



5 / THE BLUE OF THE KAISER HOUSE



*The blue of the Kaiser house, Palo Alto, California.  
Christopher Alexander, Gary Black and James Maguire, 1989.*

The process of getting this rather intense blue for the Kaiser house in Palo Alto was interesting. I was unsure what color would work best. Indeed, it was so difficult that it did need work on paper. I had several xeroxes of a color photo (before the house was painted at all), and I painted the house walls in gouache on the xerox copies. I made a green one, one turquoise, one heavy green, one light blue, one intense dark blue with a touch of green in it. The light blue was not good.

Strangely, and to my great surprise, the intense dark blue had by far the most harmonious life. I suggested this to Gail Kaiser. She hated it and wanted a more conservative pastel blue. I really did not want to ruin the house with that pastel color. We argued for several weeks. Finally, a godsend, her mother came to stay and told her how beautiful the deep intense blue was, that it was better for the house and brought more life to the street. She accepted her mother's view. We painted the darker blue tinged with green.