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Neutra Gem Seeks Steward

Architect's "gloriously untouched" Hinds house for sale for the first time in 63 years

BY [ADRIENE BIONDO](#)



The Hinds house (above), now on the market in Southern California, is a compact home that merges with the landscape. Architect Richard Neutra's skill in designing homes like this one blurs the line between indoors and out, keeping the focus on the natural beauty surrounding them. Photos: courtesy Tracy Do/Coldwell Banker

Master architect Richard Neutra's Hinds residence in Los Angeles is a special property in search of a steward.

Built in the early 1950s, the home, "distilled by time and gloriously untouched," as described in the listing, features expanses of glass and Neutra's signature 'spider-leg' roof beams that extend into space across a panoramic hillside view.

"This is not a forgotten Neutra. It's a known home, photographed by Julius Shulman...and man, when you're in that house you really feel it," says Mark Mullin, a member of the home's realty team.



Sitting atop Mount Washington in Los Angeles, the property, located at [3940 San Rafael Avenue](#) in the Mount Washington neighborhood, is represented by Tracy Do and Ronda Doyal of Coldwell Banker, and listed at \$1,599,000.

"There's an energy to this house, and the use of space is magnificent," adds Mullin. "It's a little pocket-sized house, but because of the way it's designed, it just feels very open and connected."



The real deal: part of the home's period lighting choices, cabinetry, built-in wood furnishings, a desk, and bookcases.

At 1,082 square feet, the compact home is a shelter that merges with the landscape. Neutra's skill in designing homes that blur the line between indoors and out created understated homes that call little attention to themselves, keeping the focus on the natural beauty surrounding them.

The road traveling up Mount Washington to San Rafael Avenue is "like a big pile of spaghetti roads, all twisty and turny," says Mullin. The house is accessible via the street behind it, Glenalbyn Drive.



One of the original Julius Shulman photos, from 1952. Photography: Julius Shulman (© J. Paul Getty Trust. Getty Research Institute - Los Angeles (2004.R.10)

Originally commissioned by Jay and Katherine Hinds in 1947, the house hugs the ground and speaks to the architect's understated manner, with a low, broad façade. The house changed hands in

1959, and has remained in the Nomura family ever since. "One family ownership going on 63 years—now that's a long time," says Mullin.

Minimally altered since its construction, the home features an integrated carport, living room, a simple, functional kitchen, dining patio, two bedrooms, and two full baths. Taken together, as Mullin describes in the listing, the effect is "a minimalist paradigm paneled in wood."

The beauty in finding such an unadulterated Neutra is that it represents the original fabric of the architect's work, not a remodel. Here is the real-deal, accurate down to period lighting choices, cabinetry, built-in wood furnishings, a desk, and bookcases.

One unexpected delight is a cabinet that cleverly conceals a vintage turntable, a unique find in itself. "I posted that on my Instagram," Mullin says. "What were the odds of having the original hi-fi phonograph with a built-in speaker still there?"



Austrian-born architect Richard Josef Neutra, AIA, was born in Vienna in 1892. He served as a lieutenant in the Austro-Hungarian Army during World War I, taking a leave in 1917 to complete his examinations at the German university Technische Hochschule.

After the war ended, Neutra worked with landscape architect Gustav Ammann in Switzerland, as city architect in Luckenwalde, Germany, and in the offices of Erich Mendelsohn in Berlin. In 1922, he married musician Dione Niedermann, the daughter of a Swiss electrical engineer, and became a father to three sons, Frank, Dion, and Raymond.

Neutra emigrated to the U.S., earning his citizenship in 1929. Southern California offered architects the opportunity and ideal climate for experimentation, and Neutra worked briefly for Frank Lloyd Wright, before living and working at Rudolf Schindler's Kings Road House in West Hollywood. Two of his well-known landscape designs are the garden for Schindler's Lovell Beach House, and the pergola and wading pool for Wright's Barnsdall House in Hollywood.



Developing his own architectural practice headquartered in Silverlake, Neutra designed his own West Coast variation of International Style modernist housing. Among the Neutra

landmarks that can be visited today are the renowned Richard and Dion Neutra VDL Research House in Silverlake, and the Kaufmann Desert House in Palm Springs, a vision of postwar leisure at its best.

Neutra passed in 1970, and his architect-son Dion carried on the Neutra legacy until his own passing in 2019. Today, physician Raymond Neutra runs the [Neutra Institute for Survival Through Design](#), a private 501c3 foundation.

"People love history, and homes with the original features inside," Mullin says.

"We see it all the time, authentic preserved homes versus homes that are 'destroyed' inside. Take it from a realtor, it pays to preserve. If you're just thinking about it from the standpoint of dollars and cents, when we're selling the homes in their original condition, it pays to preserve—that's the bottom line."



With the Hinds residence, "We're so fortunate that this family simply took care of it the way anybody who loves their home takes care of their home. It's extraordinary." Adds Mullin. "I hope I have the opportunity to see the home again once it is polished and the luster of the beautiful wood is brought back."

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