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VOL. 3, 2018

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RESIDENTIAL DESIGN



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On the Cover: Miró Rivera's Hill Country House.  
Photo: Paul Finkel/Piston Design

# RD

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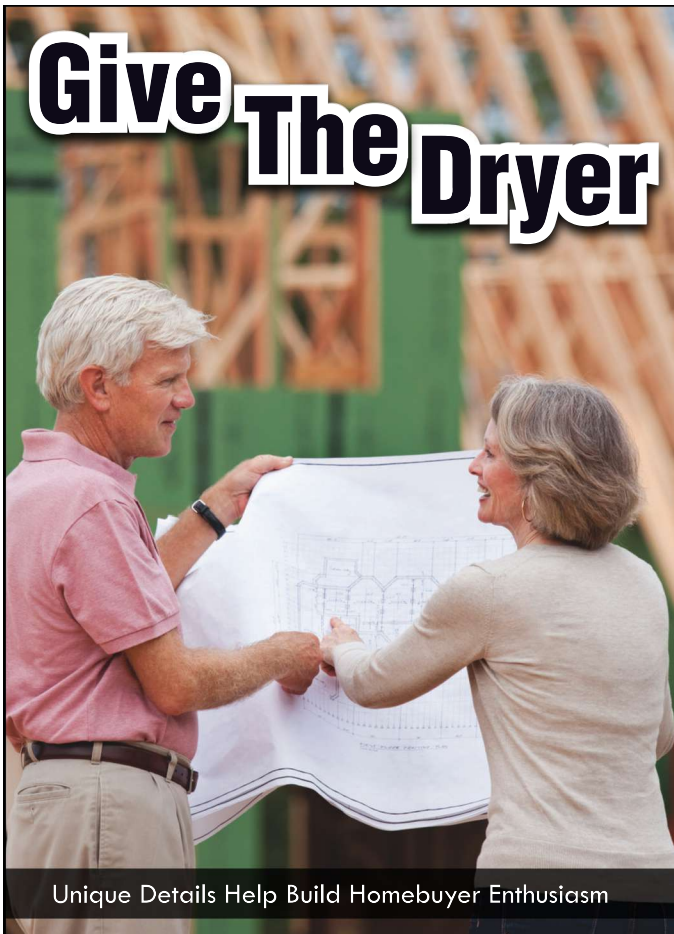
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## Telling Stories



Salvaged wood, exposed brick, charred cypress, marble, weathering steel. What do these materials have in common? They constitute a common palette for today's modern custom houses, whether renovation or new construction. There are common threads that weave through them—an authenticity, a touch of history, and a special character they bring to the projects they grace.

It's hard to know when something is a trend or a more durable shift in taste. Nonetheless, there's important information in every trend, and if you can distill it, you can tap its potential. What makes these and similar materials seem authentic is their solid, practical appearance and their ability to age handsomely over time.

We live in a world of perfect objects these days, sleek cell phones and flat panel televisions. There's a hunger emerging for a little "grit" in our lives, as Dan Maginn, FAIA, of DRAW Architecture, calls it (see our story on page 11)—a careful measure of beautiful imperfection.

To harness the full effect, that grit should be highly curated and injected with meaning and purpose. It should tell a story about the location, or the client, or the building—and perhaps all three. It demonstrates the effect of nature's influence over time, or what the Japanese call *wabi-sabi*. Nothing can or will stay perfect forever, and maybe it shouldn't.

When we go looking for projects for this magazine, we're drawn to a "little bit of grit"—to the elements of imperfection that add character and maybe even a little quirkiness to a house. Here, imperfection doesn't mean sloppy execution but personal, custom choices that set the house apart from others.

This is the real difference between production houses and well-designed custom homes. Production houses are designed and built to be generically appealing. Even if their designers apply salvaged wood or another *wabi-sabi*-infused material to the house, by definition it can't be personal, it isn't custom; and it lacks the backstory of history, location, and client that makes custom homes so resonant and meaningful.

The houses we've picked for this issue are very different from each other, but they share similar backstories. They deviate substantially from typical programs for typical clients, if such things really exist (production builders have to presume they do). They all occupy spectacular sites—waterfront, pasture, desert—and that's part of their story, but their power comes from the highly personal vision of their unique clients given form and function by their architects and builders.

Custom homes are stories that architects, builders, and clients write together. There's something deep and interesting from each of their lives that is woven into the narrative. Well-chosen, evocative materials give us clues to the tale we're being told; they're part of the dramatic arc, but they are not the end of the story.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "S. Claire Conroy". The signature is fluid and cursive.

S. Claire Conroy  
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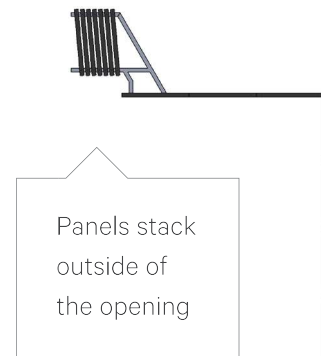
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**SHERWIN-WILLIAMS**

# Grit Is Good

DRAW ARCHITECTURE + URBAN DESIGN  
KANSAS CITY, MO.

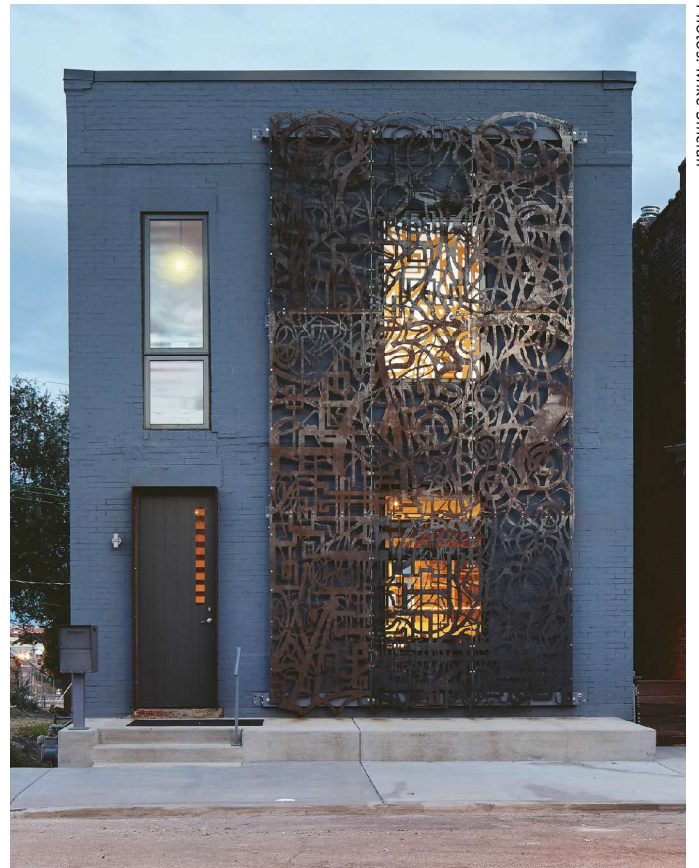
There is slick architecture, and then there is living, breathing design no one is afraid to touch. DRAW Architecture aims for the latter, with as much of the former as circumstances will allow. The mid-sized firm of about 12 or so operates out of the Crossroads, a KCMO neighborhood alive with creativity, cuisine, and coffee. Says Dominique Davison, who founded the firm under her own name in 2005, “We’re right behind the art store, just down from the coffee shop, and next to the Thai noodle place.” The area is bustling with architecture firms, too, which fosters a culture of healthy competition that keeps everyone sharp. Dan Maginn, FAIA, was part of that competition until three years ago, when he joined Dominique’s enterprise, attracted by its mission of “empathy and activism.”

With a mix of adaptive reuse, renovation, and new construction projects of all types, the diverse practice celebrates the city’s urban grit—never seeking to erase the character lines that come of history, location, or tough budgets. “You know, Missouri has St. Louis on one side and us on the other. They like to refer to themselves as the ‘western most eastern city.’ But we’re like the first western city,” says Dan. “There’s a little bit of a grit here that we embrace—a bit of urban edge that we try to combine while achieving an elegance.”

Dan has a gift for words—precise, evocative, and funny. It was a talent that served him well as a cofounder of el dorado, a design/build firm also known for its humor and edgy urban



Portraits: Dan Videtich



Photos: Mike Sinclair

This page: DRAW principals Dominique Davison, AIA, and Dan Maginn, FAIA. For the McGrath townhouse renovation with scant setback from the sidewalk, the architects commissioned a custom metal screen for shade, privacy, and a touch of gritty elegance.

appeal, along with his design chops and solid business skills. Dan came aboard Dominique’s firm at a time when it was struggling with its own success. She needed more methodology to manage the madness. “Four years ago, when I started to talk with Dan, the office was getting larger and the projects more complex,” she recalls. “I knew that my strengths were not on the operational side. When you’re running the business and trying to bring in the business, it’s tough to be also thinking about how to get it all done. Dan is great at being able to get things done. And he’s great in his marketing ability.”

Her last statement is really an understatement, and that’s obvious the moment you pull up their website.

El dorado also had a snappy website that captured the quirky spirit of the firm and honed its image as a creative powerhouse, but one that was very approachable. DRAW’s website, produced by Dan and his wife, Keri Maginn, who is director of operations at the firm, is even better. Filled with loose, fun, but highly polished visuals, it communicates brilliantly the heart, soul, and deep good nature of the principals and staff. And, of course, it’s funny—very funny. Most important, though, it’s disarming—deftly purging any intimidation a potential client might feel in hiring an architect. You want to have a beer with them, and you want them to design your house—or any other building you might have in mind.

## Good Turns

Dominique’s passion is for architecture that intersects with urbanism—no matter what the building type or scale. She’s a Californian who went to Berkeley and then Yale for architecture. Which begs the question, how did she end up in Kansas City? “I met a boy from Kansas,” she says. “And we would come to visit. One day, we were sitting in one of the coolest neighborhoods—39th Street—eating pizza. And I said, ‘This is awful pizza. But I really love it here.’”

That boy, now Dominique’s husband, was a friend of Dan’s from Tulane. Pull threads just a little, and it seems like all the creative people in Kansas City know each other, or work

near each other, or have worked for each other. “One of the things that appealed to me about the city after school is that the design culture here is really, really strong,” Dan explains. “There are a dozen firms in town that you could quickly think of that are interested in achieving design excellence. That culture is supported. You see your peer firms doing great work, and that makes you want to do even better work.”

That design culture fuels many of the firm’s residential clients. They are artists and collectors, culturally savvy and intellectually curious. The budgets, however, are generally less expansive than the clients’ vision. “All of our projects are in a pretty affordable range—somewhere between \$180 to

\$300 a square foot at the most. We’re always dealing with constraints,” says Dominique.

She points to the Quackenbush project, a house and standalone art studio the firm designed in a neighborhood of \$15,000 lots, as an example: “We have to be conscious about materials and providing owners what they’re looking for. But we have an interest in affordable housing and in providing a comfortable, gracious home for a homeowner, or for a customer who has never built custom before. We’re not known for doing the super-big-budget house.”

What the team accomplished on this project, though, made all the difference for the clients. They were able to angle the buildings off the street grid to capture spectacular views of the city skyline. For an artist, that inspiration is everything. Even the space between the buildings has become precious to the couple.

“Dan talks about how we’re like journalists—getting to understand people, and their relationship and what drives them,” says Dominique. “If you do your job well, you get very intimate with other people—without it being weird.”

Sometimes it’s the house that’s weird. It took a couple with rarefied tastes to see the potential of a 1970s octagonal suburban house with a looming mansard roofline in Mission Hills, Kan. They are collectors of unusual period furniture—from the 1940s to the 1980s—so they appreciated the odd time capsule of a house. What they needed from DRAW was careful curation of the home’s eccentricities, and updates to make it livable for a modern family. The team’s sensitive touches recast the Heitz-Sylvester Residence from goofball character to high-style showplace.

“This was a case of really great clients who recognized there was something unique in this house that they could bring out,” Dan explains.



*This page:* A 1970s suburban house has its cool renewed with DRAW’s careful curation of its campy kitsch.





Above: Twisting the new Quackenbush house and studio off the street grid resulted in fantastic city views and some very happy clients.

“If you’re interested in other decades, you can embrace the mystery of another time. I don’t know what the ’50s were like, but I do understand the ’70s. There was a real mystery about what was influencing the era. There was an Asian influence, there was a dragon motif, there was the influence of alcohol that called for its own little shrine off the main living area. The original house was a tired, weird example from a strange era in our history.

“But instead of immediately judging it, we try to calm down and listen,” he continues. “That’s what happened on this house. The clients hired us because we showed an appreciation for what was there. We knew we could amplify and sharpen some of the quirks—we knew what to remove and what to amend.”

The firm applied a similar process to the McGrath Residence, an intensely urban building from the late 1800s in a transitional neighborhood. The owners were also art collectors, drawn to the location for its walkability and proximity to the performing

arts center. “This project, like many of the ones we do, was about how do we showcase the owners’ art,” says Dominique. And in the process of that exploration, the house itself became a focus of creative energy.

“It was just a shell of a building and quite derelict inside. It was a sort of apartment building that our clients wanted to make into a three-story, single-family residence,” she recalls. “Ultimately, it was like an archaeology project, as we started uncovering walls to find beautiful patina of brick. In the bathrooms, we let the plaster fall off the walls to show the brick underneath.

“And then,” she continues, “we had to solve the problem of the building’s setback. It’s right on the sidewalk. We wanted to create some privacy and shade. So we commissioned a metal screen for the front façade.” Says Dan, “We worked with a great artist, Jesse Small. It’s really an example of where art and architecture go hand in hand.” And, it’s a perfect example of the firm’s deft balance of grit and polish.

### Open for Design

Whether the project is new construction or a substantial remodel, DRAW’s goal is for an authentic result that engages and moves people, a place for people to “gather and connect.” Currently on the boards are market-rate multifamily projects, custom houses, and community and civic work, including a new airport terminal they’re designing with SOM.

The range is impressive, and DRAW feels up to the pace and ambition of the portfolio—even if it means Dan can’t design as much as he used to. “Cross-pollination is our secret ingredient,” he says, then pauses for a moment of self-reflection: “When a firm reaches a certain size, you may quit being able to design as much. Or, you can challenge that notion, and suggest that while you might be designing less on the boards, you’re designing how you document who’s working on what, how you tell your story to others. I was influenced by the Eameses, who thought everything is open for design—including information systems.” —*S. Claire Conroy*

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# Busy Is As Busy Does

REPP + MCLAIN DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION  
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**Repp + McLain** is the architect's go-to builder in Tucson, and there's a very good reason for that: They are architects, too. They're a design/build firm lead by Page Repp, AIA, and Rick McLain, AIA, both trained and licensed architects. Page, who founded the business in 1996, is also a licensed contractor, something he learned at the feet of his father and grandfather, who were in the building trades. Their 16-person company does a mix of work, from design/build to just build, and from residential to restaurant and retail. What is consistent across different scopes of work and building types is that they always bring their design-thinking to the job—whether they are the lead designers or not.

Such was the case for the project you'll see in our Design Lab feature on page 68, which was a veritable mash-up of talent, including two Taliesin veterans and the Repp + McLain team. Says Page, "We tout that in Design/Build, you don't just have a contractor, you have a team of architects building your project. We feel like that's an advantage we offer—we can execute a project with a real understanding."

When working with other architects, similar advantages apply. For instance, there's no "CYA" insurance fee tacked onto their bid just because a particular high-design detail is unfamiliar to them, as there might be with other custom builders. "Architects find a huge benefit in being able to ask us how we



Photo: Liam Frederick Photography

Portraits: Courtesy Repp + McLain



Above: The Brewer Conner addition inserts an art studio and a breezeway leading to a new workshop space. Custom steel and concrete weather Tucson's harsh climate with grace.

Far left: Page Repp, AIA. Left: Rick McLain, AIA

might execute an idea of theirs," Page says. "They like our deliberation and care for the craft, and our appreciation for their process. And when we do build for them, it's with their vision in mind. They don't have to explain every little thing to us."

