schindler, theory and practice were intimately connected. He wrote, "The twentieth century is the first to abandon construction as a source for architectural form." Advances in materials and methods enabled architects to design space; Schindler wrote that in the future the architect would control "space, climate, light, mood," creating what he called a 'Space Architecture'.

Schindler built his own home on Kings Road in Los Angeles. His 1922 concrete and redwood structure combined radical integration of interior and exterior spaces with an equally radical social program of four adults living as equals. Now known as the Schindler House, it holds the MAK Center for Art and Architecture.

Schindler never returned to Vienna, concentrating on his architectural practice in LA. He designed around 500 projects. Nearly 150 residences, mainly single family houses, were built. Rudolph Schindler died in 1953.



Steven Ehrlich

Steven Ehrlich started his architectural practice in Culver City following six years in the Peace Corps in Morocco. His noted buildings in southern California include the Stoneview Nature Center in Baldwin Hills and the Westwood Branch Library. Other significant works include the John Roll Federal Courthouse in Arizona, and the competition winning entry for the Parliament Building Complex in Kuwait for the Federal National Council. Ehrlich has lectured and taught widely at schools including the University of Southern California, the Southern California Institute of Architecture (SCI-Arc), and Yale University. Ehrlich's firm won the 2015 National AIA Firm Award.

Stefan Hammerschmidt

Stefan Hammerschmidt is a landscape architect based in Venice, California. His practice is primarily residential, with an emphasis on sustainability.