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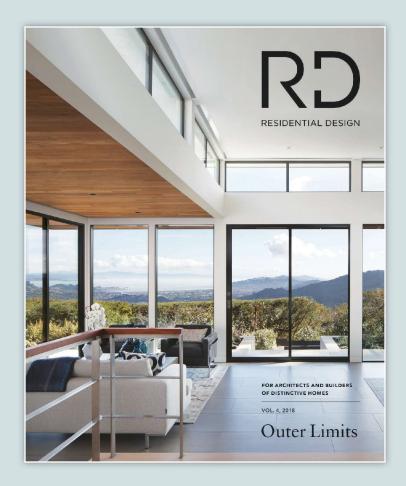
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 Joeb Moore & Partners Architects
 cultivates a modern barn house.





On the Cover: Kentfield Residence by ODS Architecture. Photo: Paul Dyer Photography



Welcome to *Residential Design* magazine. We are the only national professional publication devoted to residential architects and custom builders. We're dedicated to providing you with expert insight and substantive information on high-end residential design and construction.

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PUBLISHED BY

SOLA GROUP

SOLA Group, Inc. 1880 Oak Ave., Suite 350 Evanston, IL 60201 847.920.9513

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SubscriptionsFor subscription information and address changes, write to:

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Seize the Day



It is the best of times for residential architects and custom builders—so much opportunity abounds to do compelling work. But it's also the worst of times when it comes to getting that work done properly. Not since the last boom have I heard so many architects and builders complain about finishing the projects they have underway or breaking ground on the backlog they have waiting.

Subs are the weakest link right now, or so say the custom builders. Even the ones they've depended upon for years are stretched to the point of breaking. In Atlanta, where I live, there has never been enough of a true custom market for subcontractors dedicated to the specialty. Therefore, custom builders compete for the same pool of trade talent as remodelers, production builders, and even some commercial builders—all of whom are slammed right now.

Take concrete, for example. Wyatt Anderson, owner of Post + Beam Builders here in Atlanta, has a tale of woe about concrete that's really an allegory about current market conditions. "Part of the problem is how long it takes for subs to price a complex, architect-designed house," he says. "I called a concrete guy I've worked with for years to bid a custom project for me. He said, 'I have 100 Pulte Homes foundations to put in, and they're just boxes.' He told me, 'It takes us so much time to bid your job, it's just not worth it."

In cases like these, Wyatt has to move down the list to a smaller sub, who will inevitably come in more expensive than a bigger business with economies of scale; and that portion of the job may take longer to complete as well. These are difficult things to explain to your client, especially when they steamroll from all aspects of the project and all corners of the trades.

Another problem we're seeing is subs jumping off projects under construction to sign onto more lucrative jobs. Sometimes this happens overtly (they just quit the job); sometimes it happens more slyly (they simply never return to complete callback items). Another common scenario is the good sub who's hired inferior labor to meet the increased demand. Call it "the good sub gone bad." You're glad to get them on your project, until you see a bunch of wavy trimwork aligning with your major focal points. Ouch.

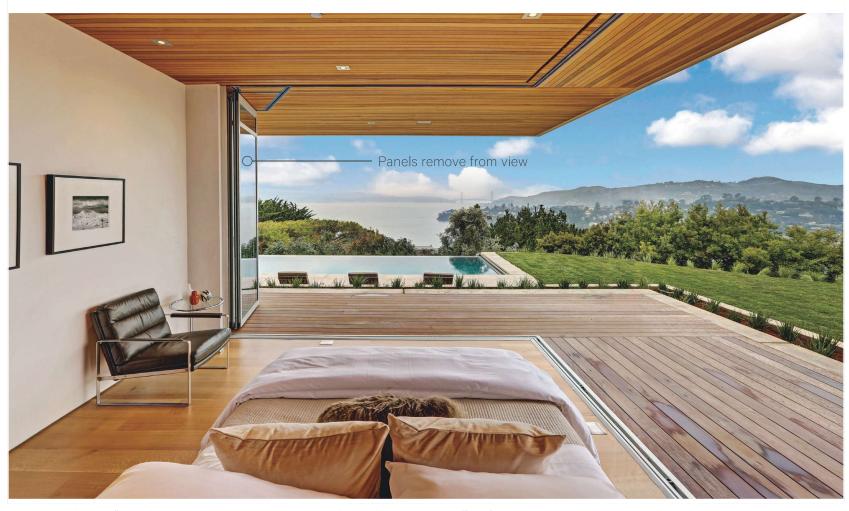
For the most part, everyone is trying to juggle the bounty of work and get it done well. Still, quality can and does suffer. And it isn't just the builders and subs who are taxed to the max. Architects, too, are finding it challenging to take a project from good all the way to great. To do so takes extra time, the kind of magic creative hours that are rarely compensated—latenight visits to the home office, a weekend trip to the firm, or even an excursion to a museum or an inspiring building.

It feels impossible, but now is the moment to strive for excellence. It is indeed the best of times to do your best work. Don't let the problems stand in your way. Stay creative; stay healthy; seize the day.

S. Claire Conroy Editor-in-Chief

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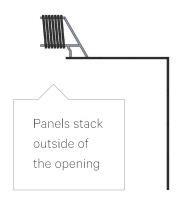
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Staging Interventions

MOSKOW LINN ARCHITECTS **BOSTON**

It's notable when a marriage lasts more than 20 years, but a residential architecture firm not powered by the entanglements and synergies of a married couple? It's unusual, to say the least. Small firms driven by two principals tend to disband and reassemble with others (or as sole practitioners) during the typical lifespan of practice. But Robert Linn, AIA, and Keith Moskow, FAIA, are still going strong with Moskow Linn Architects, 21 years after Linn joined Moskow's young Boston firm.

Their enthusiasm for the work remains unchecked, and like a simpatico married couple who really like one another, they finish each other's sentences and bound off each other's ideas and thoughts. "We're interchangeable," Keith jokes. "We're not your typical uptight architects."

What keeps this union fresh lies in the variety of interests the architects share, and their love of creative tangents that keep the five-person office challenged. The mainstay of the firm is residential work—a mix of "urban interventions" and weekend homes on the Cape—but there's always some other project going on the side as well.

From the firm's inception, the partners have pursued conceptual design competitions as a means of sharpening their skills. They've enjoyed the research aspect and the creative charge such projects brought to the firm culture, even if they never saw a hammer or a nail.

And yet, a number actually have been built—to critical acclaim. The







Clockwise from top: Orleans House emphasizes views inside and out; the firm's 9/11 Memorial at Logan Airport glows from within; principals Keith Moskow and Robert Linn keep their practice fresh with creative "interventions."

firm's winning design for Massport's 9/11 Memorial at Logan Airport is a beautiful, resonant beacon. And "Ice Chimes," a pavilion the firm was asked to conceive for Boston's Rose Kennedy Greenway Conservancy, is a clever sound sculpture. Intended to lure visitors to the Conservancy's parks and gardens during the winter, it creates icicles that chime as they melt. After a year in place, the piece has since moved to Keith's alma mater, Dartmouth College.

More of these urban intervention projects are in the flat files than on building sites, however, which has caused some soul searching at the firm. "Eventually, so much paper architecture becomes unfulfilling," says Keith. One





Clockwise from left: Swamp Hut, a low-tech retreat for the architects' families, inspired the firm's Studio North program. Half Glass House is a modern twist on a Cape Cod Shingle house.

answer has been to compile and author a series of books on architecture-about houses in Martha's Vineyard, architectural follies, and sustainable design. Architecture committed to paper in a book is perhaps more durable than "paper architecture."

At a certain point, though, the firm began to yearn for more architectural "explorations" that result in built work, and they decided to take matters into their own hands. "We ended up finding fewer competitions that piqued our interest, so we started to create our own projects," says Keith.

Swamp Thing

The first sui generis project was Swamp Hut in 2008. The template derived from a number of ideas the partners had been kicking around for years—for rescue housing, resort housing—a kit of building parts that would rest lightly on the land. The site was a swampy 10 acres in Newton, Mass., of which only 1/8th of an acre was buildable. The land, which

belonged to Keith and his siblings, was not accessible by vehicle, so the partners had to carry materials in by hand.

Three months and many small injuries later, the project was complete. Four teepee-like "huts" appeared atop a platform—two huts were for sleeping, one was for bathing, and one open-air hut served as dining pavilion. It was the perfect pared-down retreat for the architects and their families—elemental, for sure, but uplifting in its immersion in nature's simple pleasures. It won a host of design awards and captured the imagination of the mainstream press.

Best of all, it brought mind and hand together for the firm—design and build. Yes, the Swamp Hut project is itself a kind of architectural folly, like the ones the partners wrote about in their "Contemporary Follies" book for Monticello Press. But it also serves a tangible purpose—it's folly and function at the same time.

The experience of designing and building the huts was a powerful one for the partners—especially the intense focus on one project and the physical remove from a conventional office setting. Additionally, it was useful in raising the national profile of the small New England firm.

Keith and Robert were hooked. They wanted to design and build more of these creative projects, but the model was unsustainable—they had self-funded the huts, something they could not keep doing. What's more, they wanted to share the experience with others. "The process is like architectural improv,"





says Robert. "Doing it ourselves took some of the mystery and fear out of the construction process for us. We gained the confidence that, by hook or by crook, things will work out. It's given us a greater maturity about construction." This was something, they thought, all young architects might find beneficial.

Northern Experience

With the goal of streamlining the Swamp Hut experience and opening it up to others, the partners decided to start a "school." They would charge just enough to cover supplies and some tasty catered meals for the week-long program. The venue was a 100-plus acre farm in Vermont, which suggested the name for the initiative, "Studio North."

Studio North was not accredited, and the partners had no backchannel supply of students from architecture schools; they just sent out some brochures and applications, and made a few calls to architect friends. Miraculously, it worked.

"We had five people show up the first year, even with no track record," Keith recalls. "We commend them for their leap of faith. They came from all over—Virginia, Minnesota, North Dakota, New Hampshire, and Rhode Island—and took a bus up north with us."

As it turns out, there are plenty of architecture school students who need and want a built project in their portfolio. The example of Swamp Hut and its accolades lent the program an air of legitimacy, and the application process is a fairly breezy affair.

"We're not terribly exclusive," says Robert. "We try to make sure there's some knowledge or interest in architecture. Most of them have not had much construction experience. And the vast majority are seeking to understand how design thinking can come together in construction. All wanted to see something actualized. Quite a few had never held





a hammer before." Quips Keith, "They learn pretty quickly from digging foundation holes that's why you stay in school."

Studio North's first effort in 2011 yielded Chicken Chapel, "a home for a growing flock of barnyard fowl."
Other farm outbuildings followed in subsequent years: Rolling Pig Pen, Birch Pavilion, Consumable Sugar Shack, Woodland Retreat, Viewing Structure, and last year's Mobile Sauna.

Individually, the projects garnered some encouraging press, but the better magic happened with the partners' thought to bundle them and submit them as a collection of "Seven Rural Interventions" to awards programs. They won a bunch of them—from the Boston Society of Architects, AIA Vermont, and others.

Urban Renewal

Now the program is at a crossroads. The seven-year itch has hit, and the partners are looking to reinvent the studio, preferably in a less remote environment. "Seven is kind of a biblical number," says Keith. "We've established the kit of parts for the program. We've done it a number of times and sort of have it nailed."

"So that's the time to stretch it," Robert says, completing his partner's thought. "We've determined we need to rethink this," Keith continues.

