

## Center for Contemporary Arts Santa Fe / CCA presents Santa Fe Modern – An Exhibition Celebrating Contemporary Architectural Design in the High Desert

### *Santa Fe Modern: Contemporary Design in the High Desert*

December 10, 2021 – February 27, 2022  
Opening Reception – Friday, Dec. 10 | 5-7 pm  
in the CCA spector ripps project space

**Santa Fe, NM, Dec. 2, 2021** — Center for Contemporary Arts Santa Fe CCA is pleased to present an exhibition entitled *Santa Fe Modern*, featuring a group of photographs of contemporary architecture and interiors by Casey Dunn, created for the book of the same name by Helen Thompson, and published by Monacelli Press (2021). This exhibition examines how Indigenous design, materials and design have informed modernist architecture and are in turn reflected in modernist and contemporary domestic architecture of Santa Fe, New Mexico. As exhibition organizer Laura Carpenter explains, “Indigenous architecture lends itself to being seen as Modern in so many ways.” The book (\$50) is available for purchase at CCA in time for the holidays. This exhibition runs from Dec. 10, 2021 – February 27, 2021.

#### **About the Book:**

*Santa Fe Modern* reveals the high desert landscape as an ideal setting for bold, abstracted forms of modernist houses. Wide swaths of glass, deep-set portals, long porches, and courtyards allow vistas, color, and light to become integral parts of the very being of a house, emboldening a way to experience a personal connection to the desert landscape. The architects featured draw from the New Mexican architectural heritage—they use ancient materials such as adobe in combination with steel and glass, and they apply this language to the proportions and demands exacted by today’s world. The houses they have designed are confident examples of architecture that is particular to the New Mexico landscape and climate, and yet simultaneously evoke the rigorous expressions of modernism. The vigor and the allure of modern art and architecture hearten each other in a way that is visible and exciting, and this book demonstrates the synergistic relationship between art, architecture, and the land.

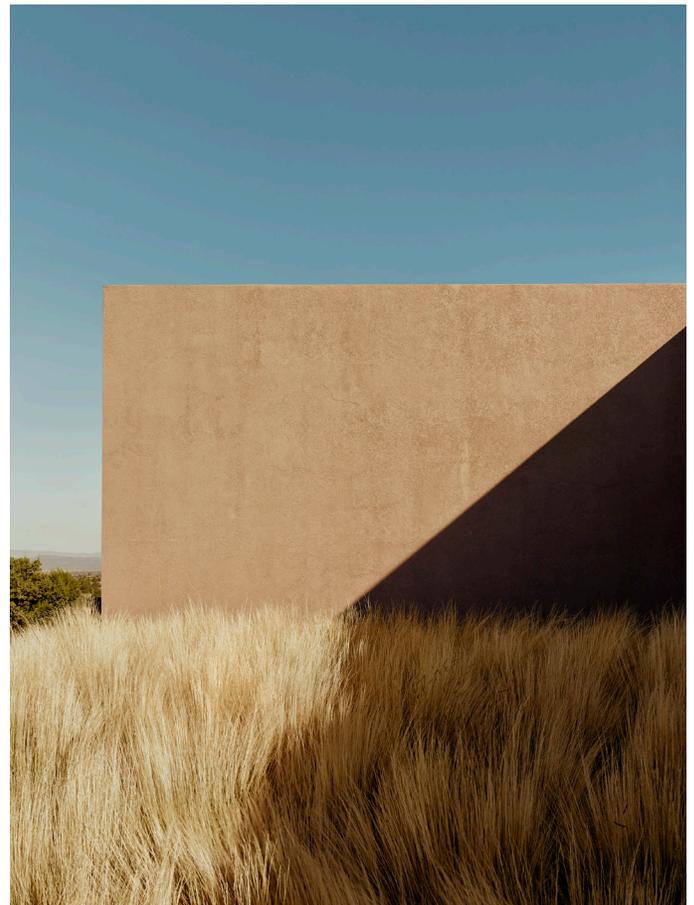


Photo: Casey Dunn



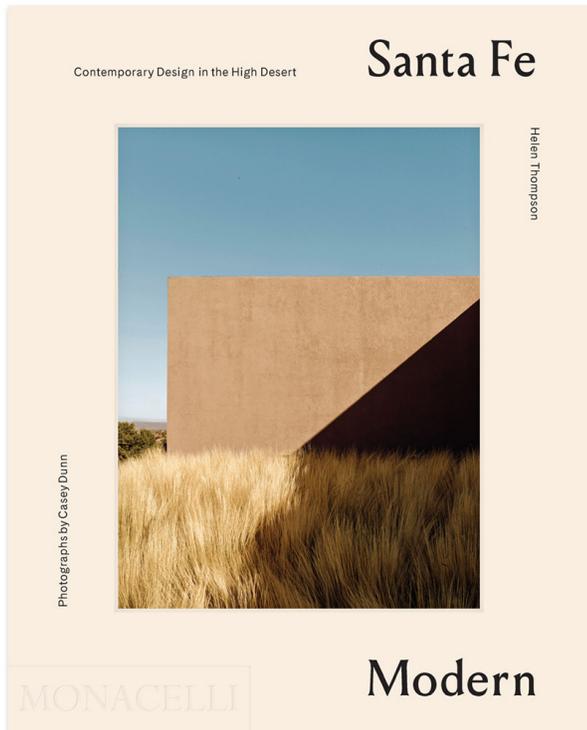
Photo: Casey Dunn

Santa Fe's dramatic mountain landscape, endless views, clear light, pueblo-style adobe architecture, and vibrant history of Indigenous cultures has made the desert oasis a popular destination for creative spirits for over a century. In the last few decades, though, the city has emerged as a hub for contemporary design, art, photography, and architecture. A robust proliferation of modernist homes has changed both the shape and intention of Santa Fe's buildings as well as their relationship to the landscape.