That collaboration and problem-solving happens with the best custom builders, as well, but Page and Rick claim a special shorthand. In addition, they have the ability to fabricate many details themselves if they can't find a trade to do it for them, something that's occurring with greater frequency given current shortages of craftspeople. Says Rick, "We do steel work, we do

framing, and we do a lot of the finishes ourselves. Sometimes it's to get it done right, and sometimes it's to keep field crews busy. Having in-field teams also helps us keep an eye on other subs."

This strategy serves their own design projects, too, where they can encounter the same sticker-price frustration pure architectural firms face. "When we come up with ideas that are very interesting or complex, we find that if we try to take that idea and put it out to other subs, they'll often come back expensive," says Page. "So that's another instance where we'll just figure out how to make it and explain it to them, or just go ahead and do it ourselves."

### Kickstarters

The company's gusto for hands-on work reflects an overall embrace of endeavors that challenge them. The team has explored speculative projects in collaboration with other architects, including a trio of award-winning, small multifamily projects built with Ibarro Rosano Design Architects. They've also

designed and built their own bar; Page has a side gig as a DJ and music festival organizer; and Rick owns an online retail business that makes and sells modern house numbers (modernhousenumbers.com) with his wife, Brandy.

Much of their entrepreneurship derives from solving problems. The idea for the house numbers business came about when Rick and his wife were finishing a big remodel of their previous house. They wanted to buy some large, modern numbers to complete the look of the project, but couldn't find a source that was affordable. So they fabricated their own, and went on to make matching numbers for their mailbox and a stencil for their curb. The numbers drew inquiries from passersby, and the couple began offering to fabricate them for others. Thus, the business was born; and it happened at a fortuitous time when Brandy, who has an architecture and urban planning background, was looking for work with a flexible sched-

ule. "The business," says Rick, "has done really well."

These and other projects keep the company hopping these days. While in the past, their workload has been 70 percent build-only projects and 30 percent design/build, the mix has flipped of late. They're largely building their own designs, with about half the work in the residential sector and the other half commercial. It's that diverse portfolio and range of skills, they believe, that kept them going through the prolonged recession.

### Lean In

For some, the housing bust began to hit in 2007. Page and Rick say their best year was 2008, but they began to see the writing on the wall. They were finishing up a bunch of projects, yet the pipeline ahead looked pretty dry. At the time, they were largely occupied with residential work—designing, building, and developing—but had hoped to branch



Photo: Liam Frederick

Left: Page's own house has served as laboratory for his ideas about design and construction. Below: Flat rolled steel, polished concrete, and sandpaper stucco wrap the exteriors and interiors of the Johnson Residence.



Photo: Liam Frederick





Photo: Liam Frederick

Above: The team transformed this 1960s adobe ranch house into a modern showplace and Rick's own home. A custom birch plywood bookcase takes center stage. Below: Repp + McLain took a big leap and designed, developed, and built their own offices just as the Great Recession hit. It turned out to be one of their best business decisions.

out into commercial. They were also maxed out on their office space, with 10 people crammed into 1,000 square feet in a residential neighborhood.

Instead of hunkering down, they decided to lean in. They took their good (at the moment) cash flow and secured financing to build a commercial building to hold their offices. They reserved 1,200 of the 4,500 square feet to sublet. Drawing from their deep knowledge of regional climate and passive and active green strategies, they designed and built a dazzling, low-slung, sculptural, and highly functional showcase for their talents. There are solar panels, energy monitoring, rainwater harvesting and irrigation systems, custom steel and concrete screens for shading, and carefully orchestrated cross ventilation and natural lighting.

The project won multiple state and regional AIA Honor Awards, giving the firm an immeasurable lift and launch into a new sector of design and construction. At the time, Page quipped



Photo: Bill Timmerman

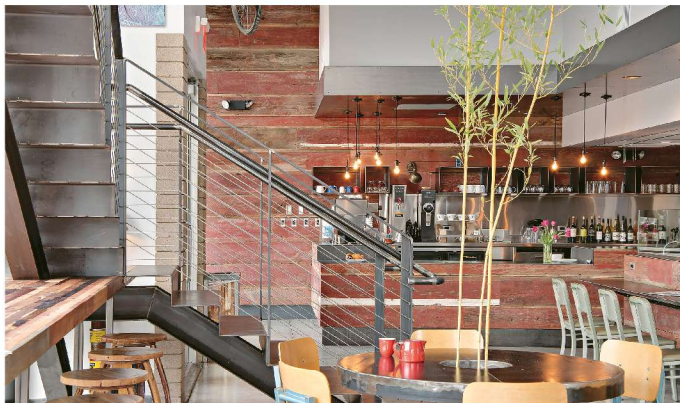
to the media, "It's basically our advertising budget for the next 20 years." Nowadays, he has a different perspective: "To say it was the scariest thing we've ever done is an understatement," he pauses. "But owning your own space is very cool."

In hindsight, it was indeed money well spent because it brought vital commercial business in just as the door shut on the housing market. It established a sharp, savvy look for the firm that still appears fresh today. It shows off their fabrication talents,

their interest in sustainable design, and communicates their solidity. This is not some generic storefront that may disappear tomorrow.

"We're both pragmatists at heart," says Rick. "A lot of our design work and approach is sensitivity toward materials and forms of buildings that are appropriate for this region. We're interested in concrete, steel—materials that are durable and will last in this harsh environment. We have an appreciation for the materials themselves. Why build a masonry wall and then cover it with

Photo: Liam Frederick



Left: Repp + McLain designed Sparkroot Coffee with architect Chuck Meyer, using steel, reclaimed barn wood, and stainless steel aircraft cable.

stucco? There are ways to invoke more subtlety and texture without covering things up.”

The office building served as a useful laboratory for ideas the company had at the time and have since learned from. “We use our own houses as laboratories, too,” says Page. “And then our

wives get really mad at us.” Perhaps the guys should buy them a drink at the bar, because it seems unlikely the experimental and entrepreneurial spirits will end soon.

And what about the speculative housing work that garnered so much attention back in the go-go days? “We

haven’t done spec houses since 2008. But we have an inventory of properties that we might be doing something with,” Page says. “Rick and I have talked about doing one speculative project a year. What we currently own is residential. So, that project could be a tiny home, or houses on smaller lots—or small commercial buildings.”

You can hear the gears start to turn, and then shift back to the here and now. “The commercial restaurant and bar work is leading us into the wellness market—not straight medical, but spa-like,” Page sums up. “We’re also doing a bit of historical, renovation, and upgrade work. What’s fun is the huge variety of things we’re working on. We’re really busy, and that’s a nice problem to have.”

—S. Claire Conroy

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South 5th Residence

# The 2018 AIA Housing Award Winners

The annual **AIA Housing Awards** honor residential projects that exhibit design excellence in balance with “client needs, sustainability, affordability, social impact, innovation, durability, and natural and built contexts.” Winners are selected by a panel of four judges. This year’s jury included **Victor A. Mirontschuk**, FAIA, EDI International, PC, New York City, who served as chair; **Katie Gerfen**, ARCHITECT magazine, Washington, D.C.; **Luis Jauregui**, FAIA, Jauregui Architecture Interiors Construction, Austin, Texas; **Adrienne Steichen**, AIA, Pyatock Architecture, Oakland, Calif.; and **John Thatch**, AIA, Dahlin Group Architecture Planning, Pleasanton, Calif.

They picked 11 winners in four categories, among them custom residential, production homes, multifamily housing, and specialized housing. Projects completed after January 2013 were eligible for entry.

The descriptions that accompany each winning project were written by the entering firms and provided to *Residential Design* by the American Institute of Architects. Check our online coverage for a more fulsome list of project team members and jury comments, which were unavailable by our print deadline. Congratulations to all involved in the winning projects.



Photos: Bill Timmerman

## ONE- AND TWO-FAMILY CUSTOM RESIDENCES

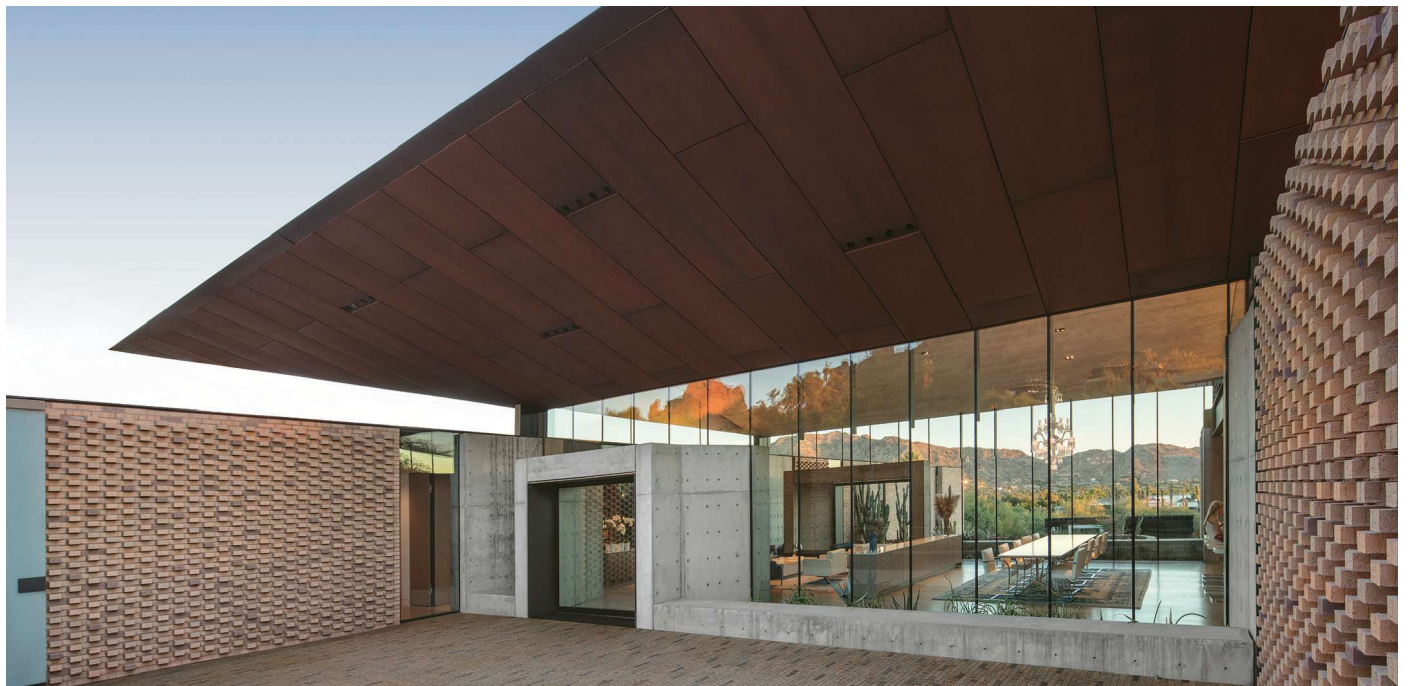
### Ghost Wash House

ARCHITECT: ARCHITECTURE-INFRASTRUCTURE-RESEARCH (A-I-R)

LOCATION: PARADISE VALLEY, ARIZ.

**PROJECT SIZE:** 9,500 square feet

The Ghost Wash House, located along the hillside of Camelback Mountain's north side in Paradise Valley, Arizona, is flanked by two washes that move storm water down the mountain. Two tumbled brick bars run parallel to the east and west washes framing a third topographic condition, or "Ghost Wash," running down the center of the site. The east bar contains the "support" programs of the house: garages, kitchen, family room, dining room, etc. The west bar shields the occupants from the intense setting sun. As the primary organizing device for the house, the central amenity infrastructure takes cues from the Sonoran Desert. In the same way that desert washes provide a habitat and ecosystem to facilitate desert life and connectivity, the Ghost Wash protects, connects, and facilitates the indoor/outdoor life of the residence. The Ghost Wash House is not a house in the desert, but a house of the desert.—*A.I.R.*





Photos: Michael Moran Photography

## ONE- AND TWO-FAMILY CUSTOM RESIDENCES

### Underhill

ARCHITECT: BATES MASI + ARCHITECTS

LOCATION: MATINECOCK, N.Y.

PROJECT SIZE: 6,340 square feet

Inspired by the history of the location, an early Quaker settlement, the design of this family home is based on the tenets of simplicity, humility, and inner focus. The house is broken into a series of modest gabled structures, each focused inward on its own garden courtyard instead of out to the surrounding neighbors. Every interior space is connected to the exterior on two sides. From selected vantage points, one may see across multiple spaces and courtyards to framed views beyond. Each volume has a sculpted roof that funnels light and air into the center of the structure. The detailing of materials articulates this organization. Oak floor and ceiling boards radiate outwards from each center courtyard. Metal straps on the ceiling further emphasize this geometry and act as a device to organize lighting and audiovisual equipment throughout the house. The Quaker values of simplicity and craft tie the new home to the community.—*Bates Masi*









#### ONE- AND TWO-FAMILY CUSTOM RESIDENCES

## The Bear Stand

ARCHITECT: BOHLIN CYWINSKI JACKSON

LOCATION: ONTARIO, CANADA

PROJECT SIZE: 3,245 square feet

Located three hours northeast of Toronto, this 3,300-square-foot retreat is carefully situated along the shores of Contau Lake on a remote, seasonally isolated woodland spanning nearly 100 acres. Recalling childhood adventures exploring the surrounding lakes and forest, the clients wished to share this unique place with others by creating a place of reprieve to be rented to vacationing families.

The two-story residence stretches parallel to the lake and a granite rock face rising up to the south, with primary living and dining spaces at ground level spilling to the outdoors, and sleeping and bathing spaces perched above to capture expansive views of the lake and surrounding forest. The retreat serves as a jumping-off point to an expansive private trail network fashioned by the client. A series of delicate canoe docks and boardwalks knit shallow marshes with hilltop perches, urging exploration by both water and land.—*Bohlin Cywinski Jackson*



Photos: Casey Dunn

**ONE- AND TWO-FAMILY CUSTOM RESIDENCES**

**South 5th Residence**

ARCHITECT: ALTERSTUDIO ARCHITECTURE

LOCATION: AUSTIN, TEXAS

PROJECT SIZE: 2,990 square feet

The South 5th Residence slips nonchalantly into Austin’s eclectic Bouldin neighborhood and deftly negotiates Austin’s zoning, envelope, and critical-root-zone requirements. A rare 25-inch-wide Durand Oak and an unexpectedly steep escarpment created a powerful circumstance for a house that emphasizes the view and a dynamic spatial sequence, while at the same time being an abstract backdrop for the serendipity of light. The visitor arrives into a verdant courtyard under the majestic oak. A thin, 4-inch gabion wall at the street, evergreen plantings, and a perforated, Cor-Ten corrugated screen to the south provide varying degrees of privacy and animation for the ensemble. A transparent living room hovers over the tumbling escarpment and reveals an expansive panorama. The visceral textures of concrete, mill-finished steel, and raw stucco are presented against finely detailed millwork and custom site-glazed window walls—which are framed with rift-sawn white oak and steel to form fitch plate mullions.—*Alterstudio*







Photo: The Agency



Photo: Mark Ballogg



Photo: Mark Ballogg



#### ONE- AND TWO-FAMILY PRODUCTION HOMES

### Linea Residence G

DESIGN ARCHITECT: POON DESIGN INC. (AWARDS ENTRANT);  
 ANDREW ADLER, ALTA VERDE GROUP (DESIGNER/RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPER);  
 PREST VUKSIC (ARCHITECT OF RECORD)  
 LOCATION: PALM SPRINGS, CALIF.

