

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions.

1. Name of Property

Historic name: Miller, Grace Lewis, House DRAFT

Other names/site number: Mensendieck House

Name of related multiple property listing:
N/A

(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)

2. Location

Street & number: 2311 N. Indian Canyon Drive

City or town: Palm Springs State: California County: Riverside

Not For Publication: Vicinity:

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,

I hereby certify that this ___ nomination ___ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.

In my opinion, the property ___ meets ___ does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:

___ national ___ statewide ___ local

Applicable National Register Criteria:

___ A ___ B ___ C ___ D

<hr style="border: 0; border-top: 1px solid black; margin-bottom: 5px;"/> Signature of certifying official/Title:	<hr style="border: 0; border-top: 1px solid black; margin-bottom: 5px;"/> Date
<hr style="border: 0; border-top: 1px solid black; margin-bottom: 5px;"/> State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government	

In my opinion, the property ___ meets ___ does not meet the National Register criteria.	
<hr style="border: 0; border-top: 1px solid black; margin-bottom: 5px;"/> Signature of commenting official:	<hr style="border: 0; border-top: 1px solid black; margin-bottom: 5px;"/> Date
<hr style="border: 0; border-top: 1px solid black; margin-bottom: 5px;"/> Title :	
<hr style="border: 0; border-top: 1px solid black; margin-bottom: 5px;"/> State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government	

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4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

- entered in the National Register
- determined eligible for the National Register
- determined not eligible for the National Register
- removed from the National Register
- other (explain:) _____

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply.)

- Private:
- Public – Local
- Public – State
- Public – Federal

Category of Property

(Check only **one** box.)

- Building(s)
- District
- Site
- Structure
- Object

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Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>1</u>	<u> </u>	buildings
<u> </u>	<u> </u>	sites
<u> </u>	<u>1</u>	structures
<u> </u>	<u> </u>	objects
<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

DOMESTIC: single dwelling

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

DOMESTIC: single dwelling

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7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

MODERN MOVEMENT: International Style

Materials: (enter categories from instructions.)

Principal exterior materials of the property: stucco, wood, steel, aluminum, glass

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance and condition of the property. Describe contributing and noncontributing resources if applicable. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, type, style, method of construction, setting, size, and significant features. Indicate whether the property has historic integrity.)

Summary Paragraph

The south-facing Grace Lewis Miller House was designed in the International Style. The one-story, stucco-and-wood-frame, 1,755-square-foot¹ building of stepped rectangular volumes is sited in the north end of Palm Springs, an area subject to strong winds from the San Jacinto Mountains and the northwest. Originally a dwelling integrated with a professional studio for teaching a specialized technique of physical exercise, the compact building is L-shaped in massing. The northern side of the building is relatively solid and opaque except for a large bank of fixed windows surmounted by clerestories, all of translucent Factrolite glass, obscuring the studio's interior. By contrast, the southern elevation is open and porous to the outdoors, characterized by groupings of full-height transparent window walls flanked by a screened porch on the east end, and a long band of shorter steel-framed fixed and casement windows on the west. The flat roof of rolled asphalt alternates between taller parapets and lower runs of aluminum-painted fascia with an attached gutter rendered in characteristic crimped metal fascia. Occupying the center of a 0.55-acre lot, the property includes an attached rear guest suite constructed in 2006 according to Miller's wishes and Neutra's original 1938 plans, and a noncontributing pool installed after the period of significance. Other alterations were the

¹ The original square footage was 1,164 square feet before the 2006 addition.

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conversion of the garage into a utility room and the later addition of a steel-and wood carport, gate, and concrete block wall at the property's east edge facing the street. Two rectangles of grass hug the front and rear of the house; beyond them, in sharp contrast, the landscaping features various species of trees and native or Mediterranean desert plantings distributed in decomposed granite. The property retains all aspects of integrity.

Narrative Description

Located in a mixed, growing area of low-rise apartment and hotel buildings, empty lots, retirement facilities, and some one- and two-story houses, the house faces south on North Indian Canyon Boulevard.² Protected by a later tall concrete block wall and long sliding open steel picket gate, the design combines contrasts of off-white stucco solid walls and voids created by groupings of translucent or transparent fenestration. All trim is painted with aluminum paint that appears silver. The floor of house and terrace are concrete stained black. Additionally, typically the roof above these solid walls are tall parapets capped by sheet metal, alternating with lower extended overhangs with square gutters attached to taller fascias. This alternating rhythm comprising a tall vertical plane of white-painted stucco and a lower, silver horizontal plane with a two-part metal trim is a very important character-defining feature of Neutra's 1930s architecture.

East Elevation

The primary (east) elevation comprises a recessed shallow reflecting pool in the southeast corner supported by a slender round steel column, while the northern portion of this elevation is a solid wall that is broken into three stepped volumes: a projecting chimney topped by a prominent spark arrestor; the northeast corner of the living room; and the east wall of the studio, which contains a silver-painted door. Historically, this is the door to the studio, for professional use. It is flanked by a narrow full-height panel of silver-painted plywood; the combined width of door and panel is the same width as the shallow concrete porch step accessing the interior. Eccentric slabs of Arizona flagstone lead from the carport to this door. The flagstone matches the original handful that are present near the door for Miller's personal use, the sliding full-height steel-framed mesh walls and steel-framed glass walls at the west end of the terrace. The southernmost wall of screened mesh opens into the terrace; immediately north the second sliding wall of glass opens to the west end of the living room.

Looking west, the corner reflecting pool is the same width as the recessed porch beyond. It is roughly a square with one small north-south leg that wraps the east face of the south end of the living room. This eastern face comprises four windows in one unit: a pair of casement windows and a single leaf that surmounts a horizontally oriented window that is the width of the three above. The entire four-window unit is not full height, rising from a point aligned with the daybed inside, adjacent and parallel to the south window wall. This point and the window height are maintained as the fenestration wraps the southeast corner to the north side of the reflecting pool.

² While the address would suggest an east-facing primary façade, the main access—Miller's personal access—was from the south; the garage driveway access was from West Via Olivera Street to the south, and the main gas lines also came off of Olivera. It is not known why the address is not Olivera-based.

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This paradigm changes with the panels enclosing the screened terrace on the east and south sides of the plain air room, characterized by full height panels of screened steel mesh framed in steel. The bottom stile of the steel panels are about a foot tall, characteristic of Neutra's work of the 1930s, seen, for example, in the Beard House (Altadena, 1934), before true full height window walls framed in steel were perfected.

While visually subservient because considerably west and partially hidden by an olive tree, the guest suite, a volume attached to the rear of the house, is also part of this east elevation. The east side of the suite is characterized by a continuous bank of silver-painted steel casement and fixed windows, interrupted on the north by a silver-painted single-panel door. Neutra's characteristically deep overhang includes a full-length roof vent about eight inches wide, covered in mesh, and a full length of lighting. This lighting, a row of incandescent lamps, is recessed so that its bottom is flush with the overhang and covered with translucent glass.

North Elevation

The north elevation is a series of three stepped volumes in plan that sequentially step south from east to west. With its bank of six tall translucent windows surmounted by alternating operable clerestory windows, it is not difficult to tell that the northmost elevation fronted Miller's exercise studio. The window grouping is asymmetrically located on the wall, nearing the front (east) edge, while centered vertically. On the far western end of this wall are two small vertically aligned silver-painted metal vents for airing the shoe rack inside Miller's bedroom closet.

The concrete floor from the bedroom flows into a small sheltered patio connected to a terrace with a picnic table. This area leads to a short exterior hallway that opens to several rooms: a small secondary bathroom with shower; the utility room (formerly the garage); the back door leading into the house; and, according to Neutra's drawings, a maid's room, quickly adopted as Miller's son's room.³

South and west of the picnic area and hallway is the north wall of the garage, embellished only by a tall slender silver-painted wood service panel on the west and the small silver-painted door to a receptacle for milk bottle deliveries on the east. Attached to the west end of the garage, and stepping back several feet to the south, is the guest suite, comprising a bedroom, a tiny kitchenette, and bathroom. The suite door is sheltered by an overhang, which extends to the edge of the guest suite's north wall.

West (Rear) Elevation

The highlight of this elevation is a small screen porch with an ingenious and possibly never repeated detail in Neutra's canon: a pair of exterior French doors centered on the west wall of the master bedroom, located on the northwest corner of the building. These two doors can swing out 90 degrees to latch onto a mesh-filled steel frame about three feet west, an area that is sheltered by the short expanse of roof that continues from this area south to the house. When drawn in

³ Miller's son Jeffrey stayed in the bedroom when visiting. His brother Philip boarded at military school.

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plan, the area is thus a small rectangle when open to the weather, and two parallel lines when closed. Long in disrepair, the detail, intended to facilitate air circulation, has been restored.

Between the master bedroom and the kitchen, the master bath and an adjacent secondary bathroom are daylit by a grouped band of six short clerestory windows. They overlook the picnic area and exterior hallway.

The garage is located south and west of the master bedroom. The west-facing garage doors as indicated on Neutra's site plan were replaced with a wall, a door, and a group of clerestory windows very similar to the original windows above the original bathrooms at the back of the house. The driveway to the front of the garage, accessed from the south, was replaced with decomposed granite and some young citrus trees.

Due to dwindling finances, Miller reluctantly gave up the idea of the guest suite, which Neutra designed in 1937-38, when the house was being completed. A later owner constructed the exterior according to the original plans—per updated building codes—located to the southwest of the garage as the final step in this elevation's progression west. The interior suite is quite similar to the original plans, including a tiny kitchenette. The primary door to the guest suite includes a silver-painted wood trimmed panel of glass. The door faces west and is recessed, and thus cannot be seen from the back door or master bedroom.

South (Primary) Elevation

The south elevation's progression of stepped volumes begins with the south rear wall of the guest suite, opaque except for one tall window on the east end, the terminating unit of a group of windows characterizing the guest room's east elevation except for a silver painted door interrupting the grouping. This last window on the south elevation is surmounted by a deep overhang that like the original overhang at the large terrace includes the characteristic strip of outdoor lighting flush with the bottom of the overhang, extending one's range of vision at night. This night lighting is an important character-defining feature of Neutra's residential work throughout his career.

The bands of windows and the identical overhead with soffit lighting is carried onto the next step back in plan; the boy's room and the kitchen. Below the kitchen windows can be seen the small silver-painted steel door for retrieving garbage from an interior system for gathering waste. The door has five small round vents at top and bottom. To the right, flush with the ground, is the heavy metal vent for the interior wooden base cupboards, designed to air out vegetables and to keep them fresh.

Moving north, the next step in volumes is the screened-in terrace. The soffit lighting is located within the patio, and extends beyond the screen's return on the east to the perimeter of the pool.

Interior

The Miller House reflects the unusual original design intent to accommodate two diverse needs, a family home and a professional space, on one small footprint. The interior stands out from

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other Neutra dwellings because while all his houses typically display a host of clever devices, strategies, and details to support domesticity, this house has an unusually rich repertoire especially given its size and modest budget of \$7,500.⁴

The palette of materials is restrained. Black-stained concrete floors, blonde Roman brick for the low, asymmetrically positioned fireplace on the east wall; grey-green rotary-cut plywood paneling on the walls, bookshelves, and cabinetry in the principal public areas. Steel-framed fenestration (casement, fixed, and awning) is original and present throughout the house; Neutra used these commercial products so consistently that they are prominent character-defining feature of his 1930s and '40s work.⁵ The stain used for the plywood paneling is an exact match of the original, still present on the back of a closet door in the living room.

The primary public space includes both the living room and the studio. The living room opens out into the landscape on the south and southeast with an array of copious fenestration. This includes tall fixed and operable casement windows and a huge sliding steel-and-glass wall that opens into the screened terrace that is cooled by the rectangular reflecting pool just to the east. The sliding unit is replicated with steel mesh rather than glass to provide access from the terrace to the gardens and pool. Together, these two huge sliding units constitute the front door for personal, not professional, use.

