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VOL. 2, 2020

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## CONTENTS

VOL. 2, 2020

## Features

### 30 CASE STUDY: INTO THE FOLD

A Louisiana house by Holly & Smith Architects absorbs design cues from the bottomland's resident organisms.

### 44 DESIGN LAB: THE OUTDOOR LIVING HOUSE

The magic of architecture isn't just what happens within the walls, but what it can conjure beyond them. Featured firms: SALA, Estes Twombly, Walker Warner.

## Departments

### 10 EDITOR'S NOTE

### 13 PRO-FILE DESIGN

WeeHouse's Alchemy Architects expands its portfolio of modular houses.

### 19 AIA CRAN

CRAN chair Lindsay Cullum-Colwell recounts her design/build company's charitable endeavors—including a house that looks like LEGO.

### 23 RD INTERIOR ARCHITECTURE

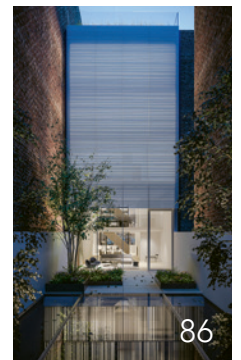
An 1885 Italianate townhouse receives a top-to-bottom redo and a new modern addition by Chicago's dSPACE Studio.

### 82 RD PRODUCTS

Fresh products for your projects.

### 86 PARTI SHOT

Andrea Steele Architecture reinvents the Manhattan townhouse.



On the Cover: The Fold House by Holly & Smith Architects. Photo: Marc Lamkin Photography

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## Against the Wall



Each year we devote an entire issue to houses designed for indoor-outdoor living. But, truthfully, that's a priority for all good houses these days. There are no longer any major impediments to considering the space beyond the walls as part of the whole experience of the house. In fact, the best architects are rethinking what constitutes a wall in the first place.

Homes that are fully integrated with outdoor dining, lounging, and entertaining spaces used to be the province of the very wealthy—think “Downton Abbey” or its kindred Biltmore Estate in Asheville, North Carolina. Those houses relied upon banks of French doors to connect indoor rooms with verandas, terraces, and the like. But there was always a checkerboard of muntins chopping views into little squares. Regular folk in regular houses just had the kitchen door to the back stoop.

Then, around the middle of the last century, the modern “patio home” was invented. Its core characteristic is built into its name—it was about annexing outdoor patio space (basically just cheap, poured concrete) into the flow of the house, uniting the outdoors with the indoors.

The advent after World War II of sliding aluminum patio doors were the key facilitator of this new way of living. Suddenly you could open the living room to an on-grade outdoor “terrace”—both visually and physically. Patio doors made smaller, less expensive houses live much larger than their square footage.

We are at another inflection point now in the evolution of outdoor access. Sliding and folding window wall systems have trickled down from the ultra-high-end market to the mainstream. Advances in technology and engineering have improved their energy efficiency, their sizes (both height and width), and their ease of operation immeasurably. It is now possible to open the entire breadth of a wall, or even two window walls that meet at a corner, to the outdoors. Some of us remember when you had to use a glass paneled garage door to achieve the disappearing wall effect.

As you page through the projects in this issue, you will note the many ways architects are removing barriers to the natural world. We expect a sprawling compound in Hawaii (page 70) to weave idyllic outdoor spaces into its plan, but you will be amazed at the degree to which a townhouse now under construction in New York City (page 86) achieves the same thing—albeit without the ocean view.

The townhouse, designed by Andrea Steele Architecture, dispenses with conventional windows to open all spaces fully to natural light and ventilation. Essentially, there are two “walls”—a glass one and a screened one—neither of which severs inhabitants from the world around them. There is privacy and connection, all at the same time.

Are we seeing the end of conventional windows (“punched openings”)? Possibly not, but if I were a conventional wall, I might be feeling a little nervous right about now.


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

S. Claire Conroy  
Editor-in-Chief  
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# Question Conventional Boundaries


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# Of Wee They Sing

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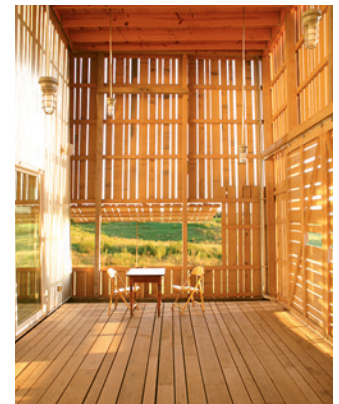
There are two powerful housing ideas that caught the imagination of the public during the early part of this millennium. The first was the modern modular movement, and the second was the tiny house crusade. At the forefront of both of those waves was Geoffrey Warner of Alchemy in St. Paul, Minnesota. You might not recall his name, but you have surely heard of his brainchild, weeHouse. WeeHouse is a synthesis of modular and tiny house, with the dual goal of making architect-designed housing more affordable and accessible. The first weeHouse in 2003 was an answer to several problems at the time, and it's still answering problems some 50 iterations later.

Geoffrey built the first weeHouse in response to a client's extremely restrictive budget. She wanted a modern weekend home for a piece of property she had on Lake Pepin, a natural lake on the Mississippi River that spans between Wisconsin and Minnesota. She had only about \$50,000 to spend but approached Alchemy to learn what she might get for her money. "We hear the same thing today as we heard in the early 2000s," Geoffrey says. "I spent all my money on the land, but I value good design. The answer back then was just as depressing as it is now. We told her, you can have a pole barn or a little jewel box—if you forgo electricity and plumbing. There weren't many builders near the site, so we decided to build it ourselves."

Geoffrey, who has a background in hands-on work, and his small team built the 336-square-foot box. It wasn't exactly factory built, but it was built off-site. "I knew an exhibit design



Photos: Courtesy Alchemy Architects



Since its first foray into modular with the weeHouse in 2003, Alchemy has amplified its product portfolio. The 2010 Blair barnHouse (shown above) riffs on the ubiquitous rural structures that dot the American countryside. Its abstracted siding and canted walls suggest it's already tumbling down.

fellow with a warehouse and a big door. So we built it there—listening to music by Journey and Foreigner over and over again. I still can't listen to them to this day," he quips.

Why 336 square feet? "That was how big we could make it and get it on a truck," he says. "The building permit only cost us \$12." The Arado weeHouse, as it became known, was off the grid by necessity (no budget for infrastructure) and equipped with just

the bare bones of shelter, but it was not without some civilized touches. There was an Ikea kitchen, a wood burning stove, and, best of all, floor-to-ceiling Andersen sliders—not really windows, not really doors, but walls of glass, immersing the cabin in its natural surroundings. Eventually, the owner recouped enough financially to add the luxuries of a deck and an outhouse—and she swapped the original cement siding for Cor-Ten.



Clockwise from the top: The first weeHouse was 336 square feet with no infrastructure. The Cumberland weeHouse gets tall with stacked boxes. The Marfa weeHouse is just 440 square feet, but lives large with sheltered outdoor areas. The lightHouse series aims at accessory dwelling needs, and the WinHall barnHouse is a hybrid SIPs renovation.

The charming tiny house captured the imagination of the public and garnered career-launching press for Alchemy. So much so, the firm decided to develop the weeHouse idea into a full-fledged modular home enterprise. The lesson learned from this first foray into micro-modular dwellings was an important one for Geoffrey, resonating with all he absorbed in architecture school and in life: “Budget is really secondary to making a project that really matters,” he says.

### Life Lessons

Scratch the surface of any breakout idea or artist, and you will find antecedents and influences that helped make them happen. In Geoffrey’s case, he had studied at the University of Minnesota with residential architect Dale Mulfinger, FAIA. Dale is a local hero in Minnesota, founder of the firm SALA and its predecessor, Mulfinger, Susanka, Mahady Architects. These firms germinated the “Not So Big House” movement that Sarah Susanka, FAIA, codified in her

book of the same name. To paraphrase the argument that Sarah makes in her treatise, designing and building a house is a size, cost, quality equation. If you want more size or quality, it will cost more. If you want quality, but your budget is tight, you must compromise on size.

This was an especially important message coming after the big volume-busting houses of the 1980s and 1990s, emphasizing square footage and ceiling height over craft, quality materials, and human-scaled spaces.

For his part, Dale’s personal and professional passion is the cabin typology, something he’s chronicled in a number of books. The special resonance of the building type emanates from its typically smaller size,

its immersion in natural settings, and its ability to simplify daily life in meaningful, powerful ways.

“Dale’s imprint and influence has really shaped our community,” Geoffrey observes. “He’s an evangelist for residential design and has built a practice revolving around small projects.” WeeHouses take the “not so big” mission to heart. They also capture some of the magic of the cabin in their ability to distill function and form down to their essence.

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— Manny Trinca, Architect AIBC  
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This page: The 2016 Sonoma weeHouse is one of Alchemy's best iterations of the form. Arranged as a compound, the 640-square-foot main house and 330-square-foot guest house create an architectural dialogue with each other and the landscape they lightly occupy.

## "Budget is really secondary to making a project that really matters."

—Geoffrey Warner

Now that they've been around almost two decades, weeHouses have gotten a bit less wee in some cases, as clients' goals and budgets have become more bountiful. But they still carry forward their emphasis on a highly insulated building envelope, siting that considers solar orientation, and spare detailing. Their modular system allows them to grow with the program, sometimes as boxes linked "like a compound," says Geoffrey, or stacked into multiple stories. "Because it's a system of boxes, each can have a different function," he explains. "You can have a sleeping box, a living box. We don't dictate how you're going to combine them." Nor does Alchemy dictate how they should be built—on-site, in a factory, or panelized prefab. Choosing a construction approach is part of the due diligence of design development.

Although based on a common modular system, the boxes are a tabula rasa for customization. "The key to making it awesome is deciding whether you enter it from the end or the side, the materiality you choose inside and outside, and the fun things you can do, like awnings, light poles, steel stairs—the jewelry stuff you can add on." In some ways, the weeHouse is that little black dress you elevate by accessorizing.

### Natural Elements

Designing small houses is as much about what you take away as what you add, but what you can't sacrifice is siting and landscaping. Geoffrey has firsthand, lived experience in renovating modest little bungalows into functional spaces that serve family life, but the projects didn't end at the front door.

"Bungalows are a common building type here. They are small, but practical. I lived in an 800-square-foot bungalow and rebuilt the hell out of it," he says. "I've lived in a succession of them, and now we live in a house we designed for someone else. What we've really come to appreciate is, that only when the



landscaping was done did each house finally feel like home. It's equally important to integrate the landscape with the house."

He now applies this personal experience to Alchemy's modular program. He tries to visit each site to guide the process of marrying structure to landscape. Most of the firm's work is far flung, so this is no small task. It's meant many trips to the West Coast and the Northeast, where most of houses are built. "This is one reason we don't go around touting how awesome we are, because the process is pretty grueling," he says.

The modular approach, though, does make the design development phase more streamlined than a conventional custom build. "By the time we meet with the clients at the site, they've already shared their program, we've shared some ideas, and they've said what they like and don't like," he explains. "We work through those in the evening and come back the next day and start making some decisions. It pulls out all the possibilities



the clients have been thinking about for a long time. We didn't use to see all of the sites, but I've discovered it's important to put in those intense two days."

Having a building system that's replicable is a welcome relief for many clients. They don't have to conjure something entirely new out of whole cloth with their architect, and that instills confidence that they'll get what they want at the end. They must accept the givens of the modular components, but within those parameters there's a great deal of customizing and tailoring possible. Together, clients and architect speak a language that makes collaboration a creative process they can both share in.

"Our clients tend to be cultural creatives. They don't have a lot of money,



The clients for the Rocky Brook weeHouse in New Hampshire were repeat customers. Modules stack and pull apart from each other to climb the hilly creekside site and bathe in its natural setting.

but they're willing to spend it on design. And they tend to buy into the ethos that smaller has advantages beyond simply that it costs less," says Geoffrey. "We collaborate with clients who are designers and architects themselves—especially

ones who don't do small houses."

Of course, there are some collaborations that don't make it to the construction stage, but Alchemy recycles them to its website as alternative weeHouse strategies. Some have been

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The Corning, N.Y., weebarnHouse is part weeHouse, part barnHouse, plus a garage shed. It combines modular and panelized construction, demonstrating the possibilities of mixing the firm's whole kit of parts.

so different they warrant their own nomenclature. There is now a barnHouse system, which can sport a pitched roof and a more familiar, classic profile. And there are lightHouses that return to the

weeHouse's roots of micro-housing with very limited luxuries. LightHouses are designed to keep costs and square footage down, and may find their best niche as accessory dwellings, "granny flats,"

home studios, or small cabins. They evoke the spirit of the Arado weeHouse, whose owner ultimately sold the rural land it occupied and had Alchemy move it to the backyard of her suburban home.