**PROJECT SIZE:** 5,000 square feet

This production house sets a new standard for the speculative tract housing industry. To the homebuying audience, Residence G offers a production home that equals the presence of custom luxury estates. And Residence G does so at a record low construction cost—one-fourth the cost per square foot of the high-end residences seen throughout Southern California. Clarity and precision, minimal lines, walls of glass, measured proportions, and Cubist massing deliver iconic architecture that opposes the predictable Taco-Bell-style or the cliché Mid-Century Modern tract homes prevalent in the area. In the past few years, Residence G and other sustainable home designs by this architect have been built and sold, totaling more than 200 completed homes in the Palm Springs area. Under the thesis of “Modern for the Masses,” the architect’s agenda has ignited an entirely new movement of design and demographics in the region.—*Poon Design*



Photos: Will Crocker

### ONE- AND TWO-FAMILY PRODUCTION HOMES

## 3106 St. Thomas

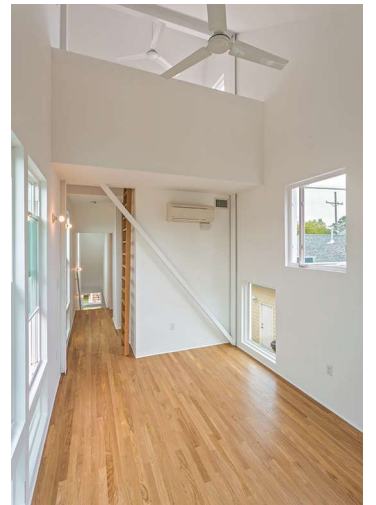
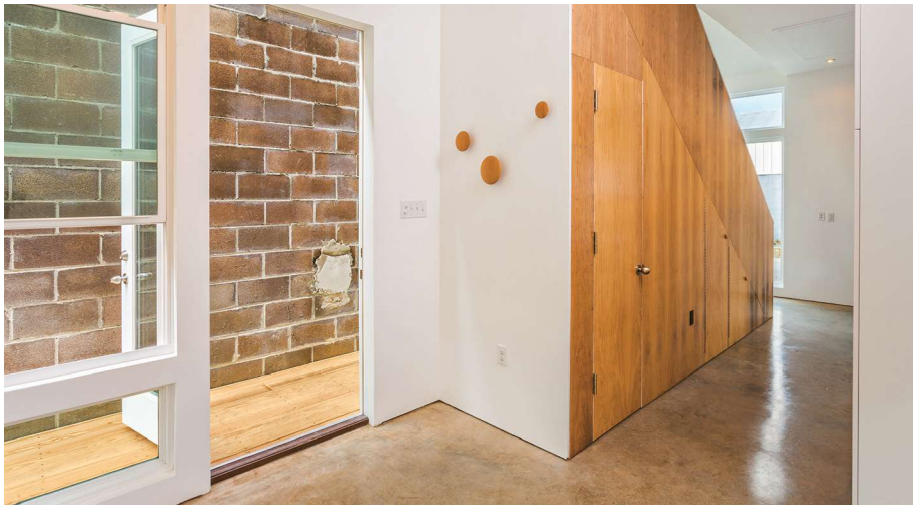
ARCHITECT: OFFICE OF JONATHAN TATE (OJT)

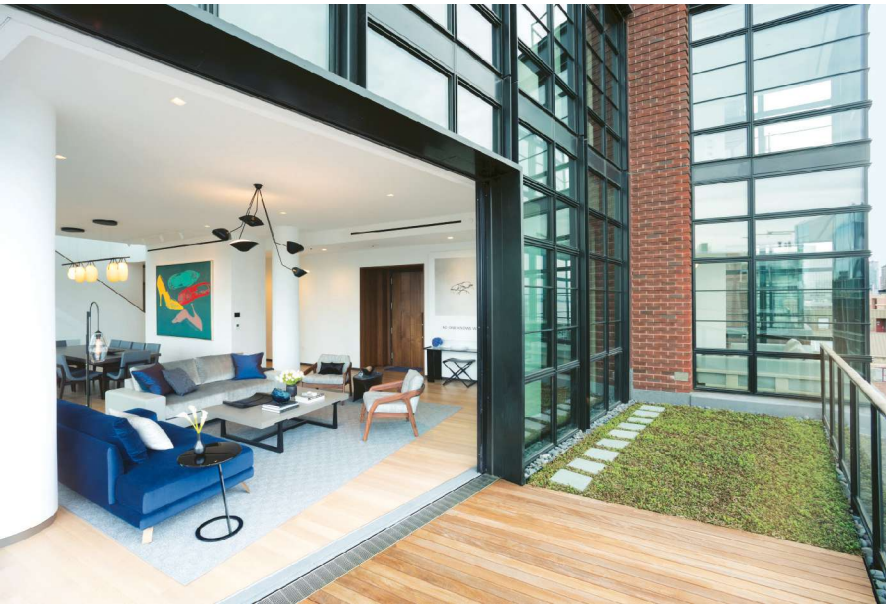
LOCATION: NEW ORLEANS, LA.

**PROJECT SIZE:** 975 square feet

The first test site for the Starter Home\* thesis, 3106 St. Thomas is an undersized lot in the Irish Channel neighborhood. Technically a historic district, the Irish Channel is in fact highly diverse in the character of its built environment, filled with low-density historic housing as well as regional industrial infrastructure. According to the Starter Home\* argument, the site is all at once a legal definition, an embedded history, a record of activity, and a physical entity. A Starter Home\* expects no tabula rasa, and in fact relies on the specificities of site to function at its best—financially, urbanistically, and spatially. The overlay of zoning—both impediment and opportunity—guides the design process, but also provides the potentiality of the site as Starter Home\* opportunity. With this in mind, no zoning variances were sought, and in its design, 3106 seeks to take advantage of its preconditions: adjacency to a warehouse and a two-family home, a highly restricted, long and narrow footprint, and a rather generous maximum height of 40 feet.—*OJT*







Photos: Peter Aaron/OTTO



MULTIFAMILY HOUSING

150 Charles Street

ARCHITECT: COOKFOX ARCHITECTS

LOCATION: NEW YORK, N.Y.

Bordering the West Village Historic District, 150 Charles Street overlooks the expanse of the Hudson River waterfront. On this exceptional site, we envisioned a building connected to nature and carefully integrated into its historical neighborhood. To conserve the character of the street, we preserved the original Whitehall Warehouse structure. Rising above is a contextual setback tower with a series of cascading garden terraces designed as a “fifth façade” to provide armatures for nature. Highlighting natural materials of brick, wood, and stone, the architectural expressions recall those of the surrounding West Village. The design proposal required the approval of several community boards and resulted in a zoning change that allows the new contextual massing scheme with the promise of “superior landscaping.” More than half the site area is now covered by gardens, and each resident has direct access to nature through private or shared terraces and the lush central courtyard.—COOKFOX

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Photo: Courtesy of FXCollaborative

**MULTIFAMILY HOUSING**

**Navy Green**

ARCHITECT: FXCOLLABORATIVE

LOCATION: BROOKLYN, N.Y.

Navy Green is a cornerstone and catalyst for equitable reinvestment in Brooklyn’s Wallabout neighborhood. The project transformed the historic Navy Brig site into a 450,000-square-foot residential and retail development covering nearly an entire city block. Certified LEED Silver for Neighborhood Development, Navy Green sets a benchmark for neighborhood-scale architecture by employing contextually responsive and environmentally sustainable design to achieve social and economic balance in urban growth. The neighborhood-within-a-neighborhood complex is composed of four multifamily residential buildings enrolled in various affordable and supportive housing programs, two rows of market-rate townhouses, a community facility and retail space, and a central common green space. The interior lawn—the “green” of Navy Green—is open and directly accessible to every resident, an oasis in the park-starved neighborhood that acts as a social aggregator. —*FX Collaborative*



Photo: Copyright Jeremy Bittermann



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Photo: Paul Vu

**MULTIFAMILY HOUSING****Mariposa1038**

ARCHITECT: LORCAN O'HERLIHY ARCHITECTS  
 LOCATION: LOS ANGELES, CALIF.

As one of the densest neighborhoods in the country, Los Angeles' Koreatown is at the forefront of changing modes of contemporary urban living. The design for Mariposa1038 plays with this burgeoning area's density with a pure cube extruded to fit tight on its lot, and then formed to gesture back to the public street and surrounding context. To blur the distinction between public and private spheres, the design pushes the cube inward on each side, creating curves that grant relief from the sidewalk and return portions of the ground plane to the public realm. The carved opening creates a central focal point for the building's interior organization and lets natural light into the courtyard. The courtyard ribbon draws the eye upwards and creates continuity from floor to floor. All units have exterior access and can be cooled by cross ventilation. A rooftop deck provides additional outdoor space and skyline views.  
 —Lorcan O'Herlihy Architects



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Photo: Peter Aaron/OTTO



SPECIALIZED HOUSING

## Benjamin Franklin College and Pauli Murray College, Yale University

ARCHITECT: ROBERT A.M. STERN ARCHITECTS  
LOCATION: NEW HAVEN, CONN.

Situated on a triangular site north of Yale University's Cross Campus quadrangle near Science Hill, Benjamin Franklin College and Pauli Murray College carry forward the Gothic style established by James Gamble Rogers in the 1920s and 1930s with his Harkness Memorial Quadrangle and six of the 10 original residential colleges. Organized around nine quadrangles and 16 arched passageways, the new colleges accommodate 904 student beds in varying types of suites. Each college has its own 300-seat dining hall and servery, a common room, a library, a faculty lounge, and provides access to shared lower-level recreation spaces. Prospect Walk, a landscaped pedestrian way that bisects the site, provides east-west circulation and invites students and neighbors to pass between the colleges. Three new towers serve as vertical campus markers, giving the new colleges a presence on Yale's skyline and visually linking them to Harkness Tower at the center of campus. —*Robert A.M. Stern Architects*

SPECIALIZED HOUSING

## Crest Apartments

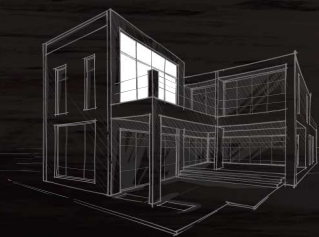
ARCHITECT: MICHAEL MALTZAN ARCHITECTURE  
LOCATION: VAN NUYS, CALIF.

Crest Apartments is a permanent supportive housing project that provides 64 homes and comprehensive on-site supportive services for Los Angeles County's most vulnerable homeless individuals, including 23 homeless veterans. Located in suburban Van Nuys, Calif., the 45,000 square-foot LEED Platinum project includes studio apartments and community spaces for residents including social services offices, a communal kitchen, laundry room, residents' lounge, and community garden. A highly sustainable green landscape spreads across the entire site, while the building's arched form and open terraces float above. The reception lobby is positioned at the front to welcome residents and visitors and to create an active connection to the street. Inviting, light-filled spaces throughout the building form a network of healthy community spaces that connect residents. The four upper residential floors of studio apartments include large windows and are connected by open-air corridors that introduce vibrant color, natural light, cross ventilation, and views of the surrounding city. —*Michael Maltzman Architecture*



Photo: Iwan Baan





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FOR MORE INFO CIRCLE 14

# Meet the Candidates for AIA President-Elect

BY MARICA MCKEEL, AIA

With the upcoming election for president at the AIA Conference on Architecture in New York City, we reached out to both candidates for 2019 first vice president/2020 president-elect for a quick chat. As a residential architect myself and the owner of a small firm, I am very excited that we have two candidates running for president of the American Institute of Architects this year who seem to understand both of those worlds well.

**L. Jane Frederick, FAIA**, is the co-founder of Frederick + Frederick Architects in Beaufort, S. C., specializing in custom residences. Her award-winning, six-person firm earned the AIA South Carolina Firm Award in 2017. **William J. Carpenter, PhD, FAIA**, is the founder of Lightroom, also an award-winning design firm, based in Atlanta. Additionally, he is current chancellor of the ACSA College of Distinguished Professors and serves as professor at Kennesaw State University.



L. Jane Frederick, FAIA



William J. Carpenter, PhD, FAIA

**What do you feel are the advantages of having a small team, and what are the most important resources to support a small team? (How would AIA support small business if you become the president?)**

**JF:** My husband, Michael, and I moved to Beaufort, S.C., from Alexandria, Va., for the quality of life we could have in a small coastal town. A well-managed firm can make exemplary buildings while maintaining a life/work balance. We work in an intimate open office with all six of us together in one room, each bringing special strengths to our projects. We work hard but also allow time to enjoy each other's company. We celebrate birthdays with homemade goodies. On Friday afternoons, we unwind from the work week by volunteering, playing badminton, watching "I Look Up" movies, visiting local exhibits, or other fun activities.

Being small doesn't excuse a firm from supporting employees. We provide benefits including attending the Custom

Residential Architect Network (CRAN) Symposium and the annual AIA Conference on Architecture, we pay for the Architectural Registration Exams upon passing, state registration fees, AIA dues, NCARB fees, 100% of health insurance for employees and their families, as well as holidays and vacation time. We also believe that we should contribute to society and provide opportunities for each employee to volunteer on company time. After Hurricane Matthew, we volunteered more than 60 hours with the South Carolina State Guard conducting building inspections, so that citizens could return to their homes on Edisto Beach and in Marion County. Closer to home, the entire office spent a Friday afternoon cleaning up Hurricane Matthew debris on the Spanish Moss Trail. We also do cleanups for the open land trust, and have picked up trash for Beaufort County Keep America Beautiful for more than 20 years.

I helped start the Small Firm Round Table, now rebranded as the Small Firm Exchange (SFX), to assist small firms. As president, I would continue as a champion for small firms by supporting the work of the SFX, CRAN, the Small Project Practitioner Knowledge Community, and the Center for Practice.

**WC:** I think the Small Firm Round Table/Exchange is one of the best programs the AIA has created. Small firms have the ability to take on very complex problems, but having a network of other firms to rely upon—and share knowledge and resources with—allows for them to have even more depth and support. One example of this is legal support. One of the current ideas is to have legal support for specific small firm issues (such as contracts) be a part of the small firm exchange. As AIA President in 2020, I would strongly support the SFX and help it continue to grow.

For my firm, Lightroom, we have worked on a range of project scales. From a \$40,000 residential addition to a \$4 million veterinary clinic and hospital, we have emphasized high-performance, sustainable design practices.

**How have new technologies affected the way you design?**

**JF:** We have always stayed on top of the latest technologies. When we started our firm in 1989 we used AutoCAD, even though it wasn't very fast on our 286 computers! We had to

share drawings by passing 5¼ floppy disks back and forth. We switched to REVIT in 2007 and found its 3D models to be very helpful for our clients in understanding the design.

Last year we started using virtual reality. We set up a VR experience room where we and our clients walk through our buildings. It affects our design process by speeding up the design development phase because we can immediately “see” areas that are not working well. Plus, clients love the VR experience.

We still begin the design process with sketches on paper. Our initial presentation to clients are hand drawings with watercolor. We find that the sketches are more approachable for our clients because they are loose and appear easier to change. Often, they are sketched over a rough REVIT model.

**WC:** For me in practice and teaching, new technologies such as digital fabrication have changed the tectonic approaches of both design and assembly. Now architects have much more power to influence the final craft and processes in construction. We need to continue to partner with companies like Branch Technology in Tennessee, where cutting-edge carbon fiber technologies are emerging and parametric design and construction are being reformed. We are currently working on a house with this group.

**How do you break the boundary between architects and non-architects? How do we change people’s impression of architecture as the ivory tower, and make people realize the value of architecture?**

**JF:** Communication is the key. Through my leadership on the Public Outreach Committee, we are raising the public’s awareness of the profession and the value that architects bring to every project and initiative. One tool is our AIA Message Book which helps members communicate four key concepts: architects are partners in the design process, architects strengthen society, we are problem solvers, and architects transform communities. The committee members and national staff have trained architects throughout the country on using the Message Book and are receiving great feedback.

For the past nine years, I have written a monthly column for our local newspaper on design, construction, and the importance of improving the built environment. Through telling personal stories, I connect with the readers. I recently wrote an article about home security systems and started by telling that our house was broken into on Christmas Day, when we had gone to an oyster roast for a couple of hours. Afterwards, a number of people stopped me in the grocery store to discuss the break-in, home security systems, and what they should do at their house.