The firm has its eyes on MASS MoCA—the Massachusetts Museum





Clockwise from top left: Studio North's award-winning portfolio includes Woodland Retreat, Consumable Sugar Shack, Chicken Chapel, and Viewing Structure.

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Photo: Eric Roth





Clockwise from top left: At either end of Fresh Pond Reservation in Cambridge lie Red House and White House, two custom homes by Moskow Linn. Robert's own home, White House flips the typical floor plan to capture views from living areas placed on the second floor.

of Contemporary Art in North Adams, Mass. "What this museum has done is revitalize a town that was in need of revitalization. We want to add a student project to North Adams. Our vision is for a new 'Studio North Adams' that mixes urban and rural aspects," says Keith. The partners are writing letters and making phone calls again. Given their track record, it's hard to imagine anyone would say no.

In the meantime, Studio North is taking a hiatus this year. And that's OK, because the firm has plenty of projects in the works that actually promise to pay the bills. They're most excited about an affordable, green development called the Hillside Center for Sustainable Living in Newburyport, Mass. The scope is

ambitious—48 units of housing, shared common space, and community gardens, all intended to operate at net-zero. The site is a brownfield contaminated by coal ash and years of use as a salvage yard. Cleanup has finished and design development is underway.

White House, Red House

The counterpoint of urban and rural work has also played out in the firm's bread-and-butter practice of single-family residential. Robert has recently completed an urban house for himself and his family on a busy street in Cambridge, Mass. Dubbed the White House, it's just a stone's throw from a house the firm designed for a client several years back, called the Red House.

Both houses back up to Fresh Pond Reservation, a wildlife sanctuary, green space, and reservoir for the city of Cambridge.

Robert flipped the typical plan to take advantage of the scenic views and to insulate bedrooms from street noise. "The living space is on the upper level and bedrooms are on the lower floor. The land slopes away, so the bedrooms are actually bermed into the hill. Triple-glazed European windows help isolate sound and make the house perform better."

Just three years old, the house has attracted coverage in the media and lots of attention on the street. "It's such a busy road, the house has high visibility. We did give it many of the characteristics of existing houses on the street but with a modern take. We love it there and feel like we have the best house in Cambridge," he says.

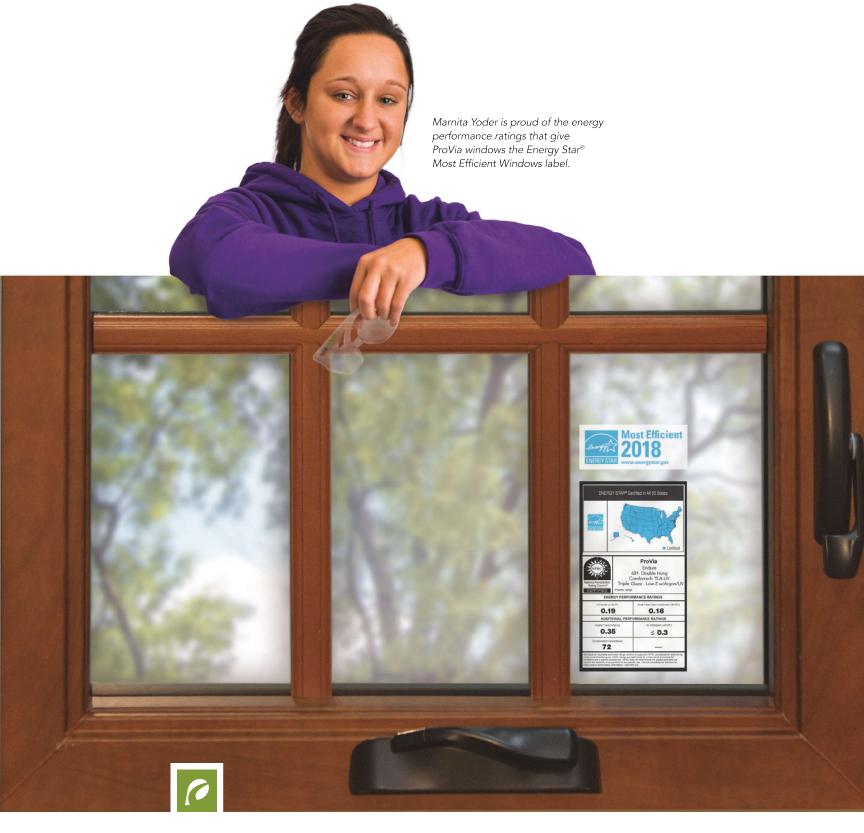
Roughly around the same time, the firm completed a weekend house for a client in Orleans, a seaside town on Cape Cod. It, too, is a modern take on the vernacular houses in the area. Fitting in and honoring the buildings already in place is important to the firm. Says Robert, "Like most architects, we're really interested in building something that feels right on its site. Wherever the project is, we want to understand what the constraints and opportunities are, and then design something contextual that elevates that context.

"On Martha's Vineyard, for instance, it's about the long views as you move through the progression from the car to the bedroom. On more urban projects, the major concern is about scale. Underlining both is the theme of energy efficiency, high-quality envelopes, and making the buildings beautiful and functional at the same time."

"We don't do McMansions," Keith adds. "These are our interpretations of what a house should look like in America."—S. Claire Conroy



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Another Wave Coming

POST + BEAM BUILDERS ATLANTA



Above: Ryan Howard and Wyatt Anderson, partners in Atlanta's Post + Beam Builders.

When the recession hit the homebuilding industry in the Atlanta area, it hit hard. The region is, in large part, driven by speculative building geared toward the C-suite corporate relocation market. Unfortunately, builders involved in speculative housing were most vulnerable to the housing bust, corporate hiring freezes, tightening bank credit, and subs' imploding businesses. Younger builders were most at risk, without projects already under construction, significant cash reserves, or a deep bench of former customers who might toss them a remodeling or repair job. Quite a few of these builders went under and, even when the economy rebounded, many never made it back.

These are some of the reasons why the custom builders you see thriving during this latest housing boom are in their 50s—and even older. They are the survivors. They had been through recessions before, and they knew how to hunker down and keep going. They may have used up their retirement funds or mortgaged their houses, but they're still in business. Now, they're poised to seize

the day, and they have the expertise and relationships to make it happen. Indeed, they're currently doing some of the best work of their lives.

In Atlanta's latest boom, the experienced survivors are certainly represented, but they've been joined by a host of carpetbaggers with dubious credentials who are flipping older houses in good neighborhoods and building speculative homes from internet plans. Lots of expensive, mediocre houses are cropping up everywhere. Tight inventory means these houses are selling well, despite their shortcomings.

This is the market Wyatt Anderson and Ryan Howard are facing with their custom building company, called Post + Beam Builders. While everyone else is rushing for the high-end traditional custom job or the easy money quickbuild spec, they're cultivating a more rarified niche: They're specializing in architect-designed modern houses. The other unusual aspect of their company is they're young builders, both under 40, with solid, relevant credentials in the building industry — and they are also survivors, who've made it through the last recession stronger and more entrepreneurial than when they started.

Inside the Box

At this summer's Atlanta modern homes tour, an annual event that reaches from the city's intown and close-in suburbs all the way to Asheville, N.C., Post + Beam's Split Box House for architect David Goldschmidt, AIA, was a showstopper. It has a number of elements rarely seen in the largely traditional town—chief among them a flat, green roof and cementitious rainscreen siding. The house itself is two separate bars—one long and one short—with another box placed atop them like a bridge, all the better to span a steeply sloped site with a constant stream of runoff water from the street above. The house is striking and architecturally rigorous, unlike the typical modern houses Atlanta favors at the moment.

Split Box House is David's own family home. He's a senior associate at Lord Aeck Sargent, and has worked at Perkins + Will, KPF, and Dattner in the past. He's also principal of his own firm, DiG Architects, specializing in commercial and residential design. It says quite a lot that he chose Post + Beam to build his house. Despite the vote of confidence, it was still a bit intimidating for the young company.



Above: DiG Architects' Split Box House uses clever geometry to negotiate Atlanta's steep topography.



Above: Post + Beam got its big break building for West Architecture Studio. Randolph House occupies a tight urban site.

"David and his wife are very nice, but I was definitely nervous about the project," says Wyatt. "But I've been fortunate to work with some prominent architects, and I just get along with them. It must be my personality." The cherubic 39-year-old jokes, but he does have an affable, easygoing attitude that inspires comfort. He also has the experience to back it up. He comes from a family of builders, and he has a master's degree in building construction from Georgia Tech.

Wyatt pursued the degree during the housing downturn in Atlanta in 2008, after already working for several years in leadership for production builder John Wieland Homes. When the market began to rebound, he signed on with local high-end design/builder Cablik Enterprises as vice president of construction.

He met business partner Ryan Howard at Georgia Tech and later worked with him at Cablik. Ryan has a degree in architecture from Lehigh University and the same master's in construction that Wyatt has. He was a project development manager at Cablik, which builds speculative houses in addition to its custom commissions.

At present, the company builds only one or two houses at a time, Wyatt working full time and Ryan part time, while he keeps his day job for a construction materials supplier. "We are certainly not the biggest builders," says Wyatt. "We only take on what we can handle, because—especially with modern houses—you have to be there and be completely focused on the job."

CA Equals QA

"Most of Atlanta's new modern houses are very weak. I'd say 7 out of 10 are not successful," Ryan comments. Wyatt has a theory about why: "I feel strongly that for a modern house to come out well, it needs a healthy budget, a committed client, and access to the architect through the entire construction process. The majority of these houses have none of those elements." David's accessibility and willingness to improvise on site were key to the success of Split Box House. "He was always willing to meet with me when I had a question," says Wyatt.

For example, Wyatt had never installed a full rainscreen system before, and he certainly hadn't done one with the precise reveals and detailing that David asked for. "The rainscreen was what most impressed people on the tour," says Wyatt. "I had done a smaller one previously, but nothing like this one. It was a learning experience to figure out which materials to use and then how to apply them. Those panels were the toughest part. Every reveal lines up with a window or door. But the panels are all prefabricated and you can't cut them."

Still, nothing was as challenging as the site itself. Atlanta is in the high Piedmont of the Blue Ridge Mountains, so there are few level lots. The footprint for David's house was some 15 feet down from the street, and continued to drop even farther toward the back of the nearly acre-sized

lot. "David's house is basically sitting in a hole. And we had a ton of rain during construction," Wyatt recalls. "We built a temporary driveway at one point, but it didn't last. And then there was the traffic on the street. It was jammed in the morning and jammed in the evening. We had to hire police to hold traffic for truck deliveries. It is the most difficult site I've had to deal with."

You'd never know it by looking at the result. And, when you're running a young company, every difficult project is a lesson that can be applied to the next job.

Ryan recently learned his own major lessons about executing demanding details—ones he designed himself. He's just completed a new house for his own family. It's in a hot, close-in area full of speculative teardown projects and whole-house renovations. His is a new build behind a teardown, which his family lived in during the construction.

Ryan not only designed the new traditional-style house himself, he also installed most of the trim work on the 4,800-square-foot house. "It nearly killed me," he says. "We've gotten a lot of compliments from experienced subs. But it was the scariest thing I've done in my life."

Says Wyatt, "Ryan is an excellent carpenter, but we've worked on so many modern houses lately, you forget how much effort goes into millwork on a traditional home." Whew. What doesn't kill you makes you a better, smarter builder. Right?

