

# DOMESTICITY IN TIMES OF CRISIS

## Peter G. Harnden's house in Orgeval: Modern Hybrid Transatlantic Interiors

Héctor García-Diego Villarías and María Villanueva Fernández

**ABSTRACT:** In 1952, both the French magazine *L'Architecture d'aujourd'hui* and the Italian magazine *Domus* published a small house built by an American architect on the outskirts of Paris for his personal use. The outsider they highlighted to was Peter G. Harnden, the architect who directed the American propaganda campaigns in Europe in the postwar period.

This was not a new project but a renovation. A single house with the characteristics of the traditional houses was not sufficient for the model of domesticity practiced by the architect. Moreover, Harnden needed the house as soon as possible. Therefore, the operation consisted of joining two small vernacular buildings in the small French village of Orgeval: a house and a barn. The strategy was completed with a garden that resulted from the demolition of four other buildings.

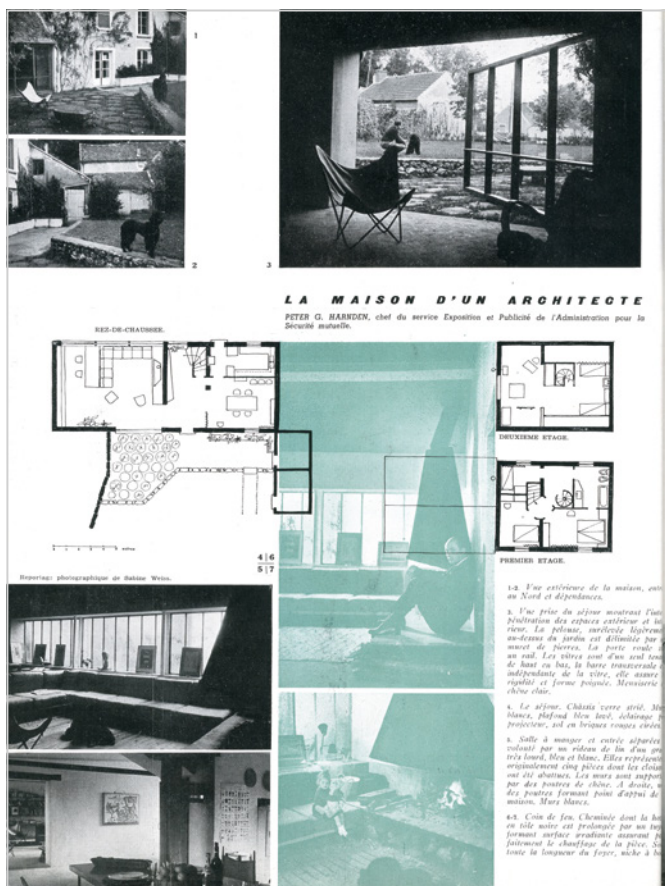
Inside, the architect exhibits an interest in objects of everyday life and authorized designs that extend throughout the spaces of the house. Furniture from the Eames, Prouvé, or the Viennese school is mixed with African rugs, mats, wicker plates, German porcelain, and different versions of vernacular stools. This studied and photogenic accumulation of pieces and ornaments supposedly made the house a more comfortable, fun, and pleasurable experience. It was a fundamental characteristic of the American Way of Life launched to the world by the United States of America, of which Harnden was a loudspeaker in Europe for more than a decade. Consequently, in this work, the American architect would interweave architecture and domesticity in postwar Europe through the combination of respect for a well-understood tradition and the materialistic world typical of his place of origin. This, in part, helps to understand the exoticism with which the magazines mentioned this project. The study and analysis of this hardly known case include its deliberate diffusion and propagandistic impact, in which the design of the interior space is crucial in a context of crisis and emergency in devastated Europe.

**KEYWORDS:** Peter G. Harnden, USA-European Campaigns, modern interior, domesticity, postwar design

**INTRODUCTION:** In 1952, a small house built by an American architect for his own and his family use on the outskirts of Paris was published in the French magazine *L'Architecture d'aujourd'hui* (Harnden, 1952 a, p. 39) and in the Italian *Domus* (Harnden, 1952 b, pp. 26-28). Both magazines coincided in highlighting this project as if the appearance of an American designer in those years denoted a certain exoticism. It was not for nothing that *Domus* unambiguously entitled its article *Un americano a Parigi*. For its part, the title of the chapter in the French magazine announced in capital letters *LA MAISON D'UN ARCHITECTE AUX ENVIRONS DE PARIS* [FIGURE 01]. Below, a photograph of the designer and inhabitant himself seated by the fireplace challenged the camera with his gaze. These two articles are not the only magazines that showcase this

Harnden house in Orgeval but have been selected specifically because they are contained in architectural journals, because of their prestige, and because they have continuity throughout the presentation of the works of Harnden and Bombelli that are analyzed.<sup>1</sup>

Peter Graham Harden, the subject of the photograph, was the son of an American diplomat. His childhood and youth as a traveler earned him his cosmopolitan character. After founding his design and architecture studio called Design Project in California in the 1930s, he enlisted in the army in the early 1940s. At the turn of the decade, he would be appointed in charge of the American propaganda campaigns<sup>2</sup> that would tour the devastated Old Continent after World War II in the preamble to the confrontation of blocs that would lead to the Cold War

