

ALEXANDER LIBERMAN

CORMAT #1 "1970"



HEIGHT 168" WIDTH 72" DEPTH 48"

Cormat #1 was originally located pool side at the home of the prestigious art collector Sigmund Edelstone in Palm Springs, California. The statue has been in Palm Springs for over 41 years and was featured in *Architectural Digest*, September/October 1975. Sigmund Edelstone was known for his collection of expensive and prestigious art. Edelstone hired Hal Broderick of Arthur Elrod and Associates to design his home and pool side landscaping. This is one of Alexander Liberman's more elegant and sensuous sculptures. Using his signature six foot - 48" diameter steel barrels, he cut the cylinders to form two curved wings, abutted to a 14 foot - one inch steel vertical plank. The pigment of the sculpture was his signature Cadmium Red # 6543.

It is unknown when the sculpture was moved from Sigmund Edelstone's home in Palm Springs to its current location in Rancho Mirage, but it was clearly after the 1975 *Architectural Digest* article. The Sigmund Edelstone home is now known as the Elrod Villa, located at the historic Palm Springs Racquet Club and was the playground to Hollywood's most glamorous celebrities.

This home has been toured by The Smithsonian Institute, The L.A. Museum of Contemporary Art and featured in *Architectural Digest*. As you can see from the more recent photograph, the sculpture is missing from its original location that was photographed by Fritz Taggart for the 1975 *Architectural Digest* article.

Additionally, after closer inspection of the sculpture, the stamped signature of Alexander Liberman with the date of 1970 is stamped near the base in the flat linear steel plank (*A Liberman 1970*)...the same year that the non identical twin sculpture at the Akron Art Museum was created called "Contact III".

BARELY DOES A DESIGNER have complete freedom in creating a house from the very beginning, in overseeing everything from outdoor landscaping and electrical systems to sheets on the bed and soap in the guest bathroom.

When Mr. Sigmund E. Edelstone decided to buy a small California condominium—actually, two joined together—at The Racquet Club in Palm Springs, it was almost inevitable for him to seek the help of Hal Broderick of Arthur Elrod Associates.

The firm, engaged in projects all over the country, has its main offices in Palm Springs and was obviously convenient. More important, Mr. Edelstone's Chicago apartment (see *Architectural Digest* May/June 1972) had been designed by the same firm, and he was comfortable with Hal Broderick's approach.

On the surface, the Palm Springs condominium seemed a simple enough project. Even with a double unit the space was modest—some 1,800 square feet—and it was a vacation home, to be used only during the winter months. Mr. Broderick's work, however, took almost a year to complete, and the project was never simple. The constant care and attention required can be attributed to enthusiasm and the meticulous natures of both owner and designer.

In general, concern with the smallest detail and an uncompromising search for quality mark the finished product. Mr. Edelstone knew precisely what he wanted: a contemporary house appropriate to the desert; that California flair typical of a Hal Broderick design; a suitable background for the extensive collection of modern art in the process of being commissioned; and a comfortable setting in which to entertain with flexibility. Mr. Edelstone is fond of having dinner parties that range from four to thirty, and he was anxious for his new house to accommodate these variations with ease.

The finished product is, quite literally, the work of many fine artists and master craftsmen and has features not often found in even the most expensive and elaborate homes. All the doors, for example, were made by a cabinetmaker, and electrical systems and controls were

1975 *Architectural Digest*

A Sophisticated Oasis in the Desert

Designing for the Palm Springs Racquet Club

INTERIOR DESIGN BY HAL BRODERICK, ASID, OF ARTHUR ELROD ASSOCIATES

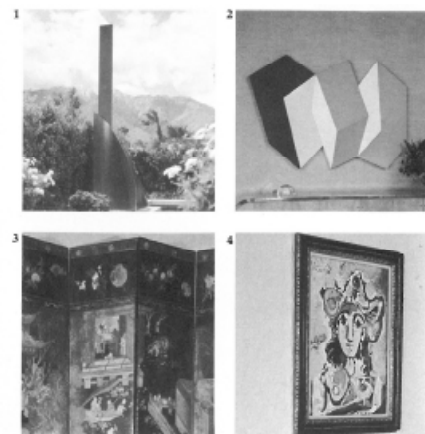


PHOTOGRAPHY BY FRITZ TAGGART

OPPOSITE: Massive stainless steel gates and front door gleam at either end of the marble-floored Entrance Court, reflecting the desert in a bold and modern way. Inset: Soaring Alexander Liberman sculpture at poolside punctuates a mountain backdrop.



