



RED CABIN RED

BY DALE MULFINGER



I recently arrived home from a road trip photographing some of my cabin designs. When I did a quick review of my images, I exclaimed, “Oh my, I’m seeing red!” Red cabins, red windows, red island, red column and more. How did that happen?



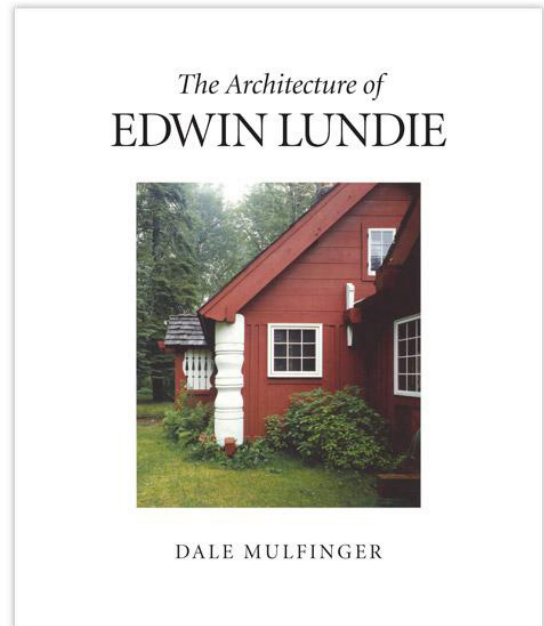
Maybe it's in my DNA from my mother's Swedish roots. Carl Larsson, the Swedish painter, always had charming little red cottages in his paintings. Was my grandmother born in one of those?



Or it could have been the red barn at my family barn. Lord knows that my father had me spending a lot more time in and around that barn as compared to the pale yellow house where my mother captained.



Or maybe it's Edwin Lundie's influence on me. Although of Scottish ancestors, his north shore cabin designs are Scandinavian red. My book on his work has a red cabin with white column on the cover.




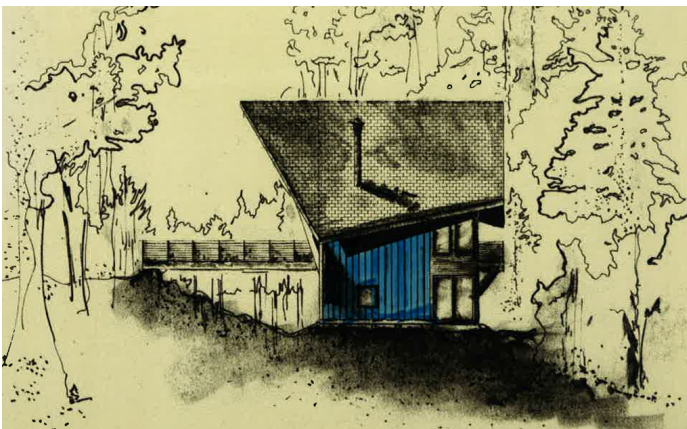
Even in the city, I live in a red house, or as the neighbors say, a red barn. I've only designed one other red house, known affectionately as the chicken coop by the owner, another of my farm references.



I didn't invent red cabins as there already are many along Minnesota and Wisconsin lake shores. Recently, earth tones have replaced red, white, and pale yellow cabins. And there are now many beige vinyl sided cabins. Better not ask my wife about those....



Maybe like Picasso, I should now move on into my Blue Period. Whereas many designers are turning “green”, I could stand out with blueberry cabins. They would be incognito bridging between blue water and blue sky. And they might feel like a giant ice cube in the winter ready to drop in your Blue Goose cocktail. 



*Dale Mulfinger was born and raised on a dairy farm in Minnesota, and the rural landscape and vernacular architecture have informed his many designs. After graduating from the University of Minnesota, he worked nationally and internationally before becoming a Founding Partner in 1983 of what is now SALA Architects, Inc. The breadth of his work at SALA includes modest remodels and additions, lakeside cabins, along with urban and rural homes from St. Paul to Buenos Aires. He has taught architectural studios at the University of Minnesota and other schools since 1976. He is a fellow of the American Institute of Architecture and author of five books include the *The Architecture of Edwin Lundie* and *The Cabin*. He has authored over 100 articles in regional and national magazines and his sustaining research on cabins has earned him the title, “Cabinologist”. In 2015 he was named “Architect of Distinction” by AIA-MN and Midwest Home magazine.*

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