

South Palm Desert Mid-Century Modern Home Expanded, Transformed Into 21st Century Energy Efficient Classic

VIDEO ARCHIVES FAMED ARCHITECT BARRY BERKUS' TALK AT PARK IMPERIAL SOUTH DURING MODERNISM WEEK



Welcome to Team Haverkate Real Estate Specializing in Mid Century Modern Desert Homes



During Modernism Week 2011, Park Imperial South on South Araby Drive in Palm Springs celebrated its 50th birthday and invited the public to tour its 31-

unit condominium community. Created in 1960 by one of the nation's most noted residential architects, Barry Berkus, AIA, Park Imperial South's remarkable Mid Century Modern design still thrives and remains virtually untouched.

www.parkimperialsouthps.com www.modernismweek.com

Berkus guided the tour and presented his take on modernism's mark on architecture in Palm Springs and across America. A video archive of the design tour and Berkus' discussion is posted here at Team Haverkate Real Estate.

"Being acknowledged by those who live within the architect's dream is the highest honor one can aspire to, and the fact that residents here have kept my dream in condition is a remarkable compliment," Berkus said.

www.24-7pressrelease.com/press-release/barry-berkus-aia-to-address-modernism-week

Founder and president of B3 Architects and Berkus Design Studio in Santa Barbara, Berkus has remained on the forefront of residential design in this country and abroad for over 40 years. His name is synonymous with innovation, and his firm has won hundreds of design and planning awards from regional, national and international competitions.

www.barryberkus.com www.b3architects.com

Berkus began college with a focus on economics, but he always loved to draw. After attending Santa Barbara City College, he transferred to USC's architecture program, saying "It was exciting and I knew I'd found my place."

He pursued housing, an industry that during the 1950's and 60s most architects thought was "beneath them" and many were convinced they couldn't make a living at it.

"When we started, housing was looked down upon," he recalled. "I lead a design panel at the National Association of Home Builders, but couldn't do one at the American Institute of Architecture."

"I had a goal to change the way housing looked," he said. "I wanted to give it a sculpted feeling, an innovative component to nurture people. I strived to use volume, light and shapes in my homes."

Berkus' ability to produce house plans quickly also turned the odds in his favor.

"Housing as a product has to move on and off the boards quickly because it didn't pay very well," he said.

www.noozhawk.com/article/120309_barry_berkus

Berkus began as an intern for noted Palm Springs architect William Cody before opening his own firm and designed Park Imperial South at the age of 25.

During his talk at the tour, Berkus recalled sitting at construction sites for John Lautner projects, inspiring him to develop his own unique design vision. Berkus said Park Imperial South was an experiment in design and construction. The distinctive folded-plate roofs were constructed in Oakland before being transported to Palm Springs where they were lifted into place by crane.

www.itssosunny.com/2011/02/20/palm-springs-modernism-week-home-tour-feature

"I wanted to design a space for people who could not afford an architect," said Berkus of the project.

As his company went public, Berkus began considering modular housing. He researched data at UCLA on every modular created up to that point and concluded that mobile homes were the only successful factory-built house that made its manufacturer money and lasted for any length of time.

"Let's change the way housing is built," he said when he approached national builders with the first "smart house" and various homes on wheels.

"I've always gone the far edge of the planet in my thinking," Berkus admits. "I've always been interested in investigating. I'm in my 70s now and I've failed a bunch, in part because security never interested me."

"Architects, by nature, are optimists," he said. "I've grown by taking risks and assumed it would work out. Even recently, with single family homes in Santa Barbara, I've had to build them and then people showed up to buy them. I knew it was right."

www.noozhawk.com/article/120309_barry_berkus

It seems Berkus was right about his long lasting design at Park Imperial South as well.

One objective of the Modernism Week tour was to demonstrate the complex's design longevity both interior and exterior as well as the versatile floor plan.

Nine homes in varying stages of rehabilitation and remodel were open for guests to view. Several units had been completely redone with new kitchens and appliances, upgraded bathrooms, redesigned patios and new flooring, while other units retained original design elements such as range hoods, cabinetry and intercom entertainment systems.

For the past 10 years, Park Imperial South homeowners association has been restoring the complex with new landscaping, entrance signage, lighting and wood paneling to each home's entrance. The Palm Springs Preservation Foundation has granted funds to continue restoration projects, and the sold-out tour during Modernism Week benefited the development's renovation projects.

www.itssosunny.com/2011/02/20/palm-springs-modernism-week-home-tour-feature

For Berkus, thinking outside the grid comes naturally and so does the task of reinvention.

"Everything has to fall apart so you can come up for air," he said. "Residential architecture is about romance, learning, fulfillment of a journey. It should never be below you to do housing."

www.residentialarchitect.com

Palm Springs has a proud heritage of innovative Mid Century Modern architecture in public buildings as well as custom, tract and condominium homes. For a personal tour of Mid Century Modern properties currently for sale, contact Ralph Haverkate at ralph@RalphHaverkate.com.

– Pamela Bieri

Tags: Architects, Architecture, Barry Berkus, Events, Imperial Park South, Mid-Century Modern Enclaves, Mid-Century Modern Homes, Preservation

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