Photo: John McManus



Above: Frederick + Frederick specializes in modern interpretations of low-country architecture, which is well suited to the hot, humid climate of their Beaufort, S.C., hometown.

**WC:** I really don’t think there is a boundary now. It is now a very porous boundary, mainly because of the intense interest the public has in architecture and design. For instance, *Dwell* magazine and Modern Atlanta are both examples of the public’s interest in design. Modern Atlanta is a program run by the public, in partnership with the AIA, where more than 5,000 people participate in a home tour and annual design festival. I think if we continue to create programs with the design-savvy public on our boards and engaged with us in strategic planning, then the boundaries will continue to evaporate.

**In reference to sustainability and energy independence, how do you balance your responsibility to the world with your responsibility to your clients? How do you reconcile with your clients when to use new technologies in your design? How do you implement environmentally friendly technologies in your architecture?**

**JF:** Southern vernacular architecture was based on sustainable design ideas, and the principles still apply today. Hurricanes, heat, and humidity are natural parts of our environment, and the houses we design must have this in mind. Large porches on the south facade keep out the hot summer sun; deep overhangs protect the walls and windows from rain and can block the harsh summer sun; single-width rooms provide cross ventilation and natural light; high ceilings keep the rooms cooler in the summer; exterior window shutters provide protection from high winds; and a raised first floor protects you from flood waters. Our clients want durable, resilient buildings that stand up to our harsh climate, which creates an alignment of our responsibilities to our clients and the world.

South Carolina has favorable net metering regulations, so we can easily make the business case for photovoltaic systems. We are using Tesla Powerwalls instead of generators for backup power. Our clients are excited about this new battery technology because generators are huge, noisy, and high maintenance.

**WC:** Many of our projects, like Paty Modern and Brazil House, aim at being completely off the grid or producing more energy than they use, which can be sold back to the power grid or stored. Houses are part of cities, and we have to think about cities as sustainable infrastructure. In time, cities will produce their own power—all of this design being led by architects. Geothermal systems are a great example in our work where we are able to help our clients obtain tax credits and use cutting edge HVAC systems at a fraction of their actual cost. I hope that we can get solar to follow suit in many of our southern states, including Georgia. We are responsible to educate our clients in the technologies that are available and to lead them through the most efficient and affordable processes.



Above: Lightroom pursues sustainable strategies that rely only lightly on the grid.

**How has your background influenced your work?**

**Jane, why did you choose to focus on residential architecture?**

**Bill, it seems that you have a passion for teaching—can you talk more about that?**

**JF:** When we started our practice we pretty much designed whatever walked through the door—churches, schools, doctors' offices, and custom homes. In 2001, we decided to specialize in custom residential projects because those were the projects we enjoyed the most. Getting to know your clients intimately and creating a one-of-a-kind solution for their needs is very satisfying. Our scope of projects varies from bathroom remodels to big-budget new houses. Specializing in custom homes, we do not have many repeat clients, but we have a lot of repeat houses. It's fun to customize a house we designed years ago for a new owner.

**WC:** For me, having Norman Jaffe, FAIA, and Samuel Mockbee, FAIA, as my mentors has made a profound impact on my work. I have also always thought that teaching was an integral part of my work. This allows me to stay informed and to share my design thinking with students and other faculty. I do think that the AIA can have a much stronger connection to academia. This can help with the talent pipeline and new graduates having greater access to firms in need, but also with connecting research centers in firms with research centers in universities. There is a great opportunity and interest from both practice and the academy.

**What are some principles that drive your design process?**


**JF:** Architecture true to its place and time was a founding principle of the firm. Houses are connected to the land and designed so our clients will make time to enjoy that connection. Our projects use resources wisely and make a positive impact on the environment. Projects are designed for their time and place, and to create delight in our clients' lives. We create homes rooted in the landscape.

**WC:** For architecture projects, having a deep understanding of the site forces and programmatic forces are the main principles in our design process. We use physical study models and precedent and component analysis through the design process. Visual animation helps us place the projects in form and space, and is a great tool to bring clients into our design thinking.

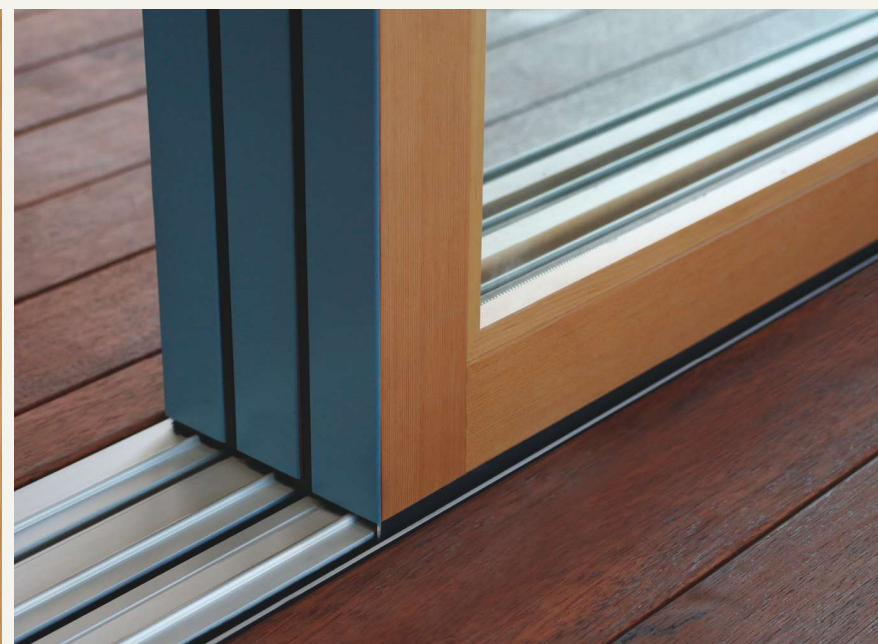
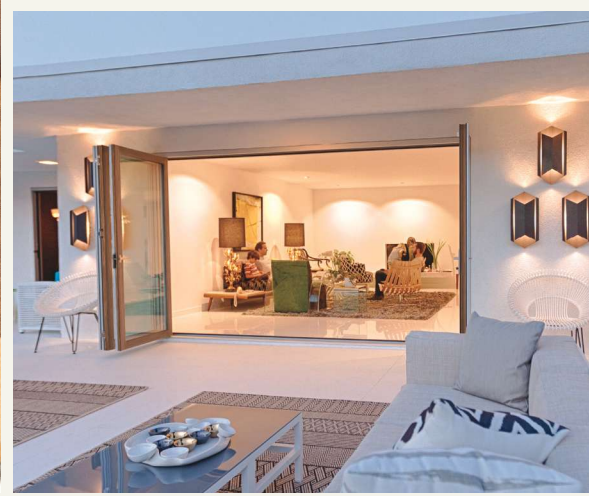
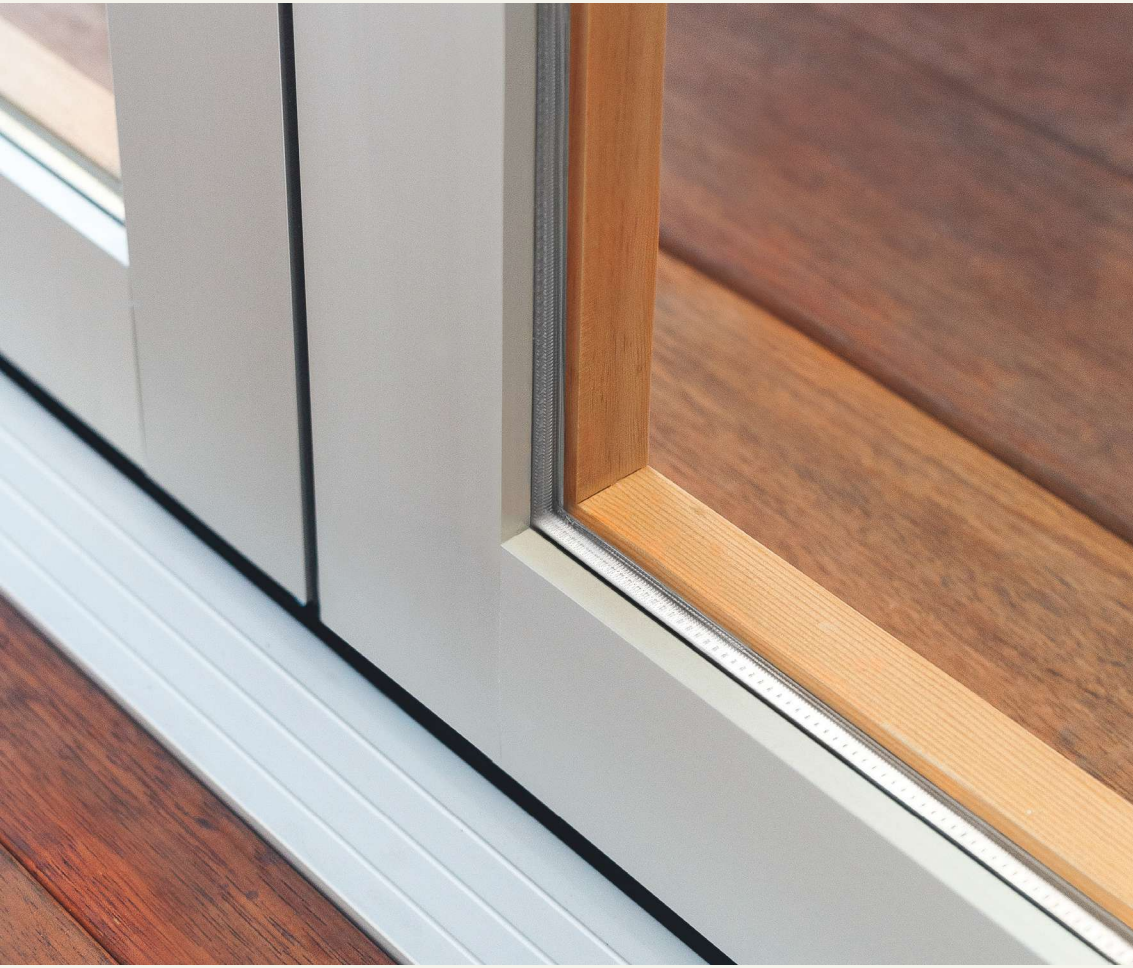
Our primary focus is modern, sustainable residential and commercial architecture. We also provide a range of professional services in interior design, landscape architecture, and branding, as well as website and graphic design. Lightroom is celebrated internationally for the quiet and restrained rigor of its designs and its creative accommodation of site demands and opportunities, particularly those inherent in the landscape, climate, and design vernaculars of the American South.

**What suggestions or advice do you have for young and future architects?**

**JF:** For interns, I suggest you work in a variety of offices to learn what is the best fit for you—large firm or small firm, high-rises or custom residential, traditional design or something else. I always encourage my interns to get registered as soon as possible, otherwise life can get in the way. Once registered, always keep your National Council of Architectural Registration Boards (NCARB) certificate active, because you never know when the registration rules might change, or your life changes and you need to be registered in another state.

**WC:** As a former chair of the Young Architects Forum and the founder of the AIA National Young Architects Award, I would say get involved with YAF or NAC [National Associates Committee]. There is a great opportunity here to encourage leadership skills and cultivate new leaders in the profession. I also think that programs like our AIA Atlanta High School Design Competition, which I co-founded with Jay Silverman, reach a completely different array of students. They encourage design thinking at a much younger age—some of these students start as early as 8th grade. Their teachers and parents become very strong advocates for public interest design, and I can attest that many of these students become outstanding and exemplary designers and leaders. 

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# The Shimmer on the Lake

The AIA's 2018 Firm of the Year conjures a lightness of being and building on a unique waterfront site.

LOCATION: WAYZATA RESIDENCE

ARCHITECT: SNOW KREILICH ARCHITECTS

BUILDER: WELCH FORSMAN ASSOCIATES

BY S. CLAIRE CONROY



**Several years ago**, on a design editors' winter trip to tour a window factory in Warroad, Minn., my colleagues and I hijacked our van driver and demanded he drive us to the Canadian border. We weren't trying to escape the country at the time, but we were on a special mission: We had to go see the U.S. Land Port of Entry building designed by Snow Kreilich Architects. The quiet, strong, beautiful building had bewitched us in photographs, and it felt very much like a pilgrimage to go see it in person. Traveling due north on the desolate road to the border made it seem like we were headed to the ends of the earth. If we were indeed at the top of the world, this building was a worthy last stop on our way to oblivion.

This year, the Minneapolis-based firm has won the national recognition it deserves—the 2018 AIA Firm of the Year

award. No matter what the building type or scale design principals Julie Snow, FAIA, Matthew Kreilich, FAIA, and their firm take on, they do so with impeccable care and sensibility. As a result, their work is powerful, resonant, solid, and remarkably human. Free of flourish, it is nonetheless gorgeously wrought and, we can rest assured, aesthetically durable—like that perfect strand of natural pearls.

Snow Kreilich hasn't specialized in residential architecture, but somehow it's a natural fit for their talents and the work keeps coming in—even more so these days and since Julie's own serenely iconic home, Weekend House on Lake Superior, captured everyone's imagination. Whether the residential project is on a densely urban lot or an expansively scenic site, the attention paid is at the same high level. The



recently completed Wayzata Residence is an example of the latter category of work—a beautifully scenic location with incomparable proximity to Lake Minnetonka, one of the most popular lakes in the “Land of 10,000 Lakes.”

Lake Minnetonka benefits and suffers from its closeness to Minneapolis, just 15 miles away. Many of the humble weekend cottages have fallen victim to teardown and replacement by sprawling, overwrought houses. “The lake has an interesting history,” says Matt, who led the design on the Wayzata house. “There was originally a trolley line that went out to an amusement park out there. Minnesotans would take the trolley out and spend the day. Then they started building small summer cottages along the lake. Nowadays, it’s essentially a suburb of the Twin Cities, and people are building 20,000-square-foot McMansions.”

The current owners already had a house on the 1-acre property, one that had some critical flaws—chief among them were a “crumbling foundation” and recurring flooding in

*This page:* The architects changed the arrival sequence for cars, steering the owners to a new side-entry garage. Now, guests can enjoy the full effect of a well-paced entry into the house and a careful reveal of its sweeping lake views.





the basement, says Matt. At first, the clients were unsure of whether they wanted to renovate the 100-year-old house or rebuild—it had already had a number of middling renovations in the 1980s. Although they sought to improve upon what they had, they were concerned they might lose what they loved about the house if it were completely replaced. Ultimately, says Matt, “there were lots of things with the bones and infrastructure that were not conducive to adding on.” The structural engineer concurred. The team and clients decided to re-envision the house and build anew.

### Seeing Clearly

The biggest sacrifice in tearing down the existing house was its grandfathered location next to the water. Had they held onto the old foundation, the design team could have gotten the house closer to the lake. “Our clients were worried they would not have as good a view in the new house,” Matt says. “But we reassured them we would be able to get them great views—even better views than they had.”

The secret to the team’s superpower? Windows—floor-to-ceiling windows—and lots of them. “Older houses were

*Below:* The new house preserves the owners’ easy access to the outdoors from the master bedroom. A cool morning dip is just steps away.





Above: Gently raised decks place horizon views directly at eye level. Master bedroom, great room, and second-floor guest rooms have dedicated outdoor spaces.

designed from the outside in,” Matt explains. “It’s always amazing to talk with clients coming from older homes—just the ability to bring glass to the floor and to the ceiling is transformative. Those two feet of wall create a very different connectivity to the site. The old house was all punched openings. The new windows really maximize those views. Now light can bounce across surfaces within the house.”