With such a diverse pattern book, the firm knows it needs a new, more full-some website—and one is in the works. After all, their best clients are ones who've done their research into Alchemy's systems and offerings—essentially prequalifying themselves and their projects. "We've done a really good job of keeping our designs simple," Geoffrey observes. "But we've realized people want to see a big matrix of design possibilities—a collection of 'ideagrams.' The idea of arranging boxes is intuitive with people." —S. Claire Conroy

Contemporary Residence, Atlanta, GA  
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 Designer: Shawn C. Alshut, ASID, RA  
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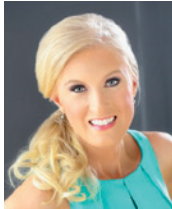


FOR MORE INFO CIRCLE 10

# Using Design Powers for Good

BY LINDSAY CULLUM-COLWELL, AIA

Photo: Bling Studio



Lindsay Cullum-Colwell, AIA

**Design can be** a messy process—one littered with sheet upon sheet of crumpled trace paper, multiple “final” versions saved to the computer, and sometimes sleepless nights with even more possible variations on a theme playing out in the mind of the architect. Once completed, the design phase leads to an even messier process called construction—the often-overlooked

craft of putting buildings together and bringing creative visions to life. Excitement and anticipation over what the finished work will look like is usually everyone’s primary focus, while the grit and grind of the construction phase is often given only secondary consideration.

At Cullum Homes in Scottsdale, Arizona, we work diligently to bring the importance and value of the construction process to light every day, and to apply the same rigor and attention to how houses get built as to how they look and function. Now in its 35th year, Cullum Homes is a second-generation, family-owned, full-service design/build/renovations firm specializing in luxury custom home architectural design and construction. We are well-known for offering premium service at all stages of the homebuilding business—from site selection to integrated design and construction, and finally to post-move-in home concierge service. Our mission is to make every part of the process easier on the homeowner.

We are also committed to giving back to the community that supports us. We are involved in multiple charitable efforts with Habitat for Humanity Central Arizona, the American Heart Association, and Rebuilding Together—a nonprofit revitalization program formerly known as Christmas in April.

Our most recent and eye-catching project is a benefit for Special Olympics Arizona. Together with our company trade partner, ICF Specialists Ltd., we are collaborating to build a 4,400-square-foot house that looks like it’s made of LEGO, the popular children’s building toy. Even in their typical white color, ICF blocks (insulated concrete forms) have often been compared to LEGO pieces, so we took the resemblance a step further and painted them in a rainbow of colors—red, green, blue, white, and yellow.

Photo: Rocket City Digital



Photo: Roehner + Ryan




Left to right: The Special Olympics benefit build under construction and what the home will look like when its LEGO-like ICFs are covered in stucco.

The blocks will eventually be covered with more conventional stucco when the house is completed this spring. But, for a few months during the build process, we have the opportunity to showcase the importance of sound and solid construction methods and draw attention to the message and mission of Special Olympics.

Our project in the Village at Silverleaf is the second local LEGO-like build program in Arizona and the first in Scottsdale, and we hope to continue to partner with ICF Specialists annually for this event. The program is gaining traction locally, but we hope the effects of the effort on behalf of Special Olympics will resonate beyond our community and across the country.

Not only is our team proud to support the initiatives of Special Olympics Arizona, we are pleased to help promote a product we believe in. Structures built of insulated concrete forms are extremely energy efficient and soundproof, as well as resistant to hurricanes, earthquakes, wildfires, and termites. Additionally, they reduce up to 70 percent of air pollution from the outside. We believe that homes built in this manner are beneficial to the environment. And we know the good works of Special Olympics are invaluable to our communities.

For further information about the LEGO-like build or to contribute in support of the cause, please visit <https://www.classy.org/give/269292/#!/donation/checkout>. 

*Lindsay Cullum-Colwell, AIA | NCARB, is managing principal at Scottsdale, Arizona-based Cullum Homes, an integrated design and construction firm. Lindsay also serves as the 2020 chair for the AIA Custom Residential Architects Network (CRAN) and co-chair for the 2020 Blueprints & Blue Jeans event, an annual fundraiser for Habitat for Humanity Central Arizona.*



## Outdoor Living at its Finest in the Hamptons

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# Tale of Two Cities

WICKER PARK REMIX  
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*This page:* This handsome 1885 Italianate townhouse had fallen into such disrepair the architects and clients felt unsafe touring it as a possible renovation. It required gutting down to bare bones, but that allowed a full-scale reimagination that blends the best of old world and new.



**Wicker Park in Chicago** is a landmark district of handsome homes, many of them dating to the late 1800s. One of the city's first outer-ring residential enclaves, it is now a vibrant, eclectic neighborhood just a 10-minute train ride from the skyscraper core. Among residents, the preservation ethic is strong. The architects took pains to restore the exterior details of this red-brick Italianate structure built in 1885. But inside, preservation finds common ground with modernism.

When the owners purchased the house, it was in severe disrepair despite being used as a three-unit rental. "We felt unsafe being in the house," says Kevin Toukoumidis, AIA, whom the new owners hired for the gut renovation. "A 100-year-old woman was living on the second floor and the house probably hadn't been touched in 40 years."

The clients had an ambitious vision. They have two young children and a Portuguese water dog, but were looking far into the future. The goal was a house that would support multigenerational living. Their request for five bedrooms and four-and-a-half baths, a playroom, and various other flex spaces would mean stripping the building to its shell and digging out the dirt crawl space for a full finished basement. The architects also added a svelte, three-story addition along the south-facing rear façade.

"Our biggest challenge was how to transform this house for a modern young family," Kevin says. "The design direction was an addition and double-height glass on the entire back wall, and to do that you are creating a challenge with the structure."

A challenge but also an opportunity. The glassy addition led to one of the interior's most striking features. Marking the transition from old to new, an artfully expressed steel moment frame supports the opening in the original back wall. A nod to the city's architectural history and industrial past—







Chicago is home to the world's first skyscraper—its strong diagonal lines define the glass-walled second-floor office overlooking the great room.

The 1,070-square-foot addition helped accomplish one of the most difficult tasks of renovating urban homes, which is opening them to the outdoors. Yet while the new plan is modern, it tells an origin story. “The clients appreciate the modern and the historic,” Kevin says. “The reason they loved this house is because they could have both.”

### Past Present

That meant embracing some of the finer aspects of 19th-century living. For example, a traditional entry foyer and stair hall opens to an intimate “salon” with an existing fireplace at the front of the house. A hat tip to entertaining’s more civilized past, this space is used for conversation and cocktails when the couple have guests. Beyond the pocket doors is a formal dining room for large family gatherings. It leads through the butler’s pantry to a sparkling, modern kitchen with a large island and separate breakfast table.

Here the floor plan moves from partitioned to exposed. The light-filled kitchen faces the double-height great

“The clients appreciate the modern and the historic. The reason they loved this house is because they could have both.”

—Kevin Toukoumidis, AIA



*This page:* The front of the house and its street-facing rooms were completely restored with streamlined but period-sensitive details. A quaint parlor now serves as a social salon for the owners, while a new, modern addition off the back is the hardworking family space.

room, deck, and backyard, bookended by the detached garage. Tucked behind the great room's two-sided fireplace, a mudroom offers a side passage between the deck and kitchen. It contains a key station and custom cubbies for each family member, even the dog. "We wanted the warmth of the double-sided fireplace to greet you as you come in from work," says Kevin.

The upper floors have an airy logic too, thanks to a skylight-topped

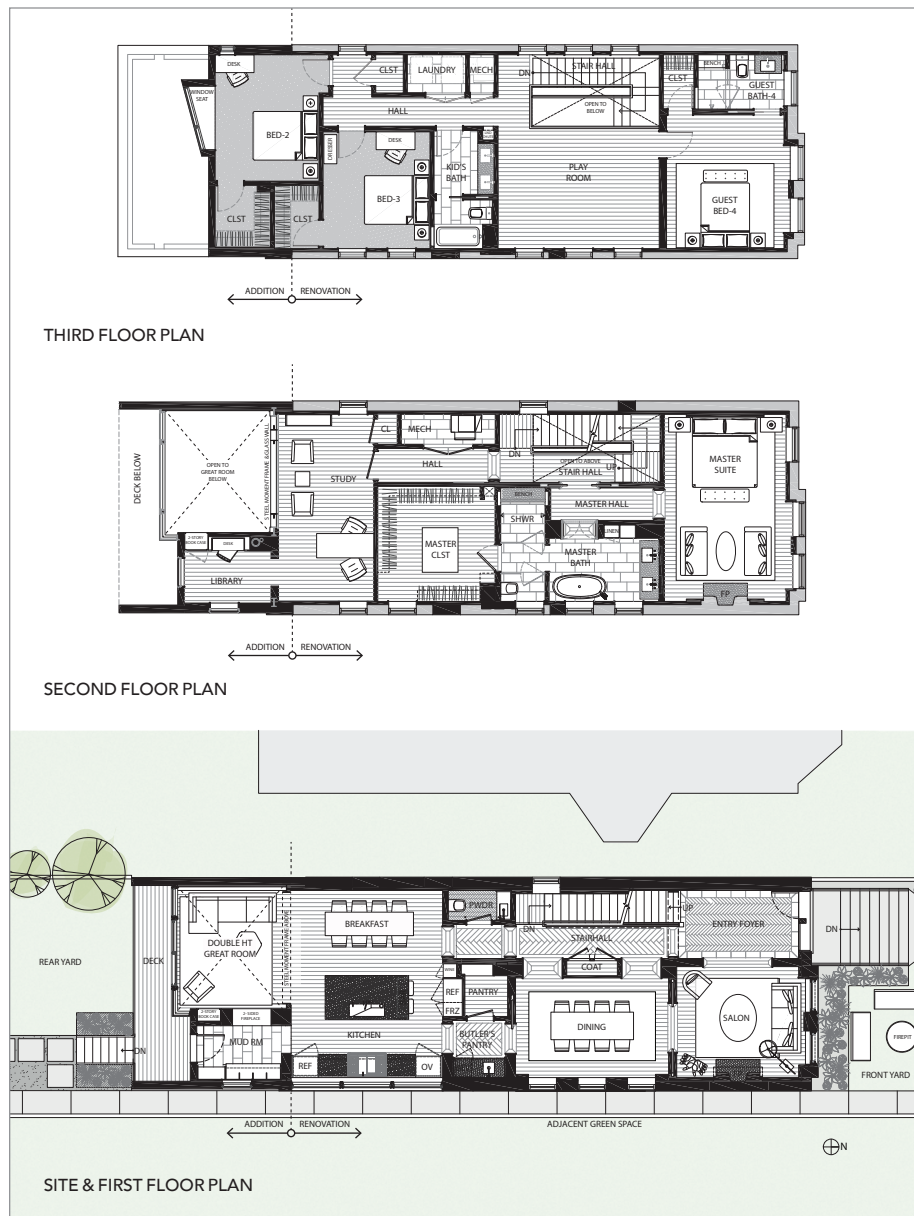
stairwell and new windows on the east façade. "Although this was a standard city lot, it had the advantage of sitting next to a lot containing only a coach house, so we were able to add windows," Kevin says. The second floor holds the master suite, a small library, and the office with its glass wall overlooking the great room. At the top of the house is the children's realm with three bedrooms, two baths, a laundry, and a playroom. One lucky child gets

the rear bedroom with a window seat jutting toward the city skyline.

If period details give a house character, this one remains friends with the neighbors without ever feeling staged. "Whenever we added a historic detail in the Italianate part of the house, we simplified it for a clean, fresh look," Kevin says. "They're a nod to history but more elegant in execution."

During demolition, the architects recycled everything, storing architectural ornament to reinterpret or reuse. "We saved the three fireplace mantels, put them in storage, and reused them," says Kevin. "Everything else is new." The foyer's custom-cut herringbone marble floor is similar to the stone found in the house. Oversized wood-and-glass pocket doors at the salon were inspired by the worn-out originals. Likewise, the architects drew a larger version of the oval window on the first stair landing and copied the stair rail details. They also added drywall ceiling details and picture molding in the old section, including a panelized wall concealing the stair-hall coat closet.

Warm, durable materials add to the house's livability and appeal.



Original stair rails and molding inspired new detailing, evoking the home's elegant past.




Timeless marble appears throughout the house—in a herringbone pattern on the foyer floor, as a backsplash in the kitchen, and as a backsplash and flooring in the master bath.