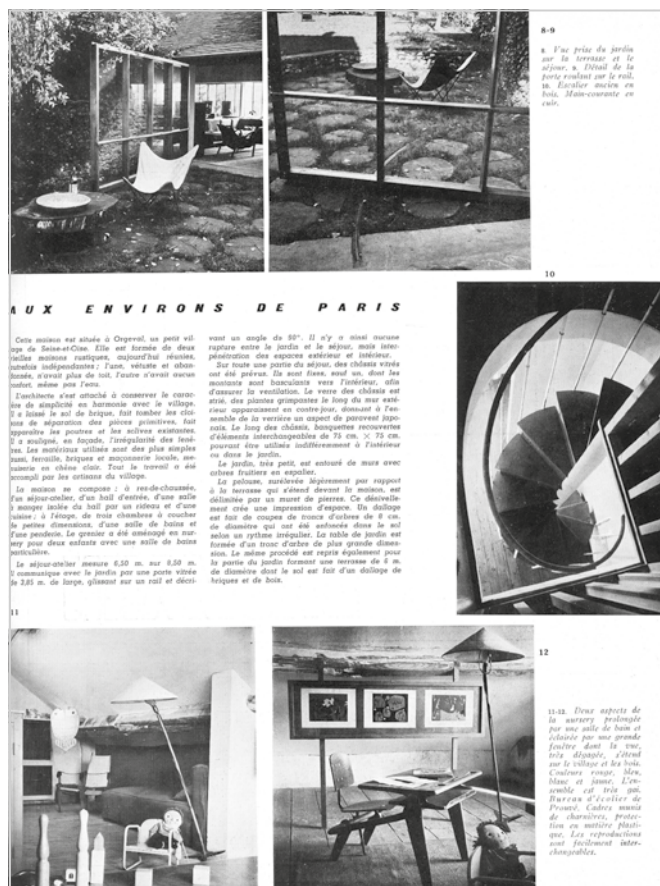


01 Peter G. Harnden's article published in the French magazine *L'Architecture d'Aujourd'hui*. © *L'Architecture d'aujourd'hui*, 1952, 39-40.

(García-Diego Villarías and Alcolea Rodríguez, 2019, pp. 155-169). To address the governmental assignment, he would set up his first office in Paris (Harnden, 1957, p. 45). Harden would be forced to look for a house to live in the French capital with his family.<sup>3</sup>

It is, therefore, the crisis following the devastation of World War II that is the primary reason for the arrival of the American architect in France in the early 1950s. In terms of architecture, among many other considerations, the climate of cultural confrontation of the Cold War contributed to founding and spreading the Californian domestic ideal, which was so popular at the time. This was a paradigm forged especially on the Californian West Coast, where John Entenza's famous Case Study House Program would achieve notable popularity in the media and an international diffusion that would be difficult to compare<sup>4</sup>. Ideals that are truly close to Peter G. Harnden (he would publish his first article in *Arts & Architecture* magazine) and that he would contribute to spread as one of the main actors in postwar Europe<sup>5</sup>.

In this context, the house presented in the articles of the French and Italian magazines is a rare case of hybrid architecture worth studying for three fundamental reasons. Firstly, the urgency for the architect's accommodation, coupled with the scarcity of resources caused by the crisis, pushed its designer to carry out the rehabilitation and transformation of a previous construction from the commitment of the American architect and propagandist. This



entailed an obligatory conjugation of the tradition of the place, both physically and culturally, with the modernity imported from California in terms of language, material culture, and model of living. Secondly, the house is in itself a means of disseminating the American Way of Life, which is worth analyzing with the change of physical and cultural coordinates. Finally, Peter G. Harnden, its inhabitant and designer, embodies in his person a hypothetical cultural fusion between Europe and America that could affect both the interior design—since it will be inhabited by him and his family—and its dissemination in different media as an influential actor in American propaganda campaigns.

## FROM FRENCH OLD BARN TO MODERN AMERICAN LIVING

The Harnden house in Orgeval<sup>6</sup> was a renovation project, and all the work on the site was done by local craftsmen. The article reflected the American architect's sensitivity to the particularities of the place and emphasized that the architect had tried to "preserve the character of simplicity in harmony with the village" in his own words (Harnden, 1952 February).<sup>7</sup> To enlarge the space, Harnden joined two small vernacular buildings in the small French town [FIGURE 02]. The house "is composed of two old rustic houses, joined today, and which were independent; one of them, deteriorated and abandoned, had no roof, and the other had no comfort, not even water" (Harnden, 1952 February).<sup>8</sup>



02 Exterior view of the two volumes of the house, the barn and the traditional house, taken from the garden.  
© Domus, 1952, 271.



The greatest efforts were aimed at making two autonomous elements of different sizes into a single dwelling.<sup>9</sup> This significant formal difference between the volumes has its logical transposition in the program. The larger, original construction was intended to house most of the living quarters. The former one-story barn, however, was reserved to create a large living and working space in direct contact with the garden (Kellog, 1957, p. 49).

To homogenize both buildings, Harnden spread a common brick block pavement. In addition, he showed the beams and pillars of the two buildings. With the same criteria, simple materials such as iron, oak wood or stone masonry were used to develop the new house following constructive guidelines that could be associated with the tradition of the place. Bright colors and varied elements were added without embarrassment. A large sofa ran along the generous window facing the street and then folded ninety degrees on itself.

This piece of furniture divided the area into two spaces, it consisted of a grill of wooden reeds on which 75x75 centimeter cushions were placed. The cushions were removable<sup>10</sup> so that, on summer days, they could be taken out into the garden.<sup>11</sup> Behind the sofa, there was a simple work area, consisting mainly of a large table supported by a continuous shelf that covered the entire wall: an integration of the workspace in the living area that was perhaps motivated, to a greater extent, by its value as a visual element [FIGURE 03].

