



# Jock Peters, Architecture and Design

## The Varieties of Modernism

Christopher Long

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**“An important document that should be included in any library of design and architecture.”**– Daniella Ohad

**“A masterful blend of émigré biography and architecture and design history, proving that the twentieth century fostered more than one modernism.”**– Donald Albrecht

Christopher Long, author of seminal monographs on Adolf Loos, Kem Weber, and Paul T. Frankel, turns his attention to the little-known architect and designer Jock Peters, a largely forgotten figure of early Los Angeles modernism.

This visually rich study is also an intimate portrait of an architect who, like too many, struggled to establish a career during the early decades of the 20th century, years ravished by World War I and the Great Depression. Among Peters's early works in Germany are designs for the Levantehaus and Karstadt department stores, an innovative design dated 1916 for a magnificent glass pavilion, and his work for Peter Behrens after the war, but the architect's most accomplished and compelling work came after 1922 when he settled in Southern California. Most notable are the strikingly lavish and elegant commercial interiors Peters designed for the iconic Bullock's Wilshire store in Los Angeles and the tragically forgotten Hollander department store in New York City; both projects brought him international recognition.

The breathtaking scope of his short-lived career includes modern film sets for Famous Players-Lasky, later Paramount Pictures, while working under the legendary art director Hans Dreier; a dynamic sales office for the trendsetting Maddux Air Lines, which later became TWA; and modern residences, including the still extant homes he built for cinematographer Alfred Gilks, who would later win an Academy Award for *An American in Paris*, and art gallerist and developer William Lingenbrink for whom Peters also designed stores and a vibrantly colorful sidewalk for the Silver Strand beach development north of Los Angeles. Lingenbrink, a major supporter of the burgeoning modernism, also commissioned Jock Peters, alongside Schindler, to design houses for Park Moderne, the legendary avant-garde modernist retreat for artists in Calabasas. Peters also designed the retreat's Streamline Moderne pump house, clubhouse, and zigzag fountain, which still stands.

This important study on early modernism includes never before published material from the architect's personal archive, still in family hands. These remarkable and inspiring images—more than 250 historic photographs, etchings, watercolors, and drawings—alongside Long's insightful narrative, demonstrate how Peters, despite his early death, managed to leave his mark on the modernist landscape in Southern California at a time when the new style was just emerging.

**Christopher Long** is Martin S. Kermacy Centennial Professor of Architecture at the University of Texas, Austin, where he first began lecturing in 1999. Shortly after receiving his Ph.D. in history, Long taught at the Central European University in Prague (1994–1995). His research centres on modern architectural history, with a particular emphasis on Central Europe between 1880 and the present. Long has lectured worldwide and written or contributed to over fifty publications, including his numerous studies of the architecture of Adolf Loos and his seminal books on Paul Frankel and Kem Weber (both published by Yale University Press). He has collaborated on several exhibitions, advising on *Living in a Modern Way: California Design 1930–1965*, a traveling exhibition that originated at the Los Angeles Museum of Art (LACMA) in 2011, and *I Have Seen the Future: Norman Bel Geddes Designs America* at the Museum of the City of New York (2013). He co-curated *Josef Frank arkitektur* at the Swedish Museum of Architecture in Stockholm (1994); *Josef Frank, Architect and Designer: An Alternative Vision of the Modern Home* at the Bard Graduate Center for Studies in the Decorative Arts in New York City (1996); *Paul T. Frank: Ein Wiener Designer in New York und Los Angeles* in Vienna and Budapest (2014); *The Rise of Everyday Design: The Arts and Crafts Movement in Britain and America* at the Harry Ransom Center at the University of Texas, Austin (2019); and is currently working on an exhibition with co-curators Wendy Kaplan and Monica Penick scheduled for 2024 at LACMA: *Better Living Through Science: The Home of the Future, 1920–1970*.

