



Image Credit:
Brad Angelini

Balogh House

49800 Joy Road
Plymouth, MI

ARCHITECT:

Tivadar Balogh, 1958

Paul Dannels

In 1957, a jury that included Marcel Breuer, Gordon Bunschaft, Huson Jackson, and Harry Weese, bestowed a *Progressive Architecture* Award Citation¹ for the design of an as-yet unbuilt home designed by a young, jovial, Michigan architect, Tivadar Balogh. He and his wife Dorothy built the home together in Plymouth, Michigan, raised a family there, and resided in that home for the rest of their lives. Dorothy lived to see the home placed on the National Register of Historic Places in 2012. The home rocketed from looking forward as a hint of the future to looking backward as a recognized marker of history, all in one lifetime.

The *Progressive Architecture* recognition was no small thing. *PA* sought to exemplify the art of architecture, the technology of architecture, and the American profession of architecture, in a forward-looking and aspirational way. There was much in Tiv's drawings that would have caught the jury's eyes. As small as it was, the house suggests the full package of what contemporary practitioners aspired to art, technology, formal precision, livability, and a certain excitement about what may be to come.

Deftly rendered in the manner of the day, with a family automobile proudly displayed in a carport internal to the building's volume, the home was sculpted from a nearly cubic wood-clad form, with one quadrant dissolved away behind a transparent redwood screen. Cantilevered concrete stairs ascend through the voided quadrant up from the carport floor to greet a two-story living space above that itself claims a second quadrant of the cube. The house was presented to the jurors in one of those images that just seem to be too cool to be true, until you carefully inspect the plans and see that, yes, this really is a charming place to live, ensconced in that tight and poetic geometry. It's a form that somehow seems both humble and audacious at the same time.

Bookended in time, however, between two impressive national honors, the house achieved, in the interim, the highest honor of all... as a cherished place to live for many years. ●

¹ "Residential: Award Citations," *Progressive Architecture*, January 1957, page 127.