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MARK ANTHONY WILSON is an architectural historian who has been writing and lecturing about Bernard Maybeck for 35 years. His 22-year friendship with Jacomena Maybeck provided him with unique insights into Maybeck's career and personal life. Wilson holds a BA in history from UC Berkeley and an MA in history and media from California State University, East Bay, where he wrote his thesis on Maybeck. He has written three previous books on American architecture, including *Julia Morgan, Architect of Beauty* (Gibbs Smith, 2007). His articles have appeared in the *New York Times*, *Los Angeles Times*, *San Francisco Chronicle*, *San Jose Mercury*, *Christian Science Monitor*, and *USA Today*. He lives in Berkeley, California with his wife, Ann, and his daughter, Elena.



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As the son of a fashion illustrator, JOEL PULIATTI was destined to see things graphically. He was brought up as an artist in New York, is a graduate of Parsons School of Design, and has been published nationally as an architectural and a fine arts photographer. In both his photographs and paintings, Joel seeks to express the beauty of the commonplace as well as the transcendent. Joel lives in San Francisco with his wife, Olivia Teter, and daughters, Jacqueline and Sophia.

Jacket Images by Joel Puliatti
Front—First Church of Christ, Scientist, Berkeley, California
Back—Howard House, Principia College, Elsah, Illinois

Jacket Design by Kurt Wählner

“Ever free in spirit, ever seeking a sad feeling, a hunger of an artist after beauty, a hunger that is never satisfied.”

—CITATION FOR THE GOLD MEDAL OF HONOR AWARDED TO BERNARD MAYBECK BY THE AMERICAN INSTITUTE OF ARCHITECTS, 1951



Architecture



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BERNARD MAYBECK

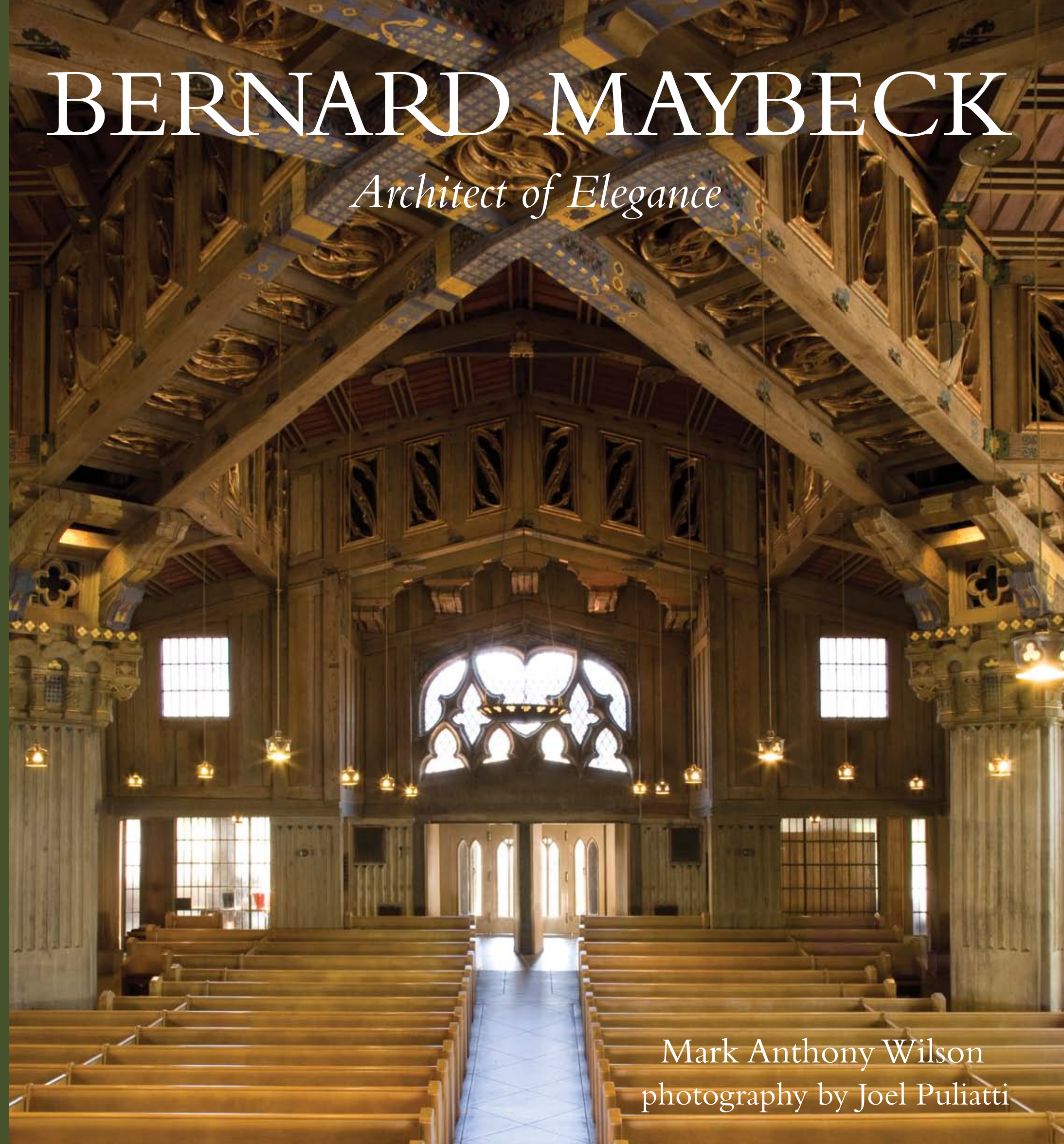
Architect of Elegance

Wilson & Puliatti



BERNARD MAYBECK

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Mark Anthony Wilson
photography by Joel Puliatti