The large dual-purpose space contains several commanding datum lines or reference points denoting specific heights, which establish a clear horizontal continuity and a sense of calmness throughout. One such datum line occurs at the bottom of the windows on the south side of the living area, which is also the height of a low built-in bookcase that terminates at the end of the daybed. The fireplace on the east wall is framed with the dark grey-green plywood, and the height established by the top of the firebox is maintained as another datum line for the built-in L-shaped sofa wrapping the north and east sides of the living area.

The north length of this sofa is distinguished by a long rectangular flat strip of lighting recessed into the back of the sofa's frame. Covered with translucent glass and trimmed in stainless steel, it provides soft, dramatic lighting at night, when it washes the white walls above the sofa. The detail can be seen in other 1930s houses such as the Davis House, Bakersfield, also 1937, there illuminating the top of a staircase. As with the exterior strip lighting, all of Neutra's diverse interior light fixtures—providing an owner with the ability to create theatre at will—are important character defining features and seen in seminal projects such as Lovell Health House (Los Angeles, 1929), Kaufmann Desert House (Palm Springs, 1946), and Tremaine House (Montecito, 1947).

The studio to the north is distinguished from the living room by a bank of cabinetry about five feet tall and oriented east-west. This wall is a multi-functional piece of furniture that includes a drop-down panel on the north studio side that opens to shelving and space for correspondence

⁴ About \$131,000 in 2019.

⁵ In later decades, Neutra used aluminum windows with similar dimensions and sections, eliminating the need for silver-colored paint to protect the steel from rusting.

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and office work. The end cap on the east has a door to an interior space custom designed to store Miller's luggage. Above that is an open space at the east end of this short wall that is framed in slender wood pieces; this U-shaped frame contains a simple extruded circular plastic cylinder, a light fixture that gently illuminates both living and studio spaces. A heavy curtain once divided the studio from the living room; this detail has not been replaced.

The master bedroom on the northwest corner features many custom details specifically designed for Miller. These include the recessed onyx dressing table tucked into the northwest corner of the room. Facing a tall panel of Factrolite⁶ glass providing ample ambient north light, the stone is flanked by two full-height mirrors. An original Lumiline lamp fixture, mounted horizontally, is affixed to the east mirror. A similar use of this type of light fixture can be seen in Kun House 1 (Los Angeles, 1936) and Ward-Berger House (Los Angeles, 1939). Behind the sliding closet doors, a bank of drawers was designed to accommodate Miller's needs as a woman of social standing, including hats of specific heights. At the other end of the closet, two vents to the outdoors provide fresh air for the shoes placed on the angled racks. The west end of the room opens out to the screened porch.

The second bedroom, a small room west of and adjacent to the kitchen, retains its original built-in desk and closet. These were roughly built, out of nondescript plywood. Originally stained like plywood, they were later painted white. The kitchen retains the original spatial layout. This workspace also includes another characteristic detail in Neutra's work (also present in Ward-Berger House), an elegant and hidden treatment of refuse. The primary bathroom, adjacent to the master bedroom, contains the original tub, sink, and Hallmack hardware.

Character-Defining Exterior Features Associated with Neutra's Residential Architecture, 1930s–1940s, present in the Miller House:

- A horizontal profile reinforced with a flat roof
- Overall design is asymmetrical; no bilateral symmetry
- A deep integration with site, setting, and landscape through sightlines, views, terraces and extended overhangs that include some kind of lighting embedded in the soffit's edge
- Grouped bands of windows
- Avoidance of conventional or elaborate ornament
- Hybrid of conventional wood framing (for solid walls) combined with the regular disposition of wood posts in post-and-beam construction (for banks of grouped windows)
- Slightly rounded "caps" of vertical wood pieces added to 4'x4' posts for softening effect
- Steel-framed commercial windows, typically casement or fixed single-light windows
- Doors single-panel painted wood, typically silver-colored paint

⁶ Factrolite is a type of translucent glass whose light-diffusing properties are achieved because the glass is a grid of tiny pyramid-shaped prisms; the pyramid quadruples the number of surfaces exposed to light. Developed in the early 1920s by the Mississippi Glass Company, founded in 1873 to produce beer bottles, Factrolite was trademarked in 1955, Factrolite was invented to improve productivity and lighting levels in industrial settings by decreasing sharp shadows and strong contrasts, improving the efficiency of floor and plant workers.

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- Use of simple materials associated with the twentieth century: concrete, stucco, float glass, steel, and aluminum
- Alternating layers or bands of white-painted stucco with walls of windows, creating a strong rhythm of solid and void
- Exterior soffit lighting, often strip lighting flush with underside of soffit, or recessed lights trimmed in narrow steel square trim

Character-defining Exterior Features Associated with the International Style.⁷ All are present in the Miller House save piloti and steel frame:

- Rectangular massing
- Balance and regularity, not symmetry
- Clear expression of form and function
- Steel frame structure used as an organizing device
- Elevation of buildings on tall piers (piloti)
- Flat roofs
- Frequent use of glass, steel, concrete, and smooth plaster
- Full-height glass curtain walls
- Horizontal bands of flush windows, often meeting at corners
- Absence of ornamentation

Alterations

The property began a decline in the 1940s under Mrs. Miller when she could no longer afford the property's upkeep.⁸ As early as 1966, the property, occupied by a renter, was cited by the City of Palm Springs as a "health hazard" with a "yard littered with ... combustible material," standing "water from faulty irrigation valve, rotting vegetation," and the "roof leaking at fireplace."⁹ When the owner purchased the property in 2000, the house was a dilapidated building painted grey with pink trim. It was uninhabitable, with no electricity or plumbing. Tamarisk tree roots had choked the plumbing lines so extensively that the roots were growing out of the toilets.

Further inspections revealed yet more damage than initially known, a state that combined lack of maintenance with ill treatment. Non-Neutra additions included a room added onto the garage, which had been turned into a second kitchen; the original back patio had been also turned into a room. The lack of roof maintenance and subsequent leaks had caused the roof framing to fail, destroying the plaster ceiling (which contained asbestos) and upper walls. In a letter dated March 7, 1937, after a particularly heavy rain storm, Miller wrote to Neutra that the "whole center of the living room has shown signs of the ceiling sagging... I have been in constant fear that the plaster

⁷ Historic Resources Group, Draft *City of Palm Springs Citywide Historic Context Statement & Survey Findings*, October 13, 2015, 423.

⁸ The incomplete and sometimes illegible Chain of Title shows at least eight owners between Miller and the current owner; these tenures, reportedly often as a rental unit, likely contributed to the building's uncared for state. Chain of Title Report, July 30, 2019, courtesy Chris Menrad, prepared by Rob Willard, WFG Title Company, Palm Springs.

⁹ Inspector's Correction Sheet, City of Palm Springs, April 15, 1966. Notably, the City's building permit history only includes permits from 1966 to 1979; those are for reroofing, sewer cleanout, and electrical service.

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ceiling would fall...¹⁰ Some windows were broken or missing; steel frames were rusted and sealed, hinge parts and cranks were missing. At some point, the interior plywood paneling had had wallpaper attached and also been painted so there was a lot of residue glue, scratches, and paint; in other places the plywood was removed entirely. In sum, none could be salvaged except for one closet door in the living room whose interior face revealed the original grey-green stain. Other elements such as wall framing had termite damage; these were selectively replaced and/or repaired. Interior built-in furnishings in the living/exercise area had all been removed.

The original plaster had been cut into an area left of the fireplace to make room for an air conditioning unit; similar work for other registers and similar plaster breakages made it impossible to patch without incurring too great an expense, according to the owner, so it was decided to replace with drywall and skim coat plaster, done along with the major framing to save the roof and to remove the later, incompatible room addition in the rear.

Plywood was selected to match the original rotary-cut plywood, avoiding the football-shaped wood plugs typically found in younger and less robust rotary-cut plywood. After some initial mistakes, the missing built-in furniture was reconstructed according to Neutra's plan and Julius Shulman's photographs. Drywall replaced broken plaster. Glass to match the original Factrolite was employed for the windows in the former studio turned dining area and tempered glass was used for windows in the living room area for increased safety.¹¹ The broken and rusted mesh screening material for the terrace was also replaced, and the French doors and framing for the master bedroom's west wall were rebuilt. A pool was added in 2005. The kitchen was redone in 2017, retaining the layout of appliances and fixtures, Neutra's details, and one bank of original cabinets.

While many finishes and details have been extensively repaired or replaced as necessary, all original spatial relationships, steel window frames, steel screen mesh frames, concrete flooring for indoor and outdoor areas, and extant exterior wall surface, have been retained.

Timeline of Restoration/Alterations

2001	Major reframing of roof structure and related timbers; removal of later additions
2001-2003	Rebuilding interior built-in cabinetry, paneling, drywall and plastering
2003	Glass windows that had enclosed the original screened terrace was removed and replaced with screen mesh
2002	Reconstruction of front and back lawns using Bermuda grass
2004	Concrete block perimeter wall, east side of property, installed
2004	Acacia trees added on south side
2005	Added plants and trees, including large olive tree, east and south sides
2005	Pool installed

¹⁰ Stephen Leet, *Richard Neutra's Miller House* (New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 2004), 135.

¹¹ Invented in the early 1920s for factory settings, Factrolite glass was a type of industrial glass made by the New York-based Mississippi Wire Co. It was regularly used by Neutra throughout his career when he wanted to introduce daylight while preserving privacy. The surface is manufactured as thousands of rows of very tiny faceted pyramids, providing a glass that both diffuses and diffracts the sun's rays.

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2006	Sumac trees added to north and west sides
2006-2007	Addition of guest suite
2013	Garage conversion to utility room
2013	New carport constructed at northeast corner of property
2016	Kitchen remodel
2016	Fruit/citrus trees added to west (rear) portion of property

Landscape

The landscape is a key character-defining feature of the property and an important component of the original composition. Except for some original tamarisk trees (*Tamarix*, a native of Asia; also known as salt cedar) lining the north property with another next to the garage, virtually all the original landscaping was long destroyed before the owner purchased the property. What is present at the time of nomination reflects combined reconstruction and rehabilitation.

Acting as a windbreak, their historic function, and as a privacy shield from the later buildings adjacent to the Miller House, African sumac (*Rhus lancea*) is a tree species planted at the borders of the west, south, and north lot lines. True mulga (*Acacia aneura*) was added later to supplement the sumac. Like its antecedent, the blue grey Tamarisk tree that Neutra originally specified and had planted, the sumac has an abundance of feathery, sword-shaped leaves that slow the strong winds; by contrast, however, to the destructive Tamarisk, the sumac is drought tolerant.¹²

Other desert plants present on the site and native to the southwestern U.S. include ocotillo (*Fouquieria splendens*), planted just south of the living room, its original location; mesquite (*Prosopis spp*), renowned for its long roots; spiky, thin-leafed banana yucca (*Yucca baccata*); desert agave (*Agave deserti*); and encelia (*Encelia farinosa*), characterized by an abundance of small bright lemon-colored flowers against a backdrop of a silvery-grey leaf structure. Three Texas Ebony (*Ebenopsis ebano*) trees, known to be tolerant of wind and arid, compacted soil, and admired for its fragrant creamy white and yellow flowers; and a Desert Willow (*Chilopsis linearis*) tree, an extremely drought tolerant tree, are located at the front (east) of the property, providing a greater concentration of foliage. A mature large olive tree (*Olea europaea*), planted in 2005, is located just east of the guest room.¹³

In contrast to the many native and drought tolerant plants, the landscape features two types of plants that require frequent and deep watering, just as their predecessors needed in 1937. These are the citrus trees in the rear—grapefruit, lemon, orange, pomelo, and tangerine—and the two

¹² While still very popular in the Sonoran Desert for its beauty and striking blue-grey-silver color—specified by Neutra, approved and paid for by Miller, and planted by Millard R. Wright—tamarisks are since considered an undesirable plant for their aggressive and invasive attributes. Long tap roots allow trees to reach deep water tables, providing the means to poison nearby plants by taking up the salt from the ground water, accumulating it in their foliage, and depositing it on the surface where it can be detrimental to their neighbors until rain or watering washes the built-up deposits away. Additionally, it can propagate through its roots or its seeds; the result is a tamarisk-dominant forest with no understory of pollinators or native species.