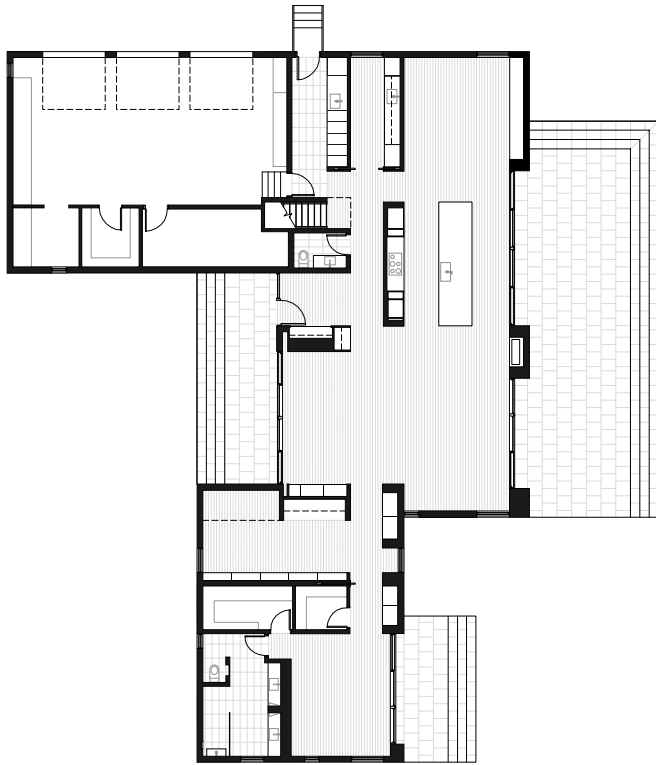
These clients were not novices about the potential of modern design (they own another house in California by Marmol Radziner), but they came to Snow Kreilich with no stylistic agenda—just a programmatic one. Their goal in optimizing this house was to spend half the year in each location. Consequently, the lake house needed the functionality of a fulltime residence, but with the special delights and lightness of being that vacation homes can elicit. The couple wanted the house to feel comfortable for just the two of them, but also absorb the hustle and bustle of returning adult children.

The firm’s response was a self-sufficient and satisfying one-story house, with private guest quarters on a second floor. (Gone was the troublesome, leaky basement, as the new house is built on a slab.) The main floor is largely open, with a central space for the kitchen, living, and dining areas that connects full-on to the views. “The kitchen is now broad face to the lake,” says Matt.

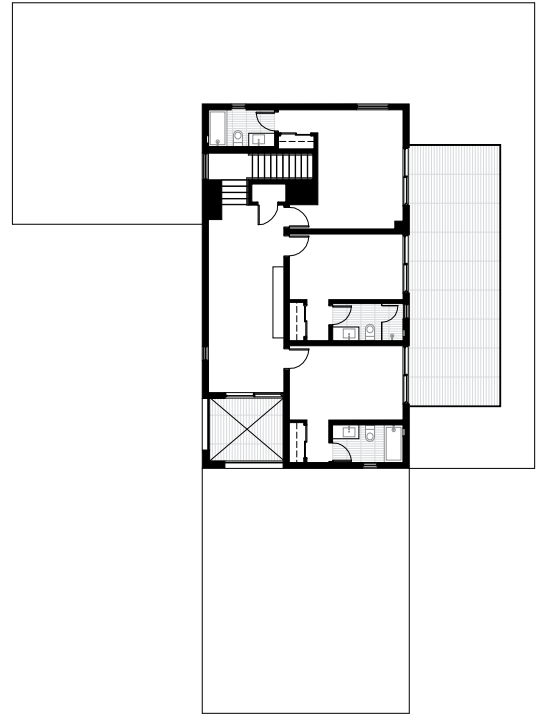
There’s also a smaller alcove carved out of the whole that serves as a protected sitting and TV-watching area for the couple. A small office adjacent to the master provides additional runaway space. Most important, the new master bedroom retains what the husband loved best about the old house: a direct connection to the lake for sunrise sails or a bracing dip in the water.

Another favorite feature of the old house was a broad deck that ran parallel to the water, seeming almost to float above it like an anchored boat. The firm recreated the idea, but with

FLOOR PLAN



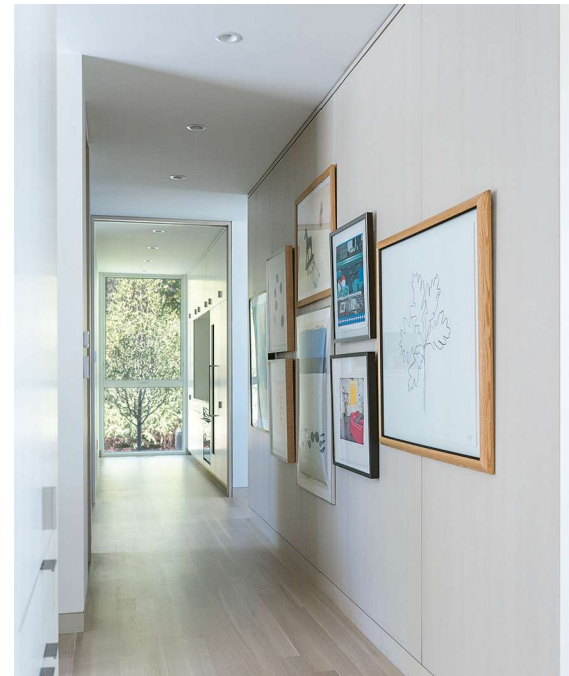
FIRST



SECOND

SITE PLAN





their own finesse in how built elements link to the landscape—crisply, cleanly, perfectly. The main room opens to the biggest expanse of deck, but there’s also a smaller deck that serves just the master.

Guests are treated well on the second floor, too, with three bedrooms and bathrooms, their own hang-out room, an ample deck overlooking the water, and a smaller, private deck that faces the front of the house.

The interiors are spare but carefully considered, designed to serve as a backdrop for the clients’ collections and those stunning views. “The clients had eclectic colorful furniture and art—we didn’t want to compete with that, we wanted those items to stand on their own. We also didn’t want the house to feel like a cabin, dark lake home,” Matt recalls. “The walls are bright, and the wood floors have an almost white-washed tone to them.”

Another challenge when you take away basements and attics is to replace storage capacity. Lakeside life requires lots of gear, as do large-scale entertaining and accommodating guests for extended periods. The firm’s solution was to build thick walls wherever they could. “The whole plan evolved from large storage walls,” says Matt. “They became the organizing elements. If you open up some of these cabinets, they’re incredibly detailed. We measured and tracked down everything they wanted to store and created a place for it.” Mechanicals are in the three-car garage, which also contains a crawl space and storage for larger items.



*This page:* Understated interiors showcase the owners’ colorful collection of art and furniture—and, of course, those lake views.

The architects reoriented the garage, originally located at the front of the house, to the side of the property. There's still a motor court, formed by the back of the garage and the front elevation, where cars may pull in as needed. Family drives around the side of the house, into the garage, and then enters through a mudroom/pantry corridor that flows directly into the kitchen. "It was a really important shift to get the vehicles away from the front of the house," says Matt.

Now the formal entry is a lovely, choreographed affair that builds to the big reveal. Slender but tall windows underline the vertical aspects of the elevation while controlling views through the house. "The entry itself is elevated on a slight deck and it's sheltered by the mass of the second floor," he continues. "The deck and the stairs—the

way they meet the ground—emphasize the lightness and the delicate touch to the landscape. As you climb the steps, you can see through to hints of the lake. Our challenge with this house was to balance its transparency with its openness to the views—its opacity and its privacy."

"We didn't want the house to feel like a cabin, dark lake home."

—Matt Kreilich

The architects considered a number of cladding options, including masonry, which is common along the lake, but they eventually settled on wood. Not just any wood, however. "We thought it would be interesting to do a modern interpretation of the masonry houses. As the design

evolved, though, there was a desire to have it lighter. Then we moved to this wood. It's burnt, brushed, and stained. As you get closer, you can see that the grain stands proud. It's not necessarily a weathered look, but there's an incredible softness to it,"




Above: The architects chose weathered Accoya wood siding, which was "burnt, brushed, and stained." Viewed close up, it mimics the lively shimmer of lake waters.





Matt says. “There’s a quality to lakes—with the light sparkling off the water. The wood is like that. It has a similar reflectivity.”

Such a lovely site is rare even for an AIA Firm of the Year winner, and it proves there’s always something new to learn with each project, each location, and each client. “We’ve done a number of houses on lakes, but this one is unusual,” notes the architect. “We haven’t been right there at the water level before. As you sit on the deck, your eyes are right at the horizon. The effect is, you’re much more engaged with the lake and the landscape.

“You know, when most Minnesotans want to escape the city, they usually go north. We have 10,000 lakes and a lot of choices. But this lake is so close—just a 20-minute drive from downtown—and as you drive out to it, it feels like you’re many miles away.” 

## Wayzata Residence

Wayzata, Minn.

### ARCHITECT:

Matthew Kreilich, FAIA, and Julie Snow, FAIA, principals-in-charge; Kart-Keat Ching, AIA, project architect and project manager; Christina Stark, AIA, designer; Kevin Ellingson, AIA, designer; Snow Kreilich Architects, Minneapolis

**BUILDER:** Welch Forsman Associates, Minneapolis

### INTERIOR DESIGNER:

Martha Dayton Design, Minneapolis

### LANDSCAPE ARCHITECT:

Travis Van Liere Studio, Minneapolis

### STRUCTURAL ENGINEER:

Ericksen Roed & Associates, St. Paul, Minn.

### PROJECT SIZE:

5,500 square feet

### SITE SIZE:

1.15 acres

### CONSTRUCTION COST:

Withheld

### PHOTOGRAPHY:

Paul Crosby Photography (exteriors); Aksel Coruh (interiors)

### KEY PRODUCTS

**WINDOWS:** Loewen

**ROOF WINDOWS:** Velux, Solatube

### CLADDING:

reSAWN Timber Co., Nigiri; Accoya Shou Sugi Ban

**GARAGE DOORS:** Midland Garage Door Mfg. Co., flush panel

**DRYWALL:** National Gypsum Gold Bond

### ENGINEERED LUMBER:

Trus Joist, TimberStrand LSL

### THERMAL/MOISTURE

**BARRIER:** Tyvek

**FIREPLACE:** Ortal

**HARDWARE:** Linnea

**COOKING APPLIANCES:** Wolf

**REFRIGERATOR/  
WINE FRIDGE:** Sub-Zero

**WASHER/DRYER:** LG

**DISHWASHER:** Asko

**KITCHEN FAUCETS:** Dornbracht

**TILE:** Revival Tile, Mercury Mosaics, Heath Ceramics

**LIGHTING:** Juno Lighting

# The Announcement of the Decade

## **Safeguard your project with the Industry Standard**

**Like the Agave Americana, the plant that blooms every ten years, the core set of AIA Contract Documents is updated every ten years. This ensures your design and construction projects are protected in light of changing industry trends and needs.**

Last spring, AIA released the first part of its once-in-a-decade update of certain core agreements including revisions to B105-2017 title changes to better reflect the complexity and risk associated with the specific project, rather than just the type of project.

B105-2017 is now “Standard Short Form of Agreement Between Owner and Architect” to indicate that it is a short form contract, whereas the previous title “for a Small Commercial or Residential Project,” may have suggested that it should be used for a residential project without considering complexity and risk.





Someone providing residential design services could use B101-2017, B104-2017, B105-2017, or several other AIA Contract Documents, depending on the complexity associated with the project.

**Other takeaways of B105-2017 include:**

- The General Conditions are incorporated in the agreement.
- For use on a project of modest size and brief duration.
- It is extremely abbreviated and is formatted more informally than other AIA agreements.
- It is intended for use with A105-2017, Standard Short Form of Agreement Between Owner and Contractor, which it incorporates by reference.

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AIA Document B105™  
Standard Short Form of Agreement Between Owner and Contractor

BETWEEN the \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_ in the year \_\_\_\_\_  
(Name, legal status, address, and telephone number)

(formation)

AIA Contract Documents

# Higher Order

When talented teams stretch to conquer difficult challenges, a special grace ensues.

BY S. CLAIRE CONROY AND CHERYL WEBER







## Hill Country House

WIMBERLEY, TEXAS  
MIRÓ RIVERA ARCHITECTS

**What does it take** to make a good house? Without a doubt, a good architect, a good builder, and a good client are key components. But the houses that rise above the ordinary job-well-done often have a special ingredient—an outstanding site, perhaps, or an unusual program that ignites the team’s creative spark. Hill Country House had all of these and more.

The client came from Miró Rivera’s own backyard, so to speak: She rented office space in the same building as the firm. “She used to say to us, one day

‘I’m going to build a house and I will call you guys,’” recalls Miguel Rivera, FAIA, who’s probably heard this more than a few times in his career. However, not only did she make good on her promise, she greatly expanded the scope of her commission. She came back to the firm with a 46-acre parcel of beautiful hill country property about a 45-minute drive from Austin, Texas, and a vision of building a community of sustainable houses with shared open space. Her house was to be the prototype.

“She wanted something connected to nature, practically off the grid, very low maintenance, and she had a very low budget,” says Miguel. The owner is part of a couple, and both are ordained ministers, so there was also a spiritual element to the program as well. The vision encompassed a place to hold retreats and other gatherings—a public-private building, with a flexible floor plan and plenty of space to convene, indoors and outdoors. “She said to us, ‘Why don’t we make this an example of what people can do?’”

And that's how a spark ignites in an architect's heart. Miguel traveled to the site "more than 100 times" to feed the flames. "We want our buildings to emphasize a connection to the region and the landscape," he explains. "I have no idea what I want to do until I see the site. The site tells me what I need to do." The sprawling land is largely meadow backed by rolling hills. It's those hills that gave rise to the building's undulating roofline, cleaved at the center by the "temple" piece—a 30-foot-high screened porch with steeply pitched roof.

The meager budget dictated a simple palette of basic materials, ones that might construct a warehouse or other industrial building. The agrarian surroundings welcome such a palette, designed to withstand years of hard use and benign neglect, baking in the hot Texas sun. Aluminum siding wraps most portions of the structure—its crisp white color repulsing the heat of summer afternoons and repurposing its energy into an otherworldly glow. The effect, along with the pier-and-beam foundation, makes the building appear to hover above its grassy perch, as if it were both of the earth and some other realm as well. A lack of transitional hardscape from the building to its grounds heightens the illusion.

*Opposite and this page:* White corrugated aluminum siding is a gleaming backdrop for rich, warm cypress and local limestone. *Center, right:* A covered, raised platform off the garage doubles as a stage and handy dog egress.





*Above and above, right:* The gabled screened porch glows like a temple. Three open sides and a 30-foot-tall ceiling usher out the Texas heat.

### Touches of Grace

Cypress wood siding for the porch and limestone for the chimney were important splurges for the budget-conscious building. They lend a homey warmth and richness to the structure, conveying an inviting tone of domesticity. “We think the wood adds an almost Scandinavian feel. Overall, we wanted the house to look sharp, modern, and clean,” says Miguel.

The porch faces south, its slats screening the worst of the sun. “The porch is a big room,” he explains. “It’s ventilated on three sides, and that helps to move the hot air up and to refresh the space.” On the north, the pitched volume continues, morphing into the central living space and then an outdoor deck. If it were pulled apart from the undulating shed-roofed volumes that flank it, the remaining portion would immediately evoke that iconic idea of

house we all conjure in our mind’s eye. Exaggerating the roof’s pitch, though, elevates it—taking it from house to the suggestion of a house of worship. “We were actually working on an Indian

“I have no idea what I want to do until I see the site. The site tells me what I need to do.”

—Miguel Rivera

temple at the same time—the Chinmaya Mission,” Miguel recalls. “Both buildings had a tight budget, and definitely there was a cross-pollination of ideas and some program similarities.”

The white-and-wood theme continues on the inside of the house, where Miguel’s only budget-driven choice

was “sheet rock,” enlivened by pecan flooring. Windows are strategically placed to break the expanses of white with glimpses of fields and woods. They are high enough off the ground to reinforce that hovering feeling, a kind of yogic flying above the landscape. “With windows, we have to think not only of doing something beautiful, but also practical,” he says. “We have to put little windows where the sun is going to hit, and then we can put big windows where it won’t.”

Those basics drive more than just fenestration decisions—they drive the floor plan, too. A yoga/meditation room is oriented so its floor-to-ceiling windows face north and east, on axis with a picturesque hill. It’s a flex space that, along with the exercise room next door, could be used as bedrooms someday, increasing the current bedroom count from two to four.