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BERNARD MAYBECK

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The warmth and elegance of Bernard Maybeck's work has influenced countless American architects for more than four generations. His buildings include northern California landmarks such as the Palace of Fine Arts in San Francisco and the First Church of Christ, Scientist, in Berkeley, both featured in great detail here.

Maybeck's architecture possesses the timeless beauty that distinguishes all great art. His work achieved a delicate and pleasing balance between historicism and modernity. No two of his buildings are much alike, yet they all manifest the craftsmanship and environmental sensitivity that were his hallmark. An emphasis on an open use of natural materials honestly stated marks him as a pioneer in what is known today as sustainable architecture, or "green" design.

This comprehensive book features a foreword by Maybeck's granddaughter, Cherry Maybeck Nittler, and also incorporates excerpts from an only recently discovered cache of family letters provided by Cherry that offer rare insights into the life and personality of this hugely influential architect of elegance. It contains 220 new color photographs of Maybeck's work and 70 archival photographs and drawings, many from Maybeck's family collection that have never been seen before in print.



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CHAPTER 5

Pompeii Villas and Mediterranean Palazzos

Wood was Bernard Maybeck's preferred material for the exterior of most of his houses. Redwood shingles, clapboards, or half-timbering were used as siding for the vast majority of his residential commissions before the 1923 Berkeley Fire convinced him to use less flammable materials. But he also designed a handful of homes with mostly stucco exteriors in which he incorporated various Mediterranean motifs, such as red-clay tiled roofs, curved balustrades, round arched windows, pergolas, Tuscan or Ionic columns, and Renaissance loggias. Several of these residences remain almost exactly as he designed them in their original settings throughout California: in Berkeley, Oakland, Woodside, San Jose, and Santa Barbara.

At 1408 Hawthorne Terrace in North Berkeley, Maybeck designed a charming, modestly scaled Mediterranean palazzo for Estelle Clark in 1921. This one-and-a-half-story stucco house is totally secluded from the street, hidden among mature pines and redwood trees at the end of a long driveway. The walls of the Estelle Clark House are unpainted stucco, the window trim and columns are painted white, and the low angled roof is covered in red-clay tiles. For the decorative details, Maybeck used a combination of Romanesque and Renaissance styles.

The south end of the house has a small balcony lined with Romanesque balusters beneath three round-arched Renaissance windows. The entrance is on the east side, past a sheltered cloister-like courtyard, at the end of a loggia with Renaissance arches supported by Romanesque columns made of painted concrete. A pair of tall, round-arched, latticed windows set into the east wall provides views of the courtyard. A high stone wall across the south side of the courtyard and another loggia along the north side create a lovely, intimate indoor-outdoor space, which Maybeck no doubt intended for al fresco dining during the many warm months in California's Mediterranean climate.

Entering the Clark House through the solid oak front door, one notices the magnificent Renaissance-style staircase made of polished oak with a rich, dark brown stain. The massive railings have bulbous, rounded balusters, and the stairs are unusually wide. At the top, a small balcony with a bulging railing overlooks the stairwell. The stairway leads to the bedrooms and baths in a half-story above the north wing of the house. In the space below that staircase, Maybeck ingeniously placed curved double doors that hide a large coat closet.

All of the downstairs rooms in the Clark House have a light open feeling. To the left of the stairs is the formal dining room with a high ceiling and tall latticed windows on the west, south, and north walls. Two ornately carved, spiraling Bernini-style wooden columns on pedestals near the north and south walls rise to meet the main ceiling beam. They were carved in Italy specifically for this room. The living room, just south of the dining room, is the one truly grand room in the house. Here, Maybeck designed a baronial concrete fireplace with a massive tapering hood painted with an intricate floral pattern as the centerpiece of the room. The ceiling has boxed beams with a dark red stain between them and geometric patterns in gold and green painted along their edges. Pocket doors set into the north wall allow access to the dining room. Adjacent to the living room, on the south end of the house, is a pleasant study with three arched windows that brighten this work space and provide views of the secluded, woodsy front yard. A set of built-in bookshelves line the west and north walls, and the northwest corner originally housed a small fireplace, since removed by the owners.



FACING: Estelle Clark House, 1921, 1408 Hawthorne Terrace, Berkeley, looking north. ABOVE: Estelle Clark House, living room. OVERLEAF: Palace of Fine Arts, 1915, San Francisco, rotunda after 2010 restoration. All images by Joel Puliatti.

