



Women and the Making of the Modern House

By Alice Friedman

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“If you want a book about architecture which is informative, provocative, offers new paradigms on the way we describe architecture, is both soundly academic, and as compelling to read as a good novel, look no further.” —Kester Ratenbury

In this groundbreaking book, Alice T. Friedman investigates how women patrons of architecture were essential catalysts for innovation in domestic architectural design. By looking at such iconic houses as Hollyhock House (Frank Lloyd Wright), the Truus Schröder House (Gerrit Rietveld), the Edith Farnsworth House (Ludwig Mies van der Rohe), the Constance Perkins House (Richard Neutra), and the Vanna Venturi House (Robert Venturi), she explores the challenges that unconventional attitudes and ways of life presented to architectural thinking—and to the architects themselves. Detailed portraits—fashioned from personal letters, diaries, office records, photo albums, and interviews—of the clients and architects reveal the private passions and struggles that women and men of talent and creativity brought to these projects, and suggest the rich cultural and artistic context in which each house was created. The works considered are thus brought to life through the people who commissioned, designed, and lived in them.

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Editorial Review

Amazon.com Review

Social and architectural historian Alice T. Friedman asks the question, "Why is it that an unexpectedly large number of the most significant and original houses built in Europe and America in the 20th century--houses that stand out not only as examples of modern design but also for their innovative approaches to domestic space--were commissioned by female clients?" She answers with a penetrating look at houses created by well-known client-architect pairs, such as Sarah Stein and Le Corbusier, Edith Farnsworth and Mies van der Rohe, and more than one independent woman who irritated Frank Lloyd Wright by staying in charge of a project. Friedman writes with brilliance and depth about these pairs' shared ideals, their frequent disputes, and the monuments of modernism that resulted from their complex relationships. --*Margaret Moorman*

Review

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About the Author

Alice T. Friedman is Grace Slack McNeil Professor of the History of American Art and Director of the McNeil Program for Studies in American Art at Wellesley College in Massachusetts. She is author of *House and Household in Elizabethan England: Wollaton Hall and the Willoughby Family*.

Users Review

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