Now, it's time for a breather. Ryan gets to kick back and enjoy his new house with his family, and Wyatt is taking his wife on a long vacation abroad. "We've been working so hard for so long, it's time to take a little break," says Wyatt. "Things are so busy now, we're confident the work will still be there when we get back. There's another wave coming."

—S. Claire Conroy



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What's Being Served in Cincinnati

BY BLAKE HELD, AIA

This year's Custom Residential Architects Network Symposium [CRAN] takes place in Cincinnati. Our venue is the Hilton Cincinnati Netherland Hotel, a feast for the eyes and an inspiring setting in which to digest a full menu of topics pertinent to our practice as architects today. As usual, there will be a tour of homes, which always prompts vibrant discourse among the attendees. The speaker list continues to grow as of press time, so I'll outline only confirmed presenters.

The keynote address will be given by Dan Rockhill, the JL Constant distinguished professor of architecture at the University of Kansas, executive director of Studio 804, as well as a distinguished professor with the Association of Collegiate Schools of Architecture. As a professor and director of the nonprofit organization, Studio 804, Dan has led his students in the design and construction of 11 LEED platinum buildings in Kansas.

Dan also helms Rockhill and Associates, which he describes as "tightly bound to the natural milieu and culture of the Kansas region." It's clear that the firm's work is further informed by and benefits from the frugal minimalism of Studio 804's pro bono achievements. This cross pollination enriches all of Dan's enterprises, as demonstrated by his many awards and speaking engagements. This promises to be an uplifting launch for the symposium.

Also on the agenda, Marica McKeel, AIA, and Rena Klein, FAIA, join forces to discuss strategies for growing your firm. Rena Klein is a nationally recognized expert in small firm practice and author of "The Architect's Guide to Small Firm Management" (Wiley 2010). Additionally, she serves as executive editor of AIA's "The Architect's Handbook of Professional Practice, 15th Edition" (Wiley, 2013) and has chaired the national advisory group for the AIA Practice Management Knowledge Community. Currently, Rena is the vice president of investment partnerships at Charrette Venture Group. Marica, previously profiled in this magazine for her social



Dan Rockhill



Marica McKeel, AIA



Sebastian Schmaling, ΔΙΔ



Martha Schickel Dorf, AIA

media savvy, brings an energetic drive and ability to her profession. Speaking from practical experience, Marica will trace the steps that have led to her young firm's rapid growth in New York City and the Hudson Valley. Areas of special focus for the talk are the importance of establishing a firm culture, systems for success, identifying the right hires, and reliable financial metrics in an unpredictable market.

Sebastian Schmaling, AIA, a founding partner of the award-winning firm Johnsen Schmaling Architects in Milwaukee, plans a talk titled "Highly Processed." Through case studies, he'll explore how the conceptual reading of context and program can serve as a source for generative design strategies. He'll also discuss the use of a variety of media and methods to convey ideas to clients, in addition to the selection of materials and how they impact a structure and its surroundings.

On the assembly side, Mark LaLiberte, co-creator of Construction Instruction, brings more than 30 years of passion and expertise in building science to CRAN with his talk, "Resiliency and Longevity."

The symposium will showcase local talent as well with a panel of distinguished Cincinnati architects, including John Isch, AIA, a principal with RWA Architects; Paul Muller, AIA, Muller Architects; Terry Boling, AIA, Terry Boling Architect; and Martha Schickel Dorf, AIA, Schickel Design. The group brings an array of awards and stylistic interests to the discussion.

Other industry experts will share their specialized knowledge with the gathering. Bryan Mills, president of Mills Technologies in Chicago, spearheads a third-generation family business that works closely with clients to generate meaningful design requirements for technology systems. He'll speak on "Successful Technology Integration," a topic prominent in discussions with many custom home clients.

Jeff Echols is a creative and strategic digital communications and marketing professional

who's also the brand story consultant at echo-Engagement. His focus on brand marketing will enlighten a good many of us who are weak in telling our own stories and conveying our strengths to potential clients.

Kevin Harris, FAIA, will speak on going "From Architect to Best-Selling Author." Based in Baton Rouge, La., Kevin is a recognized expert and speaker on single-family residential and renovation design. His work has received numerous design awards and has been published in more than 50 books and national publications. His book, "The Forever Home," outlines a "step-by-step process" for collaborating with clients to design successful and fulfilling custom residences.

Filling out the roster are Michael Imber, FAIA, principal architect of Michael G. Imber, Architects, PLLC, and John Senhauser, FAIA, of Cincinnati, Michael leads a modern classical



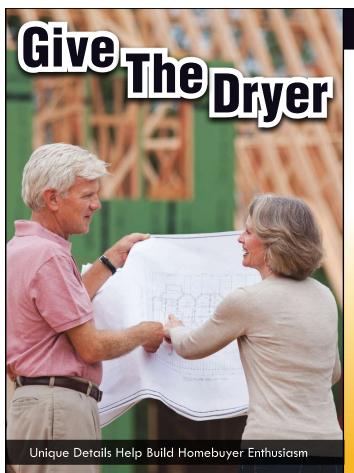
Kevin Harris, FAIA



John Senhauser, FAIA

design firm based in San Antonio, Texas, recognized for work that's strong in historic sentiment yet modern in execution. Michael will speak on being "Drawn to Classicism." John designs both modern new buildings and sensitive renovations "that are nationally celebrated for their craft, durability, wit, and poetic vitality," according to one critic. He'll talk on "Peeling the Onion and Other Musings."

This reminds me that not only are the seminars rich and varied in content (be it traditional or contemporary design) at CRAN Cincinnati, but the food will be equally delectable and diverse in offerings—whether one prefers Cincinnati Chili with the works or strictly vegetarian fare. All in all, as with past CRAN events, beyond a full plate of food, fun, thoughtful conversation, and informative discussions, an intimate connection with vendors and peers in residential practice will be served.



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CASE STUDY



Improv on the Mountain

A light renovation morphed into a total transformation.

LOCATION: KENTFIELD, CALIF. ARCHITECT: ODS ARCHITECTURE **BUILDER: EDEN ROC BUILDERS**

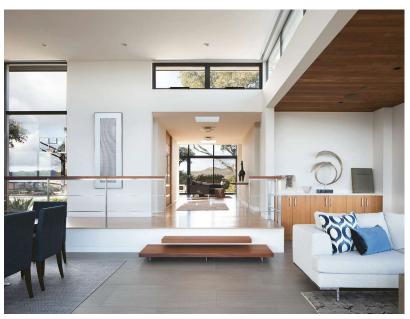
BY S. CLAIRE CONROY



Some of the worst houses occupy the best sites. This hilltop location in California's Marin County doesn't just have a mountain view, it looks out on Mount Tamalpais, where the sport of mountain biking was first invented. It also takes in views of San Francisco Bay, San Quentin, and the Richmond Bridge. Breathtaking. Too bad the original house on the site looked like a dental clinic in a strip mall.

In some parts of the country, there would have been no question that the existing house should come down. But in Northern California, there are many advantages to remodeling. Permit approvals are often faster and less complicated; codes may allow grandfathered elements to remain (a wood-burning fireplace, for instance); there may even be financial benefits, given the area's sky-high construction costs. And then there's the higher order benefit to society and the planet that comes of conserving resources and materials. The clients







 ${\it Clockwise from top left:} \ A \ new \ pivot \ door \ replaces \ the \ old \ front \ door. \ The \ remodel \ adds \ rigor \ to \ axial \ views, \ aligning \ hallways$ $to borrow\ dramatic\ mountain\ and\ sea\ vistas\ from\ key\ rooms.\ A\ sight\ line\ from\ the\ living/dining\ area\ looks\ across\ the\ foyer\ to\ the\ living/dining\ area\ looks\ across\ the\ looks\ across\ the\ living/dining\ area\ looks\ across\ the\ looks\ across\ the\ living/dining\ area\ looks\ across\ the\ looks\ across\ across\ the\ looks\ across\ the\ looks\ across\ across$ $game\ room.\ Lush\ stone\ and\ species\ of\ wood\ combine\ with\ new\ clerestories\ and\ window\ walls\ to\ upgrade\ the\ quality\ of\ the\ house.$



Above: A small formal living area tucks into an alcove near the formal dining area, allowing unimpeded views from the window walls and glass sliders. Windows on the old house had been recently replaced. Additional units were added and previously installed ones were painted on site to match.

and design team on this house were interested in all these advantages when they decided to renovate instead of building anew.

Principal-in-charge on the project, Alan Ohashi, AIA, isn't sure when the original house was built. "70s or 80s, maybe," he says. "It looked like the elementary school I used to go to. It had a big parking lot, a basketball court, and no windows to speak

of. Walking around the house, it didn't really get any better. Not until you got around to the back and saw that view. That's why the clients bought the house."

As is often the case, everyone underestimated the scope

of the undertaking necessary to transform this sow's ear into a silk purse. And the project grew in ambition and quality as the timeline progressed. The result bears no resemblance to the original—except to those intimately familiar with the building—and looks for all the world like a brand-new custom home, conceived and executed with architectural rigor right

from the start. It's a testament to the clients' commitment to quality and the firm's flexibility, resilience, and vision in dealing with a somewhat improvisational project.

Although most aspects of the original house were disappointing, Alan did like its shape and the clients were largely happy with its size. "It's basically a rectangle, and lots of

good things happen with that shape." As was the norm of the period (whatever period it was), the ceilings of the old house were too low throughout. So, the basic plan of attack was to "raise the roof

it just needed to be better."

—Alan Ohashi, AIA

"The house didn't need to be bigger,

and remodel everything under it," says Alan. "The house didn't need to be bigger, it just needed to be better."

That sounds easy, but of course it wasn't. Reconfiguring rooms and walls is never simple, and this house had plenty of divided spaces that required reuniting or at least opening up to sight lines and circulation flow. Improvements in energy

use and moisture management were also critical. Says design director Philip Liang, "The site almost has its own microclimate on the top of the mountain. It can be cloudy below, but sunny up there. Or it can rain sideways against the house. We had to make sure the design could meet the criteria of the climate on the hill. It had to stand up to the winds."

Vista and Volume

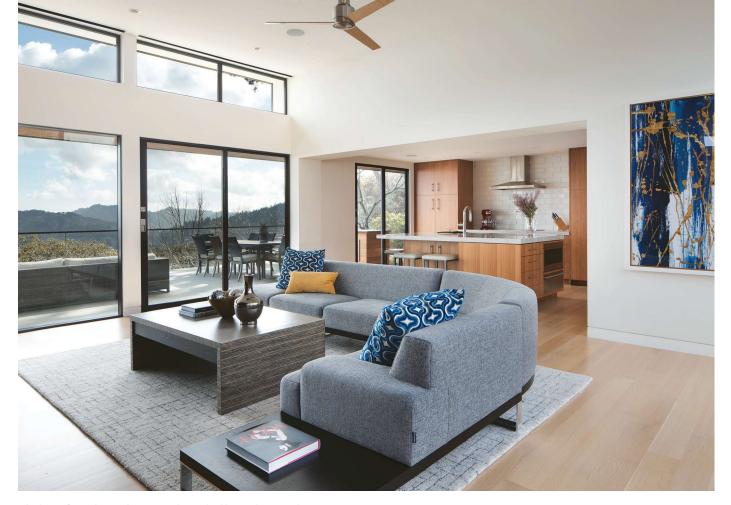
In a stroke of good luck, the previous owners had recently swapped out the original window system with new high-quality steel units. The team was able to preserve them and add additional units to match. The only difference was color, but they devised a clever solution to the problem: "We found an automotive paint person and had him come set up shop on site. He painted the units right there," says Philip.

