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NPS Form 10-900 OMB No. 1024-0018

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form.* If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions.

RECEIVED 2280
MAR - 4 2016
NAT. REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

1. Name of Property

Historic name: Schaffer, J.W., House

Other names/site number: _____

Name of related multiple property listing:

Residential Architecture of John Lautner in Southern California, 1940-1994

(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing

2. Location

Street & number: 527 Whiting Woods Road

City or town: Glendale State: CA County: Los Angeles

Not For Publication: ☐ Vicinity: ☐

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,

I hereby certify that this X nomination ___ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.

In my opinion, the property X meets ___ does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:

___**national** ___**statewide** X**local**

Applicable National Register Criteria:

___**A** ___**B** X**C** ___**D**

State Historic Preservation Officer 2 March 2016

Signature of certifying official/Title: **Date**

California Office of Historic Preservation

State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

In my opinion, the property ___ meets ___ does not meet the National Register criteria.

Signature of commenting official: **Date**

Title : **State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government**

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

✓ entered in the National Register

___ determined eligible for the National Register

___ determined not eligible for the National Register

___ removed from the National Register

___ other (explain:) _____

for Edson H. Beall 4.19.16

Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply.)

Private: [x]

Public – Local [ ]

Public – State [ ]

Public – Federal [ ]

Category of Property

(Check only **one** box.)

Building(s) [x]

District [ ]

Site [ ]

Structure [ ]

Object [ ]

Number of Resources within Property
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1		buildings
		sites
		structures
		objects
1	0	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

6. Function or Use
Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions.)
Domestic:
Single Dwelling

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions.)
Domestic:
Single Dwelling

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions.)
Modern Movement: __
Other: Mid-century Modern

Materials: (enter categories from instructions.)
Principal exterior materials of the property: Wood
Concrete
Glass

Narrative Description
(Describe the historic and current physical appearance and condition of the property. Describe contributing and noncontributing resources if applicable. Begin with **a summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, type, style, method of construction, setting, size, and significant features. Indicate whether the property has historic integrity.)

Summary Paragraph

The J.W. Schaffer House was designed by John Lautner in the Mid-century Modern style with Wrightian influences. It is located in Glendale, California, approximately 15 miles northwest of downtown Los Angeles. The Schaffer House stands at the southern edge of a 0.25-acre parcel amid lush landscaping and several mature trees. It exhibits the modest scale and massing, horizontal emphasis, large expanses of glass, and asymmetrical plan associated with Mid-century Modern houses, along with a connection to outdoors and focus on the specific site conditions of Organic architecture. In the early 2000s, the Schaffer House was rehabilitated, including the features and finishes, and system upgrades. The Schaffer House retains significant character-defining features on the interior and exterior. It retains integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association.

Narrative Description

The J.W. Schaffer House is located on the north side of Whiting Woods Road in the Montrose neighborhood of the City of Glendale, California. The lot is bounded by single-family residences on the north, east, and west, and by Whiting Woods Road on the south. The property contains a one-story, single-family residence constructed in 1949. The house is set back from the street with a lawn and a curving asphaltic concrete driveway, and is set within a grove of mature oak trees. The building is Mid-century Modern in style, with Wrightian influences, and is of wood frame and brick masonry construction. It is screened from the street by the carport and a fence of horizontal redwood planks. The house has a "V"-shaped plan, with the open end facing the street, and a series of low-pitched, asymmetrical gable and shed roofs with open eaves, wood fascias, and several skylights. A large interior brick masonry chimney projects from the center of the roof. A flat roofed shade structure extends from the north façade, supported on a large L-shaped pier of brick masonry. Exterior walls are of glass, exposed brick masonry, or horizontal redwood siding, sometimes solid and sometimes alternating with bands of glass. The primary entrance is asymmetrically located on the south façade, accessed from the triangular central patio, and consists of a single wood door with floor-to-ceiling sidelights. Fenestration consists primarily of glass walls and bands of battered clerestories. Pivoting wood-framed glass doors form the north and east walls of the living room.