Floors are gray-stained white oak with a herringbone pattern in the main hallways. The kitchen was designed to function well despite being on display. Dark oak cabinetry warms the white lacquered upper cabinets and quartz countertops, which reflect light from the new clerestory windows facing the empty lot. Above the chef's cooktop, stainless steel cabinets and an integrated exhaust hood lend a streamlined look, while a lip on the marble backsplash offers a place to hang and store items artfully. A drawer at the wine area holds bottle openers and glassware, and a wet bar and walk-in pantry around the corner alleviates clutter.

“Every inch of the house was utilized for storage so no space is wasted, which is critical in an urban home,” says Kevin. Another example of inventive storage design is in the great room. “The clients have a lot of books they wanted to display, but it’s hard to find space for them when there’s a lot of glass,” Kevin says. Here the bookcase acts as a design feature by cleverly spanning two stories; upstairs, the back of the bookcase is accessed from a pocket library in the office.

### Future Perfect

Early on, the clients voiced their desire for a flexible floor plan that would work equally well for their growing family, aging parents, or just the two of them when the kids move out. With that in mind, the playroom and lofted office can function as multipurpose spaces. And the basement—bedroom, bath, laundry, and large family room with floor-to-ceiling windows to the backyard—offers possible in-law quarters. Plumbing is also in place for a small kitchenette, and the pantry can be fitted with an elevator connecting all floors.

“Design is an intimate process, and the best story for us is when the client says the house has impacted their lives,” Kevin says. “We want them to be thrilled every time they walk into the house.” And they are. Not long ago the clients accepted job offers on the East Coast, but in the process of house-hunting they couldn’t find anything they loved as much as their Chicago house and neighborhood. So they decided to stay. “Our philosophy isn’t just about steel and glass and architecture but connecting deeply with clients and changing their lives,” Kevin says.—*Cheryl Weber* 

## Wicker Park Remix

Chicago

**ARCHITECT/INTERIOR DESIGNER:** Kevin Toukoumidis, AIA, principal in charge, dSPACE Studio, Chicago

**BUILDER:** John Rosenwinkel, Fraser Construction, Lyons, Illinois

**PROJECT SIZE:** 5,700 square feet

**SITE SIZE:** .93 acres

**COST:** Withheld

**PHOTOGRAPHY:** Tony Soluri Photography

### KEY PRODUCTS

**CLOSETS:** ClosetWorks

**COOKTOP:** Miele

**COUNTERTOPS:** Celador

**DISHWASHER:** Bosch

**DOOR HARDWARE:** Emtek

**DOORS:** TruStile, Kolbe

**FIREPLACE:** Kingsman

**FLOORING:** Red oak

**HVAC:** Carrier

**LIGHT FIXTURES:** RH, Moooi, Stilnovo, Tom Dixon, West Elm, Bevolo, Sonneman

**MILLWORK:** KWI Cabinetry

**OVENS:** Miele

**PAINTS:** Benjamin Moore

**PLUMBING FIXTURES:** Dornbracht, Axor, Hansgrohe

**RANGE HOOD:** Best

**REFRIGERATOR:** Miele

**SINKS:** Kallista, Lacava, Kohler

**SKYLIGHT:** VELUX

**STAIRS:** Lake Shore Stair Company

**TOILETS:** Duravit

**TILE:** Paonazzetto marble, Mutina, Ann Sacks

**TUBS:** Rubix, WETSTYLE

**WASHER/DRYER:** Whirlpool

**WINDOWS:** Marvin, Kolbe

# Beyond the Glass

HOW PELLA ARCHITECTURAL SERVICES HELPED CREATE A MODERN MASTERPIECE.

River Birch House | Jose Garcia Design | Cincinnati, OH



Photographer: Ryan Kurtz Photography

Aiming to create a strikingly modern residence with narrow sightlines, expansive glass and natural materials, Jose Garcia Design turned to the Pella Architectural Solutions team. From preliminary drawings to installation advisory, Pella worked with the acclaimed firm and contractor to deliver solutions that met challenging design requirements – and created one of Cincinnati’s most innovative structures.



JARON VOS  
Manager, Architectural Solutions

## AT THE DRAWING BOARD

Pella’s experts started by drawing up plans for Garcia’s extra-large window combinations. Using design parameters provided by structural engineers, the team developed several conventional mullion-reinforcing options that would withstand wind loads at spans greater than 14 feet.

“Conventional reinforcing options are too wide for a project like this, so the width of the mullions was very important,” said Jaron Vos, manager of Architectural Solutions at Pella. “We designed a one-inch custom extrusion that was deeper than the frame but could hold a narrow width.”

## A NEW USE FOR TRUCK BED LINER

A span this long required a unique solution. To obtain the right structural capacity, the depth of the aluminum extrusion needed to extend beyond the window frames and into the interior. This design presented the potential for condensation. And though the extrusion would be insulated by wood trim, the team wanted to be sure that condensation would not be an issue.

After utilizing thermal modeling and conductance testing, Pella’s architectural engineers concluded that a coat of truck bed liner applied to the extrusion would solve the issue.

“It has durability and low thermal conductivity. Plus, it’s thin enough to not interfere with the trim,” Vos said. “Once the interior trim was installed, the condensation concern was alleviated.”

## SMART INSTALLATION PRACTICES

Because large combinations and custom extrusions were new to the installer, a field services specialist from Pella Architectural Solutions worked on-site to advise on the installation procedures.

“With specialized engineering, drafting, testing and field services, we can say ‘yes’ to an architect’s vision, help contractors make those visions reality, and provide customers the looks and performance they want,” Vos explained.

### ARCHITECTURAL EXPERTISE FROM BEGINNING TO END

Design and performance analysis

**Thermal analysis**

**Custom extrusion design**

**Preliminary design drawings**

Custom product design

**Installation shop drawings**

**Field services and on-site training**

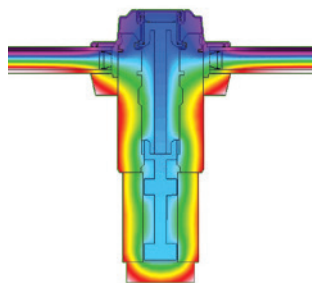


Photographer: Ryan Kurtz Photography

## We owe this project to one thing – truck bed liner.

When Jose Garcia Design needed a custom aluminum extrusion for their contemporary masterpiece, we were game. But Pella's thermal and performance analyses determined that condensation might be a problem. So the Pella Architectural Solutions team got creative, recommending a coating of truck bed liner to deliver a building envelope that exceeded performance requirements – and helped our client achieve their most ambitious goals.

FROM CONCEPT THROUGH COMPLETION.



Thermal model represented is specific to this project.

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[pella.com/beyondtheglass](https://pella.com/beyondtheglass)

FOR MORE INFO CIRCLE 15

# Into the Fold

A Louisiana house absorbs design cues from the bottomland's resident organisms.

BY CHERYL WEBER

LOCATION: HAMMOND, LOUISIANA

ARCHITECT: HOLLY & SMITH ARCHITECTS

BUILDER: WILSON CONSTRUCTION

**Whether a work of architecture** is about materiality, place, or creating an experience, finding a “way in” can mean taking inspiration from something very specific. In the case of Fold House, what appears to be the ultimate inert, low-maintenance machine was inspired by the almost primordial ecosystem of the Louisiana bottomland. Ironically, perhaps, this weather-shedding house finds common ground with the lush native life on its 15-acre parcel. And its perfectly smooth skin will patina to a soft gray, like the colors of the forest around it.

In scope and sensibility, this house is typical of the one or two residential projects Holly & Smith Architects takes on each year. Practicing in the South, where most people prefer a traditional, plantation-home vernacular, the firm's modernist bent is best suited to the hospitality and higher-education sectors for which it is known. However, these clients, who are close friends of project architect Jeffrey Smith, AIA, approached him with a healthy budget and the desire to do something different.







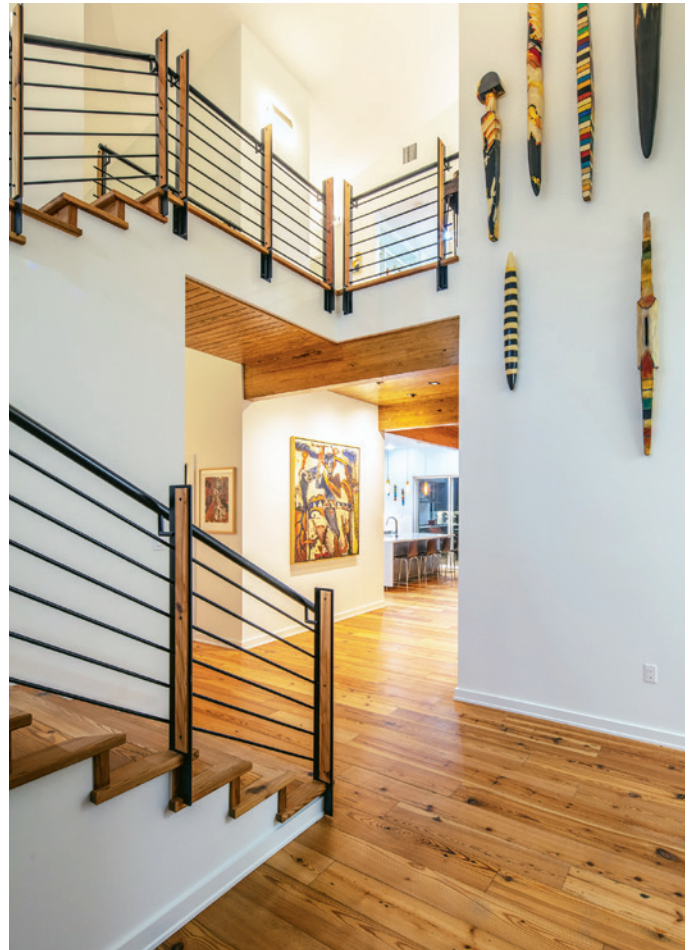
*This page:* Taking inspiration from vines draping nearby trees, the roof forms of this rural house fold into walls. Three volumes connected by hovering bridges comprise garage, main living, and master wing.

The clients, empty nesters who had decamped from Louisiana to Santa Fe in recent years, were returning to home base to be near their children and grandchildren. The husband, Roy Dufreche, a landscape architect, also had a professional history with Holly & Smith, having designed the landscaping for most of the firm’s institutional and commercial work over two decades. So it was natural for Roy, Jeffrey, and design director Pierre Theriot, AIA, to walk the wooded land in anticipation of siting the house. They picked a spot on a high point overlooking a creek that feeds into the Natalbany River, and oriented the house to maximize the views and prevailing sun on the south. Its position also minimally disturbed the thick tree canopy of spruce and cypress, tupelos and oaks.

“Access to the site is a bit away from where the house is located,” says Jeffrey. “Roy came up with a circuitous route for the drive that winds through trees and captures a view of the house on approach.”

That view reveals a three-part house distinguished by its series of jauntily angled, folded metal roof planes. The main two-story volume contains the public spaces





*This page:* The art-collector clients commissioned the “spirit sticks” that adorn the foyer and stair hall from John Geldersma, a Santa Fe-based artist from Louisiana. The architects worked closely with the couple to create feature walls and other areas to display their extensive collection.



*This page:* The clients returned from Santa Fe to Louisiana to be close to their adult children and grandchildren. The house facilitates extended family life with an open-plan living, kitchen, and dining room.

on the first floor and bedrooms and an office/lounge above. Glassy bridges—they float above the ground—connect it to a 750-square-foot garage on the north and a master suite on the south. This sprawling footprint not only softens the house by breaking up the geometries, it also expanded the canvas for showcasing the owners' art collection. "One of the design partis I like to use is pods to disconnect different functional spaces if the site allows," Jeffrey says. "We took advantage of that concept while creating a gallery bridge for artwork."

It also lets the house interact with the landscape, Pierre says, and not just visually. "Bioswales under the bridges direct drainage around the house, because the house blocks drainage to the wetlands," he says, adding that the roofs slope down toward the swales. Perhaps secondarily, the bridges are a bespoke buffer between the master suite and the grandchildren's pajama parties, eliminating the need to stock up on earplugs to get a good night's sleep.

*This page:* The living room pushes into the view and is flanked by outdoor lounging and dining areas. An adjacent TV room also benefits from the arrangement.



