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VOL. 4, 2022

Vacation in Mind

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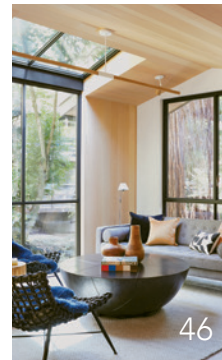
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Welcome to Volume 4 of *Residential Design* magazine. We are the only national professional publication devoted to residential architects and custom builders. We're dedicated to providing you with expert insight and substantive information on high-end residential design and construction.

Our print edition is published every other month. And our newsletter is published twice a month. If you are not already a subscriber and would like to be, please go online to: ResidentialDesignMagazine.com/subscribe.

If you have an exceptional single-family residential project you'd like us to write about, or an interesting and instructive business story you'd like to share with other professionals, please email Claire@SOLAbRANDS.com.

We look forward to having you join our *Residential Design* community.

RD

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Vacation at Home



If there's one house I really miss, it's a weekend home I had in the Virginia Blue Ridge a few years back. Part of what I loved about the place were the rural surroundings—views of Old Rag Mountain and its undulating neighbors in the chain. (The mountains really do appear blue-tinged from a distance because of the isoprene emitted by spruce and fir trees.) But what was truly wonderful about the house was how it immersed you in views—both long-range and close by.

The house achieved this with walls of windows on three sides of its great room. There was a deep back porch that filtered the western sun, and another deep front porch that titrated the southern exposure. The room had a double-height living area at the center, then the ceiling dropped over the flanking dining and fireside sitting areas. We called the central zone the cocktail lounge, because it felt social and celebratory, while the dining and sitting areas were far more intimate and cozy—all this in just one well-planned room.

The house was built by an interior designer and a builder for themselves, and they knew what they were doing. Sure, there were some flaws, but they got the major moves just right. Floor planning really is everything, and it goes wrong in so many houses. As we know, it's among the most expensive aspects of a house to fix later on. The biggest mistake? Windows in just one direction.

Every now and then, I pine for another weekend home in the mountains. And then I remember the terrible traffic getting to and from. I recall the exorbitant carrying costs of two houses, and the stress of trying to maintain them both. Unless you have deep pockets and can hire everything done for you, you spend all that imagined relaxation time pulling hard labor at each location. (Although I do admit I enjoyed mowing the rural lawn with the tractor.)

What's the answer to this vacation house craving if you don't want to or can't afford to own more than one property? This issue of RD offers a solution—design your primary home as if it were a vacation house. Did my weekend place require those long-range mountain views to wield its power over me? Actually, the closer view of the pond and its paper birch trees was more bewitching; and a favorite reading chair nestled by the fire was the best place on earth come wintertime.

The houses we feature in this issue are located in beautiful places, but most are full-time residences. And if you examine their key features, it's clear to see they would still lift the spirits even without their long-range vistas. A curated view of a garden, courtyard, or stand of trees would do the trick, too. Humans crave nature and natural light, but also shelter and protection. We don't need to spend hours on the highway every weekend to find the prospect and refuge we seek.

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

S. Claire Conroy
Editor-in-Chief
claire@SOLAbands.com



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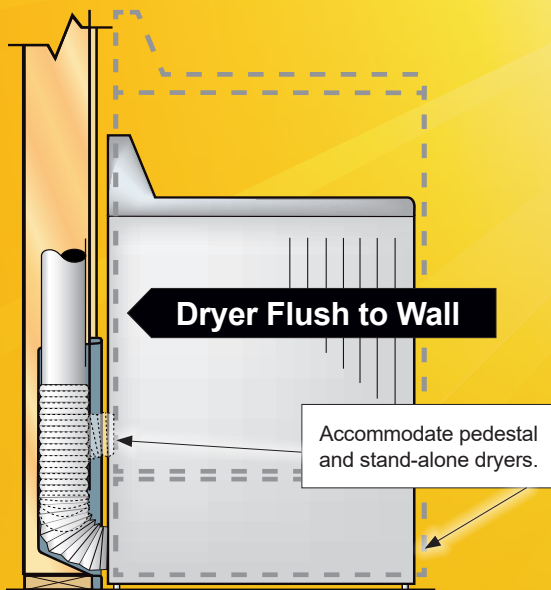
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The Annual AIA CRAN Symposium Returns in Person

BY AIA CRAN

After a two-year hiatus, the Custom Residential Architects Symposium [CRAN] returns to an in-person live event at the historic Intercontinental Chicago Magnificent Mile hotel. The opening cocktail reception takes place Thursday, September 8, at 5:30 p.m., and we close with a luncheon on Sunday, the 11th. Please see the CRAN website at AIA.org for more information.