¹³ Although not native, the olive tree thrives in the hot, dry, sunny climates of the southwest U.S.

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lawns, located in the front (east) and back (west) of the house. The lawns have been planted to match the original locations as seen in the photographs by Julius Shulman.

Integrity

The Miller House retains all aspects of integrity. The property is in the same location as when constructed. The house reflects Neutra's design intentions and their accurate execution for his client, Mrs. Grace Lewis Miller. Alterations resulting from the kitchen remodel in 2016 are compatible with the original kitchen, whose footprint and general layout of fixtures, sink, stove, and cabinetry are largely unchanged. The property retains integrity of design.

The immediate and reconstructed setting of the landscape around the house has largely kept the design intent and execution of the landscape Neutra designed, maintaining the original two themes of California desert-friendly, native, drought tolerant plantings with the second theme of East Coast or Midwest plantings with greater water needs, the two lawns and the fruit and citrus trees. The larger context of the property has changed. Where on every side Miller looked out to desert scrub, where the horizon line was always in sight and only an occasional building such as the El Mirador Hotel stood in the distance, two-story buildings overlook the property. Many more buildings stand along North Indian Canyon Boulevard than were present in 1937, reflecting the growth of Palm Springs from an unincorporated town in 1937 to a city of 47,000 residents. Compared with many other neighborhoods, this northern slice of Palm Springs is still considerably underdeveloped with many vacant parcels, so still retains some of the character of the original larger setting.

The key materials of the Miller House are primarily intact: original steel window, screen, and door frames have been retained and in their original locations, the black concrete floor that extends outside and inside is original; exterior doors are intact, and the concrete reflecting pool is original. According to the June 11, 2002 "Recommendation for Class I Designation," issued by the Palm Springs Historic Site Preservation Board, the Board noted that "during Staff's site visit, it was determined that the building originally had a plaster (light cement) exterior stuccoed sometime after."¹⁴ If that is correct, the light sand finish of the existing stucco resembles that of other Neutra houses of the period and later.

As a Modern architect, Neutra's intent was to use readily available commercial and off-the-shelf industrial materials that did not require handmade craftsmanship or the stamp of an individual artisan. Because his palette of materials was typically limited and because he did not use ornament or trim to cover up uneven transitions, there was actually more skill needed to make sure materials were finished and presented according to a Modern architect's design intent, and that transitions or connection points between materials such as steel window frames and adjacent plaster were rendered crisply, cleanly, and smoothly. Fine workmanship can be seen wherever such intersections occur, for example in the placement of the glass in the strip soffit lighting; the evenness of the soffit trim; stucco, plaster, or paint; or the brick mortar joints of the fireplace. It

¹⁴ Historic Site Preservation Board, Letter of Recommendation, June 11, 2002, Designation of the Miller House as a Class I Historic Site.

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can also be seen in individual components such as the alignment of the vents on the exterior walls.

The feeling of the property strongly conveys the aesthetic and historic sense of Neutra's work of the 1930s. The association of Miller's commission of this early live-work space is apparent in the restored character defining features of the house and studio.

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8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- A. Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B. Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C. Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D. Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

- A. Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes
- B. Removed from its original location
- C. A birthplace or grave
- D. A cemetery
- E. A reconstructed building, object, or structure
- F. A commemorative property
- G. Less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years

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Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions.)

ARCHITECTURE

Period of Significance

1937

Significant Dates

N/A

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Neutra, Richard, Architect

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Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance, applicable criteria, justification for the period of significance, and any applicable criteria considerations.)

The Grace Lewis Miller House is eligible for listing on the National Register of Historical Places at the local level of significance under Criterion C in the area of Architecture, representing the work of a master and possessing high artistic values. The period of significance is 1937, the year of construction. One of Richard Neutra's most celebrated and publicized projects, the property was an unlikely candidate for such acclaim: a small, Depression-era project located in the isolated northern end of a small city. While its boxy white volumes recall the pueblo dwellings of the Southwest, it was that resemblance integrated with the severity of the European International Style against a desert backdrop that ensured notoriety. The house-studio is unusual in its rich repertoire of many of Neutra's signature strategies and noteworthy because it exemplifies Neutra's typical consuming approach to his clients, here an especially interesting relationship: a design for a woman whose strong professional goals paralleled her architect's. Miller's objectives were therapeutic with regard to the body's physical fitness; Neutra sought to create therapeutic environments that responded to the body's senses and perception. With its special lighting, reflecting pool, landscaping, types of glass, and spatial layout, all combined with an exercise studio, the design has anchored the City of Palm Springs' reputation as a global center of residential Modernism. The house was designated by the City of Palm Springs in 2002 as a Class 1 historic property.

Narrative Statement of Significance (Provide at least **one** paragraph for each area of significance.)

Historical Context

Palm Springs conjures images from vintage estates in full revival garb for the old Hollywood elite to the playful mid-century tract developments of William Krisel, from swimming pools to meticulously landscaped golf courses. To the foreigner Richard Neutra, it meant "Die Wüste," a German word connoting wilderness, especially, a wasteland. Die Wüste was a place that had fascinated Neutra at least ten years. His first book, *Wie Baut America*, 1927, includes images of southwest Native American pueblos and architect Lloyd Wright's slip-form concrete resort, the Oasis Hotel (Palm Springs, 1924). It concludes with a haunting photo of a wind-whipped horizon line in an apparently empty, desolate Sonoran Desert.¹⁵

By contrast, the original owners and stewards of the land, the Agua Caliente Band of Cahuilla Indians, knew the huge Coachella Valley for thousands of years as a home abundant with native and life-sustaining plants such as cacti, acorns, agave and yucca (plants also seen at the Miller House.) Possibly the largest owners of the region's land and water rights, the band continues to live there.¹⁶ They described the sacred hot springs they used for purification rites as *sec-he*

¹⁵ To those unfamiliar with deserts, they may appear empty while actually teeming with life and the habitat for centuries with Native American tribes.

¹⁶ Agua Caliente Band of Cahuilla Indians website, Cultural History, <http://www.aguacaliente.org/content/History%20&%20Culture/>, accessed DATE.

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(boiling water.) The Mexicans who arrived in the early 1820s named it *Agua Caliente* (hot water.)

The region became part of the United States in 1848 with the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo. In 1876, the U.S. Government established the Agua Caliente Indian Reservation and an idiosyncratic checkerboard allocation of land, in which the band owns the even-numbered sections in three townships, totaling some 30,000 acres; the Southern Pacific Railroad owned the odd-numbered sections of land. The Miller House is on former railroad land in Section 3, and is off reservation.

The eventual permanent name, Palm Springs, refers both to the springs and to the ubiquitous *Washingtonia filifera*, the desert fan palm, the only palm native to the western United States, Baja California, and especially Palm Springs. With its hot springs, shady canyons, streams, and sunny winters, the region drew its first non-Indian residents in the late nineteenth century. It was especially attractive because of the setting: Mount San Jacinto, often snow-capped for much of the year, abruptly rises almost 11,000 feet above the Coachella Valley floor to preside over the flat plains below.

Between the mountains and the plain lies the Chino Cone, a vast alluvial fan of soil and rock washed down from the San Jacinto Mountains, a rugged mountain range that acts as a north-south spine separating the Los Angeles Basin from the Salton Sea Watershed to the east. The Santa Rosa Mountains terminate the Coachella Valley to the south. The Chino Cone's foothills are dense with boulders, part of the fan's deposits that bear witness to the occasional earthquake and frequent flooding. This area is part of the very northern and western tip of Palm Springs, which includes upscale enclaves such as Little Tuscany, a neighborhood whose houses seem to perch on top of the sea of boulders at the eastern edge of Mt. San Jacinto, and Chino Canyon, directly west of the Miller House. Other areas near the property, such as the exclusive older neighborhoods of Old Las Palmas, the Movie Colony, and Racquet Club Road Estates, featured homes on large lots bordered by tall walls and hedges. While architecturally eclectic, Mediterranean Revival dwellings were especially popular, in part because developers building the homes mandated architectural features broadly associated with the style.¹⁷

Named after the legendary club, Racquet Club Road is the east-west cross street closest to the house. The club opened December 15, 1934 at 2743 N. Indian Canyon Drive, less than two years before Mrs. Miller bought her lot on August 19, 1936. The two-acre plot she purchased was desert scrub and surrounded by same as far as the eye could see; the north end of Indian Canyon Drive was a dirt road then called Indian Avenue.

At first Miller's choice of this windy northern plot first might appear very strange for a single woman new to the Village, as Palm Springs was known. The Racquet Club was a social magnet for celebrities, particularly movie stars. Founded by tennis-mad actors Charles Farrell and Ralph Bellamy, the ten-acre site served up privacy and glamour along with tennis and poolside parties;

¹⁷ Maley/Petrin/Tinsley/Watson, Architectural Resources Group, "Building, Structure and Object Record," Department of Parks and Recreation, State of California—The Resources Agency, August 2003.

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it was here industry royalty such as Humphrey Bogart, Gary Cooper, Kirk Douglas, Clark Gable, Katherine Hepburn, Marilyn Monroe, Spencer Tracy and many others came to relax and play.

At only one-third mile north of Miller's ultra-Modern home, it was a six-minute walk from there to the exclusive club. To the south stood the older, larger, majestic El Mirador Hotel located at 1150 N. Indian Canyon Drive. Opened New Year's Eve 1928, and designed by Los Angeles-based architects Walker & Eisen, the local landmark's Spanish name means "the watchtower," named for its distinctive sixty-eight-foot-tall bell tower, just in sight of Miller's lounge chairs on her terrace. Sited right between the two elite resorts, her thinking was that she might attract that chic, body-conscious clientele to take her classes in the highly specialized German exercise technique known as the Mensendieck method.

While the City of Palm Springs was not incorporated until 1938, it was already famous as a winter retreat for celebrities, the wealthy, and others in search of a respite from other demands. Talented American and European architects were attracted to the area for its *tabula rasa* potential, supported by bewitching contrasts of light and shadow, the strange landscape, the abundant sunshine, and the prospect of a wealthy clientele who could well support a new architectural vision. The first house built in the modern idiom in the desert region was the Popenoe Cabin, designed by Rudolf M. Schindler, followed by a house by William Gray Purcell, a disciple of Louis Sullivan, and Evera Van Bailey, in 1933.¹⁸

The influential Kocher-Samson Building followed the next year. Called the purest example of the International Style in Southern California by architectural historian David Gebhard, the Kocher-Samson medical office was designed by A. Lawrence Kocher and Albert Frey.¹⁹ Frey (1903-1998), who lived in Palm Springs for the next sixty-four years until his death, became known internationally for his unique approach to Modernism and his life-long devotion to the city and the Coachella Valley. He began his career here as a newly arrived Swiss architect who trained under Le Corbusier, worked in his Parisian atelier, and detailed the iconic Villa Savoye, Poissy, 1931, using the first *Sweet's Catalog*, the renowned American publication of standardized tools and prefabricated parts. Frey soon found a new partner, fellow Modernist John Porter Clark. They went on to design notable buildings, some clad in new industrial materials such as corrugated metal.