## Natural Bent

If architecture is personal, a continual interplay of creativity and reason, it was a singular reading of the land that spawned the building's organizing form. Hiking the bottomland before design work commenced, the architects discovered a lot of "big, fat ancient vines" laddering up the trees. "They would crawl up a tree, fold down, and crawl up another limb, creating a folding appearance of vines running through the tree," Jeffrey says. These folding patterns show up on the house, where standing-seam planes were creased to manipulate mass and form. They wrap around the three program pods, opening for access, views, and natural light.



*This page and opposite:* The house tiptoes across a natural bioswale. Portions of the structure are elevated off the ground to direct water flow toward the nearby creek. A screened porch can open fully to the outdoor kitchen and entertaining area.

“We simply took a plane, stuck it up vertically, folded it once at an angle to form the roof, then folded it again to create a vertical plane,” he says. “We get a lot of rain, so we extended the planes past the house to create porches, and overhangs at the windows.” Outside the TV room on the south, the roof folds down to the ground but is carved away to accommodate a bank of windows.

This theme extends to a 500-square-foot outdoor kitchen with a prime view to the bottomland. Located across a deck from the screened porch, crisp metal panels on the back wall tip up at a sharp angle to form the roof, and then dip down to

rest on twin columns. “Roy has a pizza oven and a Big Green Egg,” Jeffrey says. “The whole wall of the screened porch can roll up to become an outdoor entertainment space, but we do have bugs down here that can carry you off if you’re not careful.” The decking is TimberTech Azek, a synthetic material that won’t rot in the moist climate.

“Our other goal was to minimize maintenance,” Jeffrey says. “Standing-seam metal is maintenance-free and will patina to a soft gray.” Likewise, dark green cement-board cladding, mounted in the shadow of the folded planes, seems to disappear into the foliage.



Some of the material details were worked out on-site. Where metal siding “folds” over the façade, the crew built a double wall, which allowed the vertical plane to align with the outside of the concrete slab. “We wanted it to cantilever out past the face of the house and read as if it were floating off the ground,” says Jeffrey. Builder John Wilson explains, “We framed up a normal 2x6 wall and added another 2x6 wall that runs down past the slab. Each wall had to be double and cut off against the slab so none of the critters of Louisiana could get in there.”

“John has built all of our custom houses and really knows



It was a singular reading of the land that spawned the building’s organizing form.



*This page:* The first floor master wing is removed from the din of the main living volume and second floor guest quarters. Strongly figured heart pine floors are their own work of art.

how to read a set of plans,” Jeffrey says. The roofer faced a different puzzle. “We originally wanted the metal to be continuous coming from the roof and going vertically down the wall, but there were too many waterproofing issues,” Jeffrey says. So the metal roofing and wall panels were installed with a flashed joint where the angles meet. The wall panels went up first, then the roof panels. “The wall and roof seams had to align; we used a commercial roofer, but this still challenged him,” Jeffrey says.



Throughout the three volumes, useful niches push beyond the wall plane and enliven the exterior elevations. In the master bath, a niche cradles the freestanding tub.



*This page:* Located in the central volume, the second floor contains accommodations for extended family, including a “man cave” and a bunk room for the grandchildren.

### Art in the Round

Corresponding to the building’s functional divisions are metal-clad bump-outs that enliven each volume’s façade. The protrusion at the main entry makes room for a soaring, switchback stairwell, while on the master suite it’s a bathtub niche, and at the garage it provides additional storage.

Deferring to the owners’ art, the interiors have a minimal material palette of painted drywall, heart pine floors, and pine on the stairs, handrails, and dining room ceiling. In fact, their large art collection influenced the overall design. “They sent us a list of all their pieces, and as we went through the design, they had locations for artwork identified,” Pierre says. “They were very particular about where each piece should go.” In addition to the spine connecting the house’s three sections, the foyer and stairwell wall were designed to display “spirit sticks” commissioned from John Geldersma, a Santa Fe artist from Louisiana. “We sent him a 3D model of the foyer and he arranged the pieces,” Pierre says.





## The Fold House

Hammond, Louisiana

**ARCHITECT:** Jeffrey K. Smith, AIA, principal in charge; Pierre Theriot, Jr., AIA, and Nicholas Clesi, project architects, Holly & Smith Architects, Hammond, Louisiana

**BUILDER:** Wilson Construction, Hammond

**INTERIOR DESIGNER:** Mary Mowad Guiteau, IIDA, Holly & Smith

**LANDSCAPE ARCHITECT:** Roy T. Dufreche & Associates, Hammond

**PROJECT SIZE:** 3,000 square feet

**SITE SIZE:** 15 acres

**CONSTRUCTION COST:** Withheld

**PHOTOGRAPHY:** Marc Lamkin Photography

### KEY PRODUCTS

**AUTOMATIC GATES:** Viking

**CLADDING:** James Hardie

**COOKTOP:** Wolf

**DECKING:** TimberTech Azek

**DISHWASHER:** Asko

**DOOR HARDWARE:** Better Home Products

**FAUCETS:** Delta

**FIREPLACE:** Heat & Glo Mezzo Series

**GARAGE DOORS:** Clopay

**HVAC:** Frigidaire heat pump

**OUTDOOR SHOWER:** Delta

**OVENS:** Wolf

**PAINT:** Benjamin Moore

**REFRIGERATOR/FREEZER/  
ICE MAKER:** Sub-Zero

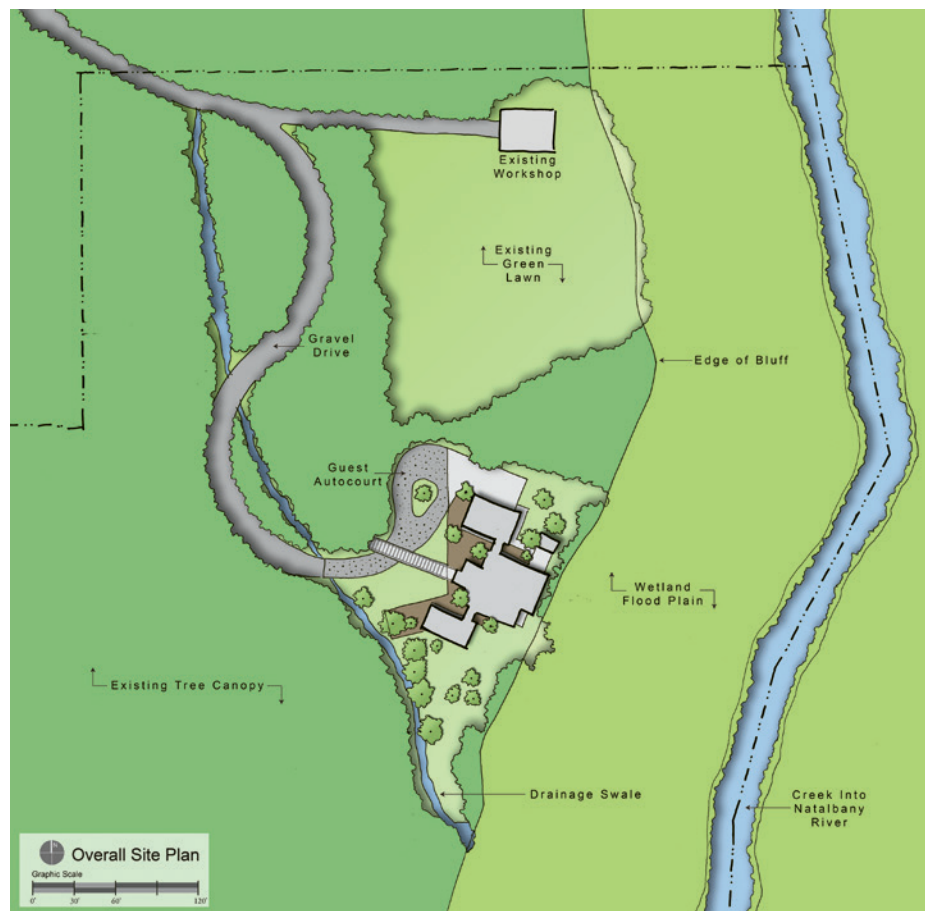
**SINKS:** Kohler

**TUBS:** Kohler, Jetta

**VANITIES AND PEDESTAL LAVS:** Kohler

**WINDOWS:** JELD-WEN

**WINE REFRIGERATOR:** LG





The dramatic folding roofs are cut away for windows to the view, but project past the walls to shelter openings from frequent downpours. Green cement siding recedes into the forested landscape.

The dining room too was designed around a piece of art, in this case an 8-foot-diameter table built by John’s son, Wesley Wilson, a cabinetmaker. Throughout, custom furniture surfaces continue the folded theme, many of them designed by Roy. For example, the kitchen island, dining room sideboard, TV console, and other side tables feature top surfacing that cascades over the edges.

It’s easy to imagine the grandchildren making memories here. Not just playing in the creek or under the colorful spirit sticks, but in their own bedroom, where two sets of built-in bunks are separated by small steps that lead to the top bunks, and a passageway invites kids to crawl back and forth between the beds. A window looks down into the screened porch, inviting games of spy.

But if the bottomland reads as a fantasy world of dripping vines and pulpy shoots, the owner’s landscape plan imposes a civilizing sense of order. A nod to the house’s angled planes, the metal-edged beds, now grown in with grasses, lead the eye to the entrance, while a path laid in crushed limestone and concrete curbing directs visitors from the parking court to the front door.

“Every great project has great clients; they challenged us to do something unique and are pleased with it,” Jeffrey says. “They like the fact that they don’t need curtains on the windows and that their art is all accommodated as desired.” By borrowing some of the land’s vegetative patterns, Holly & Smith created a very personal house where the family enjoys gathering, a protective place where they can appreciate nature. 



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# The Outdoor Living House

The magic of architecture isn't just what happens within the walls,  
but what it can conjure beyond them.

BY CHERYL WEBER AND S. CLAIRE CONROY





## Box Camp

NORTHERN WISCONSIN  
SALA ARCHITECTS

**The driveway winding** toward this family cabin encapsulates everything Wisconsin’s northwoods is known for. It meanders through a mixed forest of oak, fir, birch, aspen, and red and white pine before approaching the house along an open meadow. You can see through the trees to one of the region’s many lakes where people have fished and canoed for centuries. For the clients, who live in Chicago, it was a dream destination.

The place had sentimental value too, because the husband’s parents have a house just a short paddle upshore. He grew up spending summers there with his siblings and cousins and had been

looking for a spot on the lake when this idyllic parcel came up. The lot juts out on a small promontory and looks across the lake to land in conservancy. What’s more, it had an unusual amount of shorefront—300 feet, allowing for a low-profile house that stretches out rather than up.

“The house could have been closer to the water, but we pulled it back to make it more quiet and private, and so it doesn’t draw attention to itself,” says David Wagner, AIA, a principal at SALA Architects.

The site fit the program to a T. Empty nesters with three adult sons



and two new grandchildren, the clients asked for a camp-like place recalling the 1940s-era wood family cabin. “They wanted bedrooms with a sleeping porch vibe where they could open windows and feel like they’re sleeping out of doors,” David says.

This, and their wish for a low-slung building they could phase in as the family grows, drove the layout of the bedrooms as sleeping pods. The one-story structure is organized along a north-south circulation spine, with a central great room (kitchen, dining, living) and screened porch, flanked by two pairs of bedrooms to the north and south. Hence the name Box Camp—David refers to the great room/screened porch as the day box and the north and south bedroom volumes as night boxes.

Cabins, in particular, can take a romantically based approach to form and place, and here the two bedrooms on the north are reached via a breezeway through the screened porch. “They feel separate, and you have to step outside and experience the weather as you move from space to space,” says David. The pair of bedrooms on the south segue from the great room via a heated glass



*This page and opposite:* A wide lot allowed the architects to stretch the modern cabin along the shoreline view. That view is strategically revealed by carefully placed openings and slatted walls.





connector whose 1-by-4 tongue-in-groove cedar siding passes from outside to inside, conveying the feel of being outdoors.

Of course, even the most harmonious sites have some flaws. Here it was the view orientation that presented a mixed blessing. The house looks west across the lake, which is great for viewing sunsets but a challenge because the sun's low

glare hits the interior right at dinnertime. "We explored facing the house more southwest to get more passive solar benefit, but the views were across the lake to houses, so we tilted the house directly west toward the more natural views," David says. "We dealt with the direct light by using overhangs and shades that filter out some of the sunlight but allow you to see through to the lake."

### Good Connections

Siting aside, one aspect of inspired indoor-outdoor living is a teaser view through a house. Here, anticipation builds as you approach the entry on the long east façade. Its corrugated steel cladding acts as a solid backbone and shields the front from the shared driveway, but transparent cutaways offer tantalizing views to the lake beyond.