The team bumped up the height in key areas of the building by inserting a series of clerestory windows. That move took ceilings from 9 feet to 12 feet in some rooms, but the transformation is much more than volumetric. "The new window wall units and clerestory really open the house to light and scenery," Philip explains. "The clerestory bounces light off the ceiling. And now, you can see the trees and sky continue upward through the view."

The clients didn't want more space in the house, but they did want to reprogram the allotment of space. They didn't need redundant spaces, or excess square footage assigned to little-used formal rooms. First on the chopping block was the original, broadly defined family room, which became a more tightly orchestrated game room. The wood-burning fireplace had to stay where it was or be completely removed per code,



Above: Casual spaces are given the lion's share of square footage, including this sitting room and television area adjacent to the open kitchen. Steps down by the three-sided fireplace lead to the formal dining and living areas.



Clockwise from above: The existing house had low ceilings, so the team bumped them up in certain areas with bands of clerestory windows. The reworked floor plan opens important rooms to views on both sides of the house.

so the team redesigned its surround in salvaged steel and fitted it into a wall of built-in storage with a niche for a flat screen television. Sliding doors open to a private patio—the perfect spot to enjoy a fine cigar, a well-aged cognac, and an incomparable view to the north. Beyond the patio is an elegant bocce court ("Does anyone really play bocce?" Alan asks) and the basketball court, reimagined and gussied up to match the home's new standards.

Indeed, there was much gussying up to do of older elements. An existing radiant floor was tested, repaired, and expanded. The remaining portions of TPO roof were further waterproofed and insulated, and photovoltaics were added. The board-and-batten siding was removed and new ipe siding applied to a rainscreen system. "You don't see any nails or screws—or even any joints," says Alan. "We have one joint, but it's hidden behind a downspout." Structural steel was inserted where needed to open spans to light, views, and flow.

New carefully considered elements were also introduced into the existing scheme. The major one is a new stone wall













that terminates the game room at the front elevation. The clients had found a rock with warm tones and texture they liked, and the stone was sourced to match. Another big addition were two mature olive trees planted at the threshold of the entry court, standing "like sentinels," says Alan, and leading to a new custom pivot front door.

Extensive 3D models helped the clients envision how new spaces would relate to each other and where view corridors would occur. They were key to inspiring confidence in expensive decisions and even smaller ones. "The clients actually found a light fixture that matched a fake one we had in the model," says Philip. The design team also built detailed solar studies to determine proper shading and depth of overhangs to minimize heat gain.

Those overhangs are trimmed in aluminum and clad in teak, rich and stable materials that combine with the ipe siding and steel windows to impart a durability and timeless quality to the house.

Spectator Sport

With the official family room eliminated, the team redesigned the kitchen area to receive a casual sitting room with dramatic see-through fireplace and large flat screen television wall. Says Alan, "The husband likes to watch TV and his wife likes to cook—and they wanted to do both in the same space. (At first, he wanted nine TVs!)"

The fireplace surround is made of volcanic lava stone, and the wood-paneled wall that holds the TV is sapele wood, which takes on a deep mahogany-like tone. The husband sourced the white oak flooring from a vendor in Los Angeles, the only place he could find engineered boards with a 6-millimeter wear layer.

The architects cantilevered the adjacent deck to extend the outdoor living area and capture a more expansive view. A cable rail system keeps sight lines unimpeded.

Back inside, on the other side of the fireplace wall and three steps down, the formal living room and dining room were combined into a single space floored in porcelain tile. Reduced







Clockwise from top left: Deep roof overhangs help control sun exposure on the mountaintop and protect the window walls from "sideways" rainstorms. The remodeled house pushes out walls in select areas (such as the tub alcove in the master bath) to capture better views.



in size and tucked into a niche of window walls, the living area functions more like a parlor or cocktail lounge.

Pulling the living area into the niche opened a main axis or "street" from the rear patio through the combined living and dining room, past the front hall, and on to the game room and the front patio beyond. Climbing up a short run of teak stairs from the living/dining room provides transition to the main circulation corridors and rewards with a gorgeous view through the game room to another mountain range.

Reworking spaces and creating artful alignments are some of the greatest challenges in a renovation. And nothing here looks haphazardly placed—or left in place as a last resort. There are no strange, vestigial rooms lacking clear purpose or definition. The entire plan reads as deliberately and meticulously arranged.

What's more, the construction looks as deftly crafted as if the building had been framed for its current design right from the inception, instead of more than 30 years ago. Thanks to Dan Nowell's team at Eden Roc Builders, materials come together here with an inevitability that belies the ugly truths of remodeling work and existing conditions. It may have started as an improvisation, but the result is a tour de force.

"The project really grew on us," says Alan. "It started with a small scope and budget, and then it became, 'What about this? What about that?' But it turned out really, really nicely. Now the house exemplifies the best of California and Marin living."

What creates that ineffable California style? It all starts with a flat roof and a bounty of glorious windows. "The rhythm and placement of the windows are very important. They need to capture views, but also an openness and ease of living," says Alan. "Even so, it was still a surprise for us how much you can pull out of an old, ranch-style house with a little vision."



Kentfield Residence

Kentfield, Calif.

ARCHITECT: Alan Ohashi, AlA, principal in charge; Philip Liang, design director, ODS Architecture, Emeryville, Calif.

BUILDER: Dan Nowell, Eden Roc Builders, Corte Madera, Calif.

LANDSCAPE ARCHITECT: Pedersen Associates, San Rafael, Calif.

SITE SIZE: .68 acres

PROJECT SIZE: 4,600 square feet CONSTRUCTION COST: Withheld

PHOTOGRAPHER: Paul Dyer Photography

KEY PRODUCTS

WINDOWS: Fleetwood Windows & Doors ENTRY DOOR: Pivot Door Company

ROOFING: TPO

CLADDING: Ipe rainscreen system

exterior wall

ROOF WINDOWS: Royalite, VELUX ROOF FASCIA: ALPOLIC aluminum

composite panels

STONE: Caldera split-face stone,

ASN Natural Stone

BATH VENTILATION: Panasonic

FIREPLACE: Ortal

KITCHEN APPLIANCES:

Miele, Sub-Zero, Wolf

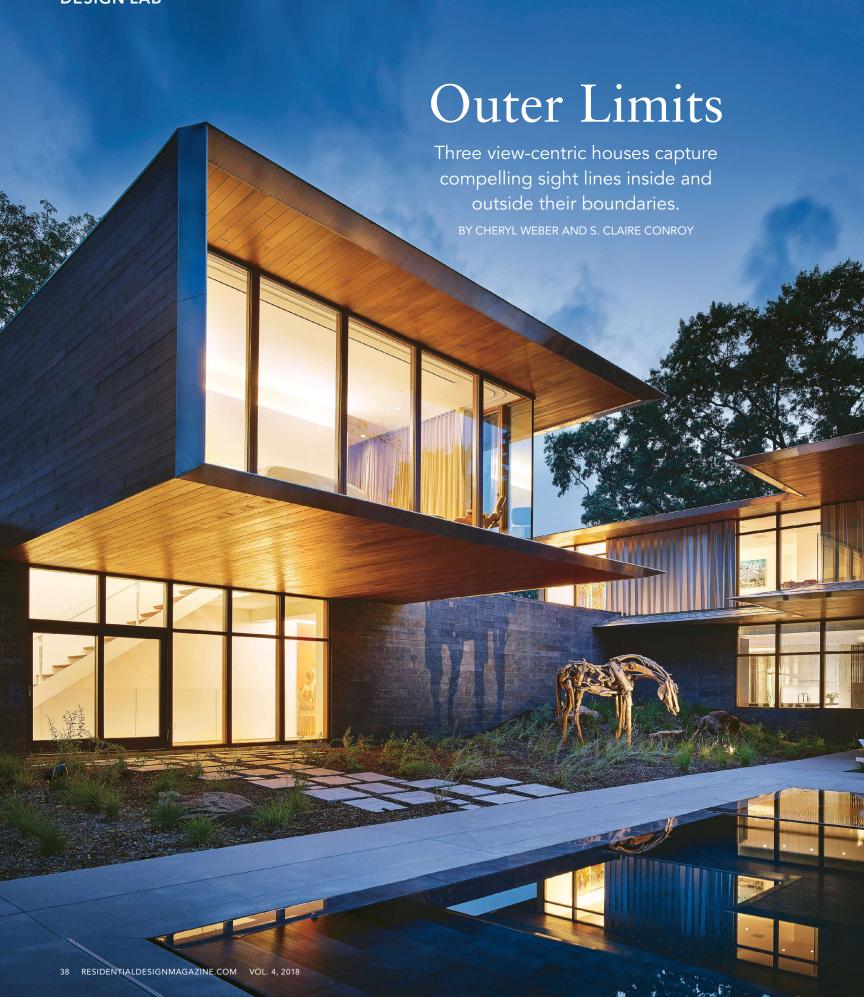
WASHER/DRYER: LG

FAUCETS: GRAFF

SINKS: Blanco

TOILETS: TOTO
TUB: Badeloft

LIGHTING: Halo





Artery House

KANSAS CITY, MO. HUFFT

Contemporary art is a big business these days, with pieces by prominent artists such as Cindy Sherman and Jeff Koons fetching millions of dollars. But the contemporary art these homeowners collect is big in another way. After years of displaying large-format pieces in their beautiful old traditional home, they were running out of staging areas. The philanthropic couple also hosts large events several times a year, and some events were so big that the couple would shut down the block and put up a tent.

Several years ago they decided to commission an even larger work of modern art: a three-level house designed by Hufft. The firm happens to be local, but it has done quite a bit of cultural and curatorial work for New York City galleries, as well as designing the Exposition Exhibition Expedition Pavilion (Ex3) at the Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art. It was simply icing on the cake that principal Matthew Hufft also had a personal connection with the clients, having grown up with the wife.

Channeling Chagall

The couple requested a house and art gallery—specifically both. Situated on a 1-acre corner lot, the house's dedicated art space is subterranean. Its cast-in-place concrete entrance is cut into a hill on the side street so that visitors can walk in at grade. "We knew that to make the gallery successful, it couldn't feel like a basement, and we needed ongrade access to the street so we could get large sculpture in and out," Matthew says. The main level is entered from the





Clockwise from left: The home, which sits atop a vast gallery space, connects visually with the art through openings in the floor plate. The kitchen cabinetry is itself a work of art, fabricated in Hufft's workshop and outfitted with 3D-printed stainless steel hardware of the firm's design. An island chandelier by Derek Porter has LED lights that can be programmed to animate individually.



street in front, which allows the couple to entertain in the art gallery below without bringing visitors into the house.

Of course, they also rotate the collection through the main level and second story, and they wanted to be able to see down into the art galley, and vice versa. By cutting holes in the floor plates, the design team developed three distinct atriums or "arteries" that permeate three levels. "It doesn't matter what level you're on, you always have a visual connection to the art from the private residence to the gallery below," Matthew says. "Like the heart that pumps blood through the body, these holes pump art through the house."

Porous Plan

The east-west-oriented main living level is essentially a limestone-clad rectangular box bisected by a finger-like gallery hall extending south into the landscape. A long run of open-tread stairs—one of those arteries—connects this hallway vertically to the 4,000-square-foot subterranean gallery. On the cedar-wrapped second-story volumes, three family bedrooms with en suite baths overhang both sides of the main living space, while two guest suites straddle the gallery hall in a rather dramatic way, cantilevering roughly 20 feet in both directions. One guest room faces the street, the other the pool. "They sit on a 10-foot center point, so it's really a teeter-totter and has glass wrapping two facades," Matthew says. "To do that we had to create a metal truss on one of the back walls and build it piece by piece like a highway bridge."