As noted in a citywide historic resources survey conducted in 2004,²⁰ Palm Springs was further commercially developed along its major north-south thoroughfares, Palm Canyon Drive and Indian Canyon Drive.²¹ After World War II, these same communities became populated by various interpretations of progressive residential architecture by architects such as William Cody, who arrived in 1945; E. Stewart Williams, who arrived in 1946; and William Krisel, who began designing tract developments in Palm Springs in 1956 with Twin Palms, a small tract in south

¹⁸ Joseph Rosa, Foreword, *Palm Springs Modern*, New York: Rizzoli, 1999, 11.

¹⁹ Ibid, 12.

²⁰ Architectural Resources Group, *City of Palm Springs Historic Resources Survey Final Draft Summary Report*, June 2004.

²¹ Historic Resources Group, Draft *City of Palm Springs Citywide Historic Context Statement & Survey Findings*.

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Palm Springs. His work with the Alexander Construction Company helped seal Palm Springs' world-famous cachet as the one of the nation's best collections of residential Modernism.

Certainly Neutra's first desert project contributed to this global reputation. According to the 2015 draft *City of Palm Springs Citywide Historic Context and Survey Findings* by Historic Resources Group, "one of the finest remaining examples of International Style architecture in Palm Springs is the Grace Miller house (HSPB-45) by Richard Neutra."

Among famous Neutra projects, few have received the attention that the Miller House has enjoyed. By contrast to icons such as the Lovell Health House and Kaufmann Desert House, or the Bucerius House (Brione sopra Minusio, Switzerland, 1966), the Miller House is small and of humble materials. Twenty-nine articles focused exclusively on the house have been published in addition to its inclusion in virtually any compendium on Neutra's work. It is the subject of a book, *Richard Neutra's Miller House*, an extensive monograph on the house, its owner, and its architect. The reason it has received such attention is the myriad of attributes and conditions all present in a house not designed for a wealthy couple but for a single widow, a brave businesswoman on a modest income. It is located in a place that guaranteed the ultimate in contrast between Neutra's sleek, industrial-looking urban silver-and-steel Modernism—a look that fit a little more naturally in an urban setting—and the desert's extremes of climate, geography, and decidedly non-European foliage, all of which Neutra exploited in his careful siting and landscaping of the house. Finally, the dwelling also exemplifies his endless thirst for publicity and that ambition's success.

Richard Neutra, Architect

Richard Joseph Neutra (1892-1970) was one of the most influential architects of the twentieth century. Born in Vienna, Austria, the Modernist architect graduated summa cum laude from the Vienna Technical Institute (later Technical University, Vienna), and was affiliated with the radical architectural theorist Adolf Loos before serving with the Austro-Hungarian Empire forces in World War I. Like his early friend and later sometime colleague Rudolf M. Schindler, Neutra was deeply influenced by the European publication of Frank Lloyd Wright's *Wasmuth Portfolios*, published in 1910-11, a watershed manifesto. The publication, which both Neutra and Schindler encountered in about 1912, illuminated Wright's radical conception of the "breaking of the [conventional] box" through the use of diagonal vistas through ganged corner windows, a more open plan, and an emphasis on the extended and low horizontal line. For Wright, these strategies culminated in a complete break with European-derived historicism in favor of a liberated, democratic architecture, an American architecture that embodied the individual free from constraints.

While Neutra deeply appreciated the break with historicism, he was less interested in heroic self-expression as an end than in recognizing the potential of Wright's work in terms of designing surroundings and environments better suited to human well-being and on a scale that embraced all classes of people. While still in Europe, right after World War I when there was little work in an exhausted Europe, he worked for the famous Swiss gardener and landscape theorist Gustav Ammann. In 1921, he found a post as City Architect for the feudal city of Luckenwalde, where

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he designed housing and a forest cemetery before landing a job with Expressionist Erich Mendelsohn, one of Germany's most successful architects between the two world wars, later that same year. Neutra worked there until 1923, when he emigrated to America, fulfilling a dream which took root years before.

After a short stint in New York, he was hired as a draftsman for the famous Chicago firm, Holabird and Roche, where he mastered the new steel skyscraper framing techniques and later met another hero, architect Louis Sullivan. Neutra and his young bride Dione continued west, working for Wright in his atelier, Taliesin, in Spring Green, Wisconsin, beginning in the fall of 1924 before moving in early 1925 to Los Angeles, which became Neutra's permanent home. His international fame was established by the Lovell Health House, one of the few West Coast designs included in the iconic "International Exhibition of Modern Architecture" held at the Museum of Modern Art, New York, in 1932. The Austrian American went on to build hundreds of homes, including tract developments and military housing as well as private residences, primarily in Southern California and as far away as Puerto Rico, Germany, Switzerland, and Italy. He emphasized that the formal characteristics of his work, a veritable codified consistency, was "largely due to its incorporation of industrialized processes and materials," such as rolled steel, sheet metal, sheet glass, cork, and concrete. Historian Stephen Leet notes that in 1929, Neutra crystallized his approach thus:

Since materials determine building modes, and since industrial conditions affect materials, it is clear that **industry determines architectural styles**. Spanish, Italian, or English ornaments do not give the character of style to American houses so much as do the technical equipment, the roller screens, the impressive surface finish of walls and fixtures, the plate glass and enamel, Vitrolite, tile, washable paint, hardware: all these parts of a **clean cut environment** proclaim that the buildings are of the twentieth century.²²

While most Modernists sought to differentiate their buildings as part of a clean cut environment, Neutra was distinguished from his peers in his credo that human beings needed to be connected to nature or to the attributes of nature in order to create well-being. Technology and modern materials such as baked enamel tiles and cork tile for floors could support, rather than suppress, that connection.

He also argued that in order to design effectively, architecture as a profession needed to embrace a range of sciences including evolutionary biology, environmental psychology, Gestalt aesthetics, and anthropology in order to better understand the basis of human needs and how best to address them. Neutra called the synthesis of architecture and these sciences *biorealism*, which he addressed in many books beginning with *Survival Through Design*, 1954, and ending with *Nature Near: The Late Essays of Richard Neutra*, published posthumously in 1989. Biorealism sought to re-integrate human and nature through strategies and details that responded to essential human biology, perception, and the senses. Each

²² Leet, 31-32.

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project blended a consideration of the human being as generic, that is, with the same basic universal psychological and physiological needs as other humans, and also as individual, with a unique and personal history of experiences, wants, and needs.

While addressing these concerns, stylistically Neutra buildings are Modern, seen in his well-controlled, horizontal arrangements of asymmetrical massings; use of standard and/or prefabricated systems and products; and unornamented planes of glass, white stucco, and wood. On behalf of biorealism he deployed specific elements such as the continuity of materials inside and out; graduated transitions between public and private space; calibrated views and direct access to outdoor views and landscape; full-height window walls and steel casement windows; and spider legs.²³ Neutra also wrote on the need to include nature and landscape as a critical part of any design in the layperson's book, *Mystery and Realities of the Site*, 1951.

Neutra never lost an opportunity to educate the public on Modernism, always seeking ways to explain it to his lay audience to make it less foreign, more digestible, and more approachable. In addition to unceasing talks to every conceivable demographic, from ladies' lunch clubs to political parties, part of that effort included labeling some exceptional designs not just according to the commissioning client but including this wider agenda. For example, it was the Lovell *Health* House, the VDL *Research* House, the *Jardinette Garden* Apartments, and the little known Mosk House, Los Angeles, 1933, was titled *Study for a Steep Hillside Development*. The Miller House was included in his group. For Neutra, it was the *Mensendieck* House, thereby calling attention to its connection to the exotic, avant-garde European practice designed to transform the body.²⁴

Winner of numerous honorary doctorates, prizes, and awards, he earned the American Institute of Architects' Gold Medal posthumously in 1977.

The House and its Owner

In February 1936, shortly after the death of her husband, Grace Lewis Miller (1895-1976) left her home in St. Louis, Missouri. On August 19, 1936, she purchased a site in northern Palm Springs from a Jerry H. Powell and hired Richard J. Neutra to design her "small, modern house in Southern California."²⁵ At 1,164 square feet, it was small indeed.

Miller was sophisticated in art and architecture. An avid reader of architecture magazines such as *Architectural Forum*, as an early member of the Museum of Modern Art in New York she visited the museum early that winter to enquire about selecting an architect for a site in Palm Springs.

²³ This is a special construction in which a beam supporting the roof runs beyond the building envelope and terminates in a post. The effect of the L-shaped unit is to connect building and ground and to create interstitial space between indoors and out.

²⁴ Identified as the "Grace Lewis Miller House" in the Class I designation, City of Palm Springs, the same name is used in this nomination to maintain consistency and avoid confusion.

²⁵ Leet, 50. The quote is from a letter Miller wrote to Arthur Drexler, Museum of Modern Art director of architecture and design, March 4, 1970.

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She was provided with three options: Philip Johnson, William Lescaze, and Richard Neutra.²⁶ The first two didn't respond, and on phoning Neutra, he invited her to Silverlake for a meeting. Agreeing to her atypical proposal, he accompanied her to Palm Springs; they viewed sites together, and she chose the property with him.²⁷ In any case, Neutra fit her brief: according to her son Jeffrey, his mother didn't "want a Rubens, she wanted a Picasso."²⁸

By training a historian, Miller was also a certified teacher of the Mensendieck System of Functional Exercise. Developed in Germany by German medical doctor Bess Mensendieck, the system is a technical series of movements and postures designed to foster the correct alignment of body architecture.²⁹ The first of her several books on the topic was geared to women: *Körperkultur der Frau* [Physical Culture of the Woman], 1906. Neutra, she told a magazine later, was familiar with Dr. Mensendieck "'since years,' and he was much taken with the idea of doing a kind of studio house for me."³⁰ Thus, the brief for the building developed, now intended clearly to be a live-work space that accommodated providing individual lessons for the well-to-do women of Palm Springs.³¹

While Neutra had many remarkable women for clients, including art collector Galka Scheyer (Scheyer House, Los Angeles, 1934) and art historian and professor Constance Perkins, (Perkins House, Pasadena, 1955), the Miller House is the only live-work design for a woman in Neutra's body of work.

Architecture of the Body, Architecture of the Building

The Mensendieck Method, as it was also known, relies on the participant being able to analyze and evaluate their body architecture through the use of mirrors, the only way to assess one's own alignment. In the studio, a large rectangular mirror takes up most of the east wall to facilitate that analysis.

Coincidentally, Neutra employed mirrors throughout his career, often above head height or perpendicular to a window wall in order to brighten spaces by borrowing daylight or to create psychological feelings of expansiveness, making small buildings feel bigger through the virtual doubling of space. Another example of the use of mirrors—although not involved with the Mensendieck teaching—are the two mirrors flanking Miller's dressing table. Facing north through translucent glass that afforded privacy, the two mirrors performed two functions: they amplified the diffuse, gentle, ambient light from the window, and they also expanded space, as Miller's own remarks demonstrate:

²⁶ Leet, 50.

²⁷ Leet, 52. Later, Neutra often helped clients choose sites, even evaluating them at night as well as the daytime; this may have been the first time he had the opportunity to do this, effectively establishing the maximum potential for any design very early.

²⁸ Phone interview with Jeffrey Miller, March 1999.

²⁹ Leet, 55.

³⁰ Leet, 54.

³¹ Leet, 17, 48.

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All the visitors to the house here are simply delighted with the two pieces of wall mirror in my bedroom, they can't believe their eyes ... and how this gave the impression of "limitlessness."³²

Thus, although client and architect used reflection differently, both intended the use to be therapeutic, whether for improving the architecture of the body or the architecture of the building.