*This page and opposite:* The cabin's corrugated steel and cedar elements are celebrated at every intersection, but there's much construction trickery hidden behind the scenes. A highly insulated and reinforced roof system is cleverly concealed so overhangs can appear sleek and thin.





*This page:* What's inside and what's outside is often blurred, as rugged flooring appears in all locations and doors pivot or fold to remove barriers to the natural world.

This is accomplished with a wall-height window in the dining area, the screened porch between the great room and north bedrooms, and the glass connector to the south. The great room's clerestory pop-up also adds a sense of lightness, playing off the grounded elements.

“The black siding in front was intended to help the house be in the shadows; it blends into the ground plane of the trees,” David says. “The black also lets the windows become lantern elements when the lights come on in the evening and the building fades away even more.” This effect is amplified at the glass entryway, where a cedar-slat panel slides across, providing a warm glow of light and marking the front door. In contrast, the rear façade is mostly glass and knotty cedar.





This page: The best views of the lake are westerly, requiring deep overhangs to shade interior spaces from afternoon glare. Hidden steel beams ensure the roof can support seasonal snow loads.



Views and egress points are equally well planned. With the circulation spine running in front of the “boxes,” a window terminating the north axis frames a pine tree. A door on the south axis will open to phase two, now in construction—a pair of rustic guest rooms up in the trees. “You walk out that door and are in the tree canopy; the ground drops away,” David says.

The division between inside and outside dematerializes further on the north side of the great room, where 4-foot-wide pivoting doors invite passage to the screened porch facing the lake. And bifold doors open the

Inside and out,  
the home’s materials  
confer both lightness  
and solidity and are  
joined with machine-  
like precision.

entire dining area to the rear terrace. An essential sense of prospect and refuge figures into the scheme too. The steel-clad wall on the entry side contains cabinets and a window seat to hunker into, with the lake on full view across the room.

### Machined Materials

Inside and out, the home’s materials—predominantly concrete, wood, and steel—confer both lightness and solidity and are joined with machine-like precision. The hybrid, exposed wood-and-steel framing sits on a concrete plinth that responds to the topography: the great room is slab on grade, while the north bedrooms have a crawl space for mechanicals, and there is room for a future bedroom and bath under the south pod where the land slopes away.

To create a thin roofline packed with R-50 closed-cell foam and R-15 tapered insulation, the team used corrugated

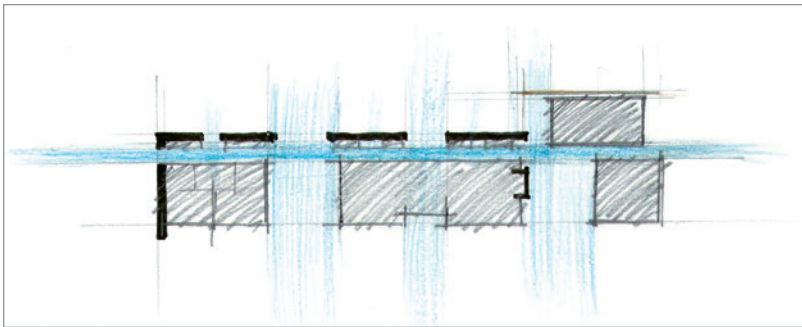


steel decking that cantilevers a good 4 feet on the north and south. Running east-west beneath the roof deck are 3-by-6 Douglas fir joists with tails exposed.

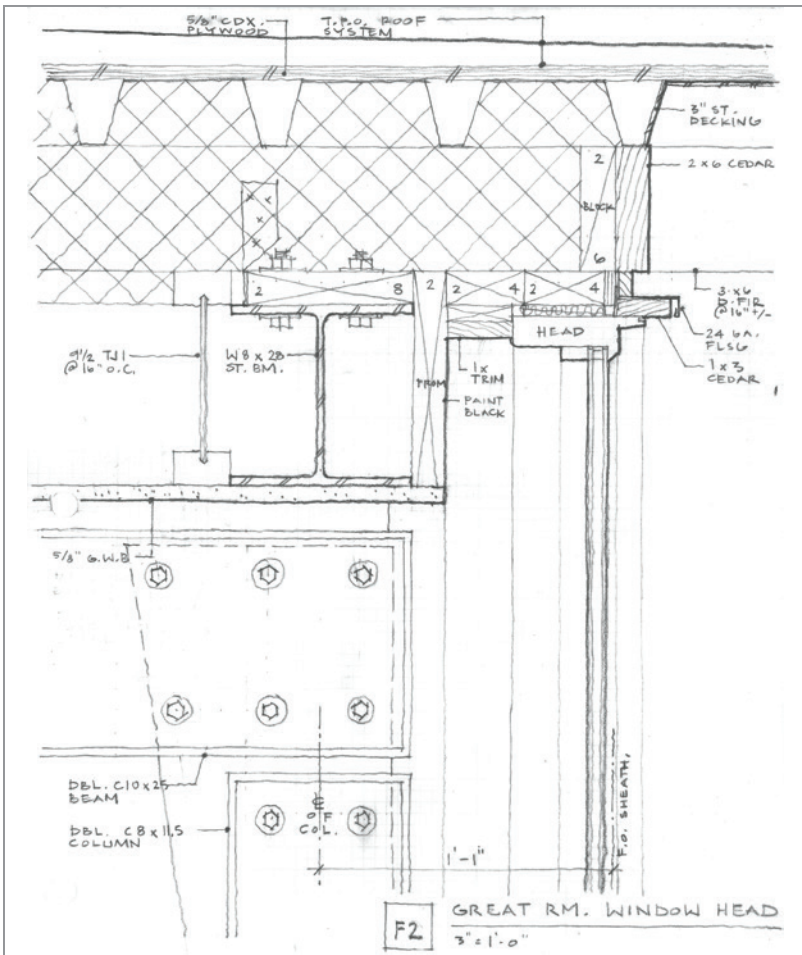
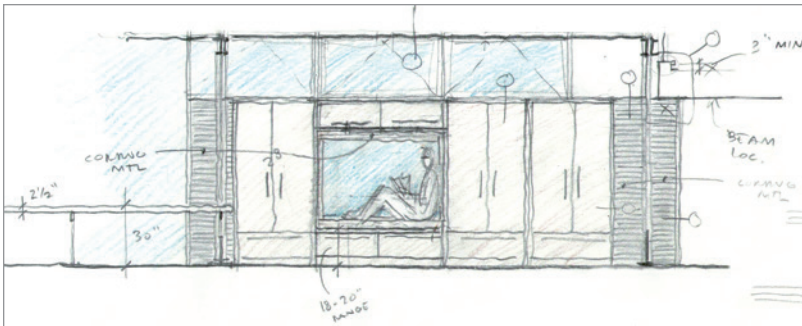
“In a kind of structural sleight of hand, the glass window wall comes tight to the underside of the thin eave framing,” David says. To pull off the illusion, a hidden steel beam carries the weight of that roof eave loaded with snow. “The spray foam under the roof deck fills the structure down to the bottom of this beam, allowing us to have a well-insulated roof while hiding our means of support,” he says. “We

*This page and opposite:* The wide, one-story plan places “night boxes” (bedrooms) at the north and south ends, with the day box (kitchen, living, dining) in the center. The fireplace’s steel surround pierces the roof to become the chimney cap.





This page, top to bottom: The flow of light is traced through the structure; a wall of built-ins near the entry has a window seat; the roof appears light and thin but is engineered to carry snow loads and conceal high-performance insulation.



## Box Camp

Northern Wisconsin

**ARCHITECT:** David O'Brien Wagner, AIA, principal in charge; Caitlin Dippo and Katie Leaf, AIA, project team, SALA Architects, Minneapolis