In designing the home, Hufft architects had to not only create three-dimensional studies but also think through clearances for moving large pieces of art. "We built lots of models—a lot of double- and triple-height spaces and large walls over a staircase, for instance,



"Like the heart that pumps blood through the body, these holes pump art through the house."

-Matthew Hufft, AIA



Top and above: The stone chimney wall that holds the living room's wood-burning fireplace rises all three levels. A custom bench conceals a TV that can be lowered to open the view to the pool and sculpture garden.







Clockwise from above: The master suite captures views inside and outside the property. Custom steel "curtains" undulate like fabric on the exterior. Deep overhangs protect art and occupants from harsh sun.

thinking about the size of art that could go on a wall and the vantage point of where you could see it from," Matthew says. "The last model we did was huge, 6 feet by 6 feet."

This porosity is apparent immediately on entering the house. The foyer crosses a bridge over the open stairwell, long staircases with exaggerated openings connect all three levels, and a glass floor off the main stair meets a large bookshelf that continues through the floor to the gallery below. "At a party you can look up and see the young girls running upstairs, and look down and see the art gallery," Matthew says. "To me that's what makes it really special; views are captured in a lot of different ways." Outside-in it's a different story. Deep overhangs all the way around the house were calculated to

keep out direct light that could damage the artwork. Although the lot is large, there are neighbors all around and the overhangs, with screening and vegetation between them, make the house feel unusually private.

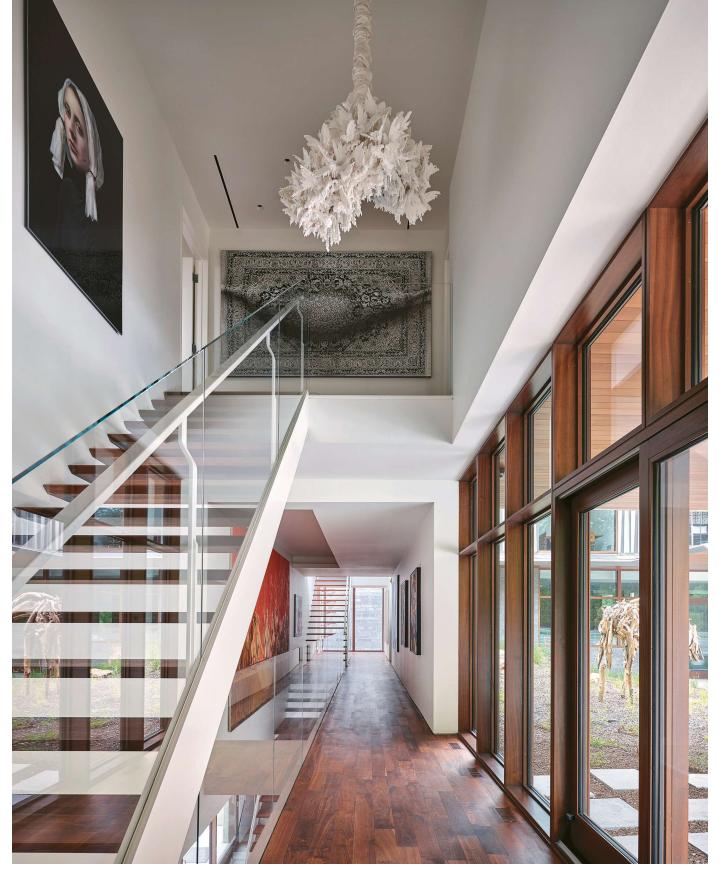
Material World

Intimate, open, and casual, the rooms of this 10,600-square-foot house are dimensionally similar to those of smaller homes. A kitchen and sitting area with a fireplace forms the center of the home where family members spend most of their time. Double-pane wood storefront windows overlook the backyard, which contains a sculpture garden and swimming pool.

A simple color and material palette creates a blank surface on which the art can pop. Radiant-heated flooring



Above and opposite: Custom knife-edge detailing appears on the stairs and echoes a similar blunt edge on the roof overhangs.



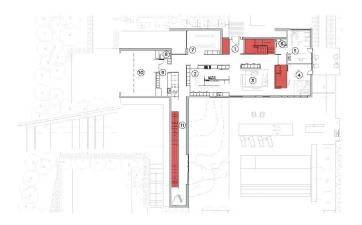
 $Above: The \ architects \ designed \ the \ house \ to \ showcase \ art \ on \ nearly \ every \ vertical \ surface. \ Plywood \ lines \ the \ back \ of \ drywall, so \ hanging \ pieces \ can \ rotate \ from \ wall \ to \ wall \ with \ relative \ ease.$

Level 2



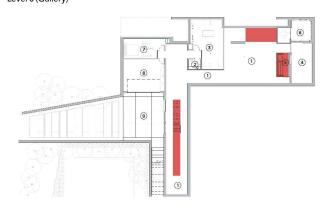


Level 1





Level 0 (Gallery)





is walnut in the circulation areas and stone in the dining room, kitchen/living area, and his-and-hers offices. The architects used as much indirect lighting as possible, and the 2-inch recessed ceiling fixtures are mudded in so they almost disappear.

"Everything we did was analyzed through the lens of an art collector," Matthew says. His firm's 40,000-square-foot fabrication facility produced the house's walnut cabinetry and printed 3D prototypes for the metal hardware. "They wanted everything to have significant meaning; it was important that even the hardware play into the concept of the house." Matthew says. "It took customization to a new level."

That customization continued on the home's exterior, where the firm wrote software to make the undulating steel panels that hang like stylized curtains on the upper bedroom volumes. "Imagine having a flat piece of metal and opening it as you would a curtain, how it would bunch up to the side; the panels do the same thing," Matthew says. With its embossed dots, the steel's texture is similar to a paper towel and diffuses the light. "We worked with local manufacturer Zahner, famous in the sheet-metal world," Matthew says. "It was a great thrill to work with them on a local project."

Not surprisingly, the biggest challenges were structural. A rigorous building envelope is always important, and when you have aggressive cantilevers on a 10-foot primary structure, zero-tolerance trimless interiors, and casework and windows that go floor to ceiling and wall to wall, there is little margin for error. The building is woodframed but the superstructure is steel, which inherently moves, says Hufft principal Greg Vielhauer, operations manager for the construction and fabrication divisions. "The finishes are not conducive to the movement you

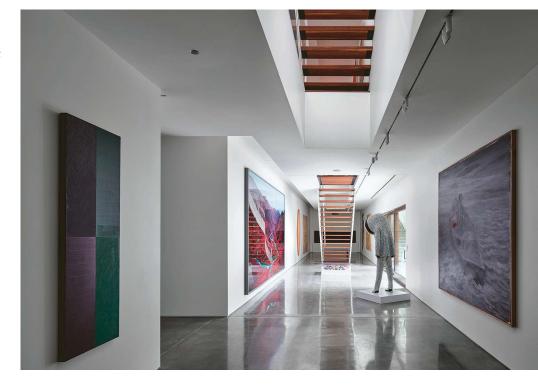


Clockwise from above: A wine cellar on the gallery level displays bottles in custom bent-andblackened steel shelves. A two-story unit for art books spans the gallery and main levels behind the chimney wall; a glass bridge reveals its rise. Connections between levels are underlined by oversized openings, such as wide stairways with open risers.



typically are allowed in superstructures like this. What it took to accomplish that is hidden and underappreciated but probably one of most impressive things about the house. You have to try to accommodate expansion and contraction, whether it's with expansion points in the drywall or bulking up flooring assemblies so they add rigidity to the structure." Plywood installed behind the drywall also provides solid blocking for heavy installations.

With such robust bones, installing the plumbing, audiovisual equipment, and HVAC was a puzzle too. "We had to get very creative in supplying the rooms with warm and cold air and water and waste," Greg says. "It was related to the amount of structure it took to achieve the clean lines and windows that went all the way to the





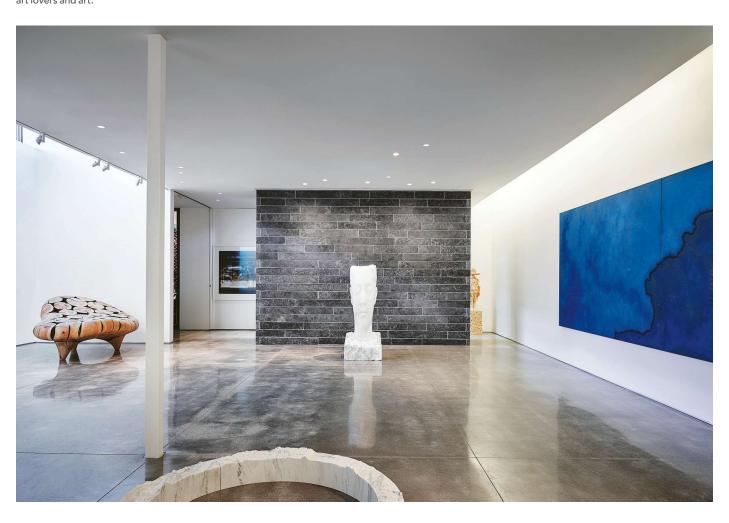
This page and opposite: Escher-like stairs give visitors something artful to see when they look up from the gallery below. The main entrance to the gallery provides on-grade access for both art lovers and art.

bottom of the ceiling. We were locked in, running mechanicals through different areas of the home."

Despite its size, the residence aims to live lightly on the land. The overhangs are just deep enough to keep out the summer sun and allow the lower winter sun to heat the thermal mass of the stone floors. Windows were strategically placed for cross-ventilation, and operable skylights atop the atriums cool the house from the bottom up. Other environmental measures include a geothermal system, solar panels, and green roof terraces, while gravel drives, pervious courtyards, and drought-tolerant native plants keep rainwater on the site and irrigation at a minimum.

This home's success can be measured in many ways, but Matthew is most gratified that the building is fulfilling its intended purpose. "We tried to get the owner to give us a list of art that would go in specific places, but he insisted that we not design that way. He wanted the ability to move things around," Matthew says. "I'm amazed at how much they rotate their artwork—probably three or four times a year. That makes me very happy. The moment you move a big painting, it changes the space. I can tell they're looking, staring at works on the wall. It feels like a great success, using the house to that level."

—Cheryl Weber





Artery House

Kansas City, MO.

ARCHITECT: Matthew Hufft, AIA, and Dan Brown, AIA, principals in charge,

Hufft, Kansas City, Mo.

BUILDER: Greg Vielhauer, Hufft

FABRICATION MANAGER:

Scott Beattie, Hufft

STRUCTURAL ENGINEER:

Bob D. Campbell, Kansas City

LIGHTING DESIGNER:

Derek Porter Studio, Kansas City

FAÇADE CONSULTANT:

Zahner, Kansas City

LANDSCAPE ARCHITECT:

40North, Weston, Mo.