The fireplace presides over the space (Chimneys, 1954, pp. 436-440). Like a huge black metal sculpture, it is independent of the wall. It acquires such dimensions as it is designed to function as an enormous metal radiator.<sup>12</sup> The fireplace plays a very important symbolic role in creating a home from the American perspective. The presence of the fireplace is further underlined by the position in which it is placed, just where the space acquires double transparency both towards the street and the garden.

Although the window facing the street is translucent to preserve privacy, there is a large transparent opening facing the garden, which takes the form of a large swinging door. It consists of four sheets of glass mounted on a

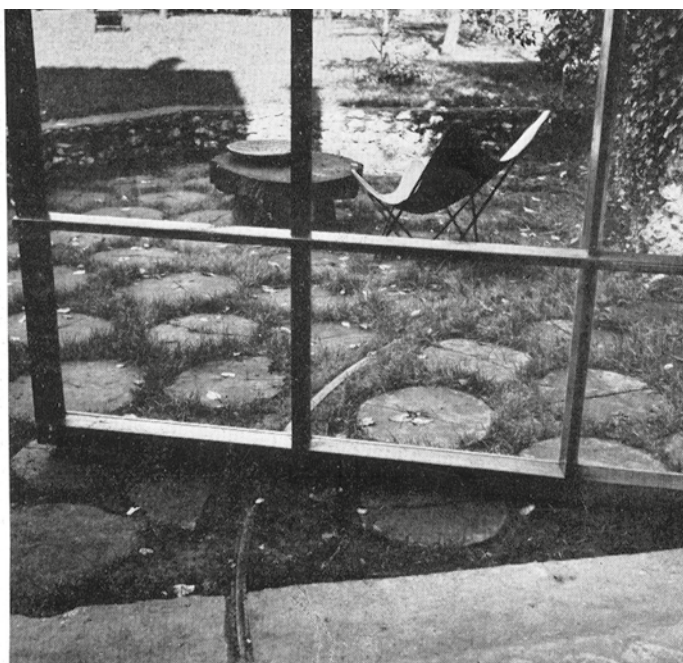
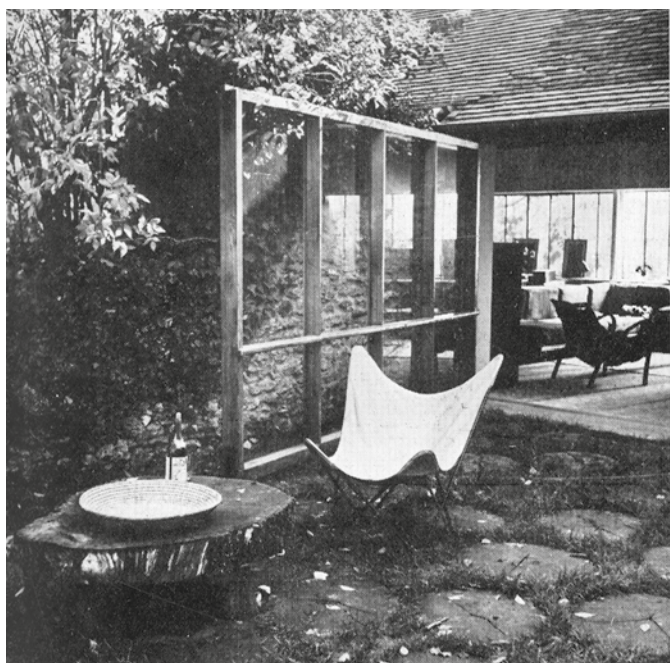
wooden frame that slides on a rail running in a quarter circle along the terrace [FIGURE 04]. A horizontal bar can be used to turn the door. As explained by the architect, this element blurs the interior-exterior boundaries, a strategy not unlike the theoretical project designed for *Arts & Architecture* magazine years ago with the use of a large sliding glass sheet (Harnden, 1942).

However, in the case of the Orgeval, the technology needed to shape a thin and sophisticated sliding glass sheet was not available in the 1950s. Nonetheless, this contingency is taken as a compositional opportunity. Given that the result was a heavy object, the door marks a groove in the terrain that, in turn, describes an arc of circumference that makes it impossible to place a set of regular, right-angled



03 Snapshots of the living room featuring the work area and the sheet metal fireplace. The fusion of tradition and modernity is highlighted by the combination of American and European furniture  
© Domus, 1952, page 27.





04 Different images of the garden showing the rotating mechanism of the large gate-lock that gives access to the garden. © Sabine Weiss, *L'Architecture d'Aujourd'hui*, 1952, page 40.