The interior is organized according to the V-shaped plan. Public and private zones are distinguished through the use of enclosure and ceiling height variations. The open living room and den, anchored by a large brick masonry fireplace, occupy the center of the house at the junction of the V. The dining area, kitchen, and attached carport occupy the east wing, and the bedrooms and bathroom the west wing. An interior planter under a skylight fills the triangular space between the living room and the bedroom wing. The interior is finished with polished concrete floors; redwood plank ceilings, paneling, and a louvered screen; and exposed brick masonry walls. Redwood strips are set into the polished concrete floor at regular intervals, and continue, uninterrupted, across the cement patio, accessed through the pivoting glass doors in the living room and den. Walls of glass provide vistas and access into the grove of oak trees surrounding the house.

Integrity

The Schaffer House retains all seven aspects of integrity.

- **Location:** The house remains on its original site. It therefore retains integrity of location.
- **Design:** The Schaffer House retains significant character-defining features of its original Wrightian-influenced Mid-century Modern design by master architect John Lautner, including its V-shaped plan, asymmetrical gable and shed roofs, glass walls, redwood siding, and exposed brick masonry. It therefore retains integrity of design.

- **Setting:** The property remains in its original setting of a low-density, single-family residential neighborhood and densely wooded landscape. It therefore retains integrity of setting.
- **Materials:** The Schaffer House retains the majority of its historic materials, including redwood siding, paneling, and screens; brick masonry walls and fireplace; glass walls; and polished concrete floors. It retains integrity of materials.
- **Workmanship:** The Schaffer House retains the physical evidence of period construction techniques and crafts in its extensive use of finely detailed redwood siding, paneling and screens; brick masonry walls and fireplace; glass walls; and polished concrete flooring with inlaid redwood strips. It therefore retains integrity of workmanship.
- **Feeling:** The Schaffer House retains integrity of location, design, setting, materials, and workmanship, and continues to its historic Wrightian-influenced Mid-century Modern design by master architect John Lautner. It therefore retains integrity of feeling.
- **Association:** The property retains integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, and feeling, which combine to convey its original Wrightian-influence Mid-century Modern design by master architect John Lautner. It retains integrity of association.

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria
(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- [ ] A. Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- [ ] B. Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- [x] C. Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- [ ] D. Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations
(Mark “x” in all the boxes that apply.)

- [ ] A. Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes
- [ ] B. Removed from its original location
- [ ] C. A birthplace or grave
- [ ] D. A cemetery
- [ ] E. A reconstructed building, object, or structure
- [ ] F. A commemorative property
- [ ] G. Less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years

Areas of Significance
(Enter categories from instructions.)
Architecture

Period of Significance
1949

Significant Dates

Significant Person
(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

Cultural Affiliation

Architect/Builder
Lautner, John (architect)

Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance, applicable criteria, justification for the period of significance, and any applicable criteria considerations.)

The J.W. Schaffer House is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places at the local level of significance under Criterion C as an excellent example of the Wrightian-influenced Mid-century Modern architecture of master architect John Lautner. It meets the registration requirements outlined in the Multiple Property Documentation Form "Residential Architecture of John Lautner in Southern California, 1940-1994" for this period of Lautner's work: it exemplifies the tenets of the modern movement and the important characteristics of Lautner's work from this period; displays the significant character-defining features of Mid-century Modern architecture; dates from the period of significance; exhibits quality of design; and retains all seven aspects of integrity. The period of significance is 1949, reflecting the date that the house was completed.

Narrative Statement of Significance (Provide at least **one** paragraph for each area of significance.)

The Schaffer House is a significant example of the work of the master architect John Lautner. It exemplifies the tenets of John Lautner's residential architecture identified in the Multiple Property Submission "Residential Architecture of John Lautner in Southern California, 1940-1994." Lautner's fascination with new shapes and structures came from his determination to humanize spaces and create what he referred to as "real" architecture: "architecture that was authentic, creative, new – yet tied to ancient and timeless ways of building; based on the needs – including emotional needs – of his clients, and the demands of the site."[1] He brought to architecture an expressive and adventurous use of structure, form, and materials.[2] Although he did not consider himself a Modernist, Lautner's interests aligned with the mid-century spirit of architectural experimentation; these factors led Lautner toward bold explorations of hilltop houses, soaring concrete roofs, sculptural steel cantilevers, and expressive double curves. His work was structurally and technologically innovative, while also reflecting Wright's Organic principles of responding to the site and the specific needs of the client. Lautner had a fertile architectural practice for over 60 years, producing some of the most iconic and influential works in post-World War II Southern California and influencing a new generation of architects. In the 1940s, Lautner experimented with simple shapes to achieve an organic expression, melding buildings with their surroundings with the shaped floor plan and roof structure.

