

THE
GLASS
HOUSE



THE BRICK HOUSE RESTORATION CAMPAIGN



Photo: Dean Kaufman

The first building to be completed at the Glass House site, the Brick House is an essential foil to the glass pavilion that faces it across a small courtyard. Philip Johnson spent his first night on the property in the Brick House, which was completed just months before the Glass House, both in 1949. Over the course of Johnson's life, the Brick House also accommodated prominent overnight guests, including Phyllis Lambert and Andy Warhol, giving it the additional name of Guest House.

Built along a slope, the Brick House has been closed to

the public due to damage caused by water infiltration and inadequate drainage. Restoring and reopening the Brick House is the site's greatest preservation priority. Approximately 13,000 people visit the Glass House each year, and reopening the Brick House is critical to providing our visitors with a complete experience of the Glass House. Approximately \$2 million is required to repair the Brick House and its collections.

Faced in iron-spot brick and arranged in a manner similar to that of the German architects Mies and Schinkel, the



Photo: Ezra Stoller/Esto/Yossi Milo Gallery



Photo: Michael Biondo

Brick House may be understood — along with the Glass House — as half of a single house that has been split in two: one part, opaque and private; the other, transparent and exposed. Their fundamental link is underscored by the fact that the Brick House holds mechanical systems, which are connected by underground pipes and wiring, necessary to support the Glass House itself. The overall layout is based on a Miesian court-house — a direct reference to 1920s modernism.

As a retreat from the exposure of the Glass House, the

Brick House afforded Johnson privacy to relax and experiment. Its interior changed several times. Originally, it held three small rooms with a bathroom and storage area. In 1953, two of the rooms were combined into a single, large bedroom with an adjoining bath. This transformation marked the first departure at the Glass House from the language of modernism, as Johnson began to reference historical architecture. Modeled on the breakfast room of Sir John Soane's 18th-century house in London, the room features flattened, plaster vaults that form a canopy above the bedroom. The walls were lined with fabric by Fortuny: Egyptian cotton with a layered, slightly offset, 15th-century Persian piumette pattern, in aquamarine, salmon and gold.

The first artwork commissioned by Johnson for his residence in New Canaan, *The Clouds of Magellan* by Ibram Lassaw, hung prominently on the wall above the bed, where a dimmer switch — a novelty at the time — was placed to control indirect lighting, further enhancing the spare, yet exotic, sleeping area. According to Phyllis Lambert, "One had the sense of nightfall in the desert, under the vaulted canopy — a sheltering firmament — as the light gradually faded."

The privacy of the Brick House still allows for a view into the landscape, via round portals on the back of the building that Johnson referred to as "the Brunelleschi windows," a reference to the early Renaissance Duomo in Florence. The reading room held Johnson's personal library of nearly 1,000 volumes and was used by him and David Whitney for both reference and relaxed reading.

As part of the National Trust for Historic Preservation, the Glass House has a central focus on the preservation of all elements of this extraordinary site. In the interest of presenting the best of Philip Johnson's vision to the public, the Brick House must be restored. The Glass House thanks you for your interest in this work and hopes that you will consider contributing to this critical preservation effort.

*For more information about the
Brick House Restoration Campaign,
please contact Scott Drevnig, Deputy Director
+1 203 978 3005 or sdrevnig@theglasshouse.org.*



Photo above: Paul Warchol
Front cover photo: Ezra Stoller/Esto/Yossi Milo Gallery



National Trust *for*
Historic Preservation®

199 ELM STREET, NEW CANAAN, CONNECTICUT 06840 THEGLASSHOUSE.ORG

A site of the National Trust for Historic Preservation