This year's symposium is taking place in a world transformed and one still very much in transition. A speaker at the last live symposium in 2019, Jennifer Kretschmer, AIA, introduced us to her practice of a fully remote workforce. It was then a new frontier, and for many in the audience, it may have been an almost inconceivable idea. Today, remote working is a staple of our lives. Architects like Jennifer, who see just a little further over the horizon, make the CRAN Symposium what it is. And this year's group of speakers is no different. As



Stuart Cohen, FAIA

always, the CRAN Symposium is where we celebrate our profession's shared experiences, the uniqueness of our career paths, and, indeed, our ingenuity.

With the great city of Chicago as a backdrop, the educational sessions will center on topics such as sustainable preservation and detailing, Midcentury Modern design, helping underserved communities, construction administration and risk management, and an exploration into Chicago's role in developing American residential architecture.

Stuart Cohen, FAIA, will lead us off with a presentation on understanding Chicago's residential architecture, from the invention of the balloon frame to Frank Lloyd Wright, Mies van der Rohe, and the others who have shaped our practices and our world. Stuart is well known to the CRAN community. His work and the work of his firm, Stuart Cohen & Julie Hacker Architects, has been published and



Frank Lloyd Wright's Robie House is one of the highlights of this year's symposium house tour. The tour will feature historic houses and new work.

exhibited nationally and internationally. Stuart has received awards for design excellence from *Progressive Architecture* magazine, *Interiors* magazine, the American Institute of Architects, and the American Wood Council. Cohen was a faculty member at the University of Illinois, Chicago, from 1973 to 2002 and is currently a full professor of architecture emeritus. He has been a visiting professor and guest lecturer at universities throughout the country, including Harvard, Columbia, The University of Pennsylvania, and Notre Dame.



Susan Benjamin

Susan Benjamin and Lee Bey will follow Stuart with their study of Chicago's Great Modern Houses, from Chatham to Waukegan. Susan will present stories of Chicago's great Modernist houses. Susan is the co-author of "Modern in the Middle," and Lee Bey authored "Modern Exposure: The Overlooked Architecture of Chicago's South Side." Susan is a noted historic preservationist and published architectural historian based in Chicago. Her office, Benjamin Historic Certifications, has initiated the landmarking of notable historic buildings of all periods in Chicago and throughout Illinois. Lee Bey is a photographer, writer, lecturer, and



Lee Bey

consultant who documents and interprets the built environment—and the often complex political, social, and racial forces that shape spaces and places. His writing on architecture and urban design has been featured in *Architect*, *Chicago* magazine, *Architectural Record*, and many news outlets. His photography has appeared in *Chicago Architect*, *Old House Journal*, *CITE*, and in international design publications, including *Bauwelt* and *Modulør*.

Also on the agenda is Deon Lucas, AIA, NOMA. Deon is the managing partner of Beehyve and president of E.G. Woode. He is responsible for establishing the firm's creative strategy and developing budgets and schedules for key design projects. The practice of Beehyve, L3 is an architecture design collective helping underserved communities. Deon will present Beehyve's work as a social impact accelerator and a business that creates opportunities for families, entrepreneurs, and small businesses to thrive.

Eric Singer and Melissa S. Roberts will discuss construction administration and risk management against the backdrop of residential architecture. Melissa is a professional



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Another stop on the tour is Crab Tree Farm, a showplace of work by notable architects of the past and a new building and master plan by Vinci Hamp.

liability insurance broker. Eric is a construction lawyer and litigator. He is a member of the ABA Forum on Construction Law, the Society of Illinois Construction Attorneys, and the ISBA Construction Section Council. He is an Affiliate Member of the American Institute of Architects, AIA Chicago, and AIA Northeast Illinois. This discussion will highlight examples from actual claims and contract provisions to help manage risk in our practices.