Neutra employed other measures to enliven the house. He exploited the reflective qualities of water to animate the house as much as mirrors and lighting did. The recessed corner pool reflected sunlight, proving a dance of light and shadow on the aluminum-painted ceiling of the terrace, further animating the building in an organic way, meaning the dance of light was the product of the moving wind against the silver canvas of the ceiling.

Additionally, a close analysis of how space is conceived and manipulated, or even acknowledged as existing, is key to understanding Neutra's architecture and to Mensendieck/Miller's teachings. One of Dr. Mensendieck's chapter headings in *Körperkultur der Frau* is The Awareness of Space. The movement through space is important for the body, for a user or a dancer, of course, and also for an architect like Neutra, whose seminal book, *Survival Through Design*, contains the chapter "Physiological Space" Has Direction and Ranges. Neutra was concerned with the ability to elongate the sense of space through corner windows (for the longer diagonal view) or to facilitate the visual and physical access to landscapes both near and far through continuous groups of windows, both abundant at the Miller House. This concern for space and "spatial elasticity"³³ on behalf of physical and mental well-being is a key feature of Neutra's work and philosophy of biorealism.³⁴

A Density of Detail

Miller's studio house contains an unusually dense repertoire of details specific to Neutra, who required that his details often at least double in function. These details varied: to facilitate domesticity; to intensify the relationship to the outdoors: to squeeze as much functionality out of every square inch of space as possible, or to create a "sensorium," as Neutra termed his designs, meaning designing for the senses: sight, touch, taste, smell, hearing, the sense of balance.³⁵ For example, the kitchen boasted a special method of disposing organic refuse so odors were confined and didn't travel through the small house. This was a small container with a round steel

³² Leet, 132.

³³ Richard Neutra, *Nature Near: The Late Essays of Richard Neutra* (Santa Barbara: Capra Press, 1998), 37.

³⁴ It is also notable that Dr. Mensendieck dismissed the Platonic ideal of the separation of body and mind, and that women had to understand their bodies much more holistically, to dispense with corsets and other restrictions that had displaced a more natural sense of aesthetics for a false ideal of beauty. Like Mensendieck, Neutra believed that body and mind could not be separated, referring often to the Greek root of "aesthetics," *aisthesthai*, meaning sensorial satisfaction, relating to perception by the senses. (*Nature Near*, 120.) He emphasized the physiological and etymological source of the word rather than to a more common understanding of it as a subjective, formal assessment of beauty.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, 115.

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lid near the sink.³⁶ Through simple gravity, refuse in the container fell down a short chute that led to a small steel door mounted on the exterior south wall. Neutra's system used a second lid inside the length of the chute to ensure the smell wouldn't backtrack into the kitchen. This was a humble, but effective, example of his constant attention to the role of the senses. In pursuit of that sensorial satisfaction, such gestures were perhaps humble if considered in isolation but cumulatively life enhancing.

Neutra also provided other vents to the outdoors to keep air flowing and fresh, whether for vegetables (two in the kitchen) or in the master bedroom's closet (two, high and low, for Miller's full-height shoe rack.) Some of the plantings around the house, such as the fruit trees, were chosen for their pleasant fragrance as much as for color, texture, or robustness.

The outdoor soffit lighting at the terrace expanded space at night by providing greater range of vision out into the darkness and thus empowering the inhabitant, who now had greater control in apprehending what was out there. Neutra also believed that the light, reflecting off the glass, and reducing visual access to the interior, created more privacy for the inhabitants, calling it an "optical screen" or even a "phantomic extension."³⁷

The use of translucent, rather than transparent, glass comprising the studio's north wall was critical to Miller's private teaching, as to understand and experience proper body alignment one had to see the body with a minimum amount of clothing.

Neutra and Miller also sought to make furniture multi-functional. Diagonally opposite, in the southeast corner of the living area, the daybed served as a comfortable sofa and did double duty as an additional bed for overnight guests.

On the drawings, the Swiss-born Peter Pfisterer (1907-death date unknown) is listed as a collaborator. For Neutra, this special word meant an employee at the level of a project architect who took charge of a project and client relations as needed. Pfisterer, an architect and award-winning furniture designer, was an early employee of Neutra who worked on many distinguished houses including the Beard, John Nicholas Brown, Kahn, Koblick, Lewin, Los Altos, and Malcolmson houses and the Strathmore Apartments, all in the 1930s. C.D.W is listed on the drawings as the draftsman; architect C. Day Woodford also went on to great success.³⁸

³⁶ This lid and mechanism, also long damaged, was restored by a visiting artist from Germany who took it back to his studio, repaired it, and mailed the restored unit back.

³⁷ Richard Neutra, *Survival Through Design*, New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 193.

³⁸ C. Day Woodford (1910-1987) co-designed the Pacific Telephone Communications Center, Los Angeles, 1961, among many other buildings in Southern California. He and partner Leonard Bernard owned one of the largest architectural practices west of the Mississippi, assuming leadership from the original firm founded by John Parkinson and his son Donald, famed for designing the Los Angeles City Hall, Memorial Coliseum, Union Station, and the Bullocks Wilshire Building. Woodford and Bernard specialized in large-scale communications facilities. See *Survey LA, Los Angeles Historic Resources Survey*, April 2018, https://preservation.lacity.org/sites/default/files/TelephoneHistoryandDevelopment_1881-1974.pdf, accessed DATE.

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Expanding Space: Landscape and Building Working Together

In February 1937, Neutra wrote a short article for the monograph *Contemporary Landscape Architecture and its Sources* in which he drew attention to modern landscape in the Coachella Valley, noting that “even the dread desert won active admiration for its superb esthetic values.” He also emphasized how “large glass areas” encourage the “outside and inside [to become] intimately interrelated.”³⁹ His view echoed the entire monograph, where the need to integrate indoors and out was repeatedly encouraged: the landscape should be “quite closely connected to the architecture of the house, forming external adjuncts to that, rather than separate entities.”⁴⁰

This is exactly the approach Neutra takes at the Miller House, using overhangs and plantings to define a gradual change between indoors and out, creating interstitial moments rather than abrupt transitions. The lawns around the house, so alien to the native Sonoran Desert landscape, extended the house into its surroundings and its Modern foreignness into the desert, reinforcing its otherness. Likewise, the loose line of apparently scattered Arizona flat sandstone pavers at the edge of the lawn, marking the beginning of a more natural, native desertscape, is effective in both melding and distinguishing the boundary between the lawn and the curated desert plantings and decomposed granite.⁴¹

Except for the front step, the continuity between indoors and outdoors is further facilitated by everything being on one level. This was a special request of Miller’s:

I required that all entrances and all living should take place at the same level as the desert floor outside (no steps up anywhere.) This has, to my mind, proved to be a very fortunate requirement, although nobody ever stops to think that this may be one reason why in this house we feel so much a part of the beautiful outdoors.⁴²

The “large glass areas” Neutra referred to also helped to realize Miller’s wish:

In general, I had in mind that my house should, above all, make use of this remarkable Palm Springs setting; that the spaces indoors should be a part of the outdoors, and that all the spaces outdoors should be a part of the spaces indoors. There are canyons and snow-covered mountains immediately to the West, and the wide desert to the South and East... I wanted this house to be a part of this setting. I wanted it to be exciting as well, and as much of a surprise as Palm Springs itself is, unless you know the place you can’t appreciate the house to the fullest.⁴³

³⁹ Richard Neutra, “Landscaping—A New Issue,” *Contemporary Landscape Architecture and its Sources*, San Francisco: San Francisco Museum of Art, February 1937, 21.

⁴⁰ Henry-Russell Hitchcock, Jr., introduction, *Contemporary Landscape...*, 17.

⁴¹ Originally, Neutra’s design of that edge condition between lawn and desert was even more subtle and provocative. While the pavers served as a general boundary between domesticated lawn and wild Wüste, originally the jagged sandstone pavers meeting the desert (on the south) were in a fairly straight line, while the adjacent pavers—meeting the lawn on the north—were more randomly, more loosely placed.

⁴² Grace Lewis Miller, Museum of Modern Art sl.doc Neutra Research Folder, May 27, 1938.

⁴³ Miller, *ibid.*

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Thus, the ground plane and roof plane work together: the extended roof overhang, the exterior soffit lighting, the large expanses of glass, and the lawns reach beyond the building's footprint to engage the landscape. The result is the expansion of space and the creation of an environment in which the setting is not secondary to the building but a key component of the design.

Enlisting Local Experts

While Neutra's first jobs were as a gardener's assistant in Switzerland, where he was exposed to a full spectrum of knowledge of garden design from the basics of horticulture to the radical new concept of a modern landscape architecture, Neutra never presumed to have all the answers in selecting plants, especially in *Die Wüste*. Rather, he often enlisted the knowledge of a local nurseryman, as Neutra referred to nursery staff, who knew the local climate and soil. This is what he did at the Miller House, working with well-known Palm Springs nurseryman and garden designer Millard R. Wright, who had operated two companies, Desert Trees" and the larger The Millard R. Wright Co. a firm that combined ornamental and native plant sales with adobe construction.

Other architects and landscape architects chose Wright to help with their gardens as well. When well-known Southern California landscape architects Fred Barlow and Katharine Bashford (known both as independent designers as well as for their partnership, Barlow and Bashford) worked in Palm Springs, "they used Wright for the plants; he would take their plans and finish the job," according to landscape historian Steven Keylon."⁴⁴

Publicity and Posterity

The home's significance rests in part on the unusual amount of publicity it garnered before it was even completed. The first rather obsequious article with a beautiful rendering of the house, drawn by Neutra, appeared in the *Palm Springs News* on November 5, 1936. For both Neutra and Miller, publicizing the project could mean new clients in this tony, upscale town.

Its fame was furthered by the brilliant images of Julius Shulman, who photographed it extensively (four times, more than the one or two sessions typical for most Neutra projects) between 1937 and 1941. His eye captured the contrast between the native desert, the human-made landscape, and the uncompromising modernity of the construction. The house was featured in *California Arts and Architecture*, February 1937; *Architectural Record*, May 1937; *Pencil Points*, July 1937; *Architectural Forum*, August 1937; *Los Angeles Examiner*, December 1937. It was included in national and international exhibitions such as the *Paris Exposition Internationale des Arts et des Techniques Appliqués à la Vie Moderne*, 1937; *Art in Our Time*, Museum of Modern Art (MOMA), 1941;⁴⁵ and a retrospective on Neutra's work at MOMA in 1982. For the

⁴⁴ Steven Keylon, architecture and landscape historian, email correspondence with author August 19, 2019. Wright did the landscaping design for the upscale La Paz Guest Ranch, 1939. Designed by local architect John Porter Clark (a Modernist who partnered with Frey) the twenty-two rental unit project was termed "of the high and exclusive type." Under Barlow and Bashford, Wright also did the landscape installation for the 1939 Palm Springs Women's Club, designed by Clark.

⁴⁵ Leet, 153.

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MOMA catalog, an insightful monograph accompanying the exhibition, Director of MOMA's Department of Architecture and Design from 1956 until 1987, Arthur Drexler wrote:

A screened porch and a reflecting pool are the most conspicuous external features of the small house set in a spectacular landscape... A sliding glass wall and panels of translucent glass contribute to an austere repose reminiscent of a Japanese tea house.⁴⁶

That year, Neutra's biographer and architectural historian Dr. Thomas S. Hines wrote that the Miller House was "one of Neutra's minimalist masterworks."⁴⁷ The house won an honorable mention in the 1937 Pittsburgh Glass Institute Competition in the category of "Houses Costing Under \$12,000" and first prize in the 1938 "House Beautiful Annual Small Homes Competition."⁴⁸

Changing Ownership

While Miller clearly loved the house, her business never succeeded. In 1940, she put the house on the market. It didn't sell. In March 1943, she began renting the house, leaving Palm Springs to return to St. Louis. Returning after World War II, the house "had fallen into such disrepair that she was unable to stay there... From that time on, the building began a steady physical decline... Just ten years after its construction, the house was in derelict condition."⁴⁹

Miller owned her home for fourteen years before selling it to Vivian H. Peterson on May 20, 1950. Peterson, according to the *Desert Sun* newspaper, was the sister of Mrs. Charles Farrell—wife of the co-founder of the nearby Racquet Club of Palm Springs.⁵⁰ Peterson sold the property to the club on January 2, 1959, which turned it over to Charles D. Farrell and Virginia Valli Farrell. Sadly, it was the Farrells who turned the garage into a second apartment⁵¹ and who may have added the additional room in the rear. The house had five more owners after the Racquet Club sold it in 1963 until the latest owner purchased the house on September 19, 2000, steadily restoring it ever since.