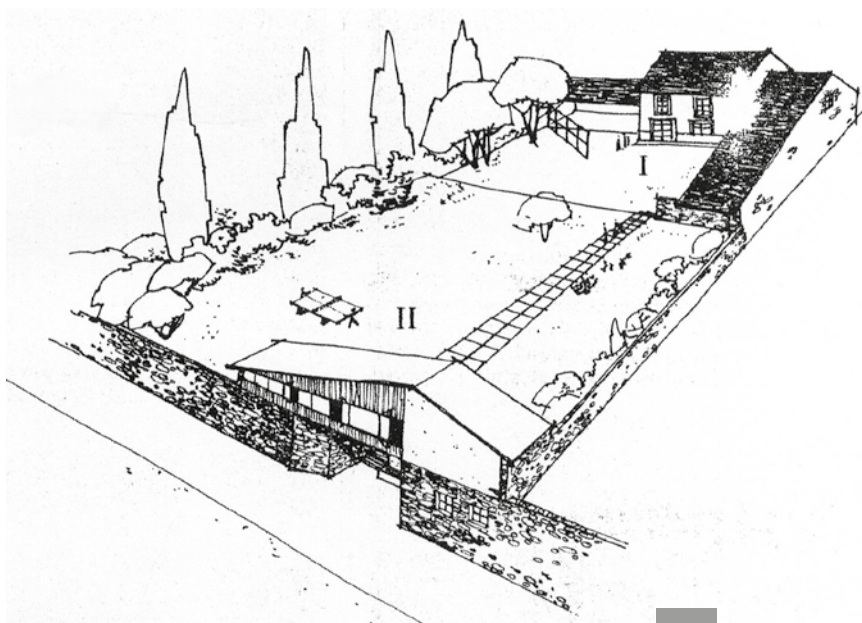
tiles. Harnden improvised an ingenious paving composed of disc-shaped log cuts, which turned the problem into a license to investigate new ways of flooring a terrace and colonizing a transitional space between indoors and outdoors. Following this plastic guideline, Harnden designed the side table with an oversized log section on four legs.

This way of dealing with the scarcity of resources resulting from the war, as if it were an opportunity for experimentation, is not too far from the principles that guided the Case Study House Program, sponsored in part by the shortage of materials.<sup>13</sup> In both situations, arising problems were addressed with the pragmatism and resolution of those who simplify the basic question and face a difficulty from the possible without renouncing the fundamental. Yet, the change of location gives greater relevance and significance to the architect's work. The architect demonstrates a sensibility of a pact between tradition and modernity that will be celebrated by the magazine *La Maison Française* in 1960: "It is quite moving to note

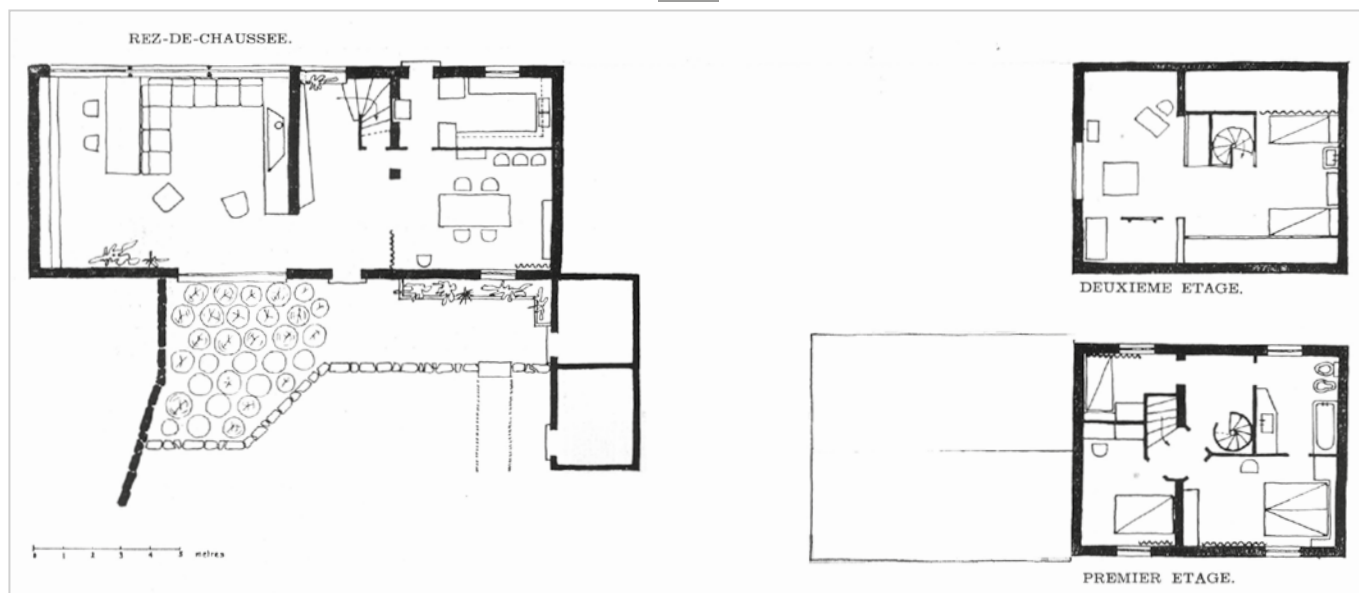
that respect for a site in Ile-de-France and the freedom of a modern composition are reconciled here in the work of P. G. Harnden, an 'architectural designer' of American origin, based in our country (Febvre-Desportes, 1961)."<sup>14</sup>

### A FRENCH HOUSE TURNED INTO A STAGE FOR THE AMERICAN WAY OF LIFE

Comparable to the stereotypical American suburban home which is inevitably linked to a garden, the small terrace in Harnden's house is located at the same level as the ground floor and is delimited by a low masonry wall. This bridges the small unevenness of barely thirty centimeters with the garden. Surrounded by other rustic constructions, a green courtyard presents itself resulting from the demolition of four other houses, which also explains the irregular geometry of the small wall that delimits the terrace and the garden. After this operation, Harnden uses vegetation in an ornamental way to attenuate the direct impact of the bare walls, surrounding the walls with fruit trees.<sup>15</sup> [FIGURE 05]



05 Harnden's drawing of his place, also referring to the guest's pavilion built years after at the end of the garden. © Peter G. Harnden, 1952.