In the mid-twentieth century, Los Angeles was not the sprawling metropolis it is today. Oak groves and chaparral defined the region. With limited independent experience and few

[1] Dave Weinstein, "John Lautner's 'Keeping it Real' Approach to Architecture," http://www.eichlernetwork.com/article/beyond-flash-and-fantasy (accessed July 2015).
[2] Ann Philbin, Foreword in Nicholas Olsberg, ed., *Between Earth and Heaven: The Architecture of John Lautner* (New York: Rizzoli International Publications, 2008), 6.

completed residential projects, Lautner nonetheless began to establish himself as an inventive local architect.[3] Though the Schaffer House is one of his earlier works, it "shows his signature touch, with floating horizontal bands of glass and wood opening up the house to the surrounding oak grove."[4] It embodies Lautner's distinctive design philosophy, revealing at the same time his debt to his mentor, Frank Lloyd Wright, and the development of his own, individual style.

The Schaffer House is an excellent example of Lautner's focus on site conditions, and is considered one of Lautner's early masterpieces.[5] "The Schaffers had bought a small property in a grove of oaks, a piece of land that they had long used and enjoyed for picnics. Lautner carefully [sited] the house on the exact picnic spot, without displacing any trees. To help the Schaffers retain an awareness of this already familiar place, he designed the house to reveal its surroundings from within. To do this he edged the house with an envelope of glass walls and eliminated conventional room divisions in the public spaces so that the rooms flowed openly into each other, allowing panoramic vistas of the exterior. He also canted sections of the roof upward with angled clerestories, directing the eye up into the trees."[6] The Schaffer House shares important attributes with Wright's Usonian house prototype, and much of the material detailing and aesthetic is similar to that of Wright's work. However, the informal arrangement of interior spaces, the horizontal bands of glass, and the way the house opens to the surrounding oak grove are characteristic of Lautner's work from this period. The Schaffer House gained widespread recognition after being featured in the 2009 film *A Single Man.*

Mid-century Modern Architecture

Mid-century Modern is a term used to describe the post-World War II iteration of the International Style in both commercial and residential design. The International Style was characterized by geometric forms, smooth wall surfaces, and an absence of exterior decoration. Mid-century Modern represents the adaptation of these elements to the local climate and topography, and in residential design to the postwar need for efficiently-built, moderately-priced homes. Mid-century Modernism is often characterized by a clear expression of structure and materials, large expanses of glass, and open interior plans. It was a conscious reaction against the rigid architectural language of the International Style, which was minimalist in concept, stressed functionalism, and was devoid of regional characteristics and nonessential decorative elements.

Organic Architecture

Lautner worked with Frank Lloyd Wright from 1933 to 1943, during which time he absorbed many of his mentor's architectural ideals, including the style of architecture Wright dubbed "Organic." He applied these design concepts to many of his earlier architectural works, including his own residence, the Carling House, and the Schaffer House.

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[3] Lynn Call, "Learning from Wright: John Lautner's Schaffer Residence," *Modernism*, Spring 2005, p. 64-69.
[4] Kate Chang, "The Radar Design: City of Angles," *Angeleno*, July 2008, p. 62-64, 128.
[5] Frank Escher, "Continuity: Structuring Space," in Nicholas Olsberg, ed. *Between Earth and Heaven: The Architecture of John Lautner* (New York: Rizzoli International Publications, 2008), 158.
[6] Tim Street-Porter and Nicolai Ouroussoff, *LA Modern* (New York: Rizzoli International Publications, 2008), 119.

Frank Lloyd Wright first used the term 'organic architecture' in an article for *Architectural Record* in August 1914.[7] Wright applied the word organic to "'living' structure – a structure or concept wherein features or parts are so organized in form and substance as to be, applied to purpose, integral. Everything that 'lives' is therefore organic."[8] Organic architecture meant a living architecture in which every composition, element, and detail was deliberately shaped for the job it was to perform. Wright stressed the unity of building, furnishings, and environment in an "organic-entity, as contrasted with that former insensate aggregation of parts…One great thing instead of a quarrelling collection of so many little things."[9] Wright expressed his concept of Organic design through crystalline plan forms, the possibility of growth by asymmetrical addition, the relationship of composition to site and client, and the use of local materials.[10]

The chief concept of Organic architecture is the merging of building and nature, so that the design responds to the environment rather than imposing itself upon it. Organic architecture grew out of the site from within, employing natural shapes, complex geometries, and new building materials and technologies to unify all elements of the design – site, structure, spaces, fixtures, finishes, and furnishing - into a single harmonious unit.[11]

Completed in 1949, the Schaffer House is an excellent example the Wrightian-influenced Mid-century Modern/Organic residential architecture of master architect John Lautner. It retains significant character-defining features of the original design. Its horizontality, asymmetrical floor plan, and natural building materials, combined with the relationship between indoor and outdoor spaces created by the walls of windows and the inside-out design process are significant features of its design.