Sculpture location in 1975 *Architectural Digest*



1. Page 49. The smooth surfaces, firm boundaries and optical colors that in the 1950s and 1960s had marked the "hard-edge" paintings of Alexander Liberman are manifest here in his steel sculpture titled *Cormat #1*. Like other artists, from Picasso to Max Bill, Liberman is equally skilled as a sculptor.

Prior to re-painting and restoration, the stamped signature of Alexander Liberman with the date of 1970 was photographed near the base in the flat linear steel plank...the same year (1970) that the non identical twin sculpture, *Contact III*, was created. Currently located at the Akron Art Museum.

Restoration, paint, and color selection was advised by Crosby Coughlin with the Alexander Liberman Estate, Marie Laibinis with MCL Conservation LLC, and Arnold Tunstall, Collections Manager with the Akron Art Museum



Contact III, Akron Art Museum

Restoration

Alexander Liberman Sculpture Restoration
June, 2015
By Don Eagleston
BFA Rochester Institute of Technology

Cornat #1 had experience 45 years of harsh exposure in the desert heat without upkeep. Summer temperatures reaching as high as 120 degrees. The paint was oxidized, the original color was sun bleached, and bare metal was exposed in some areas.

1. The sculpture was washed with a neutral PH cleaner
2. The painted surface was sanded to a stable layer with 200 grit sandpaper
3. Larger pits and flaws were filled with Evercoat Metal Glaze, a two part finishing and glazing putty. Some smaller native pitting of the original steel barrels were left untouched
4. The Evercoat Metal Glaze was sanded with 200 grit sandpaper
5. The surface was cleaned with a neutral PH cleaner and Scotch Brite pads
6. The surface was wiped down with paint thinner
7. The surfaces were primed with PPG Deltron DP50LV 2.1 Epoxy Primer mixed with PPG Deltron DP401LV 2.1 Epoxy Hardener and DT18xx Reducer. Ration 2:1:1
8. The Sculpture was painted with Axalta Imron 2.1 HG + Polyurethane #6543 and mixed with Axalta Imron 9T00-A Activator. Ration 3:1 with a 3% flattening agent. (The original Imron Dupont paint brand-name has been purchased by Axalta and is now sold under the Axalta brand name; they use the same Dupont color codes). According to Crosby Coughlin with the Alexander Liberman Estate, The original Dupont color code used by Liberman was Imron Red #6543. We were able to locate the exact Imron color #6543 and restored the sculpture using that original matching paint.
9. The sculpture is approximately 2,500 pounds.

Art critics are far more receptive to his sculptures than his painting. Many of his pieces were commissioned by art collectors. Mr. Liberman's sculptures, fashioned from (six foot) gas storage tanks and old boilers, appear in parks, museums, sculpture gardens, private collections and college campuses throughout the United States and abroad, making him one of the most prolific contemporary public sculptors of his time. The Museum of Modern Art placed one of his sculptures in its garden. Nelson Rockefeller commissioned one for the family estate at Pocantico Hills. Robert Hughes, art critic at Time and a Vogue contributor, called those welded-steel sculptures Mr. Liberman's most important work, describing them as "of real importance in recent American sculpture."

Alexander Liberman (1912-1999) was born in Russia and lived in London and Paris before emigrating to New York in 1941. While in Paris, Liberman worked at Vu magazine with photographers including Andre Kertesz and Robert Capa. In New York, Liberman was the highly influential art director for Vogue, and later held the position of editorial director for all of Condé Nast publications for several decades.

Liberman's work is in the collection of many major U.S. museums, including the Museum of Modern Art; the Whitney Museum of American Art, the Metropolitan Museum in New York, and the Corcoran Gallery of Art in Washington, D.C. His large-scale public sculptures are widely known with examples sited in cities around the world and in sculpture gardens including three pieces at the Storm King Art Center in Mountainville, NY; the Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden in Washington, DC; the Guggenheim Museum; the Tate Gallery in London; the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, and the Laumeier Sculpture Park in St. Louis.

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