Recipient of a Tucson – Pima County Preservation Award, A Guide to Tucson’s Historic Neighborhoods is a project of the Blenman-Elm Neighborhood Association, historic districts, and the City of Tucson Historic Preservation Office to highlight, recognize, and preserve Tucson’s oldest neighborhoods.
TUCCON'S HISTORIC NEIGHBORHOODS

ALDEA LINDA
This subdivision, its name meaning “beautiful small village,” was founded in 1946 by former Arizona Governor Samuel P. Goddard, Jr. Still in effect are deed restrictions protecting the neighborhood and guaranteeing that the area, with its large lots, will remain residential. The majority of the 18 residences date between 1947 and 1964 and reflect post-World War II styles, including Ranch and Modern, as well as Territorial Revival and Spanish Colonial Revival. The dense creosote, curvilinear streets, and cul de sac layout have insured a rural feel to this oasis near 22nd Street.

ARMORY PARK
The first residential district in Tucson to be listed on the National Register of Historic Places, this downtown neighborhood takes its name from the Military Plaza where the Armory was located prior to its relocation to Fort Lowell in 1873. With its close proximity to the railroad tracks, rapid growth in the area occurred following the arrival of the Southern Pacific Railroad in 1880, offering prominent railroad men and their families a convenient place to live. The neighborhood features wide avenues, and the Queen Anne, Greek Revival, and Territorial styles predominate. The Carnegie Free Library, completed in 1901, is now home to the Tucson Children's Museum.

BARRIO ANITA
First platted in 1903, over 90 percent of the houses in this historic Hispanic barrio were built by 1920, with the remainder built prior to World War II. Early neighborhood dwellings were constructed in the Sonoran style with adobe walls and flat roofs, and later houses were built in the American Territorial and Queen Anne styles. Beginning in the 1930s, the Cury Park Tigers baseball team used to bring out 400 fans at a time in what is now the David G. Herrera/Ramon Quiroz Park. Once featuring an irrigation canal which watered trees and gardens, the barrio also included numerous Chinese-American owned grocery stores; only the Anita Street Market, known for its tortillas and burritos, continues today.

BARRIO EL HOYO
El Hoyo (“the Hole”) was so named because it is lower than the surrounding land. Originally part of the floodplain of the Santa Cruz River, most of the neighborhood was once owned by Leopoldo Carrillo and developed as Carrillo Gardens, a lush park with large trees and small ponds. It later became a popular gathering spot and amusement park known as Elsian Grove. The houses, mostly built between 1908 and 1950, include many small adobe structures built in the Sonoran style by the owner-occupants. It retains a distinct, almost rural feel, still reminiscent of when it was the garden spot of downtown Tucson.

BARRIO EL MEMBRILLO
Until the late 19th century, this historically Hispanic barrio between the freeway and Sentinel Peak was cultivated land on the floodplain of the Santa Cruz River. Named for the quince trees that grew here, El Membrillo was platted in 1920. The construction of the Interstate-10 Highway in the early 1950s resulted in the loss of more than half of the neighborhood. During the Urban Renewal initiative of the late 1960s, another portion of the neighborhood was demolished for the Tucson Convention Center. Of the 15 houses left today, the characteristic type is the single- or multiple-unit dwelling built in the Sonoran style with bearing walls of adobe brick and flat or pitched roofs.

BARRIO LIBRE
Tucson’s third oldest historic district, this neighborhood provides a sense of Tucson during the 1870s. Originally more extensive, its northern half was demolished during Urban Renewal in the late 1960s. It still has more Territorial-period adobe buildings than any other part of Tucson, and its intact Mexican-style urban streetscapes are unique in Arizona. The architecture is predominantly Sonoran, transformed Sonoran, and Transitional styles with building fronts flush with the streets. The Carrillo-K-S Magnet School (1950) was designed in the Mission Revival Style by architect Merrill H. Starkweahe. El Tradito (“The Little Castaway”), a 1940 update of a shrine established in the 1870s. Barrio Libre, along with neighboring Barrio El Hoyo and the tiny Barrio El Membrillo, are commonly known together as Barrio Viejo.