**BUILDERS:** Nick Allen, Handmade Homes; David Tworek, Tworek Construction, Hayward, Wisconsin

**INTERIOR DESIGNER:** SALA Architects and Diane Wright, Post House Interiors, Glencoe, Illinois

**LANDSCAPE DESIGN:** SALA Architects and Kelly Larsen, Winter Greenhouse, Winter, Wisconsin

**STRUCTURAL ENGINEERING:** ALIGN Structural, St. Paul, Minnesota

**PROJECT SIZE:** 2,400 square feet

**SITE SIZE:** 3 acres

**CONSTRUCTION COST:** Withheld

**PHOTOGRAPHY:** Paul Crosby Architectural Photography

### KEY PRODUCTS

**BATHROOM VENTILATION:** Panasonic

**COUNTERTOP:** Caesarstone

**ENTRY DOORS/HARDWARE/LOCKSETS:** Marvin, Simpson, Emtek

**EXTERIOR PAINTS/STAINS/COATINGS:** Cabot

**HOUSE WRAP:** Tyvek, VaproShield

**INTERIOR PAINTS/STAINS/COATINGS:** Farrow & Ball, Sherwin-Williams, Rubio Monocoat (cabinets)

**KITCHEN APPLIANCES:** KitchenAid

**LIGHTING:** Vista Lighting, Prescolite, MP Lighting

**LIGHTING CONTROL:** Lutron

**PLUMBING FIXTURES:** TOTO, Duravit, Grohe

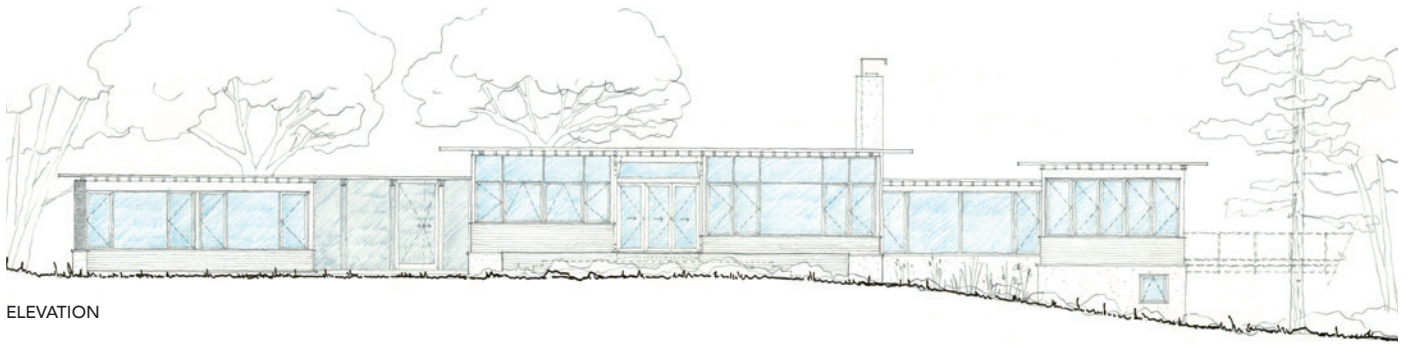
**RADIANT HEATING:** Uponor

**SCREENING SYSTEM:** Centor

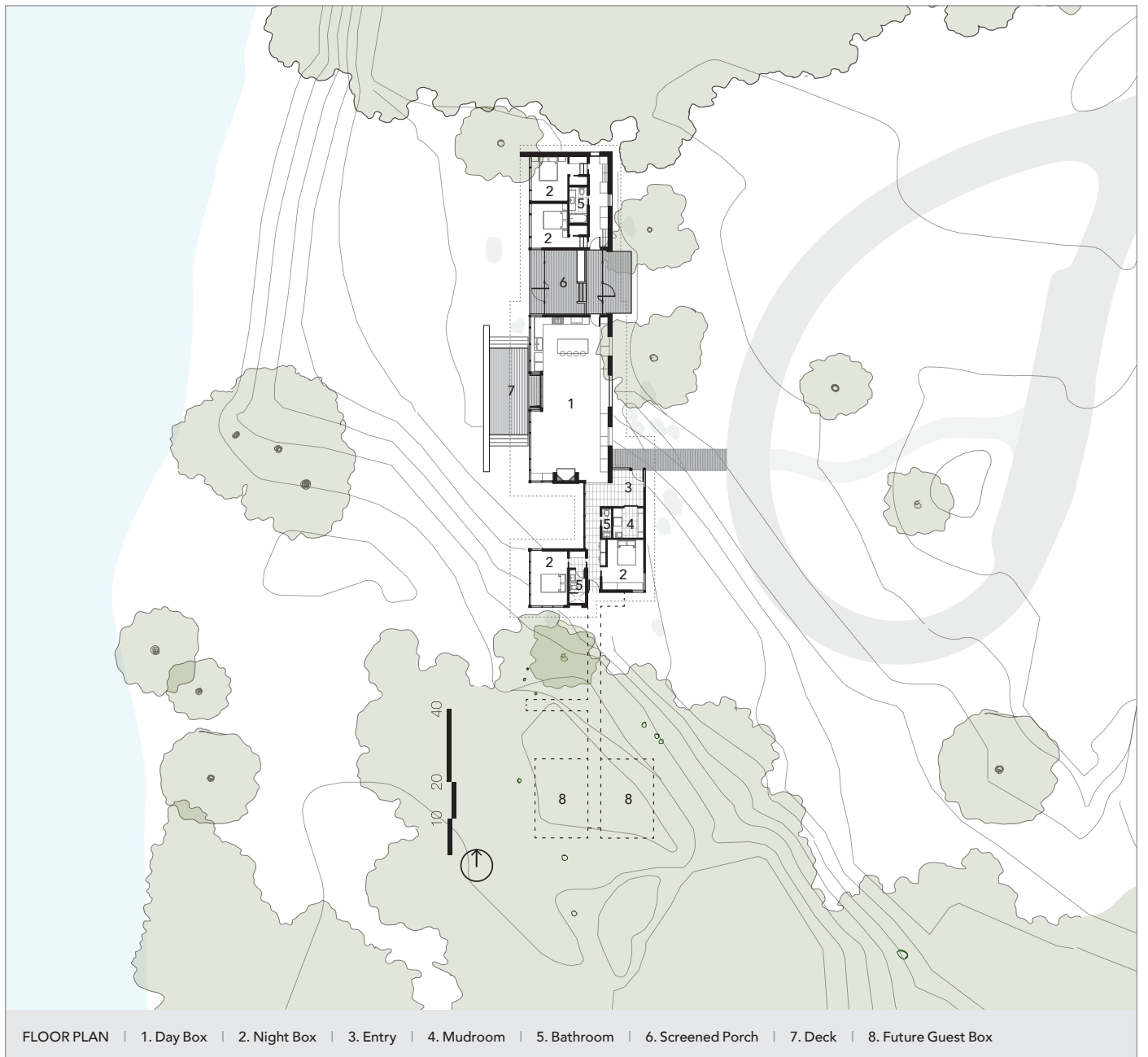
**WASHER/DRYER:** Whirlpool

**WINDOWS:** Marvin

**WINDOW SHADING:** Hunter Douglas



ELEVATION



FLOOR PLAN | 1. Day Box | 2. Night Box | 3. Entry | 4. Mudroom | 5. Bathroom | 6. Screened Porch | 7. Deck | 8. Future Guest Box



Black corrugated siding on the front elevation traces a shadowy frame for the glistening lake view.

minimized thermal bridging by having the insulation encapsulate the point of contact between structural members running north-south versus east-west underneath them.”

The use of columns and beams with double channels, rather than a flange, created an erector-set aesthetic where column-to-beam connections are finessed with flat steel plates and through-bolted connections. “You get a sense of daylight and views between two pieces of column,” David says. Builder Nick Allen’s crew executed this subtle architectural expression. “We were bolting three pieces together—

the base knife plate coming out of the concrete and C channels on either side holding the post,” Nick says. “Everything had to line up to within  $\frac{1}{32}$ -inch or the bolt wouldn’t go through.”

These decisions lend the building an industrial vibe. “We needed to stiffen the spaces between the large windows, so we turned what would have been the casing into a wind brace,” Nick says. “There were a lot of things like that where structure became part of the look of the interior.” On the C-shaped concrete fireplace, the blackened steel surround pierces the roof to become a weather cap for the chimney. The

material appears again on the kitchen backsplash, where it is a quiet complement to the gray quartz countertops and Douglas fir cabinets finished with an acid stain and soft gray wash.

The result of these thoughtful interfaces—between materials, between inside and out—is a comfortable and durable getaway where the family and their friends gather frequently—from Chicago, Minneapolis-St. Paul, and “all over the place,” David says. “It draws them back. It’s the grandkids they’re thinking about now, providing good spaces for everyone.”

—Cheryl Weber





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# Quahaug Point House

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WESTERLY, RHODE ISLAND  
ESTES TWOMBLY ARCHITECTS

**With a backyard sloping** down to Quonochontaug Pond, this house is in the enviable position of providing access to the Atlantic Ocean. In summer, the outdoorsy owners can load their coolers into a kayak and paddle across the pond to spend the day on the beach. Conceived as a multigenerational camp—a magnet for the couple’s four grown sons and grandkids—its main job is to be deeply involved with the outdoors.

Estes Twombly excels at such work. The firm is well known for its taut coastal houses rooted in the land and the modest forms of rural barns and fishing shacks. Like the Quahaug Point House, they often read as separate structures lightly connected by pergolas, walkways, or changes in roofline, inviting a view here, a breeze there. Low-upkeep materials, too, take cues from the regional vernacular, with the use of metal roofs, weathered cedar shingles, wood decks and connectors, and local stone.

Located in a wooded area, this house is set back from the road on a high point to capture views south across the pond to the ocean, says associate Adam Titrington, AIA, who took point on the commission. “The entry side has a beautiful forested feel, and the back, which had been previously cleared down to the water, has a lawn and naturally occurring boulders.” The clients, who live in Cambridge, Massachusetts, wanted a practical, hard-wearing house with a light footprint. “They’re an active family and love lawn games and cooking,” Adam says. “They wanted an indoor-outdoor house that they could leave open to the air as much as possible.”

*This page and opposite:* A family weekend house combines hard-wearing, low-maintenance materials with multiple indoor-outdoor spaces for gathering or grabbing a quiet moment alone.





*This page and opposite:* The plan is arranged to suggest an assemblage of buildings, like an old summer camp. Pulling the great room into its own volume allows it to open fully to light and views.

If there was a challenge, it was the narrow buildable area: a 140-foot-wide lot with a 40-foot setback on each side. The architects responded with a roughly L-shaped structure whose long, narrow, two-story bedroom wing runs north-south perpendicular to the road. The other volume, a one-story great room, forms a right-angle parallel to the view, opening to a screened porch and terraces on the south and west. “The bedroom wing protrudes forward because we wanted to keep the screened porch as open as possible and not impede views,” Adam says. “At the entry, you can see straight through between the wings to the water.”

The great’s room’s pitched roof provides a south-facing surface for the home’s 7kW-hour photovoltaic system, while a flat, planted roof joining the two volumes offsets energy use and manages rainwater. “The flat roof divides the massing,” Adam says. “The idea is that there are these smaller buildings







This page: The extended family loves to cook, and requested a space where all can pitch in and make a mess.



like a summer camp, connected in the landscape through paths.

The entry progression lies at the nexus of this programmatic shift. From the gravel parking court, a pergola and bluestone pathway lead alongside the bedroom wing to the front door. The bluestone stitches the house to the land by crossing the threshold and running through the foyer, sandwiched between the den and great room. From there it continues into the screened porch, which terminates the entry axis, before spilling out to bluestone terraces.

### Equal Access

Whatever the program's particulars, designing a family getaway is about putting the money on the public spaces. These practical clients thought so too. "They didn't want to overbuild, especially the bedrooms," Adam says. While the bedroom wing contains the master suite, a second en suite bedroom, and a third bedroom, downstairs the den flexes as another sleeping area or place to stash a crib. In an ideal setup, the clients own an existing cottage next door that absorbs any spillover, along with a yurt they erected.



*This page:* Key rooms are stretched along the water to capture views. The screened porch continues the path of bluestone flooring that began at the front entry. The south-facing great room optimizes placement of the 7kW solar array. The house heats and cools with a high-efficiency geothermal system.

With overnight needs addressed, the architects stretched the living and dining areas along the water. While the house's stone and shingles are regionally inspired, the great room's oversized sliders, steel windows and doors, and exposed steel tie rods add modern, pavilion-like elements. Asked for an ample working kitchen where "exuberant cooks" could make a mess, Adam sketched a space that is open to the great room but set back on the north, slightly offset from the living and dining area. A good-sized butler's kitchen and pantry is tucked around the corner, and a side door opens to the west terrace containing a grill and kitchen garden. The kitchen has two refrigerators—one is kept in the pantry—two dishwashers, and a wine rack incorporated into the large island, which functions as storage and a sideboard for entertaining. Washed-ash floors and ash veneer cabinetry match the materials used elsewhere in the house, and a gray-green tile backsplash adds a reflective pop of color.





With its abundance of light and cross-ventilation, the great room benefits from being a separate volume. Its south wall is all glass, with sliders that open directly to the terraces and the screened porch. “The sliders can be left open so the porch becomes part of the house,” Adam says.

These fluid indoor-outdoor spaces evolved as the landscape architect got on board. “There is almost equal entertaining space outside, and enough separate places for people to

do different activities such as eating, grilling, or reading, just like inside,” Adam says.

On the quieter eastern side, the screened porch leads out to a reading patio landscaped for privacy. An outdoor shower is here too, near the side laundry-room door behind the den—a convenient stopover for washing up after a day at the beach. “It’s the inversion of the typical mud-room, which is associated with cars at the front of house,” Adam says.

“The idea is that there are these smaller buildings like a summer camp, connected in the landscape through paths.”

—Adam Titrington, AIA



### Au Naturel

Judging by the number of boulders protruding from the earth, the construction crew expected to encounter a few more during excavation. But once digging commenced, they hit an almost solid wall of them. Talking to local excavators, they learned that when the foundation for the adjacent house was dug years ago, excavated boulders were buried on this property. Undaunted, “the clients challenged us to use as many as we could in the landscape,”

Adam says. In fitting contrast to their formal Cambridge garden, “the rocks are used as an obstacle course for croquet games on the lawn and integrated into terraces and along the entry.”

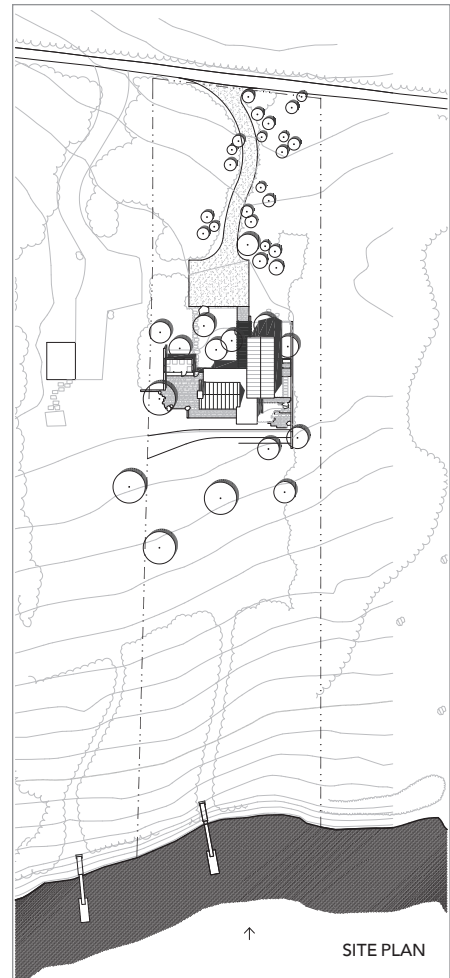
Indeed, the hump-backed boulders complement the building’s natural materials. Garapa was used to link the landscape elements. The great room is clad in a Garapa rainscreen that also wraps the kitchen garden fencing on the west, drawing the front façade out into the landscape. The wood also encloses

*This page and opposite: Familiar New England seaside materials—stone, cedar, and standing-seam metal—are honed to a crisp, modern edge. Some boulders on site were left in place, providing a natural, undulating counterpoint to the modern angularity.*





This page: Awning windows allow natural ventilation—even during summer downpours. An outdoor shower and adjacent mudroom place cleanup facilities near beach and pond activities, instead of the usual spot by the motor court.