Sustainability—broadly defined to encompass resource conservation and mutable program functionality—was a top concern for the client and for the firm. Says Miguel, “It’s a custom house for a specific couple, so that makes it more unique. But at the same time, you have to think, ‘they may not live here forever,’ so you have to design it in a way that over the long term can work for another family.”

The house is zoned to reduce energy consumption and makes use of overhangs for shading. Active strategies include an 8kW solar array atop the garage that provides 61% of the home’s power needs; a 5-ton geothermal system for mechanical heating and cooling; a

30,000-gallon rainwater collection system for water needs; and a septic system for waste. Miguel will tell you, though, that the most important move was the siting of the house—and for him, it called for surgical precision.

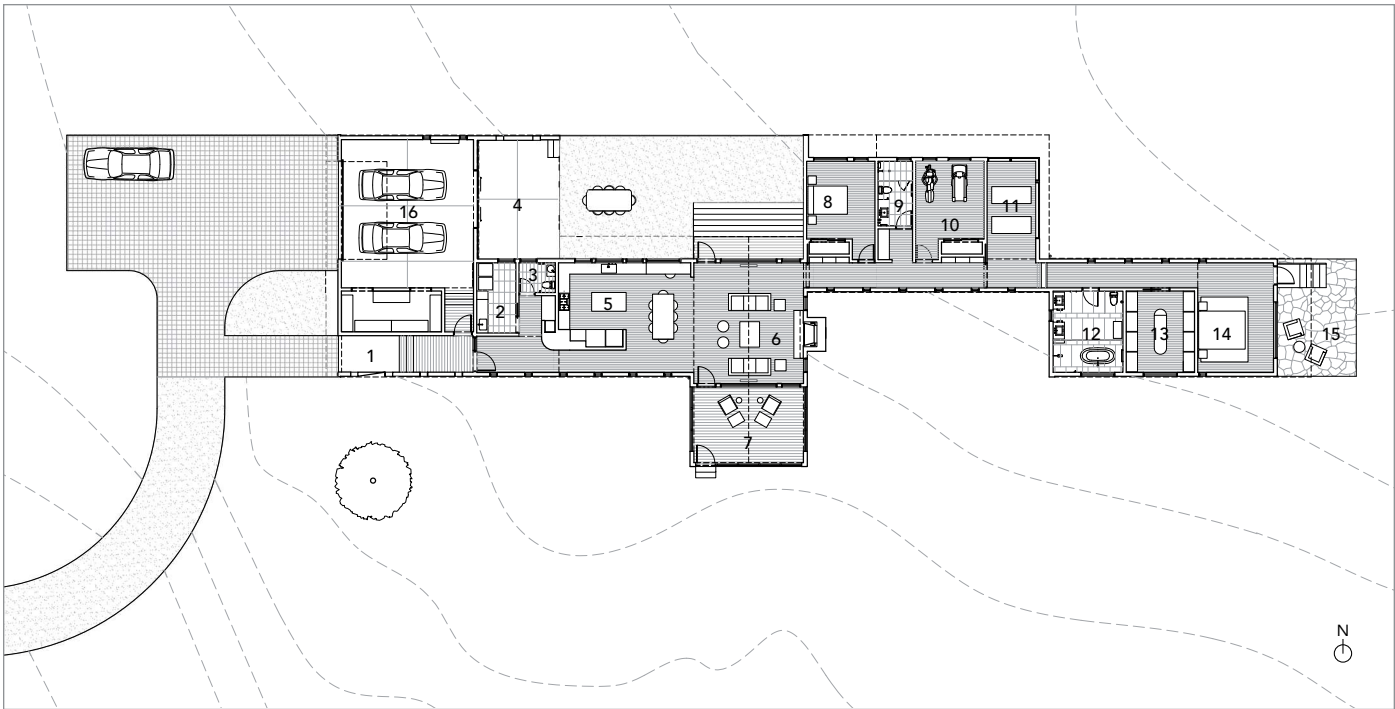
“The big side of the house faces north toward a large field. The screened porch side faces south where we have a lot of trees,” says Miguel. “We weren’t going to just put the house in the middle of the field—we moved it south to benefit more from the shade of the trees. We wanted it close to the trees—but not too close and not too far away. You want to be able to walk outside and get in a hammock. It was very carefully located.”



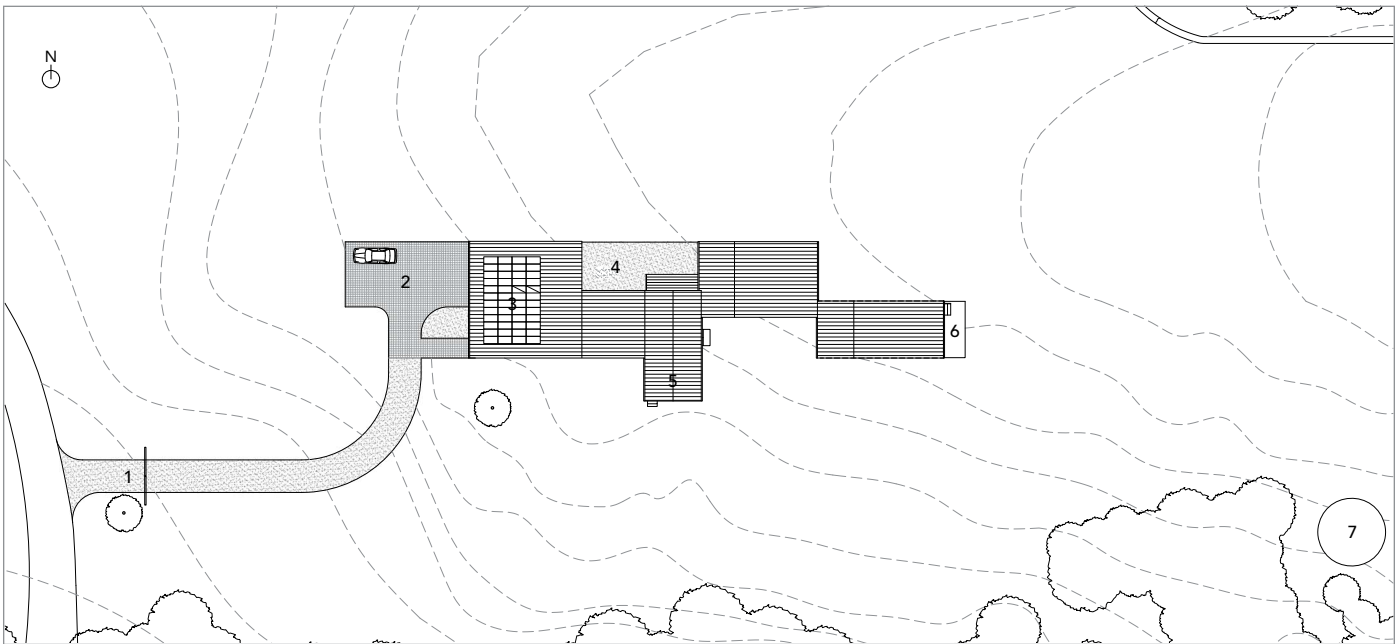
Above: A limestone fireplace surround adds a touch of luxury in the budget-driven project.



Above: The yoga/meditation room has some of the best views in the house, thanks to large window openings facing north and east. A flexible space, it can be converted into an additional bedroom for future owners.

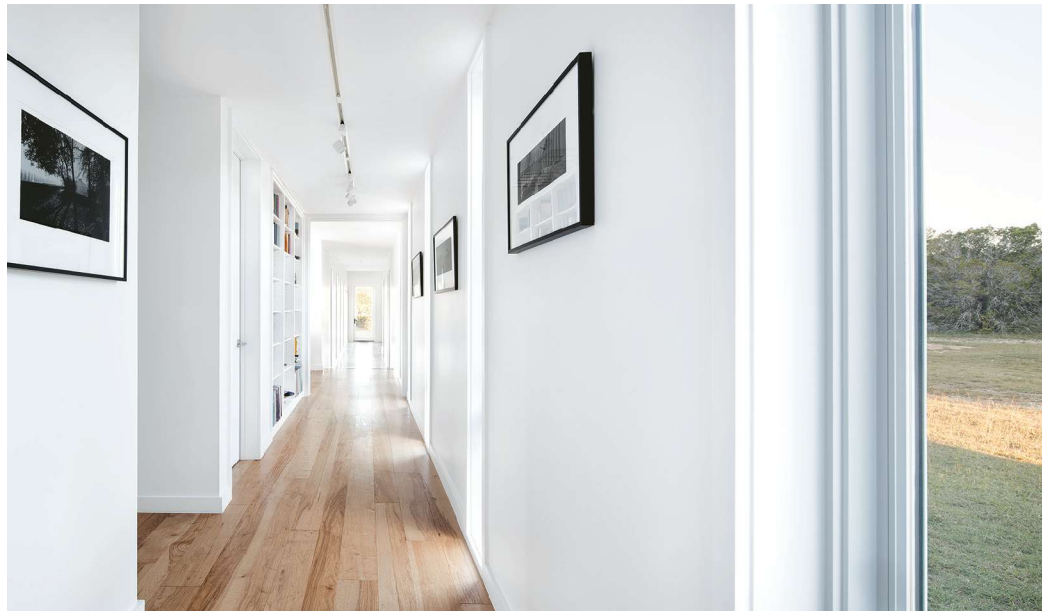


FLOOR PLAN | 1. Entry | 2. Laundry | 3. Powder | 4. Studio/Stage | 5. Kitchen | 6. Living | 7. Screen Porch | 8. Guest Bedroom | 9. Guest Bath  
10. Gym | 11. Meditation | 12. Master Bath | 13. Master Closet | 14. Master Bedroom | 15. Master Patio | 16. Garage/Storage



SITE PLAN | 1. Entry Gate | 2. Auto Court | 3. Solar Array | 4. Studio/Stage | 5. Screen Porch | 6. Patio | 7. Rainwater Cistern





### Dignity on Arrival

There's something else Miguel feels strongly about: A home's entry sequence should treat clients and guests with the same level of dignity and ceremony. He'll not have his clients skulking through cluttered mudrooms and service corridors in their own houses. Here, guests and clients alike approach down a long driveway, guided at night by the glow of that porch beacon. ("It gives you a sense of safety and scale," says Miguel.) They park in the motor court or garage and enter through a wide hallway, clad on all sides like a jewel box.

Once inside the main door, they proceed down a long spine to the central entertaining areas. The interior's sheet rock walls become gallery space for hanging art and shelving for books and sculpture, punctuated along the route by floor-to-ceiling windows that frame views of the natural world. In short, everyone who arrives delights in the best aspects of the home. "It's horrible that in most houses only visitors come in the beautiful way," he says. "Here you enter with the same dignity as the guests; you use the same front door."

*This page:* The arrival sequence is the same for owners and visitors—through a cypress-lined entry corridor and down a long gallery hall to the kitchen and great room.







The open kitchen flows directly into the living room and either to the north deck or the south screened porch. A limestone fireplace hearth and soapstone kitchen counters add measured touches of luxury to the great room. Miguel believes the house shouldn't overpower the lives and objects within it. His goal is a simple backdrop for art, furniture, textiles—elements that can change over time or with the seasons. From the great room, another long spine takes owners and overnight guests to the private realm—a secondary bedroom, the exercise room, yoga room, and then the master bedroom.

The home's outdoor public function areas are still in development, but the firm has laid the preliminary groundwork. The meadow and fields are a blank slate for any kind of gathering, but there's also a covered concrete

platform that extends from the garage toward the lawn and the great room's outdoor steps. Sliding barn doors to the garage allow the platform to be used for performances, with “back-stage” functionality inside the garage. (There's also a ramp and dog door for everyday utility.) It's easy to imagine concerts, lectures, and other events here, or even just a protected terrace for family use.

This is a house that doesn't upstage the life within it; instead, it sets the stage for a myriad of pursuits and experiences. It is certainly a work of architecture when viewed at a distance, but within its embrace, it's all about the humanity it shelters and the landscape it reveals. “The house doesn't need to compete,” says Miguel. “I can't compete with nature—nature will win every time.”—*S. Claire Conroy*

## Hill Country House

Wimberley, Texas

**ARCHITECT:** Miguel Rivera, FAIA, and Juan Miró, FAIA, design partners; Matthew Sturich, RA, project architect/manager; Spencer Cook, Sarah Hafley, Matthew Helveston, Edward Richardson, team members, Miró Rivera Architects, Austin, Texas.

**BUILDER:** Paul Balmuth, PB Fine Construction LLC, Austin

**STRUCTURAL ENGINEER:** Jerry Garcia, PE, Structures, Austin

**LANDSCAPE:** David Mahler, Environmental Survey, Austin

**PROJECT SIZE:** 3,140 square feet (conditioned); 5,100 square feet (total)

**SITE SIZE:** 46.7 acres

**CONSTRUCTION COST:** Withheld

**PHOTOGRAPHY:** Paul Finkel/Piston Design

### KEY PRODUCTS

**WINDOWS:** Kolbe Windows & Doors

**ROOFING:** Berridge, Double Lock Standing Seam

**SIDING:** Atas, Metafor Aluminum Panels

**REFRIGERATOR:** KitchenAid

**COOKTOP/OVENS/DISHWASHER:** Thermador

**VENTILATION:** Best Range Hoods

**WASHER/DRYER:** WHIRLPOOL

**KITCHEN SINK:** Blanco

**DISPOSAL:** InSinkErator

**OTHER SINKS/FAUCETS:** Elkay, Moen, Duravit, Hansgrohe, Victoria+Albert, Kohler, Brasstech

**DOOR HARDWARE:** Omnia, Linnea, Kolbe, C.R. Laurence Co., Sugatsune

**LIGHTING:** Lightolier, Translite, Finelite, Ligman USA, Lithonia, Belfer, Day-O-Lite, Solvanti

**LIGHTING CONTROL:** Lutron

**CEILING FANS:** Modern Fan Co., Big Ass Fans

**TILE:** Ann Sacks, American Tile, Marazzi USA

**PAINT:** Benjamin Moore



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## Tucson Residence

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TUCSON, ARIZ

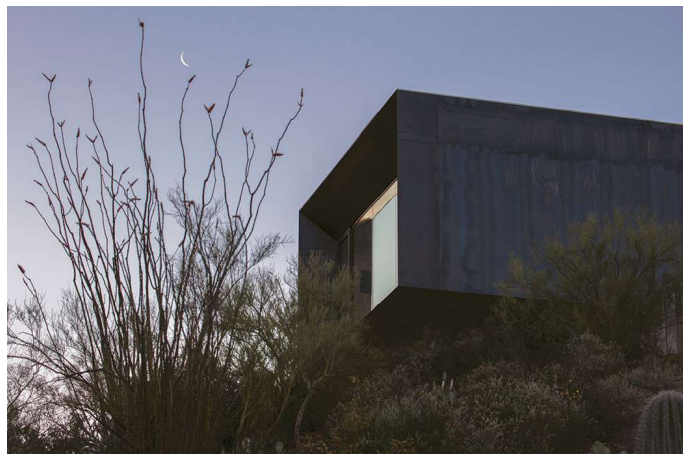
MANCUSI DESIGN AND VICTOR SIDY, AIA

**When architects Victor Sidy** and Nick Mancusi first walked this hillside site with their clients, the word that came to mind was “intimate.” Although it lies just a few miles west of downtown Tucson and within city limits, the land is virtually untouched desert, and a wash that runs down from the Tucson Mountains supports a lush ecosystem of animals and songbirds; saguaro, prickly pear, and cholla cactuses; and desert scrub. “There was an intimacy about the site that we felt was important to touch on in the design of the house,” says Victor.