BARRIO SANTA ROSA
This neighborhood lies directly south of Barrio Libre. Part of the original urban core of the city, its history began in the 1890s and two-thirds of its historic buildings are representative of Tucson’s indigenous Sonoran style architecture, consisting of adobe structures with flat roofs, typically grouped in rowhouses with their fronts flush with the street. During the early 20th century, the Craftsman Bungalow and Mission Revival styles were introduced. In the mid-1930s the Ranch style was favored by younger families moving to the area. The neighborhood is also home to the Pio Decimo Center, a Catholic community center built in 1946 in the Mission Revival style.

BLENMAN-ELM
Midtown home of the 14-acre garden resort, the Arizona Inn (1930), as well as Blenman Elementary School (1942), this midtown neighborhood consists of 17 styles of homes popular between the 1920s and the 1930s, a majority of which are Ranch style with Spanish Revival influences. The neighborhood also contains a large number of homes designed by Swiss-born Tucson architect Josias Joester. Featuring wide landscaped streets, Blenman-Elm continues to be a popular housing area for its proximity to the University of Arizona and University Medical Center.

CATALINA VISTA
Officially platted in 1940, this 170-acre neighborhood was once part of the Kramer Ranch, home of Tucson’s first rodeo. Its design was influenced by the “City Beautiful” movement and incorporates landscaped medians, traffic roundabouts, and a small neighborhood park. Many of the homes reflect the modern Ranch style, with broad front faces, low-pitched roofs, and attached garages. The subdivision today continues to reflect the unique character outlined in early advertisements which described it as: “...scientifically planned to conform to the Tucson of tomorrow... with curvilinear streets that eliminated...monotinous straight street lines... and...no two-story houses to obstruct the mountain view.”

COLONIA SOLANA
One of the first suburban subdivisions in Arizona, Colonia Solana is located in midtown on the border of Reid Park, home to the Reid Park Zoo. Landscape architect Stephen Child, who studied with Frederick Law Olmsted, designed Colonia Solana in 1928 incorporating natural elements such as the Arroyo Chico, a lush desert riparian habitat for birds and wildlife. The neighborhood is designed around five small triangular parks and intersecting curvilinear streets featuring homes located on large desert-landscaped lots. Architectural styles range from Spanish Colonial Revival to post-World War II Ranch houses designed by prominent architects such as Roy Place and Arthur T. Brown.
DUNBAR SPRING/ JOHN SPRING
Built on land that was originally the Court Street Cemetery (1875-1909), and platted in 1904, this neighborhood has always been ethnically mixed. Eventually it became the first predominantly African-American neighborhood in Tucson and the site of the Dunbar School, Tucson's segregated elementary school. Designed by architect Henry O. Jastad in 1917, the school later became the non-segregated John Spring Junior High School, named after one of Tucson's early educators. The neighborhood reflects its diverse early roots in its mix of architectural styles, from Sonoran to early 20th-century revival styles. Jim's Market, at the corner of 9th Ave. and 4th St., is representative of several former markets now converted to residential use.

EL ENCANTO ESTATES
With houses built primarily between 1929 and 1961, the formal, curvilinear, Neoclassical subdivision plan of midtown El Encanto Estates was inspired by the "City Beautiful" movement and represented a deliberate break from the gridiron developments of post-WWII Tucson. A central circular park is notable for its idyllic rendering of a native desert landscape. Formal plantings of palm trees and green lawns enhance the architectural designs in the Spanish Colonial, Mission, and Pueblo revival styles by locally prominent architects, including Josias Joessler, Henry O. Jastad, Arthur T. Brown, Anne Jackson Rysdale, and Merritt H. Starkweather.

EL MONTEVIDEO
Founded in 1930, El Montevideo was one of several subdivisions established around the prestigious 1928 El Conquistador Hotel (demolished in 1968). Lacking curbs and sidewalks, and featuring native desert vegetation, the neighborhood initially grew with architectural revival styles popular in the 1930s, including Spanish Colonial, Territorial-Sonoran, and Pueblo Revivals. As elsewhere in Tucson, this semi-rural, one and one-half block enclave filled-in rapidly during the post-WWII era with Ranch and Mid-Century Modern (Contemporary) style residences by architects Lew Place and Arthur T. Brown.