The symposium will also feature Christine Williamson, AIA. Christine has spent her career in building science forensics, discovering why buildings fail and working with owners, architects, and builders to remedy the problems. She is the founder of the Instagram account *BuildingScienceFightClub*, an educational project that teaches architects about building science and construction. The site has more than 95,000 followers, and for a good reason, as it engages and informs. Christine graduated from Princeton University and received her Master's of Architecture from NewSchool of Architecture & Design. She is past chair of ASHRAE Technical Committee 1.12, Moisture Management in Buildings, and is a frequent lecturer on building science at universities and professional conferences. Christine will present the small design adjustments that architects can make to disproportionately improve comfort and energy efficiency in residential design.

Bonnie McDonald and Nate Kipnis, FAIA, will discuss sustainable design practices through improving the performance of vintage homes. They will present the challenges of balancing existing conditions, code requirements, budget, and the commitment to saving a 1907 vintage home. Nate, of Kipnis Architecture + Planning, is joined by clients who have a

proven commitment to the environment and preserving history. Rounding out the symposium is a dialogue on Chicago's role in the development of American architecture by three Chicago architects: Celeste Robbins, AIA, Tom Shafer, AIA, and Michael Graham. The history of American architecture runs through Chicago from the Prairie School architects to Ludwig Mies van der Rohe, Howard Van Doren Shaw, and David Adler. The architects with different approaches and residential projects will present their work, followed by a panel discussion.

Of course, the symposium will feature tours of some of Chicago's iconic residential architecture. The tour selection offers a comparison not only between historic and contemporary structures and design but also between urban and suburban approaches to design. The home tour will include visits to Frank Lloyd Wright's Robie House, H. H. Richardson's Glessner House, Crab Tree Farm by Vinci Hamp Architects, as well as several contemporary homes. There are a host of networking dinners and a special evening of drinks and hors d'oeuvres aboard a glass-ceilinged riverboat while touring the city from the river.

CRAN welcomes back colleagues, sponsors, and friends. Looking past the sessions and events, it's the architects who come here who make this event so special. Whether our colleagues are across the street or across the country, the trials and travails of being a custom residential architect are identical. And so are the joys of this remarkably unique profession. Here at the symposium, we come to share those moments, learn from one another, and compare the notes of our professional journeys.

We look forward to seeing you in Chicago. 

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From Spec to Bespoke

ART HOUSE
KANSAS CITY, MISSOURI
FORWARD DESIGN | ARCHITECTURE



Historic overlays govern many neighborhoods across the country, prescribing and proscribing many characteristics of new home construction and remodels. The one that had dominion over this new urban home near Kansas City, Missouri's Country Club Plaza district was, mercifully, a little looser than most. The gist for any new construction here was that it had to complement the traditional fabric of the area, known for its historic Tudors developed by J.C. Nichols.

Chris Fein, AIA, of FORWARD Design | Architecture embraced the challenge, because he knew he had a rare opportunity. He was commissioned to design not just one, but two side-by-side urban houses in the marquee neighborhood. "The way the neighborhood was planned, there were to be eight big houses that face a park," he explains. "These were the last two lots in the development and they had to be



A double-height great room lends an expansive feel to the house on a tight urban lot. Custom built-ins add storage, art display opportunities, and a richly crafted, bespoke look.



This page: Visible from below and from the bridge, the three-sided gallery on the second floor displays more of the clients' notable collection. The exterior's brick cladding comes inside to form the fireplace hearth. Door trim was a feat of triple-mitered fold pieces.

developed together. Our client, a commercial architect by training who runs a construction company, had to buy both lots and build within a year. People had tried to do this in the past, but the historical overlay required full permit drawings to the city before building.”

Ready, set, go. Chris and his client hit the ground running, with the client taking on one house as his own personal home and planning the second one as a spec. “It was a three-month

whirlwind to design two front exteriors,” says Chris. “Once we got approval, we just continued developing the plans. Along the way, the spec house became a bespoke house.”

