

## John Lautner's building timeline



Joshua White

The Elrod house in Palm Springs also is among Lautner's most famed commissions, partly because of its appearance in the James Bond film "Diamonds Are Forever."

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**1911** Born July 16 in Marquette, Mich., to an artist-teacher and the head of German, French and social studies at a local college.

**1933** Graduates with a degree in English from that college, which later became Northern Michigan University. Begins six-year apprenticeship to Frank Lloyd Wright, joining the first group of Taliesin Fellows at Wright's school in Spring Green, Wis.

**1936-38** Supervises construction of two Wright projects.

**1938** Moves to Los Angeles, collaborates with Wright and later establishes his own practice.

**1947** Completes first major commission, Carling house in L.A., and builds Desert Hot Springs Motel. Its four units are restored in 2001 and eventually put on the market for \$495,000; it's currently in escrow.

**1948** Commercial commissions include a Lincoln car dealership in Glendale, and a year later, Gogie's coffee shop in L.A. Some of this work later is derided by critics who see it as evidence

that Lautner is all style, no substance.

**1957** In Idyllwild, builds Pearlman Mountain Cabin, whose walls of glass seem to float between tree-trunk posts. Looking out from the living room, those posts virtually disappear into the surrounding landscape.

**1960** Near Mulholland Drive, builds Malin residence, better known as the Chemosphere, a space-ship-shaped form perched on a single concrete column and reached by funicular.

**1963** With planning process dating to 1956, largely completes the experimental Reiner residence, better known as Silvertop, in Silver Lake. Client runs out of money and must sell before moving in.

**1968** Finishes two landmark houses: Elrod in Palm Springs (seen in "Diamonds Are Forever") and Stevens in Malibu, whose overlapping roof forms maximize light and air.

**1969** In West L.A., wraps work on Walstrom house, which historian Nicholas Olsberg calls one of the most authentic Lautners today. "Walstrom still has the carefully made rough edges that Lautner was interested in," he says. "It still feels like the place he made."

**1973** Completes Arango residence, also known as Marbrisa, which feels suspended above Acapulco Bay in Mexico. Architectural Record later calls it "earthly paradise."

**1979** Completes Bob Hope's mansion, often likened to a giant mollusk or bird perched above Palm Springs, and the Segel house in Malibu, later bought by David and Courteney Cox Arquette, then Dodgers owner Frank McCourt and his wife, Jamie.

**1994** L.A. chapter of American Institute of Architects awards him a gold medal. Monograph published. Dies of heart failure Oct. 24.

*Sources: Times archives, John Lautner Foundation, "Between Earth and Heaven: The Architecture of John Lautner."*