EL PRESIDIO
This neighborhood is where Tucson began as a Spanish Colonial outpost. Most of the structures date from 1860 to 1920, and styles include Sonoran, Transformed Sonoran, Transitional, American Territorial, Mission Revival, and Craftsman Bungalow. Preserved remnants of Hohokam pit houses, the 18th-century Spanish period presidio, and the subsequent Mexican village can also be found here. Celebrated Territorial period families are still associated with houses they built, including merchants such as the Steinfels and Jacomes. Home to restaurants, offices, shops, and the Tucson Museum of Art, this is an eminently walkable neighborhood.

FORT LOWELL
This semi-rural neighborhood in the central urban area offers an abundant mix of icons of Tucson's history, including the soldiers of Fort Lowell (1873-1891) and the priests of the San Pedro Chapel (1932), along with the families, craftsmen, and historians who have called it home since the 1890s. Architectural styles include the Sonoran Ranch, the Santa Fe-Sonoran Ranch, the Bungalow Vernacular, and the Sonoran Military. Protected remnants of the mesquite groves along the Rillito River and Hohokam archeological sites offer reminders of the original natural setting and ancient indigenous peoples of the valley.

HAROLD BELL WRIGHT ESTATES
In the center of this semi-rural subdivision sits the home of popular American novelist Harold Bell Wright (1877-1942). Street names gracing this 116-acre neighborhood are all derived from the characters or places in his numerous novels. Intended for relatively affluent homeowners, many of the burnt adobe buildings built primarily in the 1950s are situated on large desert-landscaped lots, with floor plans larger than was typical for the period. Many homes were designed in the post-WWII custom Ranch style by prominent Tucson architects and designers, including Henry Jastad, William Cocks, and Robert Swaim.

INDIAN HOUSE
Located in the east central part of Tucson, this semi-rural neighborhood includes 11 contributing historic residences built between 1926 and 1950 on 2 to 6½ acre lots, all excellent examples of Southwestern Revival and Mid-century Modern (Contemporary) styles. Indian House follows in the tradition of several other Tucson desert subdivisions that were established to promote a distinctive Southwestern lifestyle, which appealed to its early residents, including internationally renowned pianist Van Cliburn. Notable architects who designed houses in this neighborhood include Merritt H. Starkweather, Richard A. Morse, and Gordon Luepke.

IRON HORSE
In order to follow the "one mile rule" established by the Southern Pacific Railroad, numerous railroad employees lived in this district in order to hear the whistle blow, calling them to work. Developed beginning in 1890, this neighborhood presents a mix of building styles, including Sonoran, American Territorial, Craftsman Bungalow, and Queen Anne Revival. Foundation stones of basalt on numerous residences were gathered locally from Sentinel Peak ('A Mountain'). 380 historic properties, including the Josias Joessler-designed Don Martin Apartments (1929) and Roy Place's Don Martin Hotel (1929), add to the charm of this neighborhood, noted as the "most walkable in Tucson." Thanks to bike and walking paths and its proximity to cafes, restaurants, and shops on North Fourth Avenue and downtown.

JEFFERSON PARK
As Tucson stretched from its downtown core, beyond the railroad tracks and into the desert north of town, homesteaders such as young Anna Stattelman ventured out to stake claims, followed by families settling in neighborhoods surrounding the University of Arizona. Established in 1899, this walking- and bike-friendly neighborhood has its roots in early to mid-20th century construction of distinctive Southwestern homes, including Craftsman Bungalow, Spanish Colonial Revival, and Pueblo Revival. Post-WWII Ranch style brick homes followed as this historic "outskirts" development transformed into a central neighborhood of rich history and diversity.
RINCON HEIGHTS

Developed as one of Tucson’s first suburban neighborhoods, Rincon Heights exhibits an eclectic blend of 1920s-1940s revival styles and vernacular designs, including Craftsman Bungalow, Spanish Colonial Revival, and Modern Ranch. A unique feature of this walkable neighborhood is High School Wash, a natural riparian area with WPA-era curbs, sidewalks, and culverts. Neighborhood planting and beautification projects continue to make this a popular housing area intent on keeping its historic character.

SAM HUGHES

This early suburban neighborhood developed between 1921 and the 1950s immediately east of the University of Arizona campus. Named after well-known business leader Sam Hughes, who was instrumental in establishing Tucson’s free public school system, the Roy Place-designed Sam Hughes Elementary School (1927), along with the 24-acre Himmel Park, are notable features of this one-square-mile district. While there are 16 architectural styles represented, including Craftsman Bungalow, Mission Revival, and International, the majority are constructed in the Spanish Eclectic style. A major bike route boulevard is an additional amenity of this popular area.