Conclusion

Considered one of Neutra's "minimalist masterworks,"⁵² the Grace Lewis Miller House is significant as an excellent example of Neutra's work in the 1930s, when his approach was still very much allied with the International Style. Additionally, it demonstrates his love for and skill in designing small dwellings that are unusual in the density of character-defining details that

⁴⁶ Arthur Drexler, in Arthur Drexler and Thomas S. Hines, *The Architecture of Richard Neutra: From International Style to California Modern*. New York: The Museum of Modern Art, 1982, 72.

⁴⁷ Thomas S. Hines, *Richard Neutra and the Search for Modern Architecture* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1982), 121.

⁴⁸ Leet, 159.

⁴⁹ Leet, 167-169.

⁵⁰ Marjorie Grant Pohl, "Wanderings About With Marj," *Desert Sun*, Volume XXII, Number 88, 3 June 1949, 7.

⁵¹ Leet, 169; Chain of Title as of July 30, 2019, courtesy Chris Menrad, Rob Willard, WFG Title Company, Palm Springs.

⁵² Hines, 121.

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support a high degree of functionality as well as providing expansive spaces. The house also reflects a change portending later decades, seen here in a more relaxed distribution of volume. This was accompanied by other new directions: deep projecting overhangs (positive gestures) that stretch into and connect with the landscape—rather than recessed balconies (creating negative volumes in a mass), punched into a building, seen, for example, at the Strathmore Apartments, also completed in 1937. The Grace Lewis Miller House embodies the master architect’s singular intense approach to both a unique client and a unique site with a comprehensive response. His client was an entrepreneurial widow, whose brief for a building required reconciling domesticity with a professional studio for physical training, and a setting that was his first experience in working with the desert landscape. His resolution on both counts is outstanding.

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9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography (Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form.)

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<http://www.aguacaliente.org/content/History%20&%20Culture/>.

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Miller, Grace Lewis. Letter to Richard Neutra, regarding Museum of Modern Art written interview with her. May 27, 1938. "MoMA sl.doc Neutra Research folder." Courtesy Catherine Meyler.

Miller, Jeffrey. Phone interview with author. March 1999.

Neutra, Dione. *To Tell the Truth*. Interview with Lawrence Wechsler. Oral History Project, University of California, Los Angeles. 1983.

Neutra, Richard. *Nature Near: The Late Essays of Richard Neutra*, Santa Barbara: Capra Press, 1998.

Pohl, Marjorie Grant. "Wanderings About With Marj." *Desert Sun*, Volume XXII, Number 88, June 3, 1949.

Survey LA, Los Angeles Historic Resources Survey. April 2018. Theme: Telephone History and Development, 1881-1974. -

https://preservation.lacity.org/sites/default/files/TelephoneHistoryandDevelopment_1881-1974.pdf.

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

____ preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested

____ previously listed in the National Register

____ previously determined eligible by the National Register

____ designated a National Historic Landmark

____ recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____

____ recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

____ recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # _____

Primary location of additional data:

____ State Historic Preservation Office

____ Other State agency

____ Federal agency

X Local government

____ University

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 Other
Name of repository: City of Palm Springs

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned):
Class 1 Historic Site 45, added July 17, 2002, Resolution 20395

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property less than one acre

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates

Datum if other than WGS84: _____
(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

1. Latitude: 33.850857 Longitude: -116.546021

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

From Grant Deed, Exhibit A:

ALL THAT PORTION OF THE NORTHEAST QUARTER OF THE SOUTHEAST CORNER OF FRACTIONAL SECTION 3, TOWNSHIP 4 SOUTH, RANGE 4 EAST, SAN BERNARDINO BASE AND MERIDIAN, AS SHOWN BY UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT SURVEY, PARTICULARLY DESCRIBED AS FOLLOWS:

BEGINNING AT A POINT ON THE EAST LINE TO THE SOUTHEAST QUARTER OF SAID SECTION, WHICH BEARS SOUTH 0 DEGREES 11' WEST, 422.15 FEET FROM THE NORTHEAST CORNER OF SAID SOUTHEAST QUARTER, SAID POINT BEING THE SOUTHEAST CORNER OF ROCHELLE TRACT, AS SHOWN BY MAP ON FILE IN BOOK 20, PAGE 68 OF MAPS, IN THE OFFICE OF THE COUNTY RECORDER OF SAID COUNTY, THENCE SOUTH 00 DEGREES 11' WEST, ALONG THE EAST LINE OF THE SOUTHEAST QUARTER OF SAID SECTION, 110 FEET, THENCE SOUTH 89 DEGREE 55' 30" WEST AND PARALLEL WITH THE SOUTH LINE OF SAID ROCHELLE TRACT, 230 FEET; THENCE NORTH 00 DEGREES 11' EAST AND PARALLEL WITH THE EAST LINE OF THE SOUTHEAST QUARTER OF SAID SECTION, 110 FEET TO A POINT ON THE SOUTH LINE OF SAID ROCHELLE TRACT; THENCE NORTH 89 DEGREES 55' 30" EAST, ALONG THE SOUTH LINE OF SAID ROCHELLE TRACT, 230 FEET TO THE POINT OF BEGINNING.

SAID PROPERTY IS ALSO SHOWN ON RECORD OF SURVEY ON FILE IN BOOK 10, PAGE 96 OF RECORDS OF SURVEY, RECORDS OF RIVERSIDE COUNTY, CALIFORNIA.

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

Includes all resources associated with the Grace Lewis Miller House and represents the legal original and unchanged property lines.

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11. Form Prepared By

name/title: Dr. Barbara Lamprecht, M.Arch., Ph.D.
organization: Modern Resources
street & number: 550 E. Jackson Street
city or town: Pasadena state: CA zip code: 91104-3621
e-mail bmlamprecht@gmail.com
telephone: (626) 264-7600
date: October 2019; Revised November 2019

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A USGS map or equivalent (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
- **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO, TPO, or FPO for any additional items.)

Photographs

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels (minimum), 3000x2000 preferred, at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map. Each photograph must be numbered and that number must correspond to the photograph number on the photo log. For simplicity, the name of the photographer, photo date, etc. may be listed once on the photograph log and doesn't need to be labeled on every photograph.

Photo Log

Name of Property: Grace Lewis Miller House
City or Vicinity: Palm Springs
County: Riverside County
State: California
Photographer: Stephen Schafer 1-3, 5, 7-8, 10-15
Barbara Lamprecht 4, 6, 9, 16-25
Date Photographed: June 8-12, 2019

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera:

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- 1 of 25 Entry gate and view from street. Camera facing west.
- 2 of 25 East elevation. Camera facing west.
- 3 of 25 East elevation. Camera facing southwest.
- 4 of 25 East elevation. Camera facing southwest.
- 5 of 25 Corner, east and north elevations. Camera facing southwest.
- 6 of 25 North elevation, east end. Camera facing southeast.
- 7 of 25 Exterior. North elevation, west end (rear of property.) Camera facing south.
- 8 of 25 West and north elevations, rear of property. Camera facing east.
- 9 of 25 West elevation, patio area west of the bathrooms. Camera facing east.
- 10 of 25 West elevation, guest room (addition), west end of house. Camera facing northeast.
- 11 of 25 East elevation, guest room (addition.) Camera facing west.
- 12 of 25 South elevation and screened porch. Camera facing northeast.
- 13 of 25 South elevation, screened porch, and reflecting pool. Camera facing north.
- 14 of 25 Corner, south and east elevations. Reflecting pool. Camera facing northwest.
- 15 of 25 Closeup, screened patio and reflecting pool. Camera facing southwest.
- 16 of 25 Closeup, screened patio and reflecting pool. Camera facing southeast.
- 17 of 25 West elevation, master bedroom. Screened porch with French doors and hardware designed to close bedroom or to open it to outdoor air. Camera facing southeast.
- 18 of 25 Detail. Locking mechanism for open position, master bedroom French doors.
- 19 of 25 Master bedroom showing screened porch with French doors locked into open position. Camera facing west.
- 20 of 25 Living room, east end. Camera facing east.
- 21 of 25 Living room, east end. Camera facing southeast.

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- 22 of 25 Dining area, formerly studio for Mensendieck instruction. Camera facing northwest.
- 23 of 25 Living room, northwest end leading to kitchen and outdoors. Camera facing southwest.
- 24 of 25 Kitchen, southwest corner, countertop. Detail, lid to special kitchen waste disposal unit. Camera facing southwest.
- 25 of 25 Kitchen, closeup, special kitchen waste disposal unit.

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for nominations to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.460 et seq.). We may not conduct or sponsor and you are not required to respond to a collection of information unless it displays a currently valid OMB control number.

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for each response using this form is estimated to be between the Tier 1 and Tier 4 levels with the estimate of the time for each tier as follows:

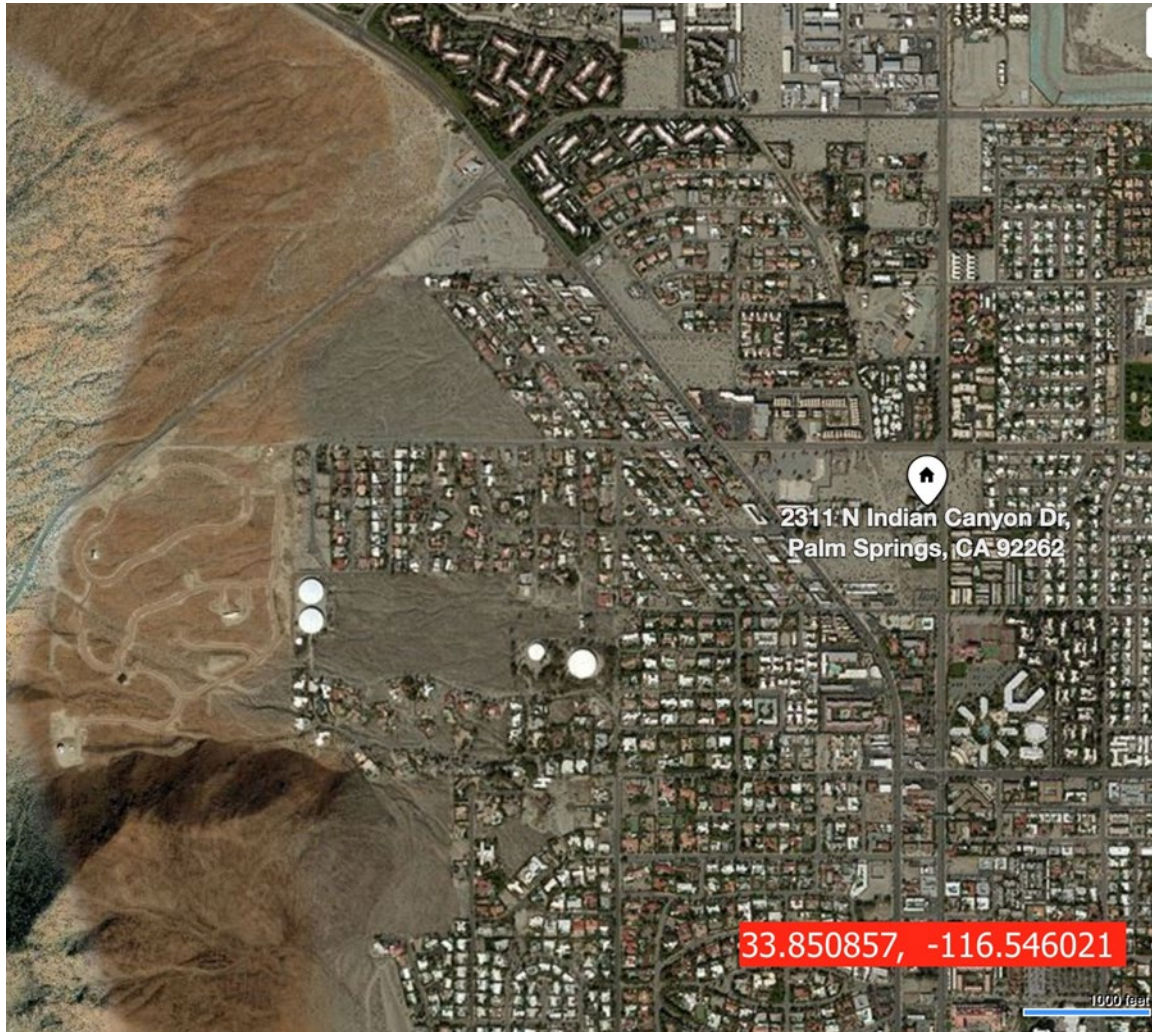
- Tier 1 – 60-100 hours
- Tier 2 – 120 hours
- Tier 3 – 230 hours
- Tier 4 – 280 hours