The two architects first crossed paths at Taliesin, the Frank Lloyd Wright School of Architecture (now the School of Architecture at Taliesin), where Nick was a student and Victor was dean. Nick had just returned to Tucson to start a practice and Victor was finishing his tenure at Taliesin when the clients approached them, seeking an alternative to the typical stucco houses with tile roofs that fill the suburbs of desert



*Above and right:* Steeped in the lessons of Taliesin and Frank Lloyd Wright, the architects designed a house of the hill and not on the hill. A 17-foot cantilever focuses the living room on the panoramic desert view.





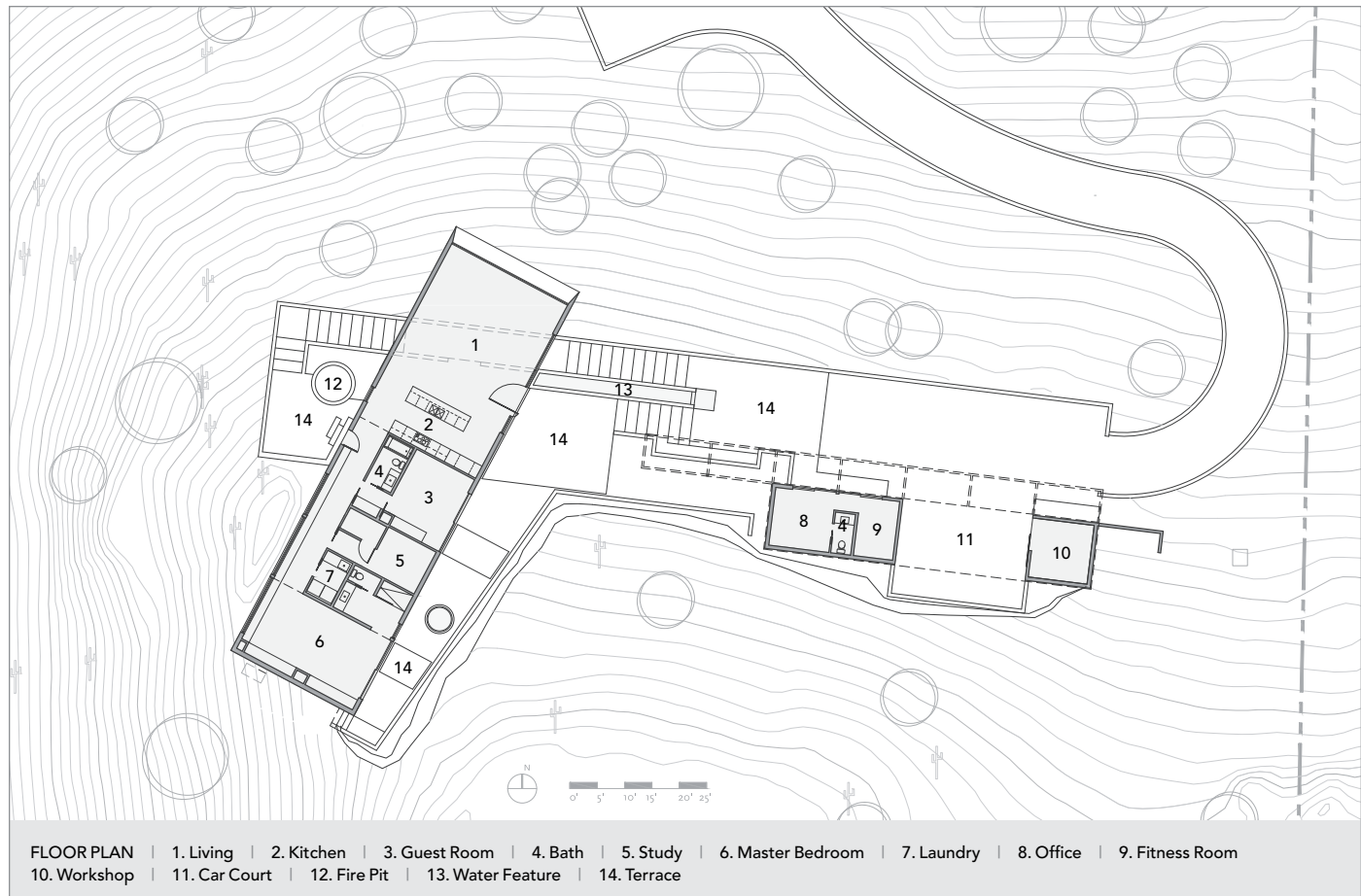
cities. Retired Midwest transplants, the couple wanted something reminiscent of Frank Lloyd Wright. “We engaged them in a dialogue about Wright’s philosophy and began to steer them in a direction that questioned the essence of dwelling and the relationship to the site,” says Nick, “helping them look beyond preconceived notions of home.”

The design they worked out is a two-bedroom home that sits below the crown of a hill, sculpted along the rock contours and canted toward the moun-

tains. Built on pilings cut into the rock, the house reaches into the natural hillside and then soars out over the desert, gazing toward the north. Low in profile and suffused with shifting light, its understated interiors and earthy language of steel and concrete eliminate mundane distractions.

It was always about the view. “Nick and I went to the property with the clients and sat on a part of the hill looking north,” Victor says. “The clients looked at each other and said, this is the spot, the view we want to look at for the rest

of our lives.” That spot is now the neck between the parking area and the main house, a crucial hinge in the overall design. The house’s massing is minimized with a detached carport structure that contains the husband’s workshop on one side and the wife’s psychotherapy office and fitness room on the other. Visitors drive up the hill along the site wall, park, and are treated to the view as they walk toward the house. This arrangement also effectively keeps work and hobbies in one realm and domestic life in another.



### Drama Without Drama

Three months of initial site work culminated in a board-formed-concrete site wall and foundation walls, which add a heavy anchoring element that’s beautiful but was labor-intensive to build. Constructing a site wall—the only part of the project with conventional footings—was the easiest way to minimize cut and fill in this delicate ecosystem. The house itself is doweled directly into the rock, or as builder Page Repp puts it, “The whole structure is epoxied into the mountain.” The bar-shaped spatial sequence moves from the slab-on-grade bedrooms and study to the cantilevered kitchen and living area, which is built with steel beams and B-decking on concrete. The overhang rests on the front site wall, sailing about 17 feet beyond it.

A high floor plate and the natural hill created room for a partial basement/storage area under the main living space and the opportunity to

“We like to add a compositional element to the way everything comes together when the design is simple.”

—Victor Sidy

connect the front and back terraces with an elegant walkway under the house. The basement excavation was the biggest construction challenge, Page says. “Chipping out rock is expensive;

we did it minimally and maintained a tight footprint so the desert stays right up next to the house.” The plywood-formed basement walls are not typical in Arizona, he adds, but “we had an incredible concrete contract that priced out the same as masonry.”

Laying out the structural system on a grid of standard building-material dimensions also helped to pare down the budget. For example, the office, workshop, and carport are each 12 feet deep, and modules divisible by 12 determined their length. This allowed for conventional wood framing and 4x8 sheets of plywood. Likewise, the house is 24 feet wide, and its standard-dimension steelwork eliminated the need for a custom B-deck support system under the concrete flooring.





*This page:* Interiors are kept intentionally simple, with white walls and concrete floors, allowing the desert to command the attention.



Across its terraces and walkways, the house taps the elements of fire, earth, water, air. *Below and bottom:* A fire pit derives from a remnant well on the site, and an array of desert plants cling to the natural hillside. *Opposite:* A runnel pours water into a pool on the open-air terrace, high above the Sonoran Desert.



“The great thing was that the contractor was also an architect, and we had conversations about how to save costs on certain structural elements without sacrificing these dynamic movements,” says Nick. There’s a handy hierarchy at play, too. “The cantilevered living room is the most visible part,” Victor says. “Everything else is subservient to that, but it’s just steel beams running out, and everything is standard sizing. We didn’t need to do a lot of structural gymnastics.” Although, as Page points out, “we had to get scaffolding in to clad the cantilever.”

### Making Music

That modular logic drove the choice and placement of exterior elements, too, but with an imaginative twist. Both musicians—Victor plays classical music, Nick contemporary—they set up a three-four rhythm with the windows and metal cladding. “We like to add a compositional element to the way everything comes together when the design is simple,” Victor says. “And the best way to understand that is its analog with music.” This three-unit-against-four-unit rhythm is especially evident on the west elevation, where the windows—a 12-foot ribbon here, a six-foot module there (multiples of three)—are set into cladding consisting of four-foot-wide, oiled steel panels that will rust gently with age. “The passage of time was something the clients really embraced,” Victor says. “As a psychotherapist, she loved the idea of seeing the building itself age as they grow older.”

There are other lyrical elements, too. Nick and Victor explored how the house might interact, consciously or subconsciously, with earth, fire, water, and air—the four elements. “Earth is a fairly visceral experience when you’re in the hill like that, and wind is typical of that part of the city,” Victor says. An entryway runnel that pours water into a



pool at the lower terrace fulfills the need for water. And as for fire, the remnant masonry foundation of an old well became a pivot point for organizing the house. Now the centerpiece of the rear terrace, it is a fire pit formed from concrete and stone.

Even the house's hardest edges took cues from the organic environment. To make the concrete site wall's vertical expansion joints disappear, the architects used 2x6s to create rhythmic depressions that bounce in and out. "How

do you celebrate the constructability of concrete?" asks Nick. "You don't want a wall that seems monolithic but one that is growing out of the desert. When you look at the desert, it never has a straight, seamed line. We created this beautiful texture that plays with light and the romance of the desert, and the construction method was achieved without being too fussy."

Says Victor, "Our hope was that there would be a resonance between the stairs and that vertical fluting, not

isolated from one another but part of the same material expression."

Ever attuned to its physical surroundings, the interior is a virtual blank canvas with white walls and polished concrete floors. Most of the glass is on the north and east, while the opaque south side plays defense against the persistent sun.

The alchemy between site and structure is in evidence every day. "It was a real joy to correspond with the clients after the house was built and to hear



how delighted they are at twilight,” Victor says. “It’s always an event where the lights gradually turn on inside the house and the sun sets.”

“It’s a house of propositions,” adds Nick. “One can sit in the living room watching hawks soar across the desert, or be in the bedroom looking at layers of rock, or walk from the open-air court either through or under the house to the east terrace and fire pit—the idea being that the architecture helps one experience the beautiful Sonoran Desert in a multitude of unique ways while being sensitive to the desert ecology.”

—Cheryl Weber

## Private Residence

Tucson, Ariz.

**ARCHITECTS:** Nick Mancusi, AIA, Mancusi Design, Scottsdale, Ariz.; and Victor Sidy, AIA, Victor Sidy Architect, Phoenix

**BUILDER:** Page Repp, AIA, Repp + McLain Design and Construction, Tucson

**PROJECT SIZE:** 2,700 square feet

**SITE SIZE:** 4.5 acres

**CONSTRUCTION COST:** \$265 per square foot

**PHOTOGRAPHY:** Bill Timmerman

### KEY PRODUCTS:

**WINDOWS AND SLIDING DOORS:** Western Window Systems

**KITCHEN AND MASTER BATH COUNTERTOPS:** Caesarstone

**KITCHEN APPLIANCES:** Ikea

**CABINETS AND HARDWARE:** Ikea

**KITCHEN FAUCETS:** Hansgrohe

**KITCHEN SINK:** Blanco

**MASTER BATH SINK:** Kohler

**GUEST ROOM SINK:** Ikea

**TOILETS:** Icera

**BATHTUB:** MTI Baths

**MILLWORK:** Pittcon Industries base and ceiling reveals



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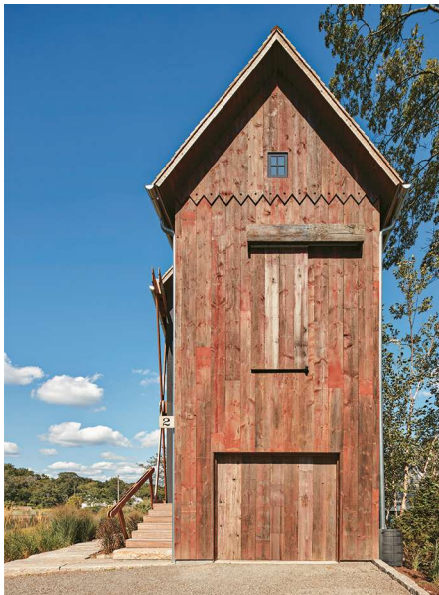


## Beinfeld Residence

ROWAYTON, CONN.  
BEINFELD ARCHITECTURE

**One of the realities** of living in an affluent coastal community is that people fiercely protect their view of the water. If you're a good neighbor, as architect Bruce Beinfeld is, you bend over backward to keep the peace. Built in 2016, his slip of a house on a tidal estuary called Farm Creek became a reality after two years in political limbo. Not only is it a fine case study in compromise, it's a model for how to build an attractive house that absorbs the impact of major weather events.

Bruce had been a resident of Rowayton, a section of Norwalk, for decades when the half-acre lot on a 500-foot-

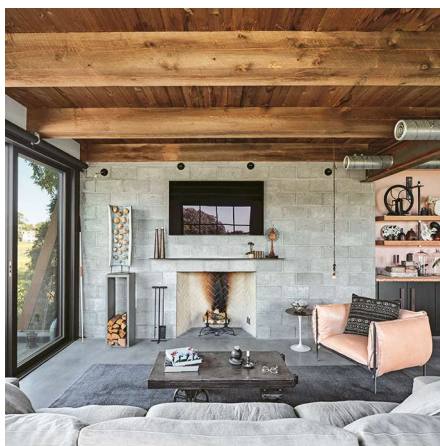


long peninsula came up for sale in 2013. The buildings he designed in the town's commercial center between 1985 and 2010 were well-received, including a market, barber shop, hardware store, several condos along the river, and the building that houses both banks. His role in revitalizing the town helped earn him entry into the AIA College of Fellows in 2010.

This spit of land had a 1949 cottage at the tip and was part of a trolley line that carried passengers over a trestle bridge to an amusement park at Roton Point. Bruce proposed a two-and-a-half-story house on stilts, 17 feet wide, that would sit toward the far end of peninsula, which itself is just fifty feet at its widest point. The backlash was swift and unexpected—driven, Bruce says, by people who did not want to see a house where none had been before, but primarily by a neighbor couple who had adopted the property as part of their backyard. “As far as they were concerned, it was their yard,” he says. “They were very successful in convincing other people that it constituted a major environmental crisis. That was far from the truth, but it was



Opposite: The house, which is 75 feet long, is organized into five 15-foot zones. The ipe X-bracing isn't critical but, says Bruce, the house feels good with it there. Just 12.5 feet wide, the footprint preserves the public's views of the estuary from the road.



*This page:* Ductwork and structure is revealed and employed to define rooms and functions. “There is no applied detail to the house,” says Bruce.

a way of getting people to come out and stop something they and a few others didn’t want to see happen.”

Things got ugly, and long story short, Bruce backed down, offering to sell the land to the Norwalk Land Trust, which owns preserved land around Farm Creek. But then that deal fell through, the neighbor moved to California, and he won approval in 2015 by moving the proposed house as close to the road as setback would allow, preserving the views for others.

It was a relief, of course, but a chapter he’d just as soon forget. “I didn’t like being vilified at all, whether for legitimate reasons or not,” he says. “I thought I’d go out of my way to do as sensitive a design as possible.”

### Paying Homage

If sensitivity to the neighbors drove the house’s design, so did its vulnerable perch in a flood zone. Assuming the area will be subject to rising sea levels and worsening storms, Bruce raised the main part of the house 15 feet above sea level on concrete piers—two feet higher than FEMA requires. The attached ground-level garage was built with reinforced concrete up to the base flood elevation. Vents in the concrete allow floodwaters to enter the garage, equalizing the water pressure so it doesn’t crush the structure from the outside.

Thinking about those neighbors, Bruce devised a tall and slightly whimsical, barn-like house whose narrow front facade—just 12.5 feet across—





maintains cherished views of the estuary from the road. In fact, his substitution of low-growing tidal grasses for an existing tall hedge further opened up the vista.

