

Kem Weber and the Rise of Modern Design in Southern California_

Christopher Long (USA)



Wednesday, 2nd June 2010, 2pm
Seminar room, Postgasse 6/2nd floor
University of Applied Arts Vienna

In the period between the two world wars, the German-born architect and designer Kem Weber (1889-1963) emerged as one of the leaders in the effort to forge a new American design aesthetic. Trained by Bruno Paul at the Vereinigten Staatsschulen in Berlin, Weber was in San Francisco when World War I erupted. Unable to return to Germany, he opened a practice in the Bay Area before moving to Southern California. Initially, he sought to translate the ideas of pre-war German modernism to the American context, but in the mid-1920s he began to experiment with the decorative French mode of Émile-Jacques Ruhlmann and his Parisian contemporaries. He soon abandoned this style for a clean, streamlined idiom that would define his work. Later, in the later 1930s, Weber moved to an even more simplified language that he would continue to employ until he stopped practicing in 1958. Though not as well known as R. M. Schindler and Richard Neutra, Weber had a central role in introducing modernism to Southern California, and he was instrumental in shaping its distinctive West Coast variant. This lecture will explore the contributions of this seminal—but still largely unknown—designer and his place in the early development of modernism in the United States.

Christopher Long is Professor of Architectural and Design History at the University of Texas at Austin. He is the author of *Josef Frank: Life and Work* and *Paul T. Frankl and Modern American Design*.

Informationen zu Inhalt und Voraussetzungen zur Teilnahme siehe Eintrag im Online-Vorlesungsverzeichnis: www.dieangewandte.at

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