SAN CLEMENTE

In 1923, developer Stanley Williamson named this east-central subdivision after the seacoast town of San Clemente, California, intending to evoke an image of an upscale Spanish Colonial Revival community. First homesteaded in 1909, the area saw most of its development between 1930 and 1959, and is considered the first Tucson neighborhood to pioneer automobile-related Ranch Style Suburb planning. Among the dozen architectural styles represented, Classic Ranch and Spanish Colonial Revival predominate within a natural desert environment.

SAN RAFAEL ESTATES

Developed by the Lusk Corporation from 1954-1956, San Rafael Estates offers one of the best examples of mid-century middle class residential design in Tucson. The neighborhood is highlighted by a community pool and 69 burnt adobe modern ranch homes with consistent features including carports, low-profile roofs and ribbon windows. The curving streetscape and eclectic low-water landscaping give an informal, rural character to this convenient, central neighborhood.

WEST UNIVERSITY

This was the first Tucson suburb north of the Southern Pacific Railroad, and was built out between 1890 and 1930. The neighborhood includes more than 700 buildings in a great variety of architectural styles, ranging from Transitional to Art Deco, with about half being Craftsman Bungalows. Built as a high school in Tucson, Rincon Bilingual Magnet School (1908/1914) is a distinctive landmark on Sixth Street. In 1980, this neighborhood was listed on the National Register of Historic Places and became the largest historic district in Arizona.

WINTERHAVEN

The unique community of Winterhaven was developed between 1949-1961 by developer C. B. Richards, who sought to emulate the environment and architectural aesthetics of the Midwest. The neighborhood is characterized by wide curving streets, dominant green lawns, non-native trees, and a park-like Midwestern flavor. The sense of community is fostered by the annual Festival of Lights, a popular Christmas light display. Among 265 examples of modern Ranch style residences, there are four distinct ranch style subcategories: Traditional, Modern, Minimal, and Transverse. Many were designed by Anne Jackson Rysdale, among the first female architects practicing in Tucson and Arizona.
TUCCON’S HISTORIC NEIGHBORHOODS...

...are a vibrant expression of this community’s diverse cultural heritage. Its origins can be traced back to the prehistoric and early historic Native American agricultural communities and Spanish period mission and presidio settlements on both sides of the Santa Cruz River, the lifeblood of this region.

During Tucson’s Mexican period, neighborhoods were based on Spanish community planning principles – attached, street-abutting buildings enclosing outdoor courtyards – and occupied by the increasingly mixed populations of Mexican and American descents.

After the arrival of the railroad in 1880, Tucson experienced an increasing Americanization evident in everything from fashions and food to building materials and neighborhood characters. New neighborhoods were established that reflected American traditions of urban planning – detached houses on a gridiron pattern of streets and blocks – and an eclectic mix of architectural styles, including the ubiquitous bungalow.

By the 1920s, Tucson developers began promoting regional revival styles - Spanish Colonial, Mission, and Pueblo - to connect with the imagery of the romantic Southwest. Some of Tucson’s new subdivisions were developed outside the corporate city limits using curvilinear streets, native landscaping, and architectural themes regulated through deed restrictions as marketing tools to lure the affluent to Tucson.

Tucson’s post-World War II population boom led to new subdivisions extending further from the city’s core and defined by community planning that was increasingly automobile oriented. The modern Ranch-style house, which followed design standards driven by federally insured housing loan regulations, soon replaced the regional revival styles as the dominant residential expression in these Tucson neighborhoods.

The local historic preservation movement that began in the 1970s led to the recognition and preservation of Tucson’s historic neighborhoods featured on this map. Understanding and experiencing the diversity of these neighborhoods allows us to also honor the diversity of cultural influences that created them, and continue to define Tucson’s unique sense of place.

R. BROOKS JEFFERY
Director, The Drachman Institute

ARCHITECTURAL STYLES

PRE-RAILROAD STYLE

Sonoran (1840s-1890)

Tucson’s oldest surviving homes date from the 1840s, when southern Arizona was still part of Mexico. The Sonoran style is characterized by one-story rowhouses with their fronts on the street, and construction of exposed mud adobe block. Common features included high ceilings, stone foundations, canales (roof drainage pipes), vigas (round roof timbers), and zaguanas (central hallways). In Arizona, this style of urban architecture is unique to Tucson.

