

THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART

11 WEST 53 STREET, NEW YORK 19, N. Y.

TELEPHONE: CIRCLE 5-8900

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EXHIBITION HOUSE WITH SLIDING WALLS OPENS MAY 19 IN MUSEUM GARDEN

A 3-bedroom exhibition house designed by Gregory Ain will open to the public in the Museum Garden, 4 West 54 Street, on May 19. The house was built by the Museum of Modern Art in co-operation with the Woman's Home Companion to demonstrate that good modern architectural design is possible in the speculatively built house, which is the kind lived in by most American families.

The outstanding characteristic of this one-story house is the sliding walls and panels which make it possible to use rooms for different purposes. The living room, dining area, parents' bedroom and kitchen can be opened up to form one living area. Similarly the children's rooms can be used as one large bedroom-playroom or as two separate rooms. This flexibility eliminates the small box-like rooms usually seen in small homes.

The house was planned as one of several similar houses in a subdivision of lots approximately 60' by 120'. The two-level roof and irregular setback on the street facade avoid the flat monotony characteristic of so many real estate developments. Rooms are planned so that no major windows face neighboring houses.

The exterior of the house is finished with striated Douglas Fir Plywood. On the street side a trellis continues the horizontal line of the garage roof and the main roof and also ties the two wings of the house together. On the garden side a glass wall shaded by a deep roof overhang makes the terrace continuous with the living room.

THE LIVING ROOM is unusually spacious for a medium-sized house. The sliding panels and walls make it possible to open up this area into a large living room extending the entire depth of the house and with a glass wall 32' long on the terrace side of the house. The center of interest is the end wall formed by the chimney which is faced with Roman brick laid in block bond. The raised soapstone hearth can be used as a coffee table. The neutral shades of the plywood paneling, gray floor tiles used throughout the entire house, and the various grays of painted surfaces form a backdrop for the bright color accents of paintings, fabrics, books and accessories.

THE DINING AREA is separated from the living room by a 4½' high storage cabinet. Sliding panels above the unit make it possible to

Ben Nelson

close off this area. The glass-topped dining table and chairs with thin metal legs contribute to the feeling of spaciousness.

THE KITCHEN, which is L-shaped, contains standard equipment as well as laundry appliances. Large corner windows overlook the garden. A door opens directly into the garage.

The PARENTS' BEDROOM is separated from the living room by a sliding wall and also has a separate door to the terrace. The adjacent dressing room has two large closets and a dressing table with soft lighting around the mirror of a type used in theatrical dressing rooms.

The CHILDREN'S ROOMS which can be used as one large room or two separate rooms are paneled in oak plywood. Bamboo shades are used at the windows. The rooms are warmly lit by florescent strips over the windows and above the beds. In addition there are two ceiling lamps on pulleys. The floor cabinets in the play areas have a large variety of storage shelves for toys and clothing.

STORAGE SPACE, in addition to the closets in each bedroom and in the kitchen, is provided by closets in the short hall connecting the baths and in the long hall connecting the children's rooms with the front entrance. There is also a large closet at the front door. Other storage space is provided in the garage.

CONSTRUCTION is conventional wood frame. The house is built on a concrete floor slab designed for radiant heating coils. Exterior siding, sheathing and all interior wall surfaces are of plywood. Gypsum board panels have been used for the ceilings, plastic tiles for the floors. Most of the glass is fixed, but each room also has an operating sash for ventilation.

ARCHITECT Gregory Ain of Los Angeles designed the house in collaboration with Joseph Johnson and Alfred Day. He is one of the few modern architects with experience in building moderate priced housing developments. In 1940 he obtained a Guggenheim Fellowship for low-cost housing research, and his buildings have received numerous awards in nationwide competitions.

COST estimates vary for different parts of the country and according to choice of finishes, etc. As one house in a development, estimates range from \$15,500 to \$19,500. The house has 1,420 square feet excluding the garage.

ADDITIONAL MATERIAL AVAILABLE ON REQUEST includes: glossy photographs of living room, dining area, kitchen, parents' bedroom, children's playroom and bedroom, floor plan, street facade and garden facade. (Please specify). Bulletin contains information on manufacturers of construction materials and furnishings.