

DESIGN EXPLORATION

Autopsy Project

Eames House/Case Study

1949

Charles & Ray Eames

Los Angeles, Pacific Palisades

Key principle behind house design

Charles described the house as *unselfconscious*. Charles and Ray designed a house specifically to meet their needs, but they were those universal needs that we all share as humans. They believed in the honest use of materials and straightforward connections.

Apparently their original intent was for the house to act as a re-orientor within nature.

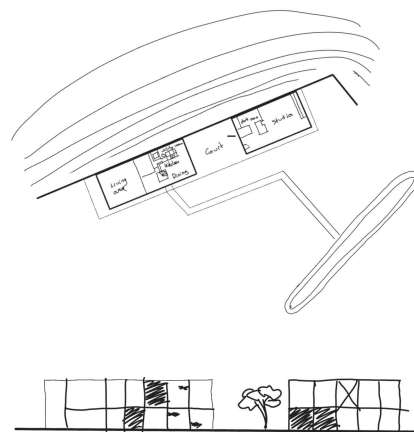
Client

Charles and Ray were (collectively) 1 of 8 architects challenged to create new intuitive designs for the average family, using the best materials available, using them in the best way possible. John Entenza, the publisher of Arts & Architecture Magazine, purchased a 5 acre meadow overlooking the Pacific Ocean for these houses to be constructed.

<https://eamesfoundation.org/house/design-bried/>

<http://www.artsandarchitecture.com/case.houses/>

Main Design idea: Concept



Context

Built on a gradient, the Eameses' had to tuck it behind a row of eucalyptus trees squeezing it between that and a hillside. The constant proximity to nature provides an appreciation for it, as the Eameses put it, it acts as a "re-orientor and shock absorber" providing relaxation from day to day life.

References

- <https://www.interaction-design.org/literature/article/meet-the-eames-function-is-the-key-to-design>
- <https://antoniaweinteriors.com/the-eames-inspiration-what-inspired-the-eames-design-and-creative-genius>
- <https://eamesfoundation.org/house/eames-house/>
- https://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/eame/hd_eame.htm
- <https://www.moma.org/calendar/exhibitions/1803>
- <http://www.artsandarchitecture.com/case.houses/>

Inspiration/Mentor

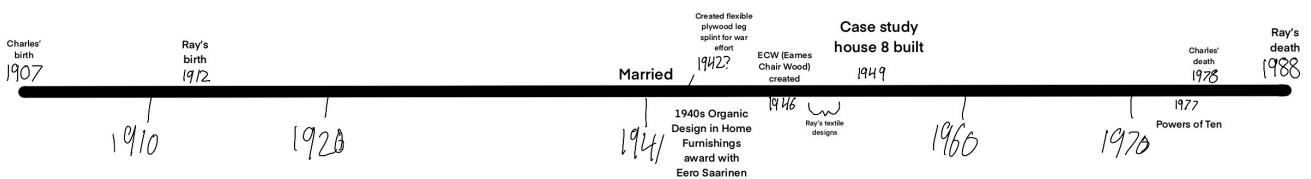
Other than finding inspiration in each other, Charles Eames' main influence was Eliseo Saarinen, a Finnish architect (no 'credible sources' try library with picture book)



Influences/Inspirations

- Clear DeStijl influence (colour scheme likely from Ray)
- Biophilic design & sustainability
- Economic design

History: specific time line with related dates and information associated with architect/designer's life and projects (timeline: bullet pointed and illustrated)



Architect/designer's own principles (philosophical/theoretical):



Would examine the function of something before designing

Began with a vision of the function then work on ways to improve the delivery of that form

Function is the most important element in design



Believes in being harmonious with nature, using simple design to carry out the desired purpose of the product

Eames' Principles

Banana leaf analogy

He said that he had seen people especially in southern india, eating from banana leaves, he said that some wealthier or a "little bit up the scale" would eat from ceramic dishes and such as well as talis, he said that people would eat from more ornately decorated dishes the more wealthy they were. He came to the conclusion that all this decoration didn't contribute to the taste of the meal so what was the point. He found that "guys that have not only means, but a certain amount of knowledge and understanding" would eat from a banana leaf as they understood this also.

Smooth simple functional designs

House: Use of light, materials and/or technology:

Concrete



The foundation for the entire building is made from concrete including the large spanning wall across the entire back of the property, holding up the hillside its dug into

Glass



There are 4 types of glass used throughout the house; clear polished plate glass, Factrolite textured glass, wire-embedded safety glass, and translucent corrugated glass. The more translucent glasses were used in places that required more privacy whilst the safety glasses were used in areas which required more precautions.

Steel



The framework for the building is comprised mainly of steel beams as it was a cost effective material to use, as the building was to be an experiment into economic building design. The framing on the ceiling also provided another use as another place to hang things.

Woods (ply & Tallow)



Plywood was used for its versatility and its cheapness whilst tallow wood was used to span the entire back wall of the house as it was known at the time for being very sturdy, but also acted as a callback to the eucalyptus trees at the front of the house as it is a species of eucalyptus.

Cemesto



Cemesto, at the time, boasted as an efficient, cost effective material to use for housing after WWII, this was not utilised in any critical parts of the structure but comprises some of the large panelling on the facade of the building

Flooring (Concrete, rubber vinyl & Parquet)



Apparently, the Eameses planned to retain the concrete flooring in the living room but then changed it. The materials they used were rubber vinyl and parquet because of their ruggedness and cheapness