



Downs House II

West Coast Modern House Series

Christopher MacDonald

ISBN	9781935935285
Publisher	ORO Editions
Binding	Hardback
Territory	World excluding USA, Canada, Australasia & Asia (except Japan; China non-exclusive)
Size	203 mm x 140 mm
Pages	76 Pages
Illustrations	32 color, 7 b&w
Price	£17.50

Downs House II presents an original and comprehensive overview of the home that local architect Barry Downs built for himself in West Vancouver. The site overlooks Howe Sound with a panorama formed by the Coastal Mountain Range of British Columbia. This house of modest proportions presents the key and formative qualities that have come to represent a West Coast Modern idiom in architecture. With post and beam structure clad in cedar shingles, the house characteristically hovers above the rough terrain while remaining intimately engaged with its forest setting. While the dramatic panorama of the living area provides a signature moment in the experience of the house, a variety of more intimate views of the forest and granite outcrop provide a richly textured and ever-changing backdrop to domestic life. The house continues to be occupied by the architect and his wife Mary, and is maintained in meticulous condition. Delightful in itself, the Downs House II also offers testimony to a time of creative generosity in which the design of even modest houses served as a place of exploration. In our current era in which architectural culture commonly privileges the experience of individuality and distinction, it is refreshing to be reminded of buildings that are decidedly calm and assured. This is certainly the case with this special house a house that could be fairly said to be at once unprecedented and singular while remaining utterly familiar.

Christopher Macdonald, FRAIC, was educated at the Architectural Association School in London, where he practiced as Macdonald and Salter while beginning a longstanding role as educator. His work has been exhibited extensively and on numerous occasions he has been invited to lecture at schools of Architecture. Since 1998 he has been based at the University of British Columbia School of Architecture and Landscape Architecture (SALA), where he serves as the school director; he also works as a writer and curator for a variety of projects with the focus of much of his work being on the arrival of modern architecture in Vancouver especially as it expresses itself in local residential design.