POST-RAILROAD STYLES OF THE TERRITORIAL PERIOD

Transformed Sonoran (1863-1912)

The arrival of Americans, initially in small numbers, and then in a rush after the Southern Pacific Railroad connected to Tucson in 1880, brought new construction materials and architectural styles from the eastern U.S. and California. Existing Sonoran-style houses were transformed by additions of pyramidal or gabled metal roofs, brick caps on roof parapets, and Victorian embellishments.

Transitional (Territorial) (1880-1900)

Early Transitional construction continued to locate buildings on the street. Walls were usually lime-stuccoed, and fixed-glass windows with shutters began to appear. Late Transitional houses were set back to accommodate a front porch, had pyramidal and gabled wooden roofs, wooden sash windows and flush-set shutters and showcased Victorian-style wooden trim.

American Territorial (1880-1910)

A new American style adapted for the Arizona desert came with the arrival of the first local brick factory in the 1890s. Houses moved to the centers of lots, brick construction on stone foundations was widely used, and corner porches with latheturned wooden columns became popular.

Queen Anne (1880-1910)

This Victorian-era style became popular throughout the United States, and was transplanted to Tucson. Defining characteristics include complex roof forms with steep pitches, turrets, chimneys, bay windows and leaded glass, and elaborate woodwork on wrap-around porches.
REVIVAL STYLES

Neoclassical/Classical Revival (1895-1930)
During the last decade of the 19th century, architecture inspired by ancient Greece and Rome became popular throughout the country. Classical proportions, gabled roofs, and symmetrical façades characterize this style, along with masonry or wood clapboard exteriors and double-height or full-façade porches supported by elaborate columns.

California Mission Revival (1895-1930)
As the turn of the 19th century approached, Tucson began to look to the West Coast for architectural ideas. Inspired by the Spanish period missions, this revival style is characterized by one-story homes with red clay roof tiles, smooth-stuccoed white walls, arched casement windows, curved roof parapets, and decorative entryways.

Spanish Colonial Revival/ Spanish Eclectic (1915-1945)
The Spanish Colonial Revival style features red clay tiled roofs and courtyard plans, and asymmetrical façades with more elaborate elements—balconies with iron railings, post-and-lintel or arched window and door openings, and triple groupings of casement and fixed windows with grills of wrought iron or wood. The related Spanish Eclectic (Southwest) style, developed in the 1920s typically features the flat-roofed box-like forms of the latter, but with arched openings and small gabled or shed-roofed entries with clay tile.

Pueblo Revival (1920-1950)
This revival style spread from Santa Fe, New Mexico, and is characterized by earth-colored stucco on adobe, brick, or wood construction, along with simple window openings and flat roofs with rounded or stepped parapets and projecting round roof beams, or vigas.

Mediterranean Revival (1920-1930)
These large, two-story homes with asymmetrical façades and irregular floor plans feature smooth, white-plastered walls with projecting bays; polygonal or square towers; porches with low, stuccoed walls; low-pitched and hipped red-tile roofs; small-paneled casement windows; elaborate door openings; and cast-concrete columns and urns.

Monterey Revival (1925-1955)
Houses in this style are sparsely ornamented two-story buildings with L-shaped or rectangular floor plans featuring low-pitched red tile roofs, large second-floor balconies with square wooden posts, smooth, white-plastered walls and chimneys, and casement windows.

Tudor Revival (1920-1940)
Brick, stone and plaster walls and leaded casement windows signal this style along with steeply pitched roofs with gable dormers covered with wood or slate shingles. Chimneys are high and/or massive. The tops of doors and casement windows are flat, Gothic-arched, or round-arched.

ARTS AND CRAFTS MOVEMENT STYLES

Prairie/Wrightian (1900-1920)
The Prairie style developed in the Midwest and was influenced by Japanese architecture and the Arts and Crafts movement. It is characterized by a low profile, horizontal emphasis, low-pitched and hipped roof, projecting eaves, cornices, hipped roof porches and dormers, and casement windows in horizontal groupings. The later phase of this style, sometimes called "Wrightian," also has horizontal massing but is distinguished by multiple flat, projecting roofs with parapets, and repeated bas-relief ornamentation in cast concrete or plaster.

