



# John Yeon: Modern Architecture and Conservation in the Pacific Northwest

*Marc Treib*

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John Yeon is today known primarily for residential designs that announced, during the mid-twentieth century, a modern architecture for the Pacific Northwest. It was architecture characterized by astute siting and a sensitive use of wood, with planning that graciously accommodated contemporary living. His devotion to each project was complete, one reason for the relatively small number of realized works. Although regarded by some as a “regionalist,” Yeon himself resisted that categorization, arguing for architecture appropriate to its place, time, and people.

John Yeon: Modern Architecture and Conservation in the Pacific Northwest presents detailed accounts of the three interrelated spheres that comprised John Yeon’s life: architecture, conservation, and art collecting. As an architect, he quickly established a national reputation with the completion of the Watzek house in Portland in 1937, and its exhibition and publication shortly thereafter. As a preservationist, his advocacy for causes like the Columbia River Gorge?efforts that spanned almost half a century?saved from development or despoliation several substantial parcels of land in the Gorge and along the Oregon Coast. Over the years, he also assembled an important collection of artworks, to a large degree centered on Asian ceramics and paintings, but bolstered by substantial holdings of European furniture and other applied arts, and works by certain contemporary artists. John Yeon: Modern Architecture and Conservation in the Pacific Northwest will appeal to al readers interested in architecture and its preservation, the landscape of the Pacific Northwest, and the appreciation and display of art.

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