Conclusion

The Schaffer House is significant as an excellent example of Mid-century Modern architecture in Southern California by master architect John Lautner. It meets the registration requirements outlined in the Multiple Property Documentation Form "Residential Architecture of John Lautner in Southern California, 1940-1994; Theme: John Lautner Residential Architecture in Southern California, 1940-1955." It retains significant character-defining features of its original design, and retains all seven aspects of integrity.

[7] Adapted from "Wright – Organic Architecture," Frank Lloyd Wright Trust, http://www.flwright.org/ckfinder/userfiles/files/Wright-Organic-Architecture.pdf (accessed August 2015).
[8] Frank Lloyd Wright, *Modern Architecture; Being the Kahn Lectures for 1930* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1931), 27.
[9] Ulrich Conrads, *Programs and Manifestoes on 20th-century Architecture* (Cambridge, MA: MIT, 1999), 25.
[10] Peter Collins, "The Biology of Analogy," *Changing Ideals in Modern Architecture 1750-1950* (London: Faber and Faber, 1965).
[11] Virginia Savage McAlester, A Field Guide to American Houses (New York, NY: Alfred A. Knopf, 2014), 656.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography (Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form.)

Baer, Adam. "If You Were Cool, Rich, or Bad Enough to Live Here, You'd Be Home." *Virginia Quarterly Review*. Winter 2013. p. 104-133.

Call, Lynn. "Learning from Wright: John Lautner's Schaffer Residence." *Modernism.* Spring 2005, p. 64-69.

Campbell-Lange, Barbara-Ann. *John Lautner, 1911-1994: Disappearing Space.* Köln, Germany: Taschen, 2005.

Chang, Kate. "The Radar Design: City of Angles" *Angeleno*. July 2008, p. 62-64, 128.

Collins, Peter. "The Biology of Analogy." *Changing Ideals in Modern Architecture 1750-1950.* London: Faber and Faber, 1965.

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Hess, Alan. *The Architecture of John Lautner*. New York: Rizzoli International Publications, 1999.

Lautner, John. The John Lautner Archive. Accessed May 11, 2011. Getty Research Institute. Los Angeles, CA.

McAlester, Virginia Savage. *A Field Guide to American Houses.* 2nd ed. New York, NY: Alfred A. Knopf, 2014.

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Street-Porter, Tim and Nicolai Ouroussoff. *LA Modern.* New York: Rizzoli International Publications, 2008.

Weinstein, Dave. "John Lautner's 'Keeping it Real' Approach to Architecture." http://www.eichlernetwork.com/article/beyond-flash-and-fantasy. Accessed July 2015.

Wright, Frank Lloyd. *Modern Architecture; Being the Kahn Lectures for 1930.* Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1931.

"Wright – Organic Architecture." Frank Lloyd Wright Trust. http://www.flwright.org/ckfinder/userfiles/files/Wright-Organic-Architecture.pdf. Accessed August 2015.

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

____ preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
____ previously listed in the National Register
____previously determined eligible by the National Register
_____designated a National Historic Landmark
____ recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey #_____
_____recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____
____ recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # _____

Primary location of additional data:

____ State Historic Preservation Office
____ Other State agency
____ Federal agency
____ Local government
____ University
__X__ Other
Name of repository: _Getty Research Institute; Lautner Foundation _____

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): _____

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property __0.25_____

Use either the UTM system or latitude/longitude coordinates

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates (decimal degrees)
Datum if other than WGS84:_____
(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

1. Latitude: 34.215141 Longitude: -118.249620
2. Latitude: Longitude:
3. Latitude: Longitude:
4. Latitude: Longitude:

Or
UTM References
Datum (indicated on USGS map):

☐ NAD 1927 or ☐ NAD 1983

1. Zone: Easting: Northing:

2. Zone: Easting: Northing:

3. Zone: Easting: Northing:

4. Zone: Easting : Northing:

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

The property is located at 527 Whiting Woods Road. The parcel is bounded by Whiting Woods Road on the south, and single-family homes on the north, east, and west.