The major benefit to designing both houses simultaneously manifested itself in the space between the houses. First and foremost, the two could share the required stair down to the park, saving important square footage on the tight lots. And, at every design point, both houses could be optimized for privacy outdoors and inside. Controlling fenestration on both houses elevated both plans. “There was an architecture professor who once said, ‘there’s always an ugly side to a house,’” says Chris. “Sharing the resources on both houses kept that from happening here.”

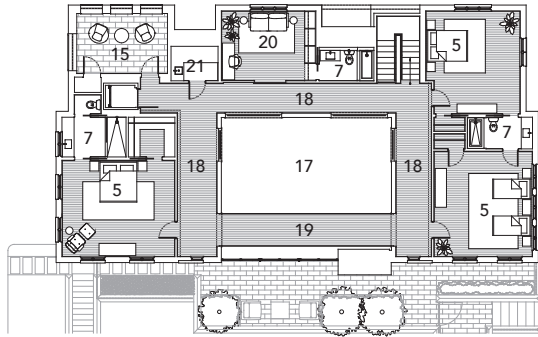
The historic overlay drove the exterior designs to an extent, but Chris and the team were free to design anything the clients wanted inside. The developer client chose an edgy modern scheme for his house, but the new buyers for this house sought a warmer aesthetic. They also asked for more outdoor space, at the ground level and on the second level. That was a trick because, although the interiors were not detailed yet, Chris had already worked out the floor plans.

“They came from a house with more outdoor space, and even though this is an urban house, they wanted more outdoor living,” Chris recalls. “So, we flipped the primary suite and swapped the service areas for the public areas.” The swaps netted two covered porches, an enlarged screened porch with a hot tub, and a patio—all blissfully private. We removed a bunch of interior square footage, but it became outdoor space. At first it bugged us, because it messed up the diagram of the house. But I’m a firm believer in restraint makes work better. Sometimes you think you know what’s best, but when you have to design with a client, it usually ends up better.”

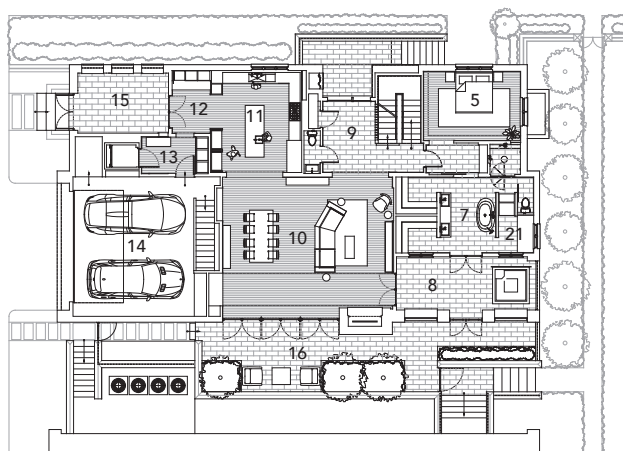
Inside Story

Interiors strike a happy middle ground between modern and traditional. The exterior’s required brick comes inside at the hearth wall, but smooth, warm woods lighten the heft. Rift-sawn white oak floors, ceilings, and trim combine

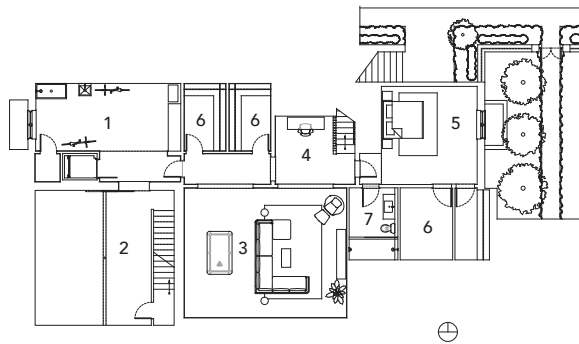
SECOND FLOOR



GROUND FLOOR



BASEMENT



FLOOR PLAN | 1. Workshop | 2. Mechanical | 3. Family Room | 4. Study | 5. Bedroom | 6. Storage | 7. Bathroom | 8. Screened Porch | 9. Entry | 10. Living | Dining | 11. Kitchen | 12. Scullery | 13. Mudroom | 14. Garage | 15. Covered Porch | 16. Patio | 17. Open to Below | 18. Gallery | 19. Bridge | 20. Office | 21. Laundry



This page: After plans had been blessed by historic review, the clients asked the architect for more outdoor space. He worked it into terraces and patios.



with white plaster walls in the double-height great room. A thermally broken, floor-to-ceiling window wall in steel is a modern nod to the drafty metal windows of midcentury neo-Tudors.