06 Floor plans of the house. © Peter G. Harnden, 1952.



07 Views of the dining room with four Safari chairs by Wilhelm Kienzle (1950s). In the background, two B.K.F. chairs by Antonio Bonet, Juan Kurchan and Jorge Ferrari-Hardoy (1938) furnish the living room. © Sabine Weiss, 1952.

Upon entering the house, a heavy linen curtain separates the large dining room from the entrance and the living room. This space was obtained by joining several rooms together [FIGURE 06]. It features a table designed by Harnden himself, a set of bookshelves anchored to the wall, and a set of chairs of Spanish provenance, probably chosen for their affordability, as the *New York Times* assumed. This is how the newspaper would describe the dining room: "Dining room in the Harnden's house was enlarged by removing the partitions between the smaller rooms. It is furnished with Spanish chairs, a table of Mr. Harnden's design and, in a space-saving manner, suspended storage cabinets" (Kellog, 1957, p. 49) [FIGURE 07].

On the opposite side, the staircase leads to the second floor, where there are three small bedrooms and a bathroom. Each of the rooms is served by identical symmetrically placed windows. From here, the staircase continues upwards, now in the form of a spiral. The light oak steps and leather handrail invite one to climb up and discover the top floor entirely dedicated to children. A bathroom is added, separated from the rest of the room by a suspended frame. The attic is illuminated by a solitary window of large proportions, the only one in the whole house facing east, which rises above the living area, offering an exceptional view over the roofs of the buildings of the village [FIGURE 06].

The photos in the articles are selected with fine-tuned precision, as they present the furniture and people in a composition that boasts numerous objects and toys: construction sets, Japanese kites, stuffed animals, and dolls share the limelight in the snapshots with Harnden's daughter [FIGURE 08]. The two-seater school desk by Jean Prouvé (1935)—in its most unusual individual version—is placed in the center of one of the images taken from the attic. This element is accompanied by a tilted floor lamp typical of the Viennese school. The architect's interest in objects of everyday life, including children's, and at the same time authoritative design pieces—as a reminiscence of past times when he collected works of art<sup>16</sup>— extends through all the spaces of the house.

The interior was equipped with a measured combination of pieces of modern design with others of vernacular tradition in a situation of contrast and dependence that was enhanced by the built framework itself. Real furniture delicacies are intermingled without blushing with the Spanish chairs and stools, wicker tablecloths or typical French berets that hang on the walls. The photographs in these articles—and in later publications—show two B.K.F. chairs (1938) by Antonio Bonet, Juan Kurchan and Jorge Ferrari-Hardoy in the living room and garden and four Safari chairs (1950s) by Wilhelm Kienzle in the dining room. Later, with the expansion of the house through the





08 Harnden's daughter entertains herself surrounded by toys and in front of the two-seater school desk by Jean Prouvé (1935). © Sabine Weiss, 1952.

construction of a guest pavilion, Harnden will acquire several Diamond chairs (1952) by Harri Bertoia, a 10A lamp (1951) by Isamu Noguchi, a Disa lamp (1957) by José Antonio Coderch, and a Vintage Lounge Chair 514A by Dirk van Slieedregt (1952). In addition, numerous works of art are scattered throughout the house, including four drawings by Willi Baumeister on the dining room sideboard.<sup>17</sup>

Perhaps it makes sense to contextualize Harnden's domestic architecture—and even more so in his way of presenting it—in the American panorama of the discipline of the 1950s. The motley image of elements and ornaments that allegedly turned the house into a more comfortable, fun, and pleasant experience would be a permanent feature in the architecture launched to the world by the US and exemplified in the figure of the Eames couple. This is how Beatriz Colomina interprets modern architecture in the United States as a lifestyle package rather than a standalone artistic or technical creation. Buildings served as frames for objects of desire, blending into the abundance of items they displayed (Colomina, 2006, p. 7). [FIGURE 09]

In view of the different items that diffuse his house in Orgeval, it could be said that Harnden openly declares himself a supporter of this way of understanding the house. African rugs, mats, wicker plates, German porcelain, and different versions of traditional seats are a constant in all the images.<sup>18</sup> By doing so, Harnden signals his model of life. The carcass of the traditional house and barn of Orgeval becomes the recipient of a domesticity transplanted from Californian coordinates to the specific ones of the French people, both in physical, temporal, and cultural terms. Peter Harnden interweaves architecture and domesticity in an exercise that goes beyond design and in which respect for tradition and a commitment to a genuine lifestyle, marked both by his own personality and his work as an American propagandist, come together to create an unrepeatable family house in postwar Europe.



09 Ray and Charles Eames sitting in their living room. © Julius Shulman, 1958; J. Paul Getty Trust. Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles (2004.R.10).

## CONCLUSIONS: HARNDEN'S WAY OF LIFE

The period of world crisis that followed World War II acted as a powerful cultural and technological catalyst. The popular Case Study House Program (CSHP), the precursor of the most visual aspect of the American lifestyle of the 1950s, had as its origin, in part, the material scarcity caused by the war.