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The boundaries represent the historic and current boundaries of the Schaffer House property.

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11. Form Prepared By

name/title: _Original nomination prepared by Jennifer Guerra and Fariba Mostajer, California State Polytechnic University Pomona, under the guidance of Lauren Weiss Bricker and Luis G. Hoyos

Revised nomination:
name/title: Christine Lazzaretto, Principal; John LoCascio, Senior Architect; Molly Iker, Associate Architectural Historian
organization: Historic Resources Group
street & number: _12 S. Fair Oaks, Suite 200_____
city or town: Pasadena_____ state: CA_____ zip code:_91105___
e-mail_christine@historicresourcesgroup.com
telephone:_626-793-2400 x112_____
date:_August 6, 2015 _____

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A **USGS map** or equivalent (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
- **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO, TPO, or FPO for any additional items.)

Photographs

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels (minimum), 3000x2000 preferred, at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map. Each photograph must be numbered and that number must correspond to the photograph number on the photo log. For simplicity, the name of the photographer, photo date, etc. may be listed once on the photograph log and doesn't need to be labeled on every photograph.

Photo Log

Name of Property: J.W. Schaffer House

City or Vicinity: Glendale

County: Los Angeles State: California

Photographer: Jennifer MacDonald

Date Photographed: April 11, 2011

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera:

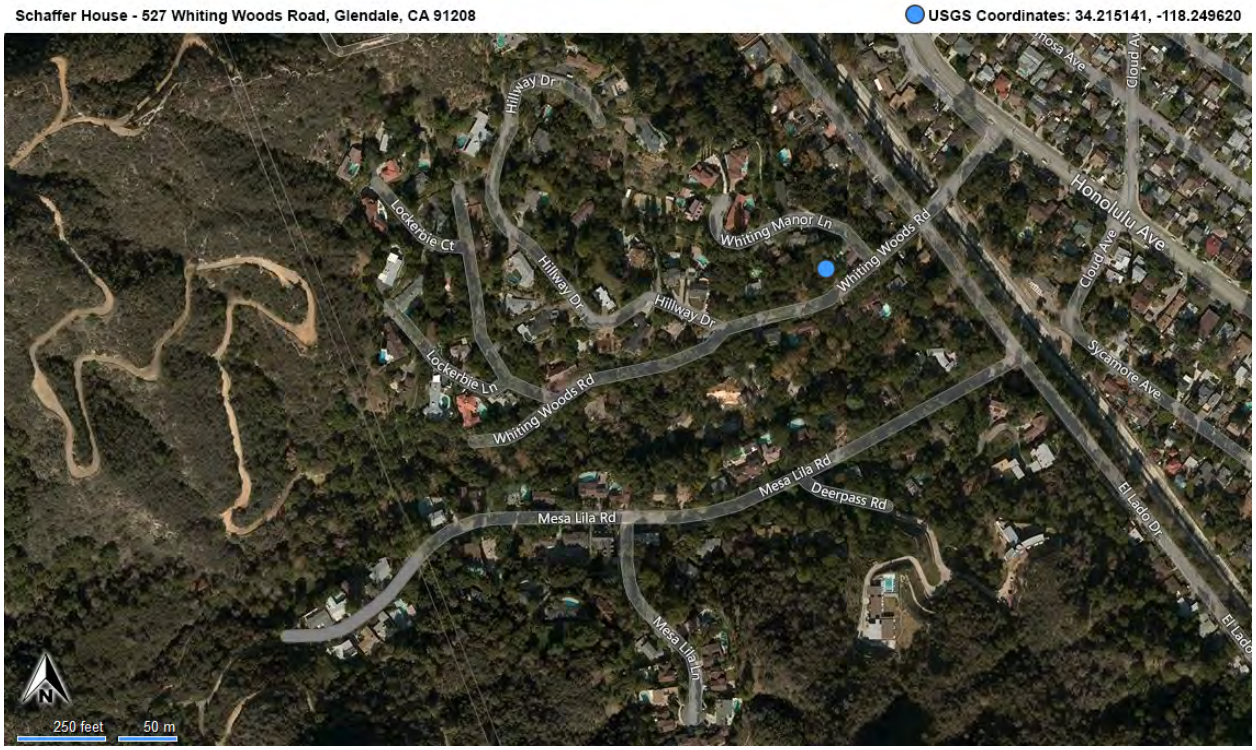
PHOTO #	DESCRIPTION/VIEW
0001	View of south façade, facing north.
0002	Interior view of main living space, facing north.
0003	Interior view of dining area, facing north.
0004	Interior view of living room doors, facing east.
0005	Exterior view of east façade, facing west.
0006	Exterior view of pivoting doors on east façade, facing west.