The above estimates include time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and preparing and transmitting nominations. Send comments regarding these estimates or any other aspect of the requirement(s) to the Service Information Collection Clearance Officer, National Park Service, 1201 Oakridge Drive Fort Collins, CO 80525.

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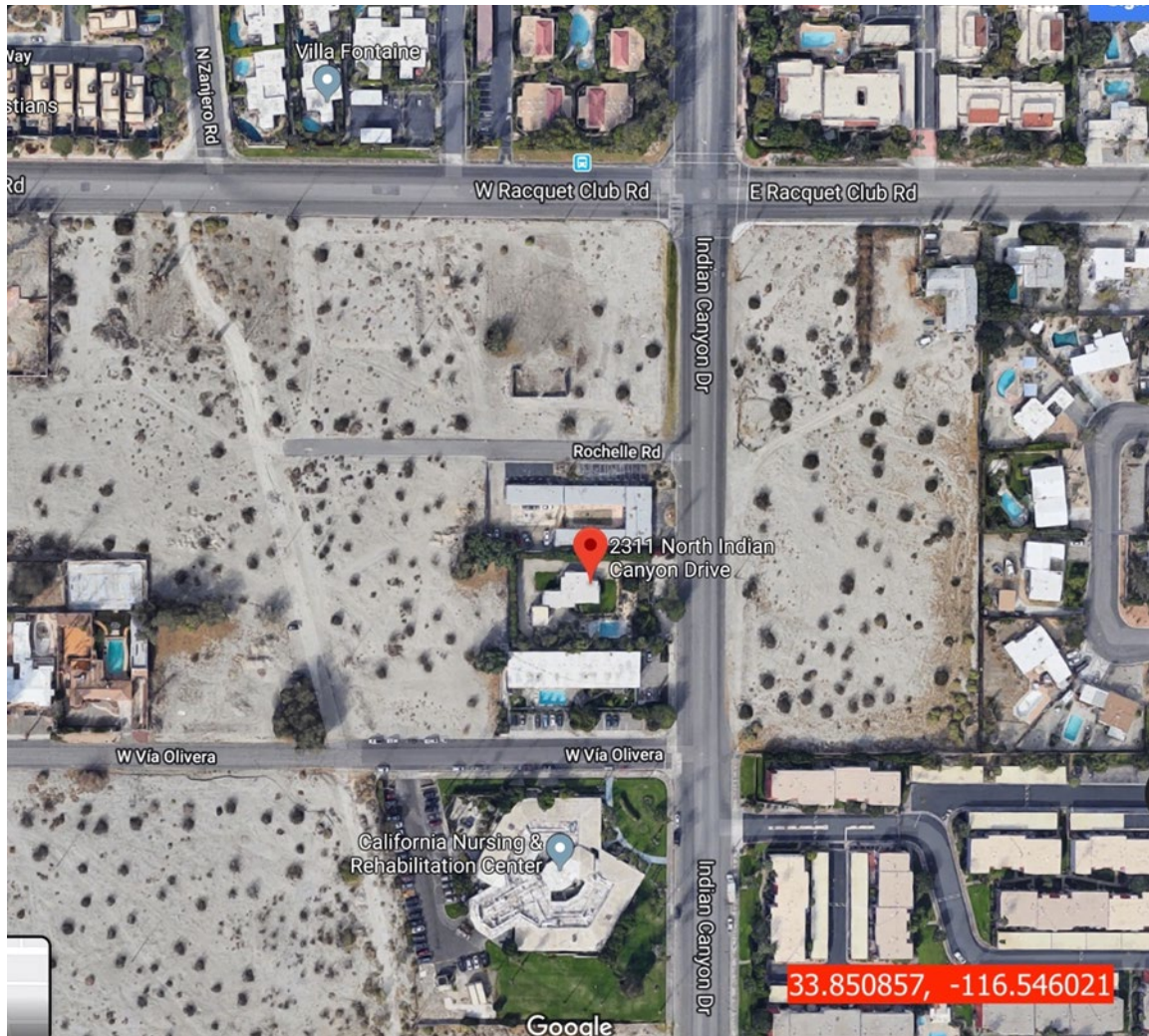
Location Map—Distant View



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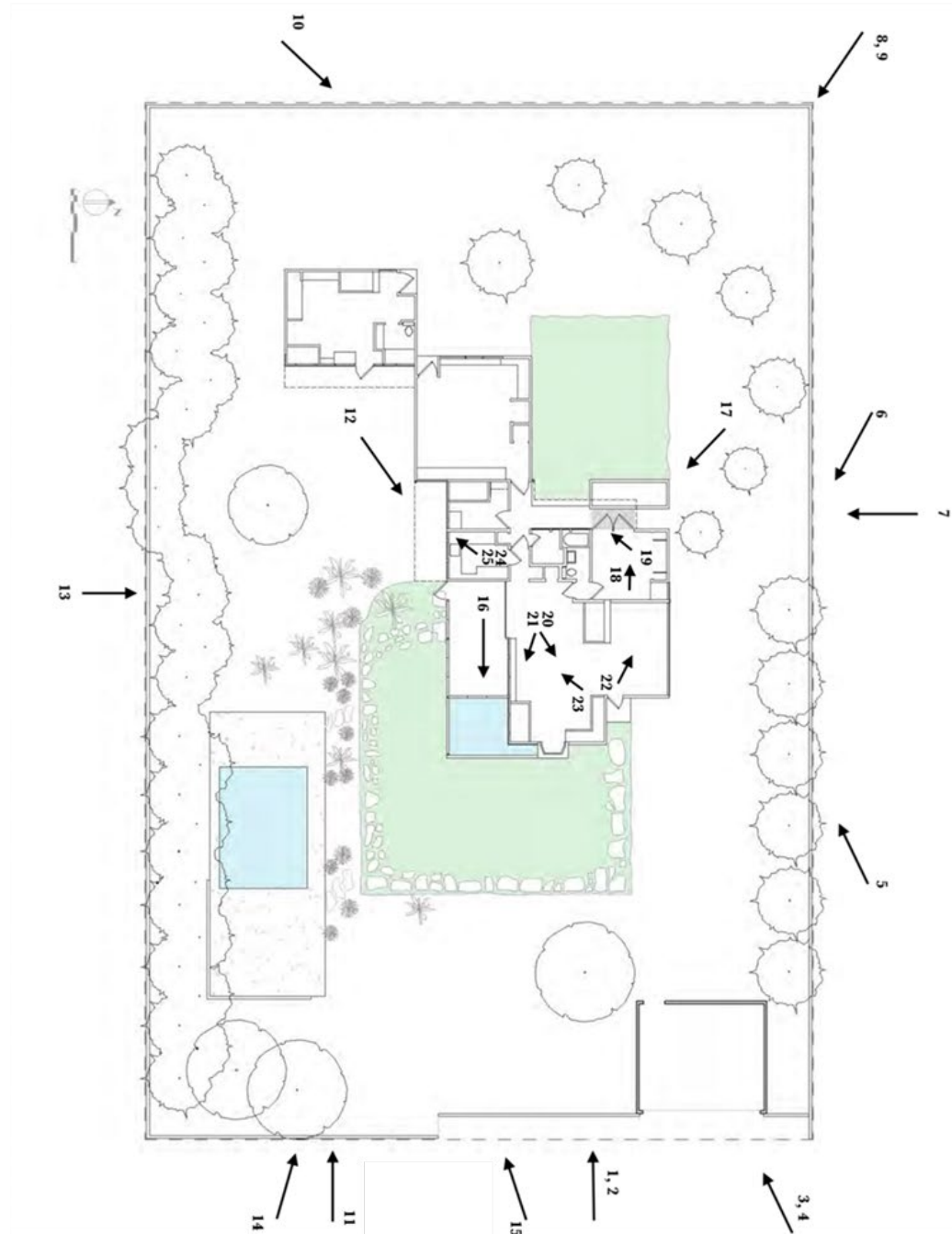
Location Map—Near View



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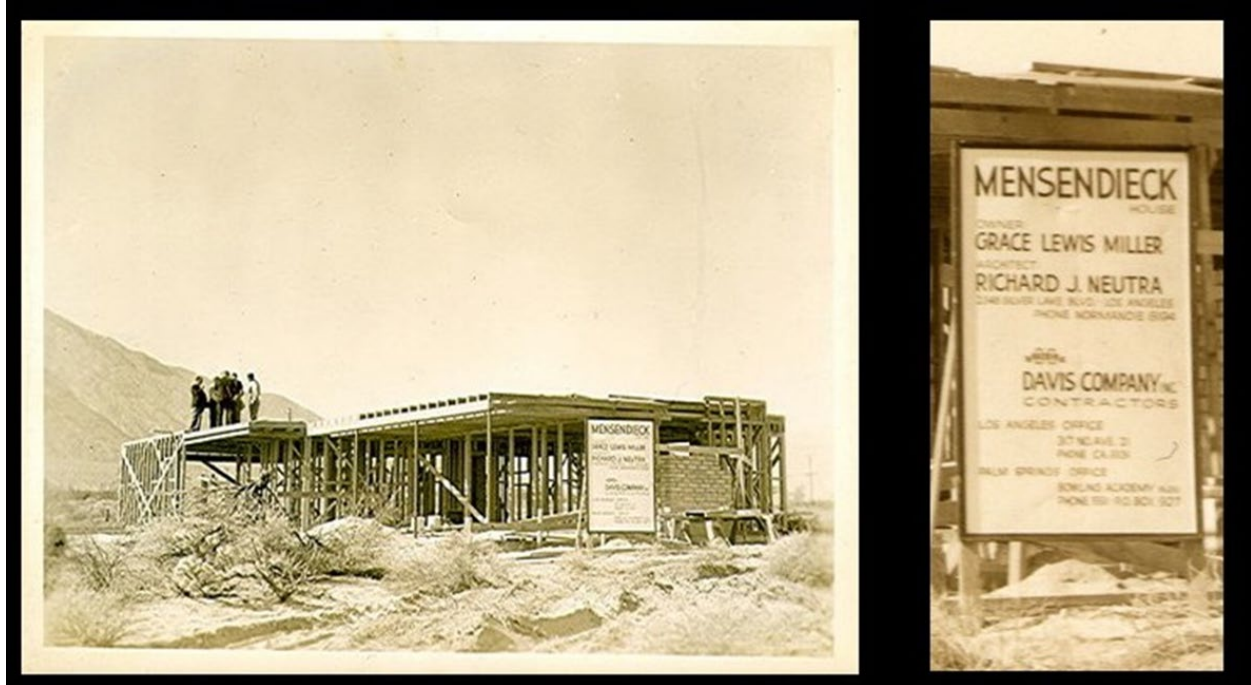
Sketch Map/Photo Key



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Figure 1. Miller House under construction, signage, 1936. Camera facing northwest.
Photographer unknown. Courtesy Catherine Meyler.