Craftsman Bungalow Style (1905-1930)
The philosophy of the Craftsman style, an expression of the Arts and Crafts movement, broke away from historical precedents and emphasized simplicity of form, local natural materials, and handicraft. Hallmarks of the bungalow form are floors above grade, spacious porches with tapered supports, oversized eaves, exposed rafters, and double hung wooden windows. The "Western Stick" variation of the Craftsman bungalow has exposed structural systems and Japanese-influenced joinery.

AMERICAN VERNAUCULAR STYLES

National Folk (1880-1955)
Not designed by professional architects, vernacular houses have modest scales, simple forms, and minimal decorative details. The National Folk style, with balloon-frame construction usually clad with wood clapboard siding, spread across the country along with the railroad systems that carried lumber from distant sawmills. Windows are double hung and roof forms include pyramidal and gabled variations.

Minimal Traditional (1930-1955)
With the onset of the Depression, this style emerged to reflect frugality. Characteristics include compact size and simple floor plan; construction of brick, concrete block, or wood; small front porch; low-pitch roofs with shallow eaves; and limited ornamentation.
EARLY MODERN STYLES

Art Deco (1925-1940)
This style is an expression of Modernity through decoration with geometric and stylized floral motifs. Vertical forms are emphasized, and bas-relief ornaments decorate entries and roof parapets. The Zigzag variation features zigzags, chevrons, sunbursts and spirals as ornamentation.

Streamline Moderne (1930-1945)
This stripped-down version of Art Deco borrowed from aerodynamic industrial design, emphasizing horizontal massing and accents. Other characteristics include flat roofs, asymmetrical façades, rounded corners, horizontal steel railings, steel casement windows, glass block, and round “porthole” windows.

International (1925-present)
Like the other Early Modern styles, this style intentionally broke away from historical references and is generally indifferent to location, site, and climate. Like Streamline Moderne it celebrates aesthetic properties of materials rather than ornament and treats houses as “machines for living.” Characteristics include one or two stories, asymmetrical façades, flat roofs, smooth and unadorned wall surfaces, steel casement windows—sometimes wrapping around corners, and lack of decorative detailing at openings.

POST-WAR MODERNISM AND REVIVALS

Ranch (1935-1975)
Housing development boomed in Tucson after World War II, and in response to the need for inexpensive housing the modern Ranch style was imported from California. Set far back from the property line these houses have a horizontal emphasis and rectilinear L-shaped floor plans and are constructed of brick, adobe, or stuccoed concrete. They feature low-pitched roofs, porches and carports or garages under the main roof, large picture windows, and sliding glass doors connecting to outdoor living areas. There are many variations of the basic Ranch style in roof forms and materials, trim, and ornamentation.

Post-war Territorial (1955-1965)
Featuring all of the characteristics of the basic Ranch (and sometimes called Territorial Ranch)—but with flat roofs, parapets, articulated front facades, and tiled shed roofs at entries—this style revived the mixture of Sonoran and American influences that characterized the late-19th century Transitional style.

Post-war Pueblo (1955-1965)
This style closely resembles the Pueblo Revival style of the ’20s and ’30s, but with metal casement windows rather than small and simple openings, and with applied, decorative vigas and canales.

Mid-Century Modern (1950-1970)
Known as “Contemporary” during the height of its popularity, this one-story style borrowed elements from the International style, including a horizontal emphasis and expanses of glass interspersed with solid walls. Homes have rectilinear or irregular floor plans and are built of brick, adobe, or slump block. Complex roofs with varied planes and broad overhangs usually combine a low-pitched, front-facing gable with flat and shed roof elements. Other features include entry courtyards, wing walls and planters, attached garages or carports.

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Allegri Printing • allegri-arizona.com
Banner—University Medical Center • azumc.com
Tucson Historic Preservation Office (THPO) • tucson.gov/preservation
Sources used for this guide and available on the THPO website:
• Additional materials about Tucson’s historic architecture and related preservation issues
• “Tucson Post World War II Residential Subdivision Development 1945-1973” Report
• Tucson National Register Historic District documentation and maps
University of Arizona, College of Architecture and Landscape Architecture, Drachman Institute • drachmaninstitute.org
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