Schaffer, J.W. House
Name of Property

Los Angeles, CA
County and State

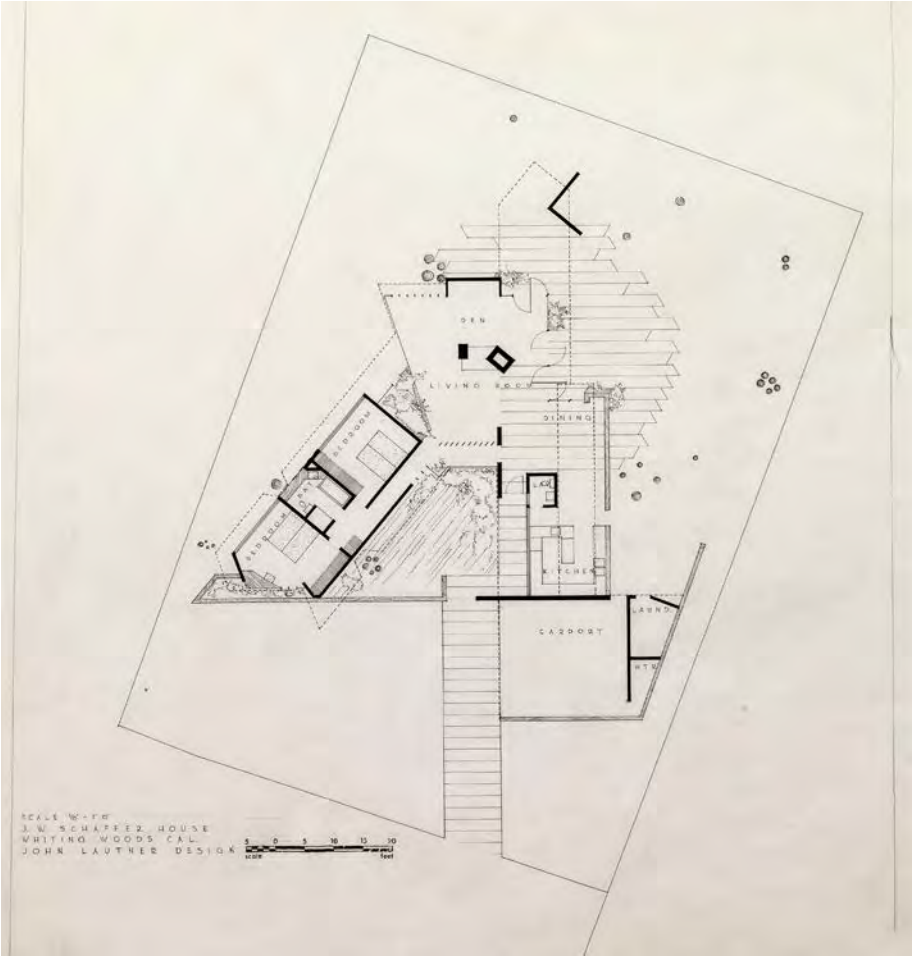
Additional Documentation: Location Map

Figure 1.



Additional Documentation: Floor Plan

Figure 2.



Floor plan, J.W. Schaffer House (© The John Lautner Foundation, courtesy of Frank Escher, 1949)

Additional Documentation: Photographs

Figure 3.

Overview of south façade, facing north (© The John Lautner Foundation, courtesy of Frank Escher, date of photograph unknown)

Figure 4.

Overview of south façade, facing north (Photo credit: Flickr – Formworks, photographed in 2008)

Figure 5.

Overview of east façade, facing northwest (© The John Lautner Foundation, courtesy of Frank Escher, date of photograph unknown)

Figure 6.