PROJECT SIZE: 10,650 square feet

SITE SIZE: 1 acre

CONSTRUCTION COST: Withheld PHOTOGRAPHY: Michael Robinson

KEY PRODUCTS

KITCHEN COUNTERTOPS: Caesarstone

HARDWARE: Mockett

VANITIES AND PEDESTAL LAVS:

ADM Bathroom Design

COOKTOP: Wolf **DISHWASHER:** Asko

ICEMAKER: Sub-Zero

OVENS: Miele

WASHER/DRYER: Samsung

GARBAGE DISPOSAL: InSinkErator

OUTDOOR APPLIANCES: Kalamazoo

KITCHEN FAUCETS: KWC, Kohler, Blanco

SHOWER FAUCETS: Blu Bathworks

TOILETS: Duravit, Toto

LIGHTING: Foscarini, Leucos ArtiStar, B-K

HOME AUTOMATION: Omni

FIREPLACE: Montigo

PAINT: Benjamin Moore

WINDOWS: Duratherm



Hillside Residence

MARIETTA, GA.
ROBERT M. CAIN ARCHITECT

It's not an easy decision to tear down your parents' house—the one you grew up in—even when it has a Mansard roof, Tennessee crab orchard flooring, and orange shag carpet. The deep memory of home is a powerful, beckoning force, and it requires an equally potent force to quiet its call and move on.

Usually, it's a slow process of coming to terms with the inevitable—a winding trip through the stages of grief. At first, everyone thinks it might be possible to renovate. But the arguments were myriad for at least a partial teardown of the existing house on this hillside in Marietta, Ga., just across the Chattahoochee River from Atlanta.

The house was stylistically and functionally obsolete, and it had suffered considerable neglect while sitting unoccupied for 10 years. What eventually hardened everyone's resolve was when the team discovered asbestos in the house—lots of it. "We thought it might be a good idea to use some of the materials from the original house," recalls project architect Carmen Stan, "but then we saw the asbestos."

Once the decision was made to start anew, the firm of Robert M. Cain Architect was free to reimagine a house that would make the best use of the stellar 1.4-acre site overlooking the Atlanta Country Club golf course. Originally, the client (a real estate attorney who works in the same office building in Atlanta as the firm does) had approached them to design a house just for him—a single bachelor—and his many visiting relatives. Life, however, rarely remains static.

The project, which began in 2008, progressed by fits and starts for the next decade. It was put on hold for a time during the recession and then reignited a couple of years ago when the real estate market looked solid again. Now the market is on fire, and even the best architects and builders are having a difficult time getting subs to wrap up all the punch list items.

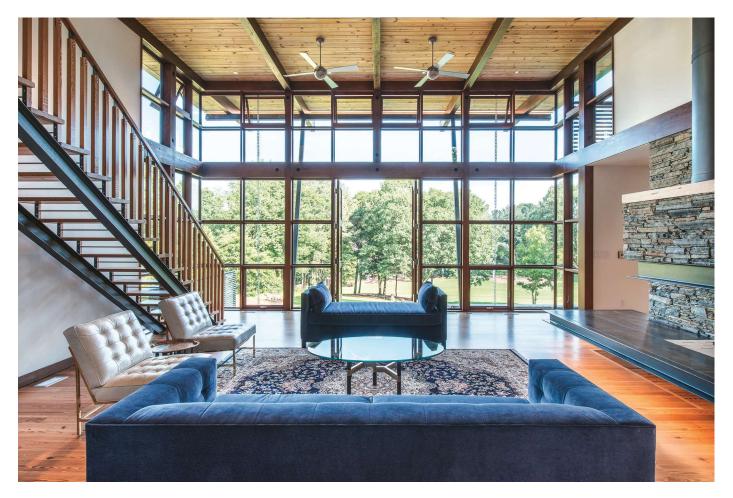
The client moved in last Thanksgiving, cramming into the home's guest quarters with his wife and two young children and suffering through another six months of construction hiccups. The house was completed this summer in

Opposite and this page: The L-shaped plan spares a silver maple planted by the owner's mother, and creates a sheltered patio from which to admire the tree. Visitors park in a motor court at the front of the house, while owners access the garage and family entrance at the side. The rear of the house takes in expansive views of the Atlanta Country Club golf course.















 $\textit{This page:} \textbf{The formal great room enjoys a two-story, three-sided view of the landscape. Every axis aligns with vistas$ inside and outside the house.

a photo finish to get it ready for Atlanta's incredibly popular tour of modern homes. It was a nail-biter.

Over the years since the house was first conceived, the client had succeeded in building a family, and the bachelor pad had evolved into a forever family home.

Trees of Lebanon

During the design phase, principal-incharge Bob Cain and Carmen worked diligently to learn what the client loved most about the original house and what he wanted brought forward into the new building. As it turns out, his strongest memory points were outside the house in a series of trees his Lebanese mother had planted on the property.

The team took pains to keep as many of those trees as it could, and ones that had to be removed were preserved as cuttings to re-establish in more felicitous locations. One tree in particular, a showpiece silver maple at the front of the property, became the pivot of the entire design, dictating the footprint and, in part, the floorplan as well. The house surrounds the tree in an L-shaped embrace. At the crook of the L, the architects designed a small covered patio. Here, their client can escape the wailing of small children and sip his coffee in the privacy and shade of its leafy, muscular branches.

The shorter run of the L contains a three-car garage and storage area. It spans the motor court and entrance serving the family on the kitchen side of the house and the guest motor court at the front of the house. Above the garage are the guest quarters, designed for long-term stays, with a kitchenette, washer/dryer, sitting area and a private deck. A separate stair allows them to come and go without entering the main house, although there is also a door from the deck that connects to the children's wing.





This page: The firm designed select furniture and cabinetry for the main entertaining spaces, which accommodate small gatherings for immediate family and large get-togethers for far-flung relatives. Rooms are divided by centered elements, such as a custom wall unit that separates formal dining from kitchen and the double-sided fireplace that partitions dining and living areas.

The children's wing connects to the parents' suite across a bridge over the double-height living room. A clerestory band of windows illuminates the passage and ushers light into the living area below and, through a corner interior clerestory, into one child's bedroom.

All corridors terminate in floor-toceiling windows, bringing in even more light and glimpses of the outdoors. "There's an axis in every direction," Bob explains. "And corridors to the left and right. Axial views bring the whole outside in and are critical to reducing the apparent size of the house. They help bring in views while maintaining the privacy the clients wanted."

The team placed service areas at the front of the house to preserve the best views at the back for bedrooms and the children's playroom. No family areas are in the basement, except for a small hobby room and exercise room. "Basements are where toys go to die," Carmen quips.

The firm designed all the custom furniture and storage walls for the master bedroom and walk-in closet. A floating bed is the main event, lifting occupants up and into the view provided by a broad wall of windows. The master bathroom is on full display at the front of the house, so the team installed power shades that can be activated by buttons on each side of the bed before the clients enter the bath or set to function on a timer.

This page: The flip side of the dining room wall unit contains the kitchen appliances. Most cabinetry in the house is dark-stained cherry, and wood floors are a lighter-colored, reclaimed heart pine. Casual dining and living areas are open to the kitchen.







This page: The custom wall unit in the family room hides returns for the HVAC system. The family entrance also accesses a back stairs to the children's wing.

Twice as Nice

Although the house feels very open with window walls all across the back and at its corners, the plan is more traditional than many modern houses. "Our client entertains family from Lebanon and has multiple gatherings for extended family, so they wanted a more formal plan than we typically design," Bob explains. That meant "two of everything," Carmen adds. "Two dining rooms and two living rooms."

This is how a program swells to almost 7,000 square feet. "The home was smaller when we started, but it got larger by adding the in-law guest suite and a first-floor bedroom," says Carmen. The couple added the bedroom as they came to realize this was likely their forever home, and they wanted to age in place.

The house is certainly large, but very much in keeping with the size of typical homes in Atlanta's affluent areas. What's unusual is that the team designed it to minimize the scale of its appearance. Most of the area's "estate homes" or

"executive homes," as they are called, strut their size as much as possible.

The house next door, built around the same time, is a case in point. It makes the most of its mega-mansion bloat for purposes of shock and awe. "What gets me," says Carmen, "is that it has the same fantastic view we do, but they only have one set of French doors and a couple of windows to take it in. And you have to go down a giant flight of stairs just to get

to the backyard. For us, it's very important to connect well to the outdoors."

That's not easy with Atlanta's high Piedmont topography, nor with the market's predilection for a sprawling "terrace" level that must reside at least partially above ground and provide walk-out access to the yard. The result is that only the basement (let's call it what it is) really connects to the site, and the main level is left marooned aloft,







This page: The firm designed the floating bed in the master, in addition to its wall unit. The room continues the palette of contrasting light and dark wood finishes. The master bathroom is located at the front of the house; electronic shades lower for privacy as needed.





linked only by a dizzying Escher-like series of stairs to the ground.

Freed from the obligation of the terrace level, Bob and Carmen were able to deploy decks, retaining walls for pool and patio, and short runs of wide stairs to ease the descent to the backyard. The journey and the destination meld into a single, progressive experience.

Down to Size

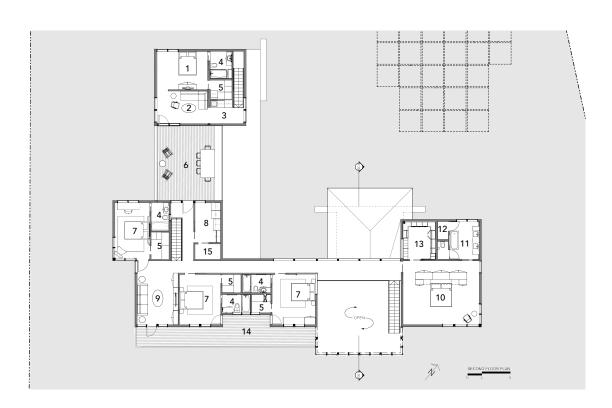
Breaking up the building's mass into two wings reduces its apparent size, as do all those windows. Its long, low-slung roofline helps as well. Next door, a colliding array of ski-slope roof projections attempt in vain to enliven an otherwise great big, looming box. Here, tightly composed structure and materials activate the elevations. The house never sheds its human scale, feeling at once comfortable in and open to nature.

"The house doesn't read that big because we didn't put enough gables on it," Bob jokes. "And we didn't use enough different materials." That's a joke, too, but it's also true. Bob and Carmen trimmed the palette to just a few materials and colors and a deft balance of dark and light elements.

The exterior siding is thermally modified poplar, says Bob. "I first used it on a property I own in North Georgia about five years ago. They heat the wood to about 180 or 190 degrees. That changes the composition to be more resistant to insects. It's much more durable than untreated wood. If you leave it as is, it will gray out. And you don't need to stain or treat it."

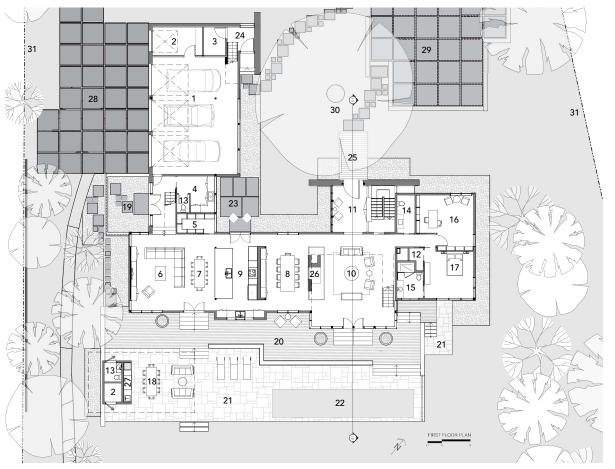
"You can oil it, though, so it keeps its rich, brown color," says Carmen.
"And that's what the client has chosen to do." The mustard-hued inserts are fiber cement panels with a specially formulated paint color.