The first foray into architecture published by Harnden in 1942 consisted of a theoretical project that appeared in the pages of *Arts & Architecture*<sup>19</sup>, the recurring means of dissemination of the well-known CSHP. During the following years, it would become an influence that would transcend the mere formal configuration typical of the photogenic houses that Julius Shulman<sup>20</sup> knew how to fix in the retina of the architectural community of the fifties. Presumably, Peter Harnden could have imbibed the principles of this domestic architecture, paradigmatically synthesized in the historic announcement of the CSHP program, to imbricate them in the reality of a context that, although devastated, is indebted to a tradition that should not be disdained.

It was the magazine *Arts & Architecture* itself that, in 1966, verbalized this characteristic of Harnden's architecture in relation to that which he would later develop in the Spanish fishing village of Cadaqués: "Attempts by outlanders to capture the flavor of local architecture usually end in disaster —assertive sterile hybrids or vulgar, rootless parodies. (unknown, 1966)."<sup>21</sup> Furthermore, the publication highlights how the seven Spanish houses featured here stand out as exceptions, blending grace and

authenticity, while their architects skilfully use materials to create environments that are simple, direct, and deeply connected to their surroundings.

With that same naturalness and pragmatism—so *clichéd* attributed to the American spirit—is how Peter Harnden would deploy his way of making architecture in the small French village in the 1950s, and that would also be the germ of the many other houses that Harnden would design in Spanish territory, echoed in Entenza's magazine. From the monumental disaster caused by the war, an intersection arises where the French popular architectural culture and the global vision promulgated from the American West Coast, personified in Harnden, meet, to result in a house project that constitutes a unique case of triple hybridization that is especially evident in the interiors of the house.

First of all, in this project, there is a conjunction of tradition and modernity, which is substantiated by the popular-modern tension originated by the roots of the pre-existence and the push of international sign of the young architect and is made explicit in the combination of objects that are accumulated in the interiors. Something that gives meaning to the combination of popular furniture with other more sophisticated contemporary design. A condition that, as we have seen, acquires special brilliance in those cases in which the technological limitations of the context of crisis are taken as a compositional virtue, as happens with the large practicable door of the living room or the pavement of the nearby garden.

Secondly, in terms that go beyond the material, Harnden's project would import a filtered American Way of Life, which could be called Harnden's Way of Life, to a distressed European continent. The organization of the program with open spaces, the prominence of the living room and garden, the symbolic value of the fireplace, and the accumulation of objects and furniture evoked a type of domesticity indebted to the promulgated American lifestyle of those years. The *New York Times* eloquently summarized this circumstance in 1957:

*The Harnden House, which he describes as 'primitive', is a 40-year-old farm house. He has kept the exterior in its original state to harmonize with the thirteenth-century architecture in the rest of the drowsy country town. But the interior with its modern furnishings and open floor plan would be at home in America.*  
(Kellog, 1957, p. 49)

Thirdly, in the house, the particular identities of the US and Europe meet and merge in the context of the extensive cultural communicating vessels that followed the war. Not surprisingly, this house shows clear similarities with some parallel movements and European precursors, especially

in Scandinavia, which often show a comparable combination of vernacular Modernism and use of design and everyday objects. This is the case in the famous Asplund Summer House (1938) but also, for example, Gerrit Rietveld's Verrijn Stuart Summer House (1941) or some of Carlo Molino's interiors in Italy.

Finally, the postwar period, marked by scarcity and crisis, catalyzed a unique blend of American Modernism and European vernacular architecture, as exemplified by Peter Harnden's work in France. Harnden's own house is clearly used for propagandistic purposes. When asked about the exhibition content of the American Pavilion for the Brussels fair of 1958, he replied: "Actually, we aren't so much interested in the exhibit things themselves as in the fact that all kind and classes of Americans can own them" (Kellog, 1957, p. 49). Perhaps this comment can be extended partially to Harnden's house at Orgeval, though the contrast between the house in France from 1952 and the Expo '58 underscores the significant societal and political changes of the era. While the former represents a time of uncertainty and recovery, the latter symbolizes a renewed sense of hope and possibility. The Cold War had begun to cast a shadow, but the Expo sought to highlight the potential of human ingenuity and cooperation. From this point of view, the house acquires a new value as a demonstration that it is possible for the two nationalities, understood as cultural realities, to meet in the domestic sphere beyond its value per se. However, this role of architecture at the service of propaganda, far from diminishing the quality of the house, insofar as it is skilfully integrated into the pre-existing vernacular construction, could multiply its value and thus suggest new paths for the development of domestic architecture in the years that followed.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This article is part of the results of the DISARQ project, PID2023-153253NA-I00, funded by MCIN/AEI/10.13039/501100011033 (Spain) and by FEDER, (EU).

## REFERENCES

- ANON. "A Cadaqués." (1961, November). *Domus*, 384, 27-50.
- BUISSON, E., & Billard, T. (2004). *The Presence of the Case Study Houses*. Birkhäuser.
- CHIMNEYS, T. . "Les chiménées des villes". (1954, 19 de avril) *Elle*, 436, 436-440.
- COLOMINA, B. (2006). *Domesticity at War*. Actar.
- ENTENZA, J. (1945, January). John Entenza, Announcement, the case study house program. *Arts & Architecture*, 37.
- FEBVRE-DESORTES, M.A. (1961). Fermes transformées. Un régionalisme bien compris. *La Maison Française*, 148, 73-79.
- GARCÍA-DIEGO VILLARÍAS, H., & Alcolea Rodríguez, R.A. (2019). Exhibitions on Wheels: USA Propaganda Campaigns in Europe (1949-1959). *Constelaciones*, 7, 155-169.

