
Professional Certificate in Mid-Century Modern Restoration

Identification and Evaluation of Mid-Century Modern Structures

Mid-Century Modern (MCM) architecture refers to the design style that was popular during the mid-20th century, roughly from the 1940s to the 1960s. This style is characterized by clean lines, simple forms, and a focus on function and efficiency. MCM structures often feature large windows, open floor plans, and a seamless integration of indoor and outdoor spaces.

Identification and Evaluation of MCM structures are crucial in preserving and restoring these iconic buildings. Here are some key terms and vocabulary related to this process:

1. **Mid-Century Modern:** A design style characterized by clean lines, simple forms, and a focus on function and efficiency.
2. **Period of Significance:** The time period during which a building was designed, constructed, or significantly altered.
3. **Historic Context:** The historical, cultural, and social events and influences that shaped a building's design and use.
4. **Integrity:** The authenticity and intactness of a building's design, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association.
5. **Significance:** The importance of a building in terms of its history, architecture, and culture.
6. **Architectural Style:** A particular design approach or aesthetic, such as Art Deco, Brutalism, or MCM.
7. **Primary and Secondary Character-Defining Features:** The elements of a building that most strongly convey its style and significance.
8. **Alterations:** Changes made to a building after its original construction, such as additions, renovations, or modifications.
9. **Contextual Analysis:** An examination of the surrounding environment and how it relates to a building's design and use.
10. **Historic District:** A geographically defined area that contains a concentration of buildings with historical, cultural, or architectural significance.
11. **Secretarial Review:** A streamlined process for evaluating and listing buildings on the National Register of Historic Places.
12. **Multiple Property Documentation Form (MPDF):** A document that outlines the historical and architectural significance of a group of related buildings or resources.
13. **Rehabilitation:** The process of modifying a building to meet contemporary needs while preserving its historic character.
14. **Adaptive Reuse:** The conversion of a building to a new use while preserving its historic character.
15. **Section 106 Review:** A process required by the National Historic Preservation Act for evaluating the impact of federal projects on historic properties.

16. **Certified Local Government (CLG):** A program that supports local governments in preserving historic properties.
17. **HABS/HAER/HALS:** Three federal programs that document historic buildings, structures, and landscapes for posterity.
18. **Preservation Easement:** A legal agreement that protects a building's historic character by restricting future alterations.
19. **National Register of Historic Places:** A list of buildings, structures, and landscapes with historical, cultural, or architectural significance.
20. **Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation:** A set of guidelines for preserving the historic character of buildings during rehabilitation.

Examples:

- * A mid-century modern building with large windows, an open floor plan, and a seamless integration of indoor and outdoor spaces.
- * A building that was designed and constructed during the 1950s, and has retained its original design, materials, and workmanship.
- * A building that is significant due to its association with a prominent architect or historical event.
- * A building's primary character-defining features, such as its façade, roofline, and entranceway.
- * A renovation that adds a new wing to a building, but preserves its original design and materials.
- * A contextual analysis of a building's surroundings, including its neighborhood, streetscape, and landscape.
- * A historic district that contains a concentration of mid-century modern buildings.
- * A building that is being considered for listing on the National Register of Historic Places.
- * A rehabilitation project that modifies a building to meet contemporary needs while preserving its historic character.
- * A preservation easement that restricts future alterations to a building's historic character.

Practical Applications:

- * Identifying mid-century modern buildings and evaluating their significance.
- * Conducting contextual analyses and historic district studies.
- * Preparing National Register nominations and multiple property documentation forms.
- * Conducting section 106 reviews and working with certified local governments.
- * Documenting historic buildings, structures, and landscapes through HABS/HAER/HALS.
- * Implementing preservation easements and other legal agreements to protect historic properties.

Challenges:

- * Identifying and evaluating mid-century modern buildings that have been altered or modified.
- * Balancing the need for preservation with the demands of contemporary development.
- * Navigating complex legal and regulatory requirements for historic preservation.
- * Securing funding and support for preservation efforts.

In conclusion, the identification and evaluation of mid-century modern structures require a deep

understanding of the key terms and vocabulary used in this field. By mastering these concepts and applying them in practical ways, professionals in the field of mid-century modern restoration can help preserve these iconic buildings for future generations. However, the process also presents challenges, such as balancing preservation with development and securing funding and support. Despite these challenges, the rewards of preserving mid-century modern architecture are well worth the effort, as these buildings serve as a testament to the ingenuity and creativity of their designers and continue to inspire and delight those who experience them.