Overview of east façade, facing northwest (Photo credit: Flickr – formworks, photographed in 2008)

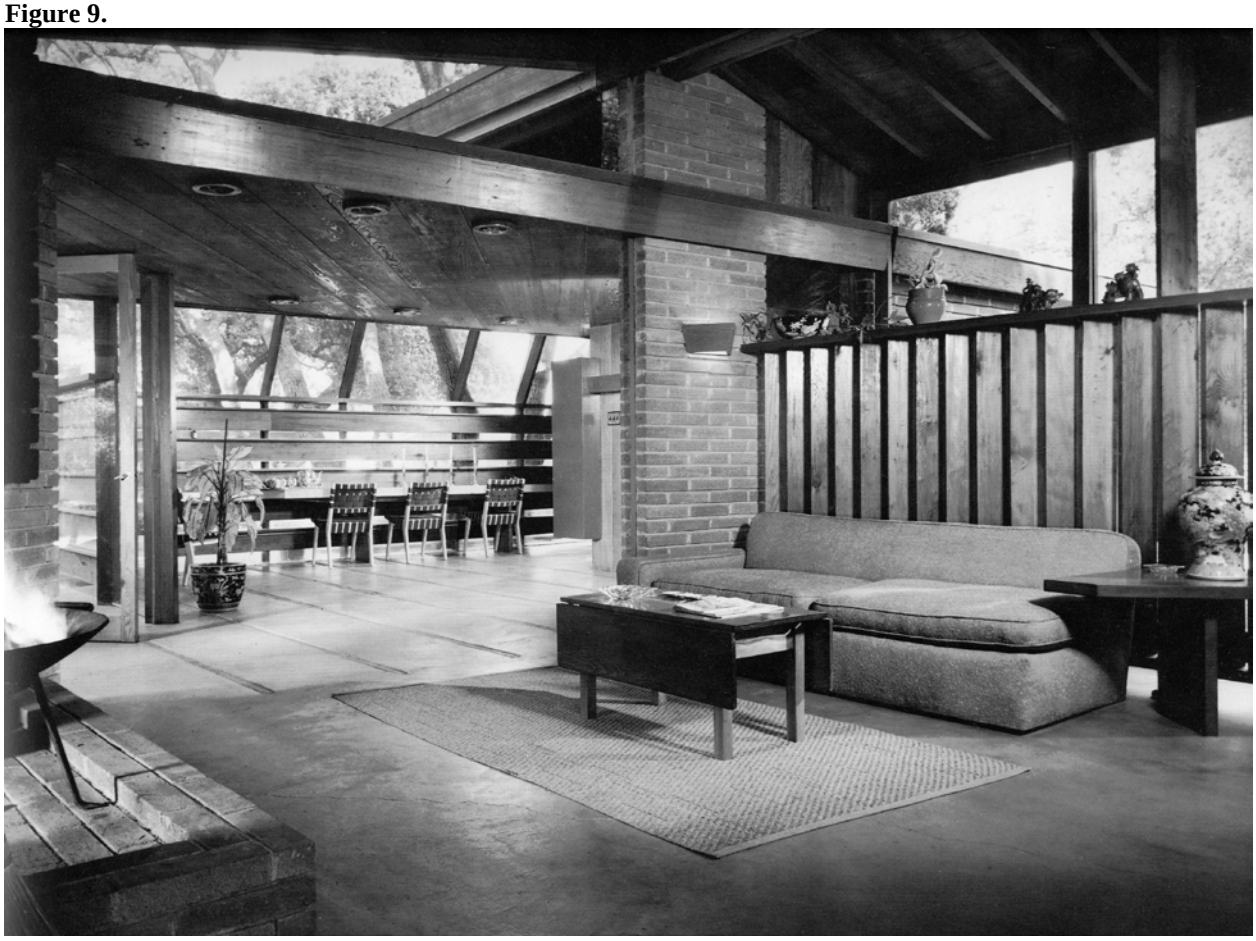
Figure 7.

Interior detail of dining room (Photo credit: Flickr – formworks, photographed in 2008)

Figure 8.

