



Living Modern: A Seminar for Homeowners and Modern Design Enthusiasts

Saturday, November 14, 2015

Sponsored by Phillips Fine Paint and Design

9:00 – 9:30 Registration and refreshments

9:30 – 9:45 **Introductory remarks**

**Rebecca Migdal, Guest Curator, *Middlesex County Modern*,
Concord Museum**

9:45 – 10:30 **Maintaining Modernism: Your (now-historic) Modern House**

Gary Wolf, Architect

This session will explore issues involved in preserving, updating, and expanding modern houses. These innovative buildings can be seen as precursors of today's interests in sustainability, "green" architecture, and the "not-so-big" house movement. Yet, at the same time, they may need to be made more energy efficient, may need updating, and may need to be expanded. An overview of these issues will include examples of different ways to add on to modern homes while retaining their essential characteristics.

10:30 – 10:45 Break

10:45 – 11:30 **Designed Nature: Landscapes of the Modernist Era**

Lisa Giersbach, Landscape Architect

How has our imaging of nature and landscape changed over the last century, and what did it mean to the modernist aesthetic of home and garden?

The modernist landscape is often represented as "nature untouched." Yet, as carefully as modernist houses aimed to situate themselves seamlessly into the landscape, so too

was the landscape designed to receive and even to extend them into the site. Carefully choreographed relationships of interior rooms to exterior living spaces, the modernist landscape is often unrecognized as a complicated layering of constructed spaces and systems.

11:30 – 12:15 **Color Trends in the 20th Century: Sources and Palettes**

**Sally Zimmerman, Senior Preservation Services Manager,
Historic New England**

The use of color inside and outside the 20th-century home reflects changing patterns of taste and consumption and a tension between “modern” and “traditional” design. Trend-setters included avocational and professional practitioners in interior design, architecture, museum curation, and color theory whose work and impacts will be illustrated using period color palettes and museum property sources for period color applications.

12:15 – 1:00 Lunch (included)

1:00 – 1:30 **Tour *Middlesex County Modern* with Guest Curator**

Rebecca Migdal

1:30 – 2:15 **Updating a Mid-Century Modern Home for Today's Lifestyle**

Diane Burcz, Interior Designer

Diane and her family were fortunate to find a mid-century modern home that retained all its original and unique details. Diane will discuss her family's experience updating their mid-century modern gem, touching on the features of mid-century modern homes that make them so appropriate to the way we live today, as well as some of the design features that might need updating.

2:15 – 3:00 **Textiles for Modern Interiors, Past and Present**

Susan Ward, Curator and Consultant

The post-war years saw a revolution in the design of furnishing textiles, and in the ways that textiles were used in modern architectural spaces. This talk will discuss the evolution of modernist textile design from the 1930s to the 1970s, and will also present some historically appropriate textile options for present-day homeowners and furniture collectors.

3:00 – 3:30

Millennial Housing

Jon Staff and Pete Davis, Millennial Housing Lab

Millennial Housing Lab is a startup that builds tiny houses, places them on rural land, and rents them out by the night to city dwellers looking to get away and test drive tiny house living. This session will share more about the renewed interest in housing innovation by touching on all sides of the housing experience: architecture, neighborhood design, financing, regulation, and community-building.

3:30

Conclusion

Speaker biographies

Diane Burcz is a Newton, Mass.-based interior designer who offers comprehensive design services to residential clients. She believes in thoughtful kitchen, bath, and interior design based on how clients live in and enjoy their spaces.

Pete Davis is a Harvard Law School student and the co-founder of the Millennial Housing Lab, an action lab founded by Harvard Business, Law, and Design students with the mission of developing and realizing fresh housing ideas for a new generation.

Lisa Giersbach, a practicing landscape architect, received her Master's in Landscape Architecture from Harvard's Graduate School of Design, is a modern design enthusiast and a homeowner in one of Lexington's planned, modernist communities. After 15 years of practice, Lisa started G Design Studio and G2 Collaborative to focus on creating landscapes which create a sense of place, purposefulness, and beauty. Central to her work is an interest in the power of landscape to foster community and create vibrant social settings as well as the necessity of landscapes to perform on an environmental level. Her work responds sensitively to the intimate connection between architecture and landscape, how the constructed landscape relates to its larger environment, and how we can create meaningful public and private spaces that positively affect our daily lives.

Rebecca Migdal is an independent museum specialist and guest curator of *Middlesex County Modern*. She earned her B.A. in art history at Framingham State University and her M.A. in American material culture from the Winterthur Museum and University of Delaware. She has broad curatorial and research experience in a range of museums, historic sites and fine arts galleries throughout the northeast. As a Newton native, she has a special fondness for the rich cultural history of this area and hopes to impart some of that fondness through *Middlesex County Modern*.

Jon Staff is a Harvard Business School student and the founder and CEO of Getaway, a millennial housing startup that builds tiny houses, places them on rural land, and rents them out by the night to city dwellers looking to get away and test drive tiny house living.

Susan Ward is an independent curator and researcher, specializing in textiles, fashion, and design history, with a personal interest in 20th-century modern design. From 1993-2009 she was a Curatorial Research Fellow at Boston's Museum of Fine Arts, where she contributed to numerous exhibitions and publications. She was later a co-curator (and catalog co-author) for the 2011 exhibition *Knoll Textiles, 1945-2010* at the Bard Graduate Center in NYC. Over the past fifteen years she has worked on a number of research and exhibition projects on the history of Marimekko and Design Research, including the 2009 D/R Brattle Street storefront retrospective from October 2009 - April 2010. She is also interested in the local history of modern architecture, having studied Architectural History at Cornell University, and has been on the board of the New England chapter of DOCOMOMO since 2008.

Gary Wolf, AIA, is an award-winning architect who has renovated and expanded modern houses and other significant buildings throughout greater Boston. The vice-president of Docomomo/New England, Gary is a leading advocate for modern architecture in his practice, lectures, writing and teaching. He holds degrees from Cornell, the University of Virginia and Princeton, serves on the Council of Historic New England, and was for many years a member of the Weston Zoning Board. The president of Wolf Architects in Boston, Gary's projects have been recognized by the Massachusetts Historical Commission, the American Institute of Architects/Central Massachusetts Chapter, the Boston Society of Architects, the Victorian Society of America/New England Chapter, and historical commissions in Brookline, Cambridge and Lynn.

Sally Zimmerman, whose background is in architectural history and preservation planning, joined Historic New England's Preservation Services Team in 2006, after many years on the staff of the Cambridge MA Historical Commission. In addition to her work managing Historic New England's Historic Homeowner membership program, which supports homeowners with best practices preservation advice, Ms. Zimmerman serves on the Lexington Historical Commission, which recently completed listing the *Mid-Century Houses of Lexington, MA* multiple property nomination on the National Register of Historic Places. A co-author of *Painting Historic Exteriors: Colors, Application, and Regulation*, Ms. Zimmerman developed the "20th Century Colors of America" paint palette, a documented range of colors of the recent past produced by California Paints.