The window wall is another beneficiary of the two-fer house design. Yes, the developer's house has windows that face it, but they are placed toward the top of a double-height space. Although the buildings are just 15 feet apart, privacy is preserved for both, even when these owners cross the second-level bridge.

From the bridge, the owners can gaze instead at the second-level gallery space, which Chris worked in to accommodate

"I'm a firm believer in restraint makes work better. Sometimes you think you know what's best, but when you have to design with a client, it usually ends up better."

—Chris Fein, AIA

their extensive art collection. The compact great room could only squeeze in a select few pieces, and they wanted more display areas. "We redeveloped to space to give them a three-sided gallery. And it kept the great room from getting too big," says Chris. "You can make small spaces that entertain well, and you can have a large space that doesn't feel good."

Pirouette in the great room and you'll notice that no two walls are alike. For instance, Chris conquered the age-old problem of TV versus fireplace by locating them perpendicular to each other on separate walls. The TV has its own subtle niche above a custom oak credenza topped in absolute black granite and backed



The kitchen is as intricately planned as a yacht's galley, with storage deftly concealed behind thickened walls. The island is a jewel box of Corian and steel.



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The brick façade connects to context (a beloved neighborhood of Tudor-style houses), while the entry's custom pivot door and hand-glazed tile hint at surprises to come. Interiors lean decidedly modern, but with a level of craft and quality of materials that honor the past.

in FilzFelt felt for acoustics. (The credenza also conceals the air return for the room.) The fireplace and its brick hearth anchor the window wall. Other walls contain a built-in bar, built-in shelves for art display, and more—no square inch goes to waste. “It took gymnastics to make all that trim come together. There’s a triple miter fold piece at the door,” says Chris. “Every time I see it, I smile.”

The kitchen is another symphony of complicated grace notes. Breaking with current fashion, it’s placed at a discrete remove from the living area, but adjacent to the nearby dining area. “I have an aversion to putting the kitchen in the living room,” says Chris. “The kitchen is a much more intimate space, a different scale. In this case, there’s a baroque minimalism to it.”

Cabinets are a gray stained wood, topped with white Corian—including a Corian sink with integral drainboard and shelf. Corian tops the island as well, but the base is a custom steel affair with recessed stainless pulls. It holds the microwave and storage for utensils and dishes. “It is the most complex thing we’ve ever designed,” says the architect. “It went through the Corian fabricator, the cabinet shop, and the metal shop.” And, yes, it contains triple miters, too.

“The development of the interiors really became like custom furniture,” Chris concludes. And thus the spec house became a truly bespoke home.—*S. Claire Conroy*

Art House

Kansas City, Missouri

ARCHITECT: Christopher Fein, AIA, principal in charge, FORWARD Design | Architecture, Kansas City, Missouri

BUILDER: Centric Construction, Kansas City

INTERIOR DESIGNER: Alan Karlin, Kansas City

LANDSCAPE ARCHITECT: Joann Schwarberg, J. Schwarberg Landscape Architecture, Prairie Village, Kansas

OTHER TRADES: Metal One (fabrication);

Bootlace Design Cabinetry

PROJECT SIZE: 7,084 square feet

SITE SIZE: 0.11 acre

CONSTRUCTION COST: \$500 a square foot

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COOKING VENTILATION: Best

COUNTERS, SURFACING: Corian; granite

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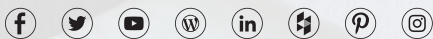
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Beyond the Glass

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

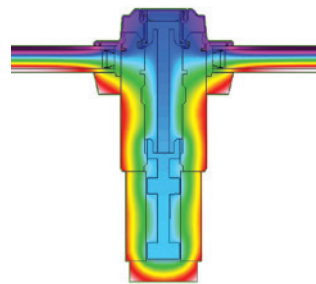


Photographer: Ryan Kurtz Photography

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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Ground Rules

An architect shapes structure to landscape to create a luminous coastal dwelling.