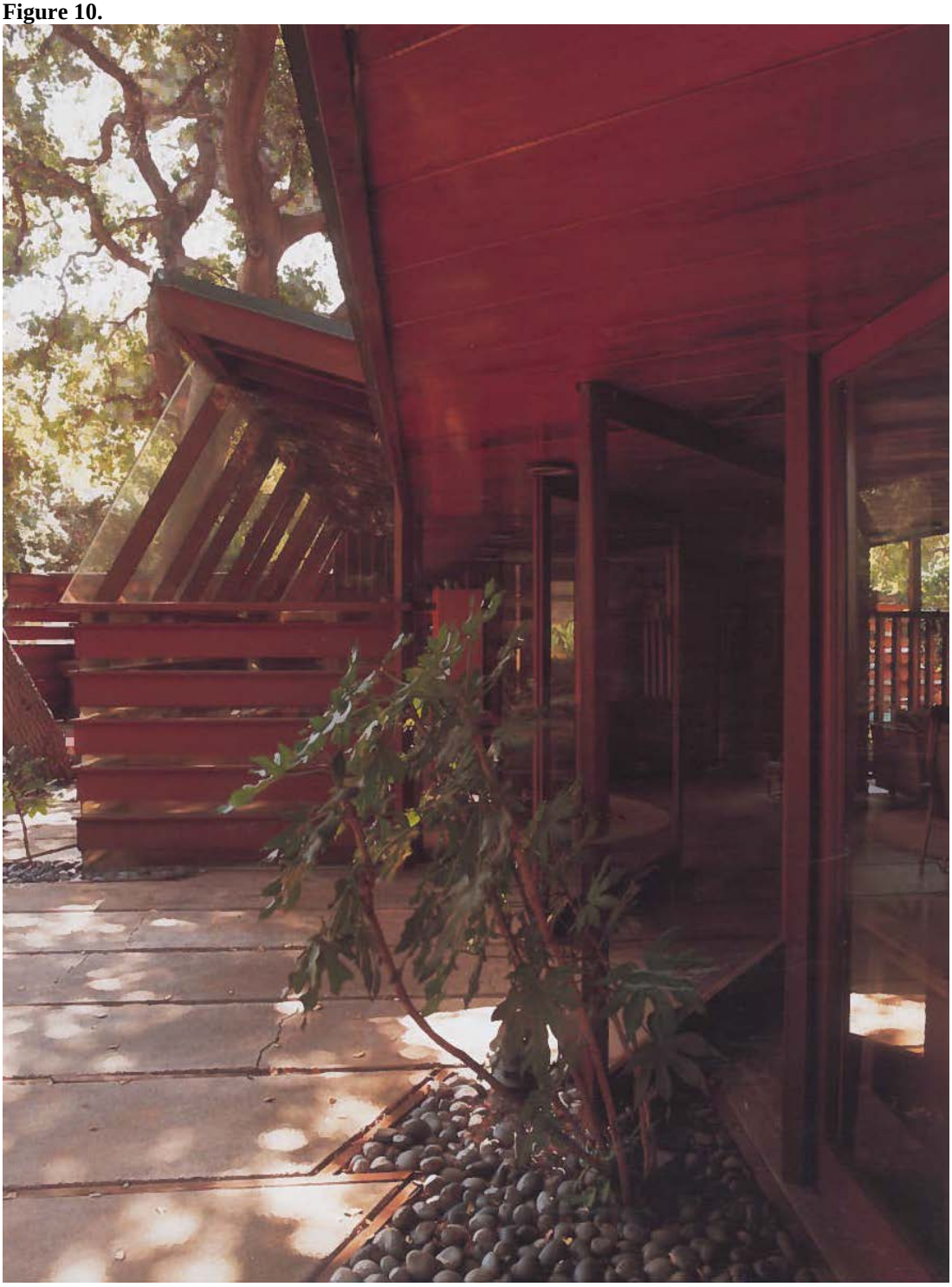
Interior detail of kitchen and dining area (© The John Lautner Foundation, courtesy of Frank Escher, date of photograph unknown)

Figure 9.



Interior detail of living room and dining room (© The John Lautner Foundation, courtesy of Frank Escher, date of photograph unknown)

Figure 10.



Exterior detail of pivot door (Photo credit: Flickr – formworks, photographed in 2008)

Figure 11.

Interior detail of living room and dining room (Photo credit: Flickr – formworks, photographed in 2008)

Figure 12.

Interior detail of hallway and roof (Photo credit: Flickr – formworks, photographed in 2008)

Figure 13.

Interior detail of bedroom (© The John Lautner Foundation, courtesy of Frank Escher, date of photograph unknown)

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.460 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 100 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Office of Planning and Performance Management. U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.

ANDO
KITCHENS
modern garden