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Figures 2-9 © J. Paul Getty Trust. Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles. Julius Shulman [photographer] Collection. (2004.R.10). Job 049, 1937-1941.

Figure 2. Corner, East/South Elevation. Camera facing northwest.



Figure 3. South Elevation. Camera facing north.



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Figure 4. North, West Elevations. Camera facing southeast.



Figure 5. Reflecting pool and screened porch, southeast corner of building. Mrs. Miller at typewriter. Camera facing southwest.



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Figure 6. Reflecting pool and screened porch at night. Camera facing west.



Figure 7. Living room, daybed, and screened porch. Camera facing southeast.



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Figure 8. Living Room, east end with fireplace. Camera facing east.



Figure 9. Mensendieck studio (later dining area). Camera facing north.



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Figures 10-11 Richard and Dion Papers, Collection 1179, Special Collections, Charles E. Young Research Library, UCLA.

Figure 10. Pencil sketch on trace. Top, interior, vantage point west of the south end of living room, looking east. Bottom, exterior, vantage point southwest corner beyond reflecting pool, looking northwest.

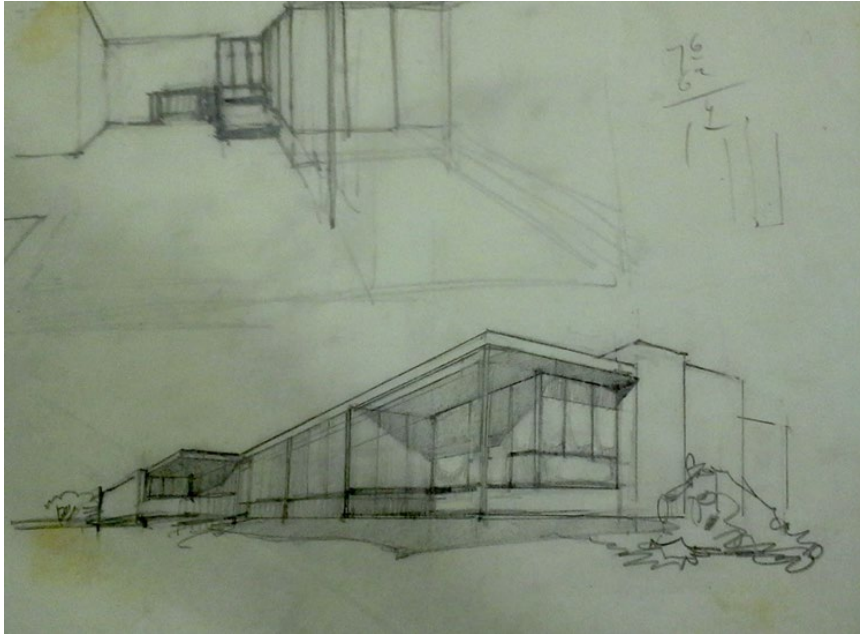
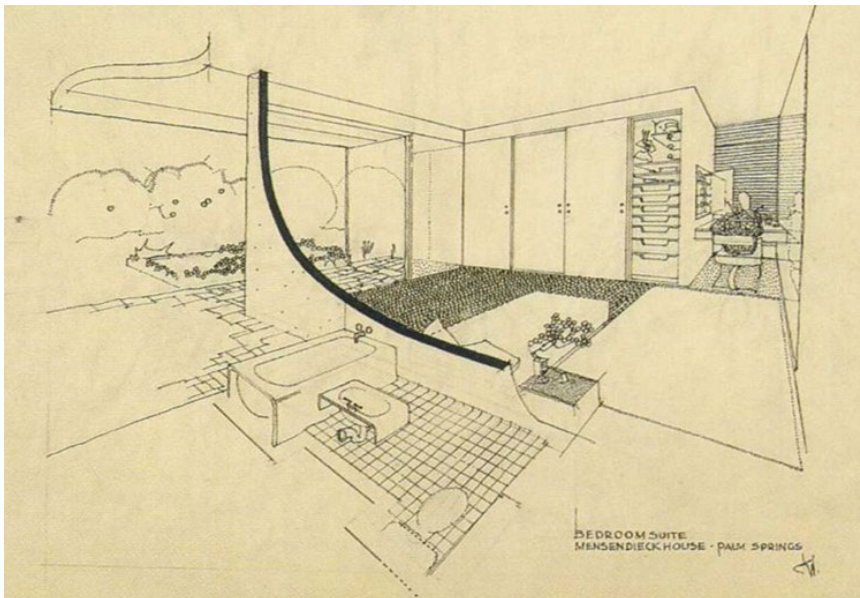


Figure 11. Cutaway sketch of interior by Neutra.

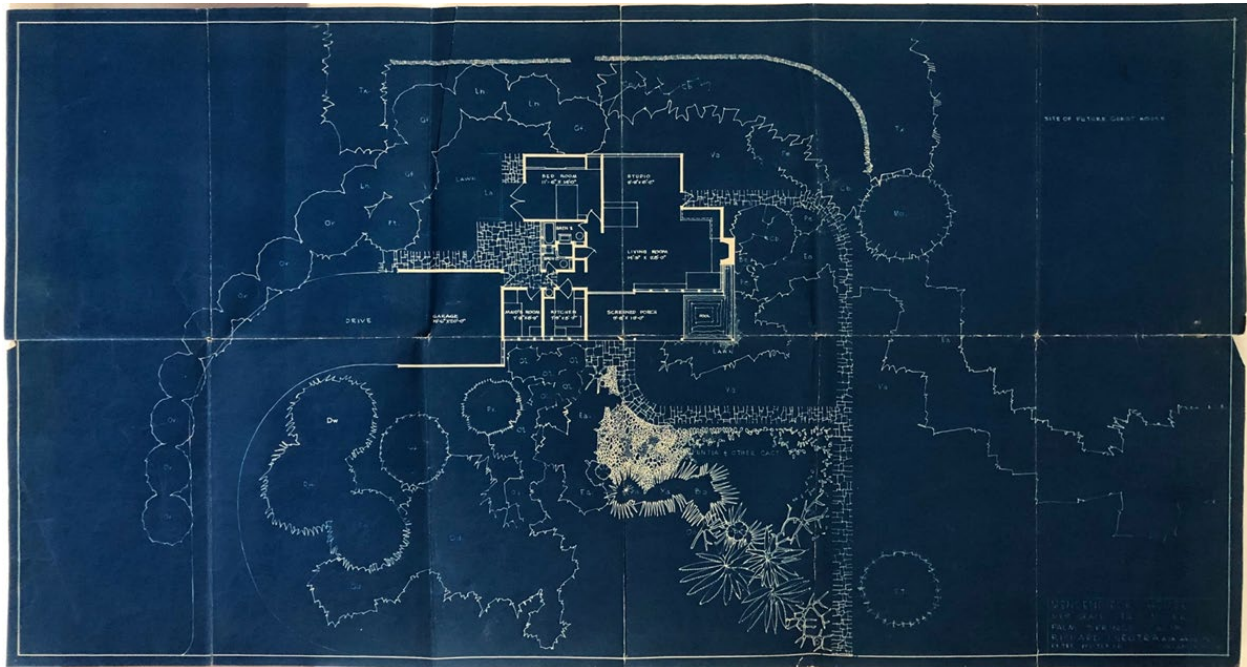


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Figures 12-15 Courtesy Stephen Leet (author, *Richard Neutra's Miller House*), recipient of images from Miller family

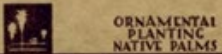
Figure 12. Landscape Plan, blueprint, by Neutra.



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Figure 13. Plant List, page 1, Millard R. Wright Co.

Palm Springs, California PHONE 8855 P.O. Box A-25		COACHELLA, CALIFORNIA PHONE 238	
 THE MILLARD R. WRIGHT CO. BUILDING CONTRACTING ADOBE & RUSTIC CONSTRUCTION			
Mensendieck House, Mrs. Grace Lewis Miller.		December 26, 1938	
		Small	Large
1	Bougainvillea	5 Gal. \$ 2.75	5 Gal. \$2.75 ✓
1	Maquey	1 " .50	
3	Century Plant @ \$2.50	7.50 @ 5.00	15.00 ✓
10	Poinsettia @ .50	5.00 @ 1.50	15.00 ✓
2	Bayonnette	10.00	15.00 ✓
2	Yucca	5.00	7.50 ✓
1	Pomegranate	.50	2.00 ✓
	Verbena	5.00	10.00 ✓
1	Smoke Tree	3' 10.00	5' 15.00 ✓
	Lantana, Trailing Purple	100 4.00	150 6.00 ✓
	Funtia	10 Plants 10.00	15 15.00 ✓
1	Parkinsonia - what is this?	5.00	15.00 ✓
3	Greasewood (SILVER MEAL)	10.00	20.00
2	Gaster Bean	2.00	4.00
3	Desert Row Tamarix 200 107.	5.00	10.00
1	Cottonwood	20.00	① 20 40.00 ✓
3	Barrel Cactus @ 5.00	15.00	15.00 ✓
5	Ocotillo ✓	5' 37.50	10' 50.00 P ✓
3	Desert Willow ✓	How large see Frank Wood 30.00	50.00 ✓
1	Washingtonia Palm	15.00	30.00 ✓
✓	White Oleander @ .40	2.80 @ 5.00	35.00 ✓
✓	1 Palo Verde		

plant as up to do so

20 ten sufficient

See only one in plan

Want to confer with Mr. Neutra on this

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Figure 14. Plant List, page 2, Millard R. Wright Co.

PALM SPRINGS, CALIFORNIA
 PHONE 488 8855
 P.O. Box A-25

COACHELLA, CALIFORNIA
 PHONE 238

ORNAMENTAL
 PLANTING
 NATIVE PALMS

THE MILLARD R. WRIGHT CO.

BUILDING CONTRACTING
 ADOBE & RUSTIC
 CONSTRUCTION

			Small	Large
	Lawn		\$ 25.00	25.00
<i>leave these till later when I arrive</i>	3	Grapefruit (BALLFO) @ 6.00	18.00 @ 10.	30.00
	1	Fig Tree ✓	2.00	10.00 ✓
	3	Lemon	18.00	30.00
	8	Orange	48.00	80.00
	1	Texas Umbrella <i>ZNINA BRILLIANT</i>	5.00	15.00
	1	Cassia Marbonensis	.50	2.00
		Total	319.05	554.25
	Flagstone		150.00	261.60
		Total	469.05	815.85

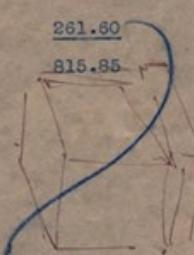
Don't see this in the plan

Approval on checked asterisks.

Grace Lewis Miller
Dec 30, 1936

(Please return this list to me in Palm Springs)

leave till later when I am in Palm Springs



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Figure 15. Grace Lewis Miller in chaise on lawn, desert beyond, late 1930s. Camera facing south. Photographer unknown.

