

culture

Its pages may espouse the principles of modernism and minimalism, but in the publisher's standard fashion, Taschen's *Arts & Architecture*, *The Complete Reprint*, is as maximal as it gets. After distilling seven decades of the Italian design journal *Domus* into 12 hardbound volumes, Taschen took a different approach with *A&A*, the legendary Los Angeles-based architecture magazine which launched the Case Study House Program and essentially codified the California modern aesthetic. In a limited edition of 5,000, Taschen has reproduced every issue of the magazine, which began publishing in 1929, from editor John Entenza's announcement of the Case Study in January, 1945 through the end of its publication in 1967. The first of two installments, covering 1945-54, hits stores this month.

This 10-box set of 118 magazines, complete with vintage advertisements, is a true gift to lovers of modern architecture and design. For copies of the small print-run *Arts & Architecture* are scarce to nonexistent today. And according to David Travers, who edited *A&A* from 1962-67 and wrote an introduction to the collection, Taschen left no stone unturned in tracking down each and every issue. "The CIA couldn't have done better," he notes with a chuckle.

Assembling the collection was a two-and-a-half-year process, says Nina Weiner, managing editor for Taschen. Most came from private collectors in Los Angeles; about a third were in the archives of photographer Julius Shulman, who began working for *A&A* in 1938 and photographed 18 of the 25 completed Case Study homes. Although Shulman, now 97, has been outspokenly critical of Entenza's choices of Case Study architects (some of whom, he argued, were not pioneers in low-cost housing at all), he says the collection represents "a tremendously significant treatise on the history of modern architecture—where we're going and where we've been."

In addition to championing the now-iconic work of Richard Neutra, R.M. Schindler, Eero Saarinen, Charles and Ray Eames, John Lautner and Pierre Koenig, and being the first to publish the work of Frank Gehry and Richard Meier, *A&A* also covered modern art—devoting pages to Ad Reinhardt and Isamu Noguchi—and music. Its graphic, abstract covers were "touched

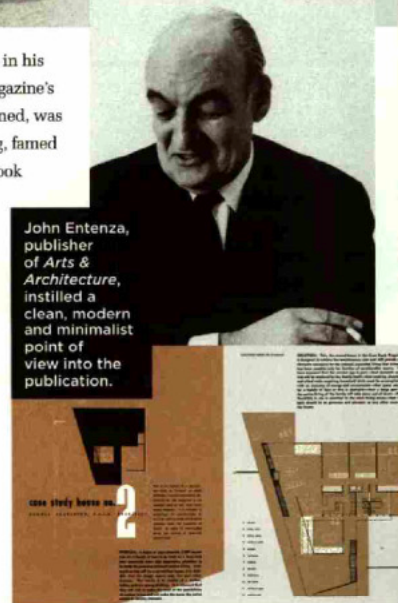


by Dada," writes Travers in his introduction, and the magazine's logo, it was recently learned, was designed by Alvin Lustig, famed for his New Directions book

jackets. As Weiner notes, some of the most colorful graphics in *A&A*'s pages were in advertisements for Knoll and Herman Miller. "There's a lot of insider information there for cultural archivists and historians," she says, but also for fans of the Case Study House Program who want to delve deeper into the philosophies that drove that program and informed its editorial direction.

Travers characterizes *Arts & Architecture* as "hopeful about life." Entenza's monthly "Notes in Passing" typically ruminated on how to address larger issues from illiteracy to human rights. Unlike today's shelter magazines, the bulk of its pages were devoted (at least in theory) to the average American family. Of course, architects and their egos are no new phenomenon, but as Travers observes, "in those days, it seemed that it was tempered a bit by a social concern."

Weiner shares the former editor's hope that exposure to *A&A*'s ideas might somehow nudge society in a more positive direction. "If we could get back to a simpler way of living, we'd all be better off," she says with a shrug. "Maybe that's just romanticizing the past, but I'm all for it." ●



John Entenza, publisher of *Arts & Architecture*, instilled a clean, modern and minimalist point of view into the publication.

THE COLLECTION REPRESENTS "A TREMENDOUSLY SIGNIFICANT TREATISE ON THE HISTORY OF MODERN architecture—where we're going and where we've been."



JOHN ENTENZA: THE GRAHAM FOUNDATION. ALL OTHER IMAGES: DAVID TRAVERS