Seventy-five feet long, the house is organized into five 15-foot-long zones with a 9-by-7.5-foot window centered on each section. The expansive windows should be able to ride out any storms, thanks to roll-up storm shutters hidden behind the cross-bracing that allow the house to be closed up like a box. The oversized ipe X's between the bays play a minor role in bracing for the house and echo the old trolley trestle over the channel (the pilings are all that remain).

“The diagonal braces are sources of wonder because they make everyone think about what they do—people do ask,” he says. “Architecturally, they change the scale of the exterior. I studied a number of different options. Every time I drew the X’s, they felt good.” Intrigued by the apparatuses of old industrial buildings, he also designed the metal connectors that read as decorative accents.

*This page:* Bruce chose materials that would show wear and change over time—copper, salvaged barn woods, weathered steel—to add warmth and character to the house.





Inside, the five zones define a richly layered series of spaces: foyer/stair hall, fir-plywood-wrapped service pod (laundry, powder room, mechanicals, pantry), kitchen, dining room, and living room. Bruce left the structural system of wood framing and mechanical ductwork exposed “to define major rooms rather than using walls and applied molding. There is no applied detail in the house; everything is integral to the base elements that make the house,” he says.

Bruce might be a modernist, but his house is no machine for living. Recycled materials and live finishes lend an organic warmth to the space, his way of infusing it with character. “One of the things people respond to negatively in modern houses is that far too often they have a certain rigidity and lack warmth,” Bruce says. The radiant-heated concrete floors feel warm underfoot, and



*This page:* The master bedroom captures a sweeping view of the water; its reflection echoes in the mirrors of the master vanity.

copper was used liberally on counters and backsplashes. “Every time you put a glass down on the copper it changes, so the finish is constantly evolving and almost has its own moods,” he says.

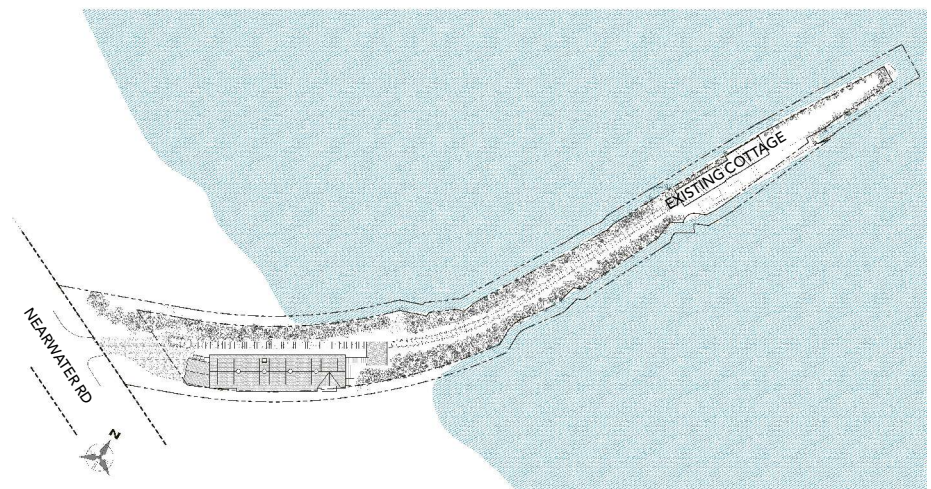
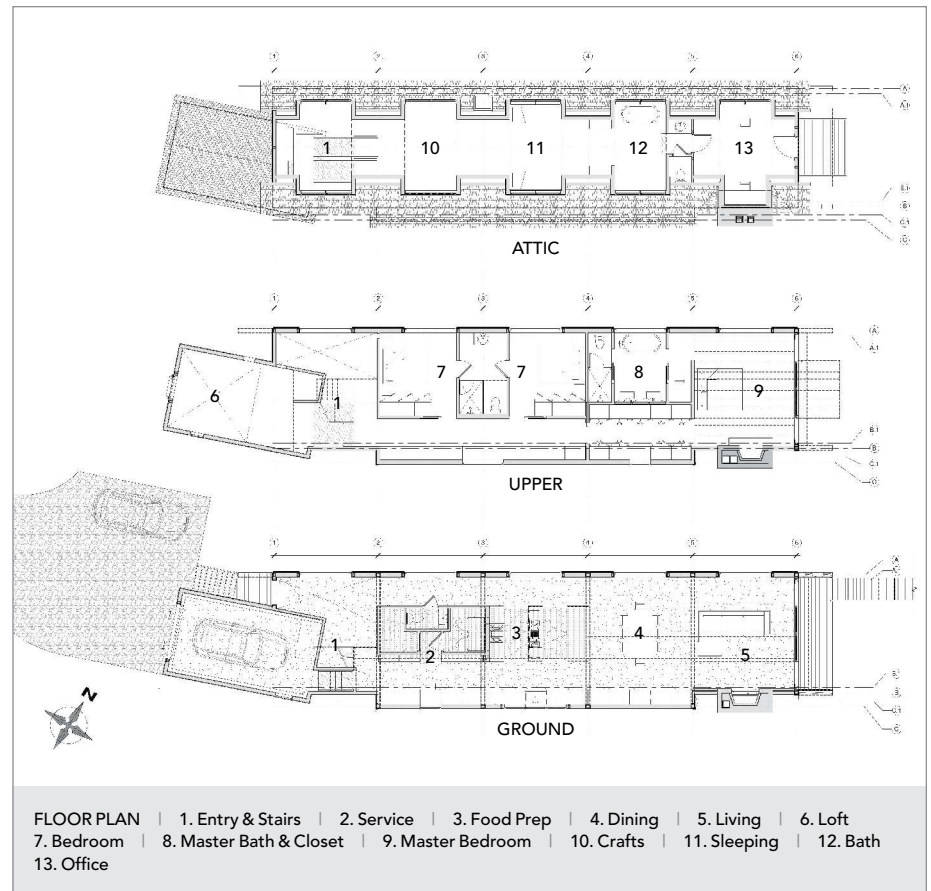
The second story contains three bedrooms, two baths, and an inviting library over garage, while the attic is a cozy studio for his wife, who is a watercolorist, collage artist, and avid collector.

“I thought I’d go out of my way to do as sensitive a design as possible.”

—Bruce Beinfeld

“Attics are always places you want to explore; they contain the mystery of former lives,” the architect says. “That’s where everyone puts stuff they don’t want to throw away but have no place for in their homes and it collects there, year after year. We wanted this space to be endowed with that kind of emotional content.” The flooring is Hungarian wagon board—a highly weathered oak, and on the walls is “brown board,” wood from the interior of old barns. “New England attics are often unfinished spaces, and the old recycled wood evokes those feelings,” he says.

From the outside, the house looks like it could have predated the residential community around it. True to its agrarian form, the exterior is clad in wood from an old Pennsylvania barn, and the front façade retains some of the red paint that’s more than 100 years old. The property’s remnant trolley track was cleverly repurposed, too, as a path from the house to the old cottage, now used as a studio and guest room. The back patio and walkway along the side of the house are made from slabs of salvaged granite curbing from Olde New England Granite.



SITE PLAN





### Natural Resilience

Bruce had a lot of fun with the landscape, too, inspired by a picture of Dutch landscape architect Piet Oudolf's Nantucket garden and design for New York City's High Line. With their salt and drought tolerance and deep root systems, native grasses such as Northwind switchback, big bluestem, and feather reed grass stabilize the creek bank and filter out pollutants such as lawn fertilizers. And each plant variety supports different birds and animals with its seeds, nuts, fruits, and shelter—which makes for lively entertainment.

"One of the great attributes of living on a tidal estuary is that the bird life is very rich," Bruce says. "There are always ducks and osprey, seagulls and egrets, and a great blue heron is out there. They're almost part of the family because you start to recognize specific birds and get to watch them going through their daily rituals of fishing."

Perhaps most important, now that the house is built, the comments have been only positive. "I think a lot of people are very pleased that the house didn't protrude any further into the tidal estuary than it needed to," he says. "I think the house is well-loved in the community."  
—Cheryl Weber



Opposite: Bruce was inspired by New York City's High Line for the landscaping around the house. Top left and above: Interiors are rich and layered, no more so than the studio for Bruce's wife, which evokes an attic full of family curios and collections.

### Beinfeld Residence

Rowayton, Conn.

**ARCHITECT:** Bruce Beinfeld, FAIA, Beinfeld Architecture, Rowayton, Conn.

**BUILDER:** Art Ruffles & Ray Donohue, RDC Construction, Stamford, Conn.

**INTERIOR DESIGNER:** Carol Beinfeld

**LANDSCAPE DESIGNER:** Bruce Beinfeld

**STRUCTURAL ENGINEER:** Jacobson Structures, Deep River, Conn.

**PROJECT SIZE:** 3,500 square feet

**SITE SIZE:** .54 acre

**PHOTOGRAPHY:** Robert Benson

#### KEY PRODUCTS

**CABINETS:** Ultra Craft

**RANGE:** Wolf

**DISHWASHER:** Asko

**REFRIGERATOR:** Sub-Zero

**KITCHEN FAUCETS:** Vola and Watermarks

**TOILETS:** DXV

**FRONT DOOR HARDWARE:** Tom Kundig collection

**DOOR HARDWARE:** Emtek

**WOOD STOVE:** Wittus

**WINDOW WALL SYSTEMS:** LaCantina Doors

# Designer's Touch



1



2



3



4

## 1. MOD SQUAD

The modular Stratos line from Hastings mixes storage components in 35 matte or glossy finishes and three wood laminate options to create a high customizable bathroom vanity.

[Hastingstilebath.com](http://Hastingstilebath.com)

Circle 101 on inquiry card.

## 2. THIN LINES

Designer Konstantin Grcic's Val suite for Laufen continues its expansion. Pieces, formed from the maker's proprietary SaphirKeramik material, achieve very thin edges and gentle curves.

[Us.laufen.com](http://Us.laufen.com)

Circle 102 on inquiry card.

## 3. URBAN OASIS

Kate Battaglia directs NEMO Tile + Stone's creatives, applying her experience at Gensler to collections such as Urban. The porcelain tile comes in 16 weathered finishes and bright hues.

[Nemotile.com](http://Nemotile.com)

Circle 103 on inquiry card.

## 4. FITTINGLY COPPER

Watermark's Elan Vital faucet gains a copper finish, adding to the myriad finish options available for the industrial modern line of plumbing from the Susan Fredman Design Group.

[Watermark-designs.com](http://Watermark-designs.com)

Circle 104 on inquiry card.



5



6

#### 5. HEAVY DUTY

Loewen's Timber Curtain Wall system supports glazing up to triple pane. Pillars and beams are clear Doug Fir.

[Loewen.com](http://Loewen.com)

Circle 105 on inquiry card.

#### 6. CONTINENTAL CUISINE

Italian maker ILVE now offers a Pro Series range. The 48-inch model holds double ovens, removable griddle, and warming drawer.

[Ilveappliances.com](http://Ilveappliances.com)

Circle 106 on inquiry card.



7



8

#### 7. HEART OF STONE

Stone Forest's Verge vanity system mixes and matches knurled fittings, stone sinks, wood cabinets, and steel or wood shelving.

[Stoneforest.com](http://Stoneforest.com)

Circle 107 on inquiry card.

#### 8. RAIN MAN

Taking cues from the wellness theories, designer Michael Neumayr's Rainmoon shower head aims for an immersive experience in water and light.

[Dornbracht.com](http://Dornbracht.com)

Circle 108 on inquiry card.



9

#### 9. HIP SQUARES

Kallista's new Grid faucet and Cube handles are inspired by the minimalist De Stijl movement. The faucet's tight tolerances are executed with 3D printing.

[Kallista.com](http://Kallista.com)

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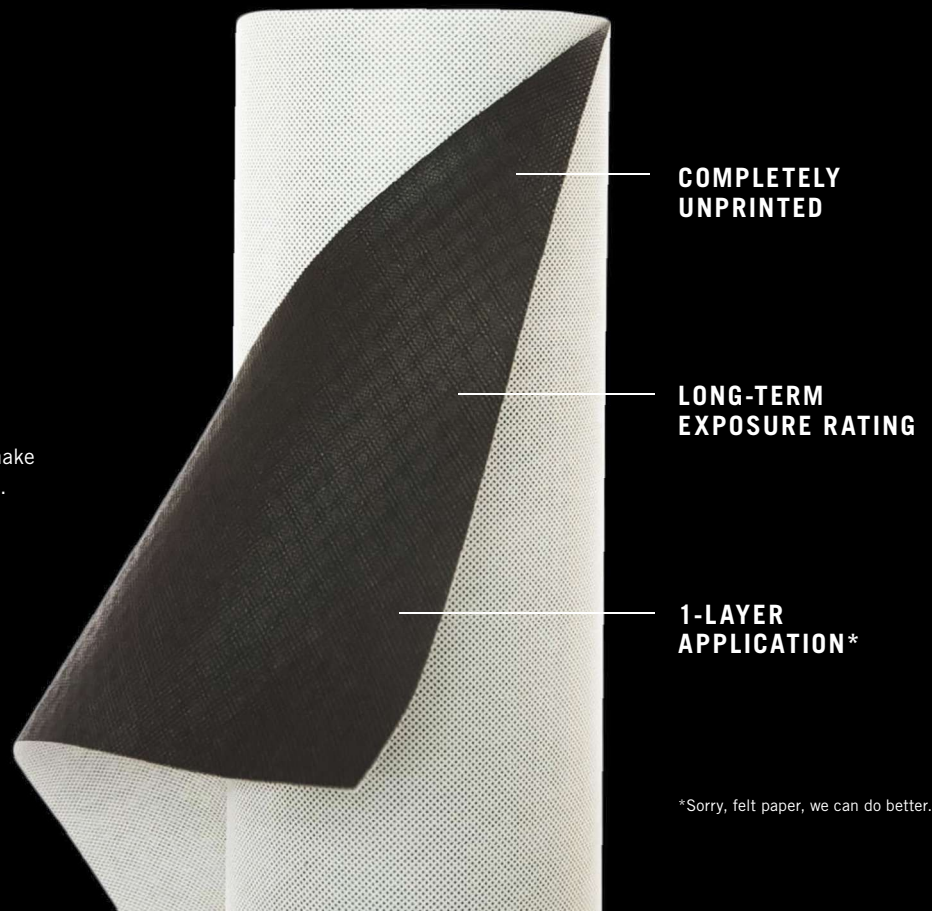
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PRODUCT SHOWCASE

## Study in Steel

TIGHE ARCHITECTURE  
PROJECT LOCATION:  
SANTA BARBARA, CALIF.

Santa Barbara's Riviera neighborhood hugs a hillside above the heart of town; its name derives from its resemblance to the Mediterranean coast. Elevation keeps the area generally clear of the fog line, preserving breathtaking views of the Pacific Ocean, Channel Islands, and mountains. Here, on a precipitous site, Patrick Tighe, FAIA, has designed the Las Alturas Residence, scheduled for completion this summer.

Inspiration came from the Case Study houses, famous for integrating house and landscape in striking ways. "One side of the house has a full panoramic ocean view, and the other side looks out to the mountains," says Patrick. "It's a relatively modest house for the area—just one-story and under 3,000 square feet—with a simple, open floor plan. We're using steel as the primary building material. Inside, it's all exposed and expressed steel beams. There's this wonderful layering of structure."

Materials are cool and "industrial"—poured concrete floors and walls of glass accompany the copious steel. For a touch of warmth, the steel has a color wash and ceilings are dropped over portions of the living room and kitchen.

For this site, it was just as important to pace the stunning views as it was to showcase them. So, arrival is through a compressed space and a large blue steel



pivot door before revealing and opening to the living room's sweeping panorama. A lap pool is tucked away from the view and borrows filtered sight lines of the ocean through the house.

With just two bedrooms and two baths, the house is not ambitious in size—the scope, however, is everything. Says Patrick, "The owners here wanted to be respectful of this magnificent site." And that was the true mission of the Case Study houses. —S. Claire Conroy



Project: Las Alturas Residence; architect: Patrick Tighe, FAIA, Tighe Architecture, Los Angeles.  
Drawings: Tighe Architecture



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