With a connoisseur's eye, author Helen Thompson has collected twenty stunning residences in *Santa Fe Modern: Contemporary Design in the High Desert* that illustrate that this new Santa Fe is no longer a kitschy tourist destination known for an eponymous "style." She demonstrates the paradigm shift, describing in elegant prose how architectural ideas that are both new and ancient have redefined the city and its culture, and paired with Casey Dunn's evocative photography, shows how this style revolution has emerged as a design tour de force. Together they spotlight a remarkable collection of Southwestern residences that range from sleek and sophisticated to quirky and deeply personal.

The first book to explore the modernist and contemporary architecture and interiors of Santa Fe, *Santa Fe Modern* is organized by project, presenting a diverse selection of private homes from architects including Lake|Flato, Lawrence Speck, Specht Architects, Studio DuBois, Trey Jordan, and Ralph Ridgeway. Through these beautifully photographed examples, Thompson reveals the dramatic high desert as the ideal setting for the bold, abstracted forms of modernist houses. While the featured architects draw from the architectural heritage of New Mexico, they use long-established materials such as adobe and wood in combination with steel and glass. These projects are confident examples of architecture that is particular to the desert landscape and climate, relying on the elemental integrity of old building traditions, yet simultaneously evoking the rigorous expressions of modernism.

The homes in the book are introduced with text presenting the project, highlighting Thompson's unique ability to capture the way the owners live in their houses and how the houses themselves function as settings for contemporary art. In-depth captions describe the architectural details, materials, and design, and original photography by Dunn includes stunning exterior and interior shots as well as atmospheric black-and-white images of the New Mexican landscape. The book also includes a foreword by pioneering gallerist Laura Carpenter which contextualizes Santa Fe's place in the art world, and a thoughtful introduction from Thompson that provides important historical background as well as examines the impact of architect John Gaw Meem and artists including Marsden Hartley, Stuart Davis, and most notably, Georgia O'Keeffe.



*Santa Fe Modern*, Helen Thompson, Monacelli Press 2021

An ideal read for anyone interested in architecture of the high desert and beautiful interiors, *Santa Fe Modern* is the first of its kind and a powerful demonstration of the synergistic relationship between art, architecture, and the land.

#### About the Author:

**Helen Thompson** is a nationally known writer on interior design and architecture. Formerly a food writer and editor for *Texas Monthly*, she was the Texas city editor for *Metropolitan Home* and has written and produced articles for *Elle Decor*, *Architectural Digest*, *House Beautiful*, *Martha Stewart Living*, *Western Interiors*, *Traditional Home*, and *Veranda*. She is also the author of *Marfa Modern* and *Texas Made*, *Texas Modern* and a contributor to *Hocker 2005-2020 Landscapes*, all Monacelli titles, as well as *The Big Texas Steakhouse Cookbook*, and *The Mansion on Turtle Creek Cookbook*. She lives in Santa Fe, New Mexico.

#### About the Photographer:

**Casey Dunn** is an Austin-based architectural and landscape photographer whose work has appeared in *Dwell*, the *New York Times Magazine*, *Interior Design*, *Architectural Digest*, *Architectural Record*, and *Paper City Magazine*. He is the photographer for *Marfa Modern*, *Texas Made*, *Texas Modern*, and *Oasis* (Potter, 2020).

The exhibition will be accompanied by a diverse group of public programs and talks designed to examine contemporary architecture and design in Santa Fe and to address the complexities around historic preservation, affordable housing, urban infill, sustainability, and progressive design. More information on these programs will be announced.

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The Center for Contemporary Arts Santa Fe is a 501c3 non-profit cultural center, celebrating creativity across the arts, humanities, and sciences through transformative experiences designed to ignite minds and connect people. CCA is currently operating with Covid-19 protocols that include indoor mask requirements and a proof of vaccination or recent negative test.

**Phase One** of CCA's Post-Covid reopening plan launched this summer and featured the Cinema program, inviting the public to screen films on CCA's new digital projector, the only one of its kind in the state. CCA has a lively schedule of screenings in both the Cinema and the Studio Theater, and the schedule and tickets are available at [ccasantafe.org](http://ccasantafe.org). **Phase Two** of CCA's reopening plan includes the relaunch of the gallery program, including the spector ripps project space, the Muñoz Waxman Gallery, and Living Room Gallery, as well as the Cinema Gallery located between CCA's two theaters.

For images, interviews, or more information, please contact JC Gonzalez, CCA Marketing Coordinator, at [marketing@ccasantafe.org](mailto:marketing@ccasantafe.org).

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