

The Gell-Mann Residence-A Modernist Landmark Designed to Rise Above the Ordinary

A 1956 mid-century modern by William E. Blurock and longtime home of Nobel laureate Murray Gell-Mann, hits the market in Pasadena's Prospect Historic District.

PASADENA, CA, UNITED STATES, September 1, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Along the tree-canopied edge of the Arroyo Seco, quietly tucked behind mature landscaping, stands 1024 Armada Drive, a two-story [mid-century modern](#) residence presented by

Beyond Shelter Real Estate Group. Built

in 1956 and designed by California [modernist architect](#) William E. Blurock, FAIA, the five-bedroom, five-bathroom home is believed to be one of only a few private residences the architect ever created, a rare domestic expression of a design mind better known for shaping how a generation learned, worked and gathered.

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Lifting the living spaces upstairs transforms the house, drawing in light, landscape and sweeping views to create a connection to place that feels open, effortless and choreographed by the architect.”

JB Fung, Beyond Shelter Real Estate Group



The Gell-Mann Residence, 1956 - William E. Blurock, Architect

The home is organized around an aspirational reverse floor plan that lifts the main gathering spaces to the upper level. There, soaring living-room ceilings, a copper-clad fireplace and walls of glass frame sweeping views of the Rose Bowl and surrounding canyons, while a bespoke light fixture stretches the entire length of the living-room wall. Custom millwork and walls clad in walnut and maple lend a natural richness, while a dramatic open-plan stairway, animated by inset colored-glass panels, rises as a sculptural centerpiece. Below, the plan opens around a serene zen-style garden and an expansive pool, with a private pool house/guest studio completing a resort-like

retreat built for modern California living.

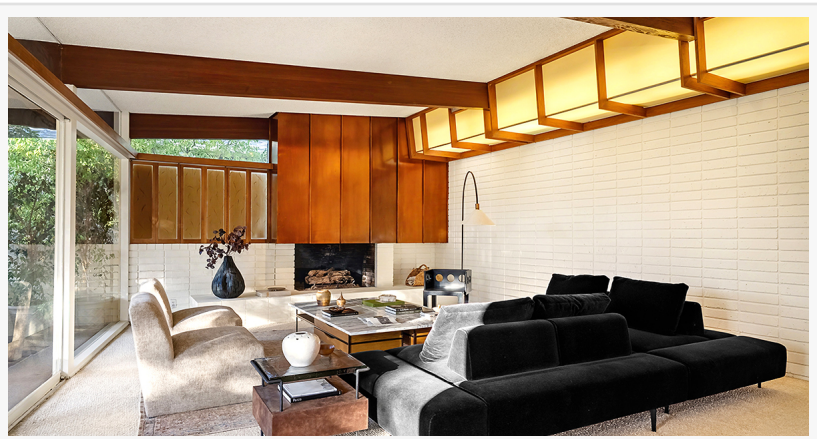
The residence carries a remarkable provenance as the longtime home of Nobel Prize-winning physicist Murray Gell-Mann, who lived here during his most creative years on the Caltech faculty. The scientist who named the "quark" and devised the Eightfold Way, the building blocks of matter, found his home in a house designed, quite literally, to lift its inhabitants toward the light and the view.

The property sits within the Prospect [Historic](#) District, listed on the National Register of Historic Places and considered one of Pasadena's earliest and most exclusive neighborhoods. First subdivided in 1906 along the eastern rim of the Arroyo Seco, the district reads today as a living survey of California's finest architecture, holding work by Greene & Greene, Frank Lloyd Wright, Wallace Neff, Reginald Johnson and Myron Hunt. Into this remarkable company, Blurock's modernist commission arrived as a confident but courteous newcomer, its restrained massing settling naturally among the surrounding Craftsman bungalows and period-revival estates.

Blurock, a Los Angeles native and 1947 graduate of the USC School of Architecture, went on to guide the planning of buildings across 32 California college campuses and hundreds of schools worldwide and was elected a Fellow of the American Institute of Architects in 1968. His larger philosophy, bringing people together through spatial organization, offers a fitting way to read the residence, where living, dining and gathering spaces occupy the privileged upper level, organized around daylight, outlook and shared experience.

More than a home, 1024 Armada Drive is a convergence of California modernism, landscape, craftsmanship and intellectual history. At once private and outward-looking, it is a distinctive mid-century modern residence designed to rise above convention and see beyond the expected.

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Custom details of the Gell-Mann Residence include a copper clad fireplace and bespoke light fixture.



An expansive pool and separate studio add to the backyard retreat at The Gell-Mann Residence.

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