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LONG A SHOWPLACE OF ARCHITECTURAL MASTERPIECES, LA IS WELCOMING A NEW GENERATION OF DESIGN MAESTROS. BY KATHY A. MCDONALD

An architect's home is his brick-and-mortar business card. More so than commercial projects, residential work can be a creative outlet, a showcase for inventive finishes and visual flourishes. One thing about an architect's home, though: It can become a perpetual work in progress.

"Architects are never done; there's always another project," explains Michael Rachlin, founding partner of Rachlin Partners (*rachlinarchitects.com*), on a recent AIA Los Angeles tour of his house. "Part of the fun is experimenting with finishes and forms," adds the architect, who spent 20 years remaking his 1950s Beverlywood ranch house into a fashionable Cape Cod-meets-cool-style cottage.

There's a major upside when an architect is his own client: The decision-maker is in-house. LA is home base for iconic, architect-built homes that are now revered as influential labs for modernist living—Charles and Ray Eames' glass-and-steel Case Study home in Pacific Palisades, Rudolph Schindler's 1921 slab/tilt-constructed communal house on Kings Road in West Hollywood, and Richard Neutra's VDL Research House II in Silver Lake, among them.

A new generation of LA architects is remaking residential style once again, and on occasion, one of their projects comes up for sale. Despite their design pedigrees, architect-designed homes, especially an architect's own home, can be a challenge to sell because of the extent of personalization and experimentation that has taken place.

"With an architecturally significant house, there's not the typical square footage, layout, and price point," says Cory Weiss, executive vice president of Douglas Elliman, Beverly Hills (*elliman.com*).

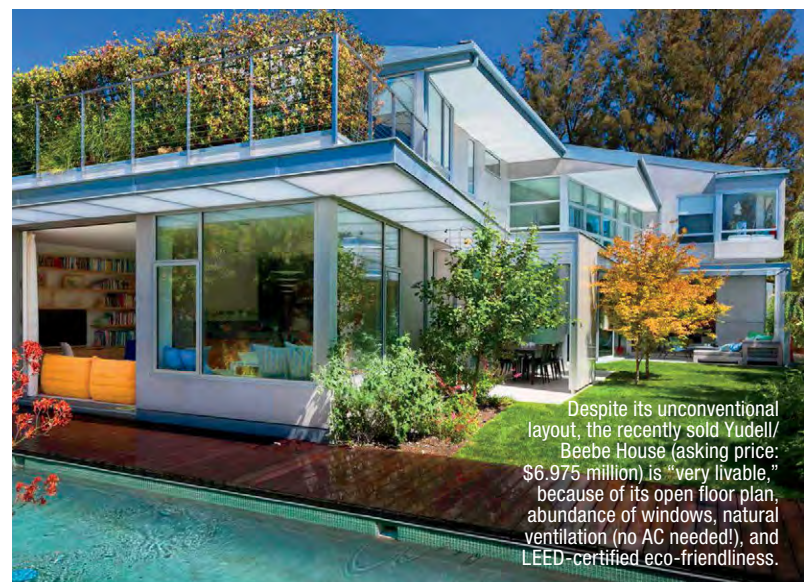
The recently sold Yudell/Beebe House—designed by architect Buzz Yudell and architectural colorist Tina Beebe of Santa Monica's Moore Ruble Yudell (*moorerubleyudell.com*)—has an unconventional, though easily transformable, floor plan: one bedroom with two studios. The 5,100-square-foot home (listed at \$6.975 million) received several offers. "It is both architectural and very livable," says listing agent Frank Langen of Deasy/Penner & Partners (*deasypenner.com*). It also has a major benefit, one coveted by realtors—"I didn't have to turn on a light to show it," says Langen of the 2010-built house. A surfeit of windows and translucent panels make the structure airy and remarkably light-filled, while screening for privacy outdoors.

Infrastructure was upgraded (rarely a client's request): Framing was engineered to prevent termites, there's radiant heating indoors and out, and the house exceeds LEED certification standards for energy use. It is net-zero, meaning the house produces more energy than it uses. Unlike most luxury homes, Langen contends the house is sited thoughtfully on its lot to enable natural ventilation, and windows are louvered so there's no need for air conditioning. "Although they did some experimentation, it's not trendy," he says of the house, which incorporates modernism in its strong lines and functionality.

"A buyer of an architectural house or property becomes enamored with the house," says Weiss of Douglas Elliman. Sometimes it takes time for that attraction to cement. Weiss is representing a \$10.995 million, four-structure Brentwood compound known as the Schnabel House, designed by Frank Gehry in 1989 (one of the architect's 28 or so



The blocks-long One Santa Fe townhome complex in DTLA's Arts District was designed by architect Michael Maltzan, whose inventive design gives renters more than 70 layouts from which to choose.



Despite its unconventional layout, the recently sold Yudell/Beebe House (asking price: \$6.975 million) is "very livable," because of its open floor plan, abundance of windows, natural ventilation (no AC needed!), and LEED-certified eco-friendliness.

residential projects).

Visually intriguing, the copper-clad buildings are asymmetrically shaped and quite sculptural (not a surprise with Gehry). The glass-boxed master bedroom edges a reflective pool. Potential buyers have asked Weiss if updates or modernization are possible. "The answer is yes, but one should really research how to make those changes," he advises.

Larger residential projects are often like "living sculpture," too—finely tuned architecture, as opposed to cookie-cutter boxes. At One Santa Fe, built for \$165 million at the edge of Downtown's Arts District (*osfla.com*), the developers selected Michael Maltzan Architecture to design the blocks-long complex of 438-unit apartments and

ground-floor retail spaces.

"Everything is purposeful," says developer Charles F. Cowley, president of Cowley Real Estate Partners, of the massive building punctuated by a grid of 600 different-sized windows and balconies. Because One Santa Fe curves and has few right angles, it almost appears to hover above Santa Fe Avenue, creating more than 70 kinds of layouts within units. The apartments, which lease from \$1,580/month for studios to \$4,530/month for two-bed/two-bath townhomes, feature exposed steel beams and much natural light from their varied windows. The atypical design has already resonated with renters, who appreciate the thoughtful design at the Arts District's border. Living with art, literally. **LAC**