BY CHERYL WEBER

COVE HOUSE
JAMESTOWN, RHODE ISLAND
ESTES TWOMBLY + TITRINGTON

Estes Twombly + Titrington knows its way around modern New England houses in scenic coastal settings. Drawing on regional traditions and materials, their direct yet poetic houses are awash in light, with forms that are at once familiar and fresh as the salt air. Rhode Island's many coves and inlets make outdoor living irresistible too, despite the rugged climate. A perpetual challenge is to balance energy efficiency and thermal comfort with indoor-outdoor views and the desire for natural light during the long, cold winters.

That's what makes a southern view so ideal in this environment, and why it took principal Peter Twombly, AIA, three years to find the right site on which to build a full-time house for himself and his partner, Jane. They were searching in Jamestown, on Conanicut Island in Narragansett Bay. The 9-mile-long island is narrow—just a mile wide—and oriented north-south, which made it difficult to find a south-facing property with water access. They got lucky when their agent sleuthed out this 2-acre property before it came on the market. More rural than suburban, the area is known for its preserved open space and old farms. This waterfront lot ticked all the boxes, and then some. Not only did it face south and west, it also sat far above the flood zone, unlike the couple's previous house. "We went from an elevation of 6 feet above sea level to 40 feet above sea level," Peter says—well above the 16-foot flood elevation.







Anchored by a series of retaining walls, architect Peter Twombly's house steps down its sloped site, securing water views for all the major rooms.



Unlike many coastal houses, then, this one could be grounded rather than perched on stilts. Slightly irregular in shape, the lot slopes 70 feet from the road down to the shoreline, and “getting the house nestled into the site was a major point in the design,” Peter says. The house steps down the slope between a grove of western red cedars on the uphill side and the coastal setback just outside the living room. On the upper slope, a garage pushes into the hill against a retaining wall that creates the level entry court. A covered breezeway at the garage leads

down three steps to the entry porch at the center of a two-story, bar-shaped volume. Oriented north-south, it contains a study to the left and a pantry and mechanical room to the right. On the second floor are two en suite bedrooms separated by a graciously proportioned stair hall that enjoys views to the water in one direction and the cedar grove in the other.

In fact, all the primary rooms have water views. Down three steps from the entry/bedroom volume, the one-story kitchen/living/dining wing sits at mid-grade. Placing it perpendicular at the north end of the bedroom wing created the opportunity for a sunny southwest courtyard. Inside, its stepped-down floor plan allowed for 10-foot ceilings with full-height glazing that takes in water views to the west and south. “Setting the garage and house on three levels helps keep it lower to the site,” says Peter, “and you sense the slope inside the house. We’ve done a lot of houses with cathedral ceilings with lots of volume, but I find those places to be very scaleless and almost too large when it’s cold and wintry. Having high, flat ceilings is a pleasant experience.”

A lot was riding on the design. “It’s the first house I designed from scratch for myself,” he says. “I was probably the most difficult client I’ve ever worked with—knowing when to stop designing and move on.”

Earth First

Conceptually, the scheme expresses the relationship of structure to slope. Low retaining walls mark the three-part progression through the site. One holds back the hillside at the garage, another snugs the entry wing into the slope, and a third supports the slightly cantilevered living room box, extending out to form a seating wall on the courtyard. “While the garage is built into the site, the living wing is cantilevered over the site,” Peter says.

In the same vein, exterior materials knit the building to its geological context. The stonework was laid by a local mason who sourced materials to match the region’s existing stone, such as the color of stone along the shoreline and the color and proportions of old stone walls in the region. “He sourced at least four different types of stone and mixed them together, most of it locally quarried,” Peter says. “The capstones are antique bluestone slabs he’s taken from sites like the Big