- GARCÍA-DIEGO VILLARÍAS, H., & Villanueva Fernández, M. (2020). Living, Creating, Enjoying: Villa Gloria by Harnden and Bombelli in Cadaqués (1959), *VLC arquitectura*, 7(2), 157-184. <https://doi.org/10.4995/vlc.2020.11843>
- GARNICA, J. (2006). Harnden and Bombelli in Spain. In *La arquitectura norteamericana, motor y espejo de la arquitectura española en el arranque de la modernidad* (133-142). Tó Ediciones.
- GARNICA, J. (2019). Peter Harnden. Tra Guerra Fredda e tradizione mediterranea. *FAMagazine. Ricerche E Progetti sull'architettura E La Città*, (47), 12-30. <https://doi.org/10.12838/fam/issn2039-0491/n47-2019/233>
- HARNDEN, P. (1942, April). Priorities and a Small House. *Arts & Architecture*.
- HARNDEN, P. (1952 a, February). La maison d'un architecte aux environs de Paris. *L'Architecture d'Aujourd'hui*, 39-40.
- HARNDEN, P. (1952 b, June). Un Americano a Parigi. *Domus*, 271, 274.
- HARNDEN, P. (1957, February). Alle Porte di Parigi. *Domus*, 327, 45.
- KELLOG, C. (1957, December 4). An American Brussels Fair Designer Gives French Home a Modern Look. *The New York Times*, 49-50.
- MARTÍN, M., & Noguera, A. (2003). *El Cadaqués de Peter Harnden i Lanfranco Bombelli*. Col·legi d "Arquitectes de Catalunya, Demarcació de Girona.
- SHULMAN, J., & Serraino, P. (2009). *Julius Shulman: Modernism Rediscovered*. Taschen.
- SMITH, E.A. (2002). *Case Study Houses: The Complete CSH Program 1945-1966*. Taschen.
- UNKNOWN (1966). "Harnden and Bombelli, Architects." (1966, June). *Arts & Architecture*, 83(5), 8.

**Héctor García-Diego Villarías** is a PhD in Architecture from the University of Navarra (2011) and Professor of Architectural Projects at the same university (2022) where he currently teaches. His research has been published in indexed journals such as *Proyecto Progreso Arquitectura*, *VLC*, *RITA*, *RA*, *Res Mobilis*, *Boletín Académico*, *Cuaderno de Proyectos Arquitectónicos* or *Constelaciones*, among others. It is worth mentioning his participation as author in *Architect's Journeys* (GSAPP Books, 2011), *After the Manifesto* (GSAPP Books, 2014), and as editor in *Pritzker Prizes: Acceptance Speeches, 1979-2015* (Arquia Foundation and in collaboration with the Hyatt Foundation) or *Escenarios de Aprendizaje* (Tirant lo Blanch, 2022, Q1 SPI). He is currently a member of the SEPARATA research group.

**María Villanueva Fernández** is a PhD in Architecture from University of Navarra. Professor at the University of Navarra, she has focused her research on the history and theory of 20<sup>th</sup>-century design, specifically the work of Spanish architects in design and the limits of this discipline within art and architecture. She has disseminated her research at several international conferences and has published various book chapters and articles in indexed magazines such as *Interiors*, *Res Mobilis*, *EGA*, *PPA*, *Rita*, *VLC*, among others. She is the author of the book *Una Caracterización del mueble moderno* (2020, EUNSA). She has been a visiting researcher at the Getty Research Institute (LA), at the GSAPP Columbia University (NY) as a visiting scholar, and at ENSAPBX, Bordeaux. She is a member of the SEPARATA research group.