## Quahaug Point House

Westerly, Rhode Island

**ARCHITECT:** Peter Twombly, AIA, principal in charge; Adam Titirington, AIA, project architect, Estes Twombly Architects, Newport, Rhode Island

**BUILDER:** Evergreen Building Systems, Stonington, Connecticut

**LANDSCAPE ARCHITECT:** Robyn Reed, studio cosmo, Baton Rouge, Louisiana

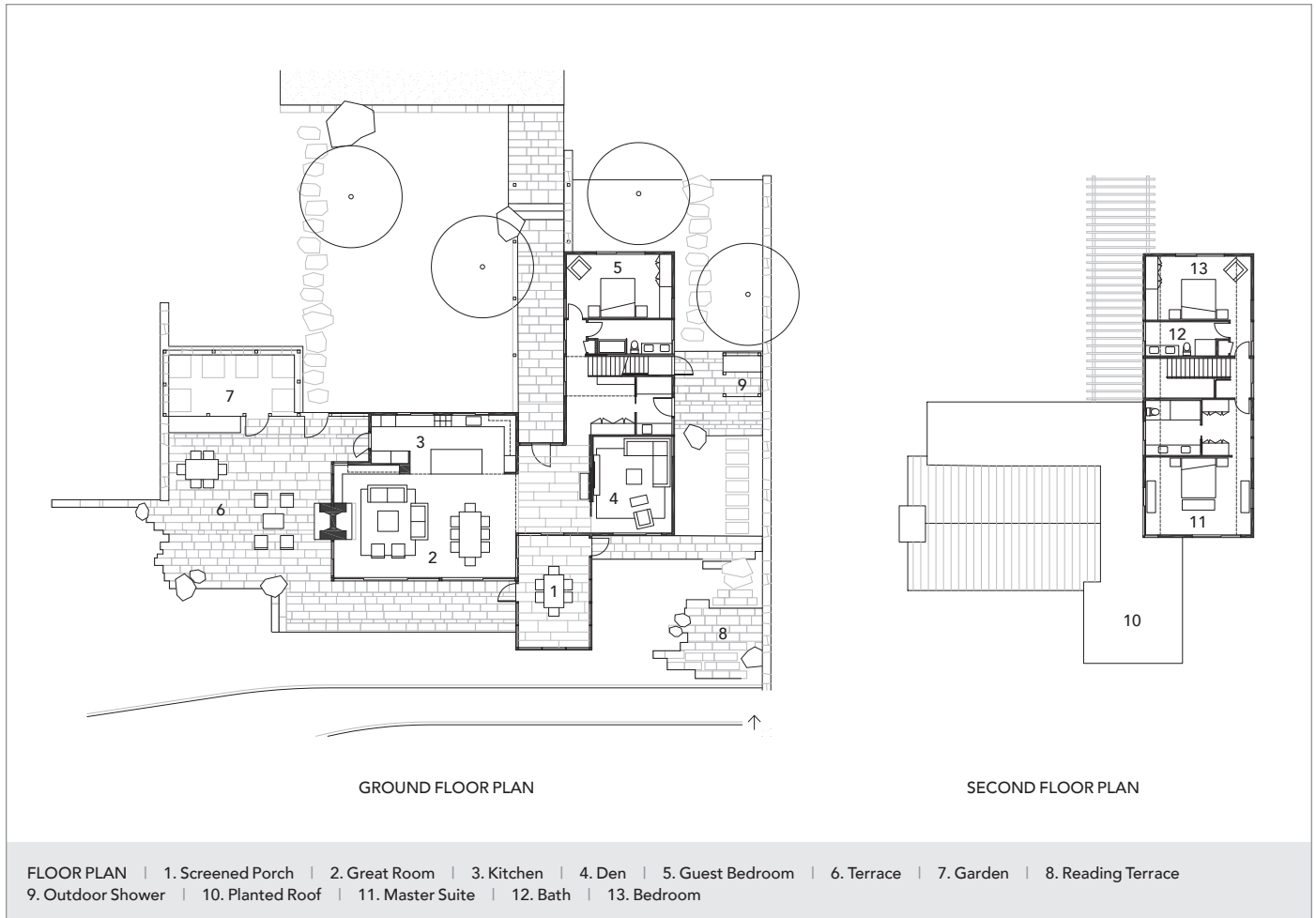
**LANDSCAPE CONTRACTOR:** Landscape Creations of Rhode Island, S. Kingston, Rhode Island

**PROJECT SIZE:** 3,000 square feet

**SITE SIZE:** 2 acres

**CONSTRUCTION COST:** Withheld

**PHOTOGRAPHY:** Warren Jagger Photography



**KEY PRODUCTS**

**CABINETS:** Custom rift ash

**CABINETS HARDWARE:** Sugatsune

**CLADDING:** Alaskan yellow cedar shingles, garapa rainscreen

**COUNTERTOPS:** Caesarstone, Corian

**DISHWASHER:** Bosch

**DOOR HARDWARE:** FSB levers, Accurate flush pulls and Hafele roller and track (pocket doors)

**ENTRY DOORS/WINDOWS/DOOR SYSTEMS:** Fleetwood

**GREEN ROOF SYSTEM:** LiveRoof

**INTERIOR DOORS:** Select Door, rift ash veneer

**KITCHEN FAUCETS:** Hansgrohe Focus HighArc, Dornbracht

**KITCHEN HOOD VENTILATION:** Broan

**LANDSCAPE PAVERS:** Thermal bluestone reclaimed granite curbing

**LANDSCAPE PRODUCTS:** Soapstone countertop, Garapa outdoor cabinetry and fencing, bluestone edging, Mexican river stone

**LIGHTING:** Hunza, Sonneman (exterior), Lucifer, Poulsen, Moooi (interior)

**LIGHTING CONTROL SYSTEMS:** Lutron

**MICROWAVE DRAWER:** Sharp

**PAINTS:** Benjamin Moore

**RANGE, OVENS:** Wolf

**REFRIGERATOR:** Sub-Zero

**ROOFING:** Englert standing seam

**SINKS:** Kohler, Fairmont

**SOLAR PANELS:** Newport Solar

**THERMAL AND MOISTURE BARRIERS:** VaproShield

**TILE:** Heath Tiles (kitchen backsplash), Quemere Designs (shower)

**TOILETS:** TOTO

**WINDOW SHADING SYSTEMS:** Lutron, Hunter Douglas



The home glows at night with welcoming light and warmth, as family life shifts inside for meal prep, dining, and games played around the hearth.

the outdoor shower. Durable Alaskan yellow cedar, left unfinished, clads the other walls, including the soffits. And the dark, standing-seam metal roof coordinates with the bronze anodized windows.

The design and detailing addressed the owners' request for a modern-looking home with low operating costs. "Historically, coastal homes in our area have been Shingle-style in the Robert Stern tradition, but we're starting to see more transitional designs with streamlined, contemporary interiors," says builder Tim O'Neill,

**"It was . . . one of those special projects where everyone was engaged and on the same page."**

—Adam Titington, AIA

a partner at Evergreen Building Systems. "Good air sealing, closed-cell spray foam, flashing, and providing for drainage planes with the rainscreen detail are critical to long-term durability." In addition to the photovoltaic system,

O'Neill installed a high-efficiency geothermal heating and cooling system, and a car charging station anchors the permeable parking court.

Not only are geothermal systems resource-efficient, they eliminate the need for unsightly and potentially noisy condensers outside the house, adding to its unencumbered, wash-and-wear appeal. For Adam, the project's success reflected the strength of the team. "It was a great process, one of those special projects where everyone was engaged and on the same page," he says.

—Cheryl Weber



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# Makani Eka

KONA, HAWAII

WALKER WARNER ARCHITECTS

**Passing through the** low gate from the motor court to the Makani Eka compound on Hawaii's Big Island subtly prepares visitors for what they will find inside. The wood-and-steel gates are utilitarian rectangles, but the inner edge of each side has a canted wedge of wood and a correspondingly canted hardware plate. They strike a jaunty midcentury vibe, coupled with a touch of California's craft-intensive regional modernism. We know immediately that the house beyond is no bland vacation box. And, indeed, it isn't. Those who thrive on right angles and tidy perpendiculars need not venture in.

"This is not your typical resort programmed house," notes Greg Warner, AIA, principal in charge of the project on Hawaii's Kona Coast. "Everything about this project is almost crooked—diagonal lines and trapezoids. If you look at the pattern of the old, indigenous fishing villages here, nothing is square, and the collage of all the elements creates an abstracted mix."

Greg and project architect David Shutt (who has since opened his own firm) scoured the island for inspiration and antecedents for this 1½-acre vaca-



*This page and opposite:* Wooden gates with angled edge pieces hint at the architectural memes and influences beyond.



*This page:* To honor the history of an old jeep road down to the ocean, the team cleaved the program into haies, the Hawaiian word for rooms or buildings, to form a compound. The imperfections of rough-hewn basalt and cowboy concrete set the tone for the casual, unfussy lifestyle in paradise.

tion home in a resort-supported enclave. “The house didn’t need to be highly programmed. As a vacation home, it didn’t have to be burdened by a full program. The client spends about 50 percent of his time here and wanted a place where friends and family could come stay. He wanted something different, so we were looking to break the rules a little bit,” Greg explains. “We looked at everything—old dilapidated sugar cane mills and those ancient fishing villages. There’s one that’s been preserved, adjacent to a state park. It’s really just a bunch of lean-tos—just basic shelter. Out of that came some conceptual ideas about creating a little village, a place to be.”





*This page:* Jaunty angles frame selective views for the buildings. Openings are recessed under deep overhangs for shade from the strong sun. A koi pond brings a water element closer to home.

Layered into the village concept were some images and memories from Greg's past. He grew up in Hawaii before moving to Northern California's Bay area, and attended high school in a building designed by one of the state's most notable architects, Vladimir Ossipoff. Ossipoff's aesthetic was a melting pot of his Russian heritage, time spent in Japan, his education at UC Berkeley, and the modernist wave of the last century. He filtered these influences into dozens of commercial, civic, and residential buildings across the islands during a career that spanned more than 50 active years, from the 1930s through the 1980s.





*This page:* Living, dining, and kitchen occupy one central building. In a somewhat unusual move, the kitchen is placed at the back to preserve the best views for the living area. Off the kitchen are curated outdoor areas that provide their own pleasing vantage.



*This page:* A separate building contains the master suite and home office, but, in another turnabout, the office has the prime water views. Steel columns evoke the ancient lean-tos of local fishermen.

### Natural Persistence

When Greg and David began the heavy lifting of preparing the site for their village plan, their first order of business was to restore a measure of topography to the land. The developer had flattened it for ease of construction. The team was not interested in the path of least resistance, but in weaving the island’s natural beauty and contours into a “rule breaking” building: a casual, durable, flexible house purpose-built for immersion in this paradisiacal place.

An actual path figured into the site planning, as well. An old jeep road once wound down the hill to the water; it was a feature the team wanted to preserve and invoke in a respectful way. “The property was ranch land, and the road led down to the bay below this house,”

says Greg. “There’s a tradition here that you can’t disturb the path of ancestors. So we decided to leave the middle of the property open where it had been.”

The path created a “central spine” that enabled the architects to cleave the program into separate pieces—four in total—all benefiting from their unique positioning. The team calls the separate pieces “hales”—the Hawaiian word for house or building. There’s a living hale with dining and kitchen, a combination master bedroom and office hale, another for guests, and one that serves as a recreation space with room for additional overnight visitors.

As promised by those front gates, these structures defy resort convention. Each building torques to capture views for prime areas and to channel





*This page:* Although the master suite offers only glimpses of ocean view, the master bathroom is a private oasis with a sheltered outdoor soaking tub.

precious trade winds. Roofs bend and bow for shade and privacy, and support columns splay like those fishing lean-tos—or the popular coconut trees everyone plants in their yards here. The intellectual exercise of architectural appropriation morphs into something vibrant and seemingly organic. The house becomes as alive and dynamic as the landscape around it. Like the lava flows that formed the ground below, movement is frozen into a static state of motion.

“The two most important forces on the island are sun and wind,” says Greg. “Pulling apart the plan allows every part to benefit from them. Here, the central spine has no buildings, so our

challenge—or opportunity—was to create connectivity among the buildings.”

Swaths of concrete flooring and paths are the new connective tissue, serving as de facto hallways among “rooms,” despite the fact that they move indoors and outside. Exterior spaces are curated into destinations of their own—a built-in dining banquette, the de rigeur koi pond, an outdoor bathing pavilion off the master, multiple spaces for covered dining and lounging, a pool and spa, a bocce court. There are myriad areas for advance and retreat in response to the daily course of nature. These spaces descend the hill into the view, allowing each elevation its own artful frame of ocean, mountains, greenery.





Deep overhangs provide shelter from the sun for outdoor lounging. Concrete flooring indoors and outdoors connects the spaces in a continuous flow. The old jeep trail is now a central spine that organizes and links the compound's buildings.



“The client wanted something different, so we were looking to break the rules a little bit.”

