



BOOK Modernism Rediscovered

By Julius Shulman, TASCHEN

If you consider yourself a fan of modern architecture, you might as well consider yourself a fan of Julius Shulman. And this new Shulman monograph presented by Taschen, in an epic three-volume edition, is as much a history of Modernism as it is a collection of the legendary photographer's work. Aside from a flat-out mastery of his craft (ever tried to use a large-format view camera outdoors?) he has the ability to boil down the three-dimensional language of architectural design into two-dimensional art that powerfully transports the viewer.

Shulman was born in Brooklyn in 1910 and raised on a farm in Connecticut until the age of 10, when his family moved to California. His appreciation for the natural world meshed perfectly with California Modernism, an aesthetic developed by the likes of Raphael Soriano, Richard Neutra and a ridiculously long list of other notable figures featured in this book. No one of his era did more to imprint the aesthetics of Modernism onto the American psyche, and flipping through this collection of prints, you can't help but notice the attention Shulman pays to highlighting the connection between interior and exterior spaces, a hallmark of California Modernism—and a source of dramatic artistry in his own work.

While he studied photography for seven years at University of California at Los Angeles, and respectively, Berkeley, Shulman always maintained that he's a self-taught photographer. He was always extremely confident of what he wanted to do and of how to accomplish it. Before photographing any structure, he would walk the site only briefly, scout the building and its surroundings and throw out the perfect times to come back and photograph each view. He would then return to shoot them each only once. Unlike a lot of contemporary shutterbugs who employ digital cameras, Shulman did not over-shoot and then edit post-factum. For any given setup, he believed your first shot should also be your final one.

—Adam Levine