## ENDNOTES

- 1 It is of great interest and it is recommended to consult other articles on this subject. Such as that of the magazine *La Maison Française*, which will show on its cover and publish years later a complete article in which this house and its later extension are included. Furthermore, in 1954, another French magazine, *Elle*, would show this house, although this time paying more attention to the plasticity of its chimney. It is also interesting to check the vision that the *New York Times*—in the section *food, fashion, family*, furnishings—published about this house through a brief article in 1957. FEBVRE-DESORTES, M.A. (1961), *Fermes transformées. Un régionalisme bien compris. La Maison Française*, 148, pp. 73-79 ; CHIMNEYS, T. (1954), *Les cheminées des villes. Elle*, 436; KELLOG, C. (1957), *An American Brussels Fair Designer Gives French Home a Modern Look. The New York Times*, December 4, p. 49.
- 2 The so-called Exhibition Programme headed by Harnden reported to the ECA's Visual Information Unit, which was the managing body of the campaigns. GARNICA, J. (2019). Peter Harnden. Tra Guerra Fredda e tradizione mediterranea. *FAMagazine. Ricerche E Progetti sull'architettura E La Città*, (47), pp. 12-30. <https://doi.org/10.12838/fam/issn2039-0491/n47-2019/233>.
- 3 In 1946, he had married Marie Vassiltchikov, a Russian aristocrat who had taken refuge in Berlin and with whom he would have four children.
- 4 Under the guise of a study on "what the house should look like after a war," and appearing in the first issue of *Arts & Architecture* magazine's forty-fifth year, a wide-ranging debate on architecture was to be opened, which would delve into the way of living. The program was intended to lay the foundations on which to debate the 'housing of tomorrow'. The advertisement itself stated the transcendence and ambition of the enterprise that was being set in motion: "Because most opinion, both profound and light-headed, in terms of post war housing is nothing but speculation in the form of talk and reams of paper, it occurs to me that it might be a good idea to get down to cases and at least make a beginning in the gathering of that mass of material that must eventually result in what we know as 'housepost war'". ENTENZA, J. (1945). John Entenza, Announcement, the case study house program. *Arts & Architecture*, January, 37. As is well known, Entenza's initiative, which lasted for two decades from the date the announcement was published, involved some of the most relevant architects of the time, such as Neutra, Soriano, Ellwood, Charles and Ray Eames, Koenig or Saarinen. See SMITH (2002) and BUISSON and BILLARD (2004).
- 5 Harnden would go on to hold more than 300 exhibitions throughout Europe, most notably designing the interior of the U.S. pavilion at the Brussels International Fair of 1958. He claimed in 1957 that more than 3 million people had already visited his traveling exhibits, and he expected tens of millions more to come to the huge pavilion designed for the international show. KELLOG, C. (1957, December 4). *An American Brussels Fair Designer Gives French Home a Modern Look. The New York Times*, pp. 49-50.
- 6 Orgeval is a small town composed mostly of suburban residential neighborhoods with a population of less than 2000 at the end of the 1950s.
- 7 HARNDEN, P. (1952, February). *L'Architecture d'Aujourd'hui*, pp. 39-40. Cit. Original text: "L'architecte s'est attaché à conserver le caractère simplicité en harmonie avec la village".
- 8 Idem. Original text: "Elle este formée de deux vieilles maisons rustiques, aujourd'hui réunies, autrefois indépendantes; l'une, vétuste et abandonné, n'avait plus de toit, l'autre n'avait aucun confort, même pas l'eau".
- 9 Exactly the same operation that he would later have to face in the project, again for his own house in Cadaqués. GARCÍA-DIEGO VILLARIAS, H., VILLANUEVA FERNÁNDEZ, M. (2020). *Living, Creating, Enjoying: Villa Gloria by Harnden and Bombelli in Cadaqués (1959)*, *VLC*, 7(2), pp. 157-184.
- 10 He will repeat exactly the same strategy in Villa Gloria, his own house in Cadaqués.
- 11 HARNDEN (1952), *Domus*, cit., 26. Original text: "Un lungo, banco ad angolo separa il locale in due parti: cuscini e schienali a motte, in tela blu, componibili a divano letto su lungo banco continuo a listelli di frassino elastici con gambe d'acciaio rimovibili".
- 12 The same fireplace that would fascinate José Antonio Coderch when, on his return from his visit to Zurich, he was hosted in this same house by Harnden and Bombelli. Lanfranco Bombelli himself, Harnden's partner and friend, recalls this anecdote: "When Coderch visited us in Orgeval, he saw this fireplace and was impressed. He asked why. We told him: well, fire is like life, it has a presence and it also has the function of heating. If you build a fireplace in the stone wall, it doesn't warm you at all, it warms you a little in front of it. A metal chimney acts as a radiator and heats everything up quickly. Coderch asked Peter for permission to introduce the metal chimney in Spain and Peter told him to do whatever he wanted..." See: Entrevista con Lanfranco Bombelli. In MARTÍN, M., NOGUERA, A. (Eds.), 127.
- 13 Obviously, the American situation had nothing to do with the European one, although the war meant an economic and resource effort for the U.S. that had a certain impact in the 1950s and 1960s.
- 14 FEBVRE-DESORTES, M.A. (1961), *Fermes transformées. Un régionalisme bien compris. La Maison Française*, 148, 73. Original: "Il est assez émouvant de constater que le respect d'un site d'Ile-de-France et la liberté d'une composition moderne sont conciliés ici dans l'œuvre de P. G. Harnden, un «architecte / designer» d'origine américaine, installé dans notre pays".
- 15 HARNDEN, P. (1952, February). *L'Architecture d'Aujourd'hui*, pp. 39-40. "Le jardin, très petit, est entouré de murs avec arbres fruitiers en espalier".
- 16 Upon the death of his mother, he inherits a rich family estate with which he manages to gather in these years an important collection of modern art. Once the inheritance was squandered, he was forced to part with many of these works. Garnica, J. (2006). Harnden and Bombelli in Spain. In *La arquitectura norteamericana, motor y espejo de la arquitectura española en el arranque de la modernidad* (pp. 133-142) T6) Ediciones.
- 17 These works of art will appear in subsequent articles that will echo the construction of the guest pavilion on the other side of the garden.
- 18 Of all the photographs published about the house in both magazines, only one does not show any person or furniture that refers to the domesticity displayed in it. It will be the one describing the spiral staircase, the only snapshot in which the plastic intentionality predominates over the domestic one.
- 19 Harnden presented a project for a minimal house. It was the design of a detached house to accompany twenty-five other experimental houses for The Federal Works Agency. HARNDEN, P. (1942). *Priorities and a Small House*. Cit.
- 20 Julius Shulman was chosen to document the CSHP for *Arts & Architecture* magazine. His photographs went beyond mere records, elevating the structures to global recognition and cementing their place in architectural history.
- 21 (1966) Harnden and Bombelli, Architects. *Arts & Architecture*, vol. 83, 5, June, 1966, 8. And continues: "Structures on the earth, however, and no of the earth: there is nothing here of the hollowed out tree trunk or cave squirmed from a tube. Nor is there anything of the catalog architect. Local materials have been used throughout in a manner that refines but doesn't weaken the local idiom: reeds, rushes, cork, whitewash masonry, tile, stone".