

GARDEN



Photographs by Kirk McKoy Los Angeles Times

Profuse plantings

Landscape designer Garrett Eckbo called for hundreds of trees, shrubs, vines and ground covers — not to mention nearly 18,000 square feet of lawn — for the Brody estate. It was common practice for him to plant dozens, even hundreds, of the same item. Here are highlights from his Brody planting list:

Bugleweed: 2,000 flats
Canary island ivy: 4,000 flats
Canary island pine: 22 in 5-gallon containers
Star acacia: 100 in 1-gallon containers
Cape honeysuckle: 375 in 1-gallon containers
Sugar sumac: 95 in 1-gallon containers
Ice plant: 20,000 cuttings

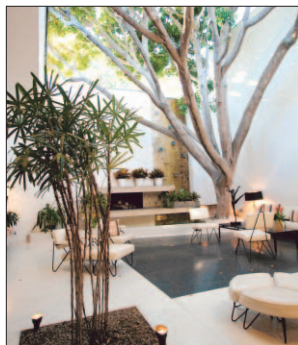
— JEFFREY HEAD



DREAM TEAM: Eckbo, who said it was “best to plan the whole lot at once as a series of indoor-outdoor rooms,” worked on the Brody estate in concert with architect A. Quincy Jones and decorator William Haines.



INTEGRATED: Whether along a vertical post or across a trellis, Eckbo’s plantings were integral parts of the overall design — not afterthoughts.



FLUID: Jones built large windows and Eckbo put plants outside and inside with Haines’ furniture. Eckbo said the plan “increased the sense of space.”

tween the indoor and outdoor.

“You cannot tell exactly where one person’s work starts and stops,” said Rios, also a former director of the USC landscape architecture program. “Quincy was honestly active with the design of some of the outdoor spaces, like the pool house, and I think Eckbo’s patterning and forms in addition to the landscape probably influenced him, along with the furniture in the atrium and the outdoor furniture that Haines also designed, and how it was all used. It is a wonderful model of collaboration that all of us practicing today want to have, that kind of seamless approach in our work.”

After the completion of the Brody house in 1952, Eckbo, Jones and Haines collaborated once more for the Gary Cooper house, also in Holmby Hills. Although each designer had his own long and successful career, the three did not share another client like the Brodys.

Eckbo taught at USC and became chairman of the landscape architecture department at UC Berkeley. He was especially interested in the social benefits of site planning, anticipating the increased need for smart growth and sustainability.

But it is his body of enduring landscape projects for which he remains best known. Eckbo worked with widely recognized architects of the era: Gregory Ain, Pierre Koenig, John Lautner and Richard Neutra, among others. Eckbo was sought for commercial and residential projects alike. He often expressed to clients that a building only exists, visually and spatially, in relation to the surrounding landscape. And the site, as he stated in his book “Landscape for Living,” exists in relation to people. “The building and the site are one in fact and in use.”

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