—Greg Warner, AIA

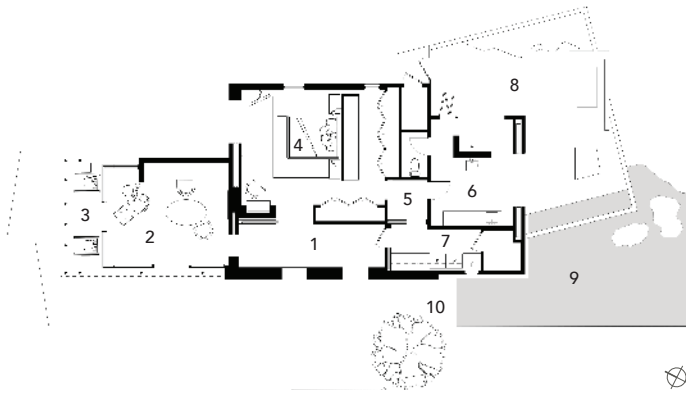
Pulling apart the buildings was one key to reinventing the stereotypical vacation home program, another was removing the obligation of certain rooms to deliver showstopping views. For instance, the kitchen gains its glimpse of ocean only through the living room. And the master bedroom has just a “shotgun” slice of ocean prospect, so the client’s office can occupy the prime spot. “What that does is activate other spaces,” says Greg. “The living hall and the lanai get the premier seat on the view. The kitchen is in the back, but that activates the spaces behind it—the dining area and the courtyard.”

Delight can derive from vignettes of nature and ephemeral slivers of beauty—a tease of something precious is sometimes more powerful than a full display, front and center. There’s a thrill in the discovery of the small, savory morsel.

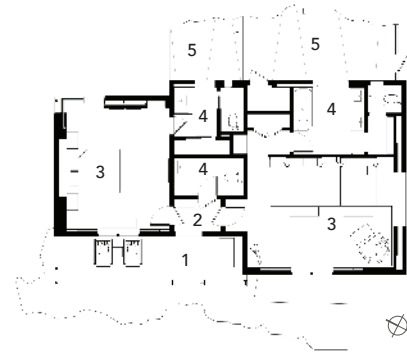
Desirable locations are often harsh as well, and this one is no exception.



This page: The pulled apart program gives water views to spaces that would otherwise stay landlocked, such as the guest house and recreation building that front the roadside of the property. The recreation building has flexibility to handle overflow guests.



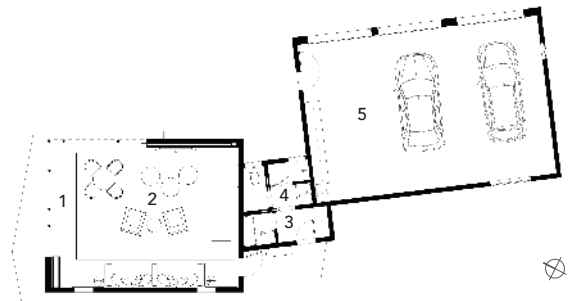
MASTER BEDROOM HALE FLOOR PLAN | 1. Entry Vestibule | 2. Library/Office  
3. Lanai | 4. Bedroom | 5. Hall | 6. Master Bath | 7. Utility/Storage  
8. Private Garden/Outdoor Bathtub | 9. Koi Pond | 10. Monkey Pod Tree



GUEST HALE FLOOR PLAN | 1. Lanai | 2. Vestibule | 3. Bedroom  
4. Bathroom | 5. Private Garden/Outdoor Shower



LIVING HALE FLOOR PLAN | 1. Lanai | 2. Living Room | 3. Hall | 4. Wet Bar  
5. Kitchen/Dining | 6. Powder Room



RECREATION HALE & GARAGE FLOOR PLAN | 1. Lanai | 2. Recreation Room  
3. Dressing Room | 4. Bathroom | 5. Garage



SITE PLAN | 1. Driveway | 2. Auto Court | 3. Outdoor Dining & Kitchen | 4. Koi Pond | 5. Axial Monkeypod Tree | 6. Activity Lawn With Ocean View  
7. Pool/Spa | 8. Fire Pit | 9. Bocce Court | 10. Lava Field | 11. Garage/Recreation Room | 12. Living Hale | 13. Master Bedroom Hale | 14. Guest Hale





So the team carefully selected materials for their ability to weather and age with dignity. Cedar, steel, locally sourced basalt, “cowboy” concrete revel in roughness—their imperfections mirroring the frayed beauty of the natural world. “The pattern in wood is not regular, nor is it in stone,” says Greg. “That gives everything and everyone the freedom to be more relaxed. It’s a vacation home, you shouldn’t have to worry about it.”

All the worry happened behind the scenes, with David Shutt doing yeoman’s work on the modeling, perfecting the improvisational look of the architecture. “That’s the artistry and brilliance of David’s designs,” says Greg. “He worked extremely closely on the project from concept through completion.”

It takes a village to evoke a village, and there were many talented contributors to this project from architecture to interiors, landscape, engineering and construction. Nonetheless, the resulting house appears effortless, humble, exuberant. It dances lightly across the site, borrowing and returning its small measure of paradise. —*S. Claire Conroy*



*Opposite and this page:* The site steps down toward the ocean, a feature the architects mined for more outdoor destinations—a fire pit, a bocce court, and a pool below. You can almost hear the old jeeps motoring down the hill for a fire and cookout on the beach.

## Makani Eka

Kona, Hawaii

**ARCHITECT:** Greg Warner, AIA, principal in charge; David Shutt, senior project manager/architect; Rob Campodonico, Rina Wiedenhoef, Anja Hämäläinen, job captains; Boyce Postma, designer, Walker Warner Architects, San Francisco

### CONSTRUCTION CONTRACT

**ADMINISTRATION:** David Shutt Architecture, East Bay, California

**BUILDER:** Oakes Management, Hawaii, Hawaii

**INTERIOR DESIGNER:** Philpotts Interiors, Honolulu, Hawaii

**LANDSCAPE ARCHITECT:** David Y. Tamura Associates, Hilo, Hawaii

**LIGHTING CONSULTANT:** Lighting & Engineering Integrated, Honolulu

**STRUCTURAL ENGINEER:** Hayes Structural Design, Honolulu

**MECHANICAL ENGINEER:** Mark Morrison Mechanical Engineering, Kailua-Kona, Hawaii

**CIVIL ENGINEER:** Kona Wai Engineering, Kailua-Kona

**WOODWORK:** Arc Wood & Timbers, San Rafael, California; Na Kalai La’au Woodshop, Kailua-Kona

**PROJECT SIZE:** 4,800 square feet

**SITE SIZE:** 1.5 acres

**PHOTOGRAPHY:** Michael Millman Photography

### KEY PRODUCTS

**COOKTOP:** Wolf

**ENTRY DOORS:** Sun Valley Bronze

**EXTERIOR DOORS:** Quantum, Tradewind Door

**EXTERIOR LIGHTING:** Beachside Lighting

**INTERIOR DOORS:** Western Pacific Building Materials

**OVENS:** Miele

**PAINT:** Benjamin Moore

**ROOFING:** Western red cedar shingles

**TUB:** Concrete Works

**WINDOWS/WINDOW SYSTEMS:** Quantum, Caoba Doors

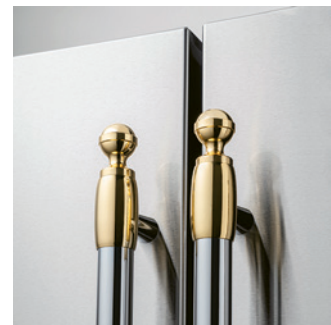
# High Style



1



2



4



3



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The global appliance giant BSH Home Appliances, better known as Bosch, introduces its first pro-style range and cooktop. The 800 series offers a dual-fuel option and 30-inch or 36-inch sizes. [Bosch.us](http://Bosch.us)  
Circle 101 on inquiry card.

### 2. LOCK 'EM UP

The new PD96 auto-latching, auto-locking mortise lock from INOX works on sliding doors, passage doors, and entry doors. It's made of 304 stainless steel to withstand commercial-level use. [Unisonhardware.com](http://Unisonhardware.com)  
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### 4. ITALIAN TAILORING

Like a Barbie Doll for culinary enthusiasts, Bertazzoni's new line of swappable "decor sets"—handles, knobs, and finials—allows Heritage Series range, vent hood, and refrigerator owners to customize their kitchens. [Bertazzoni.com](http://Bertazzoni.com)  
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5

#### 5. LIGHTING THE WAY

Kohler's new line of lighting fixtures complements its venerable plumbing and kitchen products. Six style collections include Artifacts, Damask, Simpalo, Components, and Modern Farm.

Kohler.com

Circle 105 on inquiry card.



6

#### 6. GREAT PRETENDERS

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Formica.com

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## ADVERTISER'S INDEX

ADVERTISER	CIRCLE NO.	PAGE NO.
Chief Architect	2	4-5
Hope's Windows	24	88
Humboldt Sawmill Company	23	87
Imperial Cal. Products, Inc.	20	84
In-O-Vate Technologies, Inc.	4, 19	8, 83
Kalamazoo Outdoor Gourmet	11, 12	20, 21
Kolbe Windows & Doors	8	15
Marvin Windows and Doors	18	69
Merchandise Mart	13	22
Mid-Atlantic Timber Frames	5	9
NanaWall Systems, Inc.	6	11
Pella	14, 15	28, 29
Petersen Aluminum	3, 22	6, 85
ProVia, LLC	9	17
SoftPlan Systems, Inc.	21	85
Spark Modern Fires	10	18
VERSATEX Building Products, LLC	7	12
Vintage View	17	57
Western Window Systems	1	2-3
Windsor Windows & Doors	16	43

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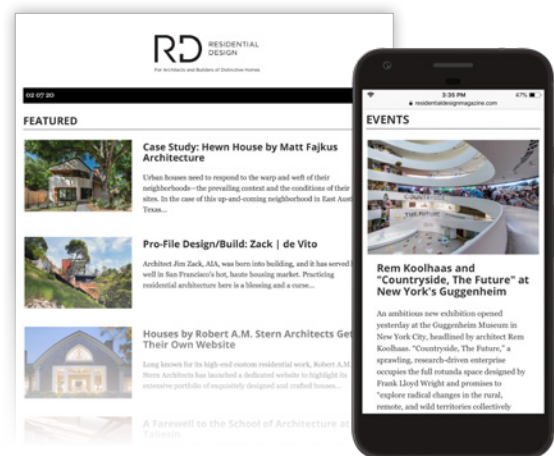
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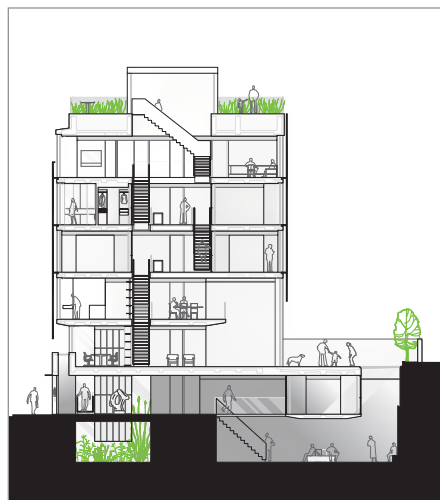
**No one would dispute** that having your own townhouse in New York City is a supreme luxury. And yet, while we retain a special affection for the classic New York brownstone, the building is not without some vexing flaws: dark interiors, choppy flow, and precious square footage sacrificed to circulation.

“It’s such a strong typology here, most of us could navigate it with our eyes closed,” says architect Andrea Steele, AIA. “Rooms take up two thirds of the floor plate. The façades are all punched windows. And the main stair is pulled to a party wall side. So much valuable real estate is sacrificed to the process of running up and down the stairs.”

When Andrea’s client approached the firm with an ambitious program and an ample budget, ASA set about rethinking the townhouse typology from the ground up—or, more precisely, from below ground up to the sky. The first element to go was that party wall stair, which the architects moved to the center of the structure. “We tried as best we could to create a courtyard building,” she says.

Next to go were those punched openings. “We peeled them away and created a dual skin façade—operable window systems that facilitate passive cooling and a screen that mitigates solar heat gain and provides privacy,” she explains. An even more dramatic move was raising the backyard to tuck in a glass pavilion suspended under a walkable skylight. It answered the buyer’s request for a “carriage house for mother” and solved a zoning constraint against building to the rear property line.

The multilevel, reinvented townhouse weaves nature, light, and controlled views to the outdoors into nearly every space, while also creating a visually striking example of urban residential architecture. —*S. Claire Conroy*



Project: Chelsea Townhouse, New York; architect: Andrea Steele, AIA, principal in charge; project team: Gisela Vidalle, Sam Rosen, Elsa Ponce, Sara de Miguel, Noy Ramon, Sabine Valenga, Andrew Vichosky, Andrea Steele Architecture, New York; builder: J. Petrocelli Contracting Inc., Ronkonkoma, New York; project size: 10,000 square feet; site size: 2002 square feet; illustrations: Andrea Steele Architecture

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