Trim around the siding is aluminum, and the eaves, supported by dark-stained glulam beams, are a light-colored pine



SECOND FLOOR PLAN

- 1. In-law Bedroom
- 2. In-law Living Room
- 3. In-law Kitchenette
- 4. Bathroom
- 5. Closet
- 6. Deck
- 7. Bedroom
- 8. Laundry
- 9. Family Room
- 10. Master Bedroom
- 11. Master Bathroom
- 12. Master Shower 13. Master Closet
- 14. Balcony 15. Mechanical



FIRST FLOOR PLAN

- 1. Garage
- 2. Storage 3. Mechanical
- 4. Mudroom
- 5. Pantry 6. Living Room
- 7. Family Dining Room
- 8. Formal Dining Room 9. Kitchen
- 10. Living Room
- 11. Foyer
- 12. Closet
- 13. Toilet
- 14. Powder Room 15. Bathroom
- 16. Office
- 17. Bedroom
- 18. Covered Patio Area 19. Covered Side Entry
- 20. Wood Deck
- 21. Stone Patio
- 22. Lap Pool
- 23. Coffee Patio
- 24. Entrance to In-Law Suite 25. Entry Deck
- 26. Fireplace
- 27. Exterior Kitchen Area
- 28. Private Driveway
- 29. Visitor Parking
- 30. 30" Maple
- 31. Property Line





decking. Blue stone was used around the pool, along with Garapa wood decking and blue orchard stacked stone for the retaining walls and other stone elements, harkening back to the crab orchard floors in the original house.

The interiors are a similar combination of light and dark elements. Floors are reclaimed long leaf heart pine. And much

The palette was trimmed to just a few materials and colors and a deft balance of dark and light elements.

of the cabinetry is dark-stained cherry, because it was relatively affordable. Window trim is dark-stained as well.

The firm designed a number of custom pieces for the main floor, including dining tables, a sofa table, office furniture, and more. The centerpiece of the living room, however, is the floating, double-sided stone-and-steel fireplace.

It divides the formal living room from the formal dining room. Similarly, walls of custom cabinetry divide the dining room from the kitchen and family room, providing separation while still maintaining visual connection and openness among the spaces.

Staying Power

The owners wanted a large, commodious house to share with family and friends, but they were concerned with making it as energy efficient as possible. Bob's office specializes in designing for the region's hot, humid climate. Multiple sun studies resulted in meticulously placed screening and overhangs, which also eliminated the need for gutters.

Additionally, there's a geothermal system that cools and heats the house and warms the pool. Photovoltaic conduit is in place, so that a PV system can top the roof at some point. Right now, says Bob, it doesn't really make sense to install one. "In Georgia, you're still required to sell the power you generate to Georgia Power. They sell it at a premium



This page: Exterior materials were chosen for durability and dimension: thermally modified poplar siding with an oil finish to hold the color; fiber cement panels in a custom hue; stacked blue orchard stone for walls; and aluminum trim for overhangs.



Clockwise from above: Outdoor spaces $be {\sf nefit} \ from \ overhangs \ {\sf and} \ other \ shading$ elements. The rear deck and patio subtly transition the significant slope to the backyard. A private deck off the guest wing spans the roof of the three-plus bay garage.

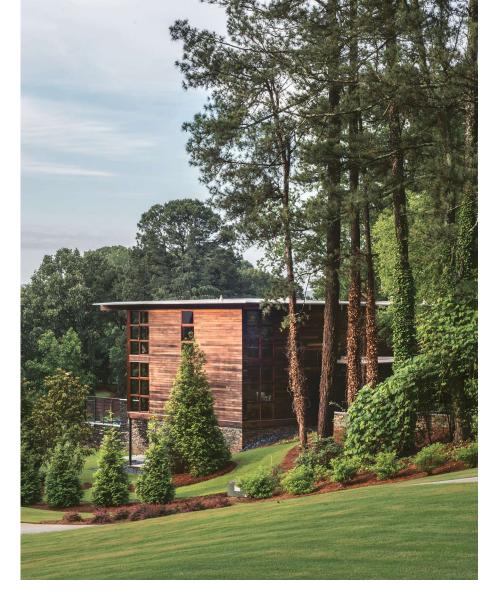




as green power, and then you use their coal-powered energy."

Heating is not a big burden in Atlanta's moderate climate, but cooling is. And that's where Bob's siting strategies for passive solar are really the best defense. Luckily, the back of the house and its prime views face east. The street side bears the brunt of the hot western sun and is therefore much stingier with glazing. Those second-floor clerestory windows are tucked under generous overhangs. Deep overhangs also shade glazing from the south sun in summer months but allow it to penetrate principal rooms in winter.

Unlike its predecessor, this is the family house that can pass to the next generation without suffering stylistic and functional obsolescence. The majestic silver maple will reach its broad branches from parents to children and to their children to come, holding everyone in a warm, protective embrace, roots planted lovingly and firmly in this solid ground.—S. Claire Conroy



Hillside House

Marietta, Ga.

ARCHITECT: Robert M. Cain, FAIA, principal in charge; Carmen P. Stan, AIA, project architect, Robert M. Cain Architect, Atlanta

BUILDER: Robert Soens, Pinnacle Custom Builders, Decatur, Ga.

LANDSCAPE ARCHITECT: Peter Frawley, Frawley Associates LLC, Atlanta

STRUCTURAL ENGINEERING: Michael Quinn, P.E., Michael Quinn & Associates, P.C., Norcross, Ga.; and Jack L. Bell, P.E., Alpharetta, Ga.

MECHANICAL ENGINEERING:

Don Easson, P.E., CoastalGEO, Bluffton, S.C.

PROJECT SIZE: 6,950 square feet

SITE SIZE: 1.4 acres

CONSTRUCTION COST: Withheld PHOTOGRAPHY: Fredrik Brauer, Artem Akimov, as noted

KEY PRODUCTS

WINDOWS: Quantum Windows & Doors (custom hardware designed by Robert M. Cain Architect)

CLADDING: Thermally modified

Cambia Wood

ROOFING: TPO

ROOF WINDOWS: Velux

THERMAL/MOISTURE BARRIERS/ UNDERLAYMENT/SHEATHING: ZIP System, AdvanTech subfloor

HVAC: ClimateMaster Geothermal Heating and Cooling System, Unico System

VENTILATION: RenewAire ERVs (kitchen and bathrooms)

KITCHEN COUNTERS: Silestone

TILE: Porcelanosa

HARDWARE, PASSAGE DOOR **AND CABINETRY: Linnea**

KITCHEN APPLIANCES: Thermador **BUILT-IN COFFEE MAKER: Bosch**

WATER FILTRATION: Pentair Everpure

OUTDOOR APPLIANCES: DCS arill. Uline undercounter refrigerator

FAUCETS: Hansgrohe, Kohler, Duravit

LIGHTING: Bega, Edge, Dabmar, Lithonia, Swivelier

LIGHTING AND SHADE CONTROL:

Lutron

SAUNA: Finlandia

PAINTS/STAINS: Sherwin-Williams, Minwax, Messmer's, Sikkens





North Penn Residence

INDIANAPOLIS DEBORAH BERKE PARTNERS



There is something comforting about a house that is easy to understand. Exhausted after a particularly brutal day at work? What a relief, then, to arrive at your house—a simple bar-shaped structure with a see-through central living area. Your children's bedrooms are on one side of the house and your office and master suite are on the other. Virtually one generous room wide, the building has no complex forms or clever maneuvers and is intuitive to navigate. In other

words, it's so instinctive that it seems as if it was never designed at all.

That's the case with this residence, a 10-minute drive from downtown Indianapolis. The owners had lived a mile or so away, and the husband discovered the property on a morning run. Its 12 acres stretched along a piece of land with a wooded upper area, a small clearing, and a sloping meadow. "They fell in love with the site and saw an opportunity to embrace living in a more connected

way to the outdoors than they had in their existing house," says Noah Biklen, a principal at Deborah Berke Partners, which received the commission. The family of five lived in a beautiful 1950s colonial-style white brick house in an older neighborhood, but this property sparked their imagination. "It inspired them to consider, 'Wow, we could live in a different way'," Noah says. "They asked us to help figure out what that would mean."



This page: A simple bar shape, punctuated by a three-car garage and guest cottage, stretches across the gently undulating site.





This page: The house is a tightly orchestrated study in transparency. Deep overhangs control glare inside.



The couple found New York-based Deborah Berke Partners through a contact affiliated with the Cummins Indy Distribution Center in downtown Indianapolis, which the firm was designing at the time. "It was great to be thinking simultaneously about a way of working in the city and a way of living in this neighborhood," Noah says.

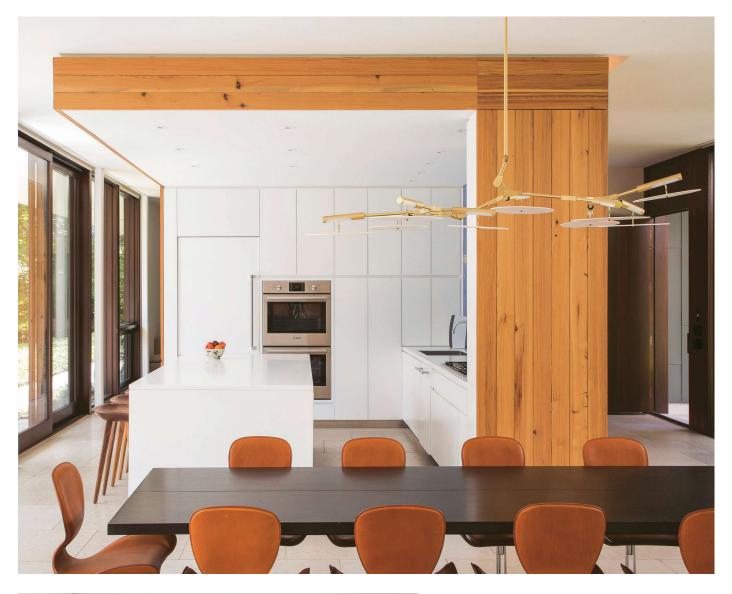
Human-Centered Design

A key part of the brief was the request that every room be a space the family used in everyday life—no ceremonial dining or living rooms—but also a home they could enjoy with friends. As the design team began to sketch ideas, it seemed fairly obvious to position the house as a long, north-to-south single-story volume along the clearing. The driveway winds up through the woods on the west, and a sloping meadow behind the house faces east.

Out of that grew the main organizing principle: arrival and public spaces living room, dining room, and kitchen would be in the middle of the house and engage the outdoors in a very trans"If this house has a big idea, it's that simple is not a style, but a state of harmony."

—Noah Biklen, AIA







This page: Heart pine, salvaged from a factory in Gary, warms key interior walls. The kitchen backsplash provides a punch of $color\ and\ reflectivity.$

parent way, while the private spaces at opposite ends—two offices and three bedrooms—could be more intimate and closer to the trees. "It made a lot of sense for how they live as husband and wife to have their area to the north and their three kids' area at the south," Noah says. The couple's offices are tucked behind the communal space's fireplace wall, while a stairway near the children's bedrooms leads to a lower-level family room and storage area.

Slender in the Grass

One of the firm's guiding principles is to bring a human-centered approach to spatial design, and this project succeeds on that level. The strong horizontal roofline draws a dramatic line against the site's hilly topography and helps define the house's place on the site. Deep overhangs shelter large and small terraces outside nearly every room. On the west, the cantilever is as deep as 13 feet to shield the entry, living space, and an office from glare. Cutouts create a shadow line that marks some of the terraces and lets light flow through to the pachysandra groundcover, whose



This page: The same salvaged heart pine used in the kitchen wraps the fireplace wall, which divides public areas and the master bedroom realm. The owners spurned redundant spaces, helping to pare the program down to essentials.



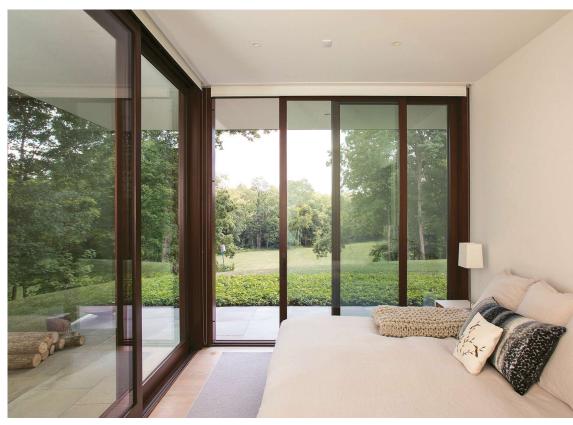






This page: On the other side of the fireplace wall, the master realm includes small his-and-hers workspaces. Children's bedrooms are at the opposite end of the house.





tidy, controlled form is a contrast to the wilder landscape. Walls of sliding glass doors expose the central living area, inviting views out in both directions, while the solid bedroom walls are wrapped in zinc panels; mahogany windows and doors soften the ensemble.

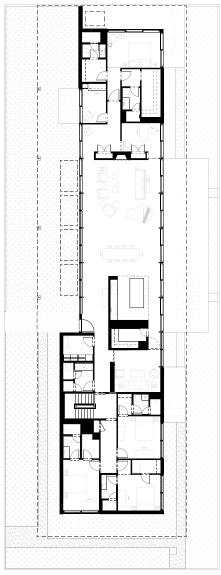
Not incidentally, the behind-the-scenes details are as rigorous as those on display. The roof and walls have 4 inches of continuous insulation out-board of the sheathing, and the use of non-metallic Z-girts keeps the cold from tracking through the framing. "One of the challenges was that there is not a ton of modern house-building today in Indiana," Noah says. Luckily, "our contractor, Brandt Construction, had experience with some of the more commercial materials and approaches we were interested in, such as the zinc rainscreen system."

Nuanced Approach

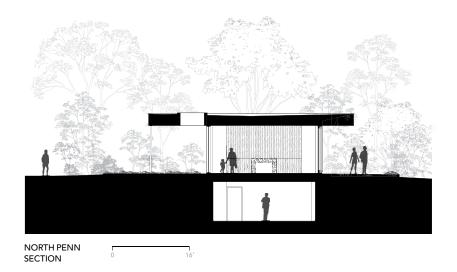
Inside, materials are refined yet simple, chosen for their durability, feel, and outdoor compatibility. "We were interested in materials that show patina over time, not artificial but that have warmth and depth," Noah says. The terraces' light gray Indiana limestone pavers continue into the public spaces, where they are radiant heated and provide thermal mass in winter.

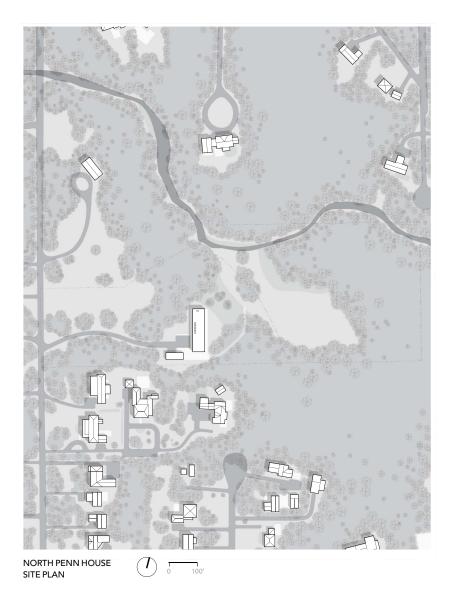
"It's always great when you're able to think at all scales and use color, texture, and pattern to create an environment that works in concert with the view," he says.

A dismantled factory in Gary, Indiana, owned by a friend of the husband's, yielded the heart pine that bookends the living area. Its knots and weathered grain add richness to both the fireplace wall and the wall inside the entryway. That wall also encircles the kitchen, where deep











blue, handmade ceramic tiles provide some reflectivity, a sense of scale, and a pop of color against the wood wall and white-painted cabinets.

One of the strengths of the overall design is its strategic transparency, which sets up a nuanced relationship with the landscape. "We've discovered that creating a sense of place doesn't always require a heavy hand," Noah says. And if this house has a big idea, it's that simple is not a style, but a state of harmony. "The best compliment we heard after it was complete was that they use the whole house," he says. "They're often outdoors, hanging out on the terrace or down in the meadow. The house sets up how to live on the site, and it's great to hear that's how they're using it."—Cheryl Weber

North Penn Residence

Indianapolis

ARCHITECT: Deborah Berke, FAIA, principal; Noah Biklen, AIA, principal in charge; Marc Leff, AIA, Shuning Zhao, AIA, project manager; Tal Schori, Ilsa Falis, AIA, Deborah Berke Partners, New York

BUILDER: Brandt Construction, Indianapolis

INTERIOR DESIGN: Caroline Wharton Ewing, senior principal, Deborah Berke

STRUCTURAL ENGINEER: Silver Creek Engineering, Indianapolis

MEP ENGINEER: MSA Professional Services, Madison, Wis.

LIGHTING DESIGN: PHT Lighting

Design, New York

PROJECT SIZE: 3,500 square feet

SITE SIZE: 12.9 acres

CONSTRUCTION COST: Withheld PHOTOGRAPHY: Chris Cooper, Glint Studios, Kevin Miyazaki

KEY PRODUCTS

EXTERIOR CLADDING: Rheinzink America

COOKTOP/OVEN: Thermador **DOOR HARDWARE: FSB** FAUCETS: Speakman

WINDOWS: Quantum Windows

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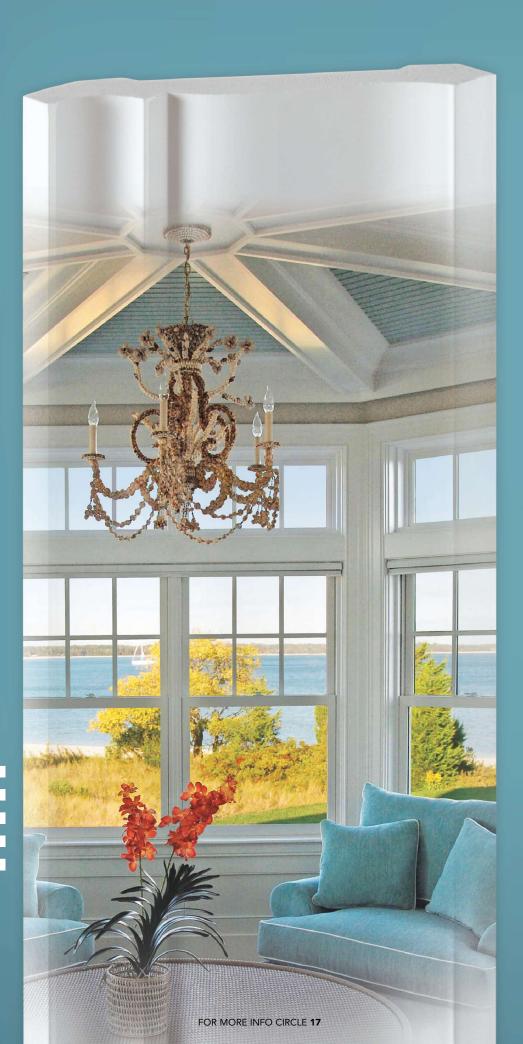


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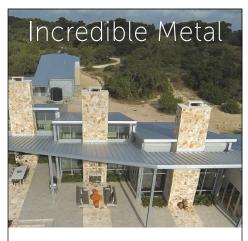
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Equestrian Equation

JOEB MOORE & PARTNERS ARCHITECTS
PROJECT LOCATION: CONNECTICUT BACKCOUNTRY FARMLANDS

What is it that everyone loves about barns? Despite the fact that our society is increasingly removed from its agrarian roots—or perhaps because of it—humans retain a great affection for farm forms. A few clients even come to believe that a barn would make a perfect house. The challenge for architects is to evoke the barn's poetic essence while solving the more prosaic requirements of a functional dwelling.

No firm is more suited to this task of distillation and reinvention than Joeb Moore & Partners. The design for this 17-acre lakeside property in rural Connecticut comes by its barn aspirations honestly—it's a working horse farm for a family of enthusiast riders.

Says Joeb, "The inspiration for the house, when we were searching for different precedents for typological farms, was the tobacco barns that dominated the Connecticut belt. The idea is of something that's an extrusion of a very simple form. We took the tobacco barn roof and used that as the key design element. The building is very linear, and that's a response to the meadow, farmland, and rolling hill to the lake."

On the street-side elevation, that long, low-slung roof appears to hover above the base of the house, exposed concrete site walls giving way to what Joeb calls "solar ribs," or the glazed openings. On the water side of the house, the solar ribs segue into a two-story window wall to capture the sweeping pastoral view down the slope to the lake.—*S. Claire Conroy*





Project: Modern Barn; architect: principal-in-charge of design Joeb Moore, FAIA; associate principals Leigh Stewart, AIA, and Devin Picard, AIA; staff designer, Robert Scott, Associate AIA, Joeb Moore & Partners Architects, Greenwich, Conn.; landscape architects: principal-in-charge Kathryn Herman; staff designer, Joseph Werner, Doyle Herman Design Associates, Greenwich; builder: Paul Tallman and Bill Manderville, Tallman Building Company, Southport, Conn. Drawings and models: Joeb Moore & Partners Architects

Stan the specifier is building homes in a termite-infested area! Should Stan:

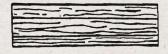
(A) Construct a decoy home out of termite-friendly spruce.



(B) Gain favor with the termite king by marrying his termite daughter.

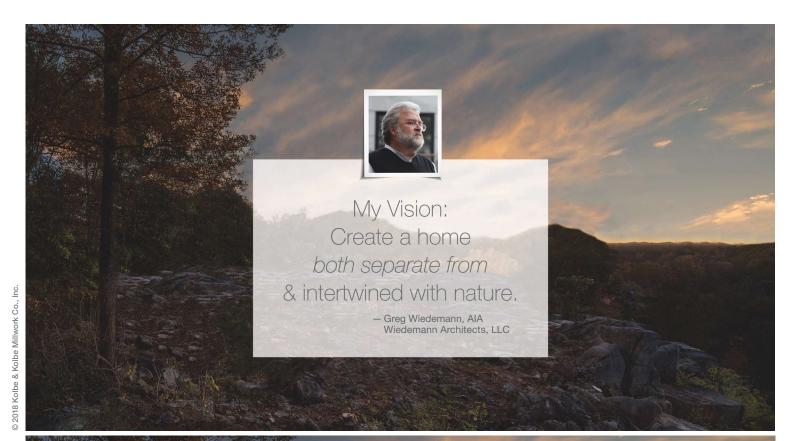


(C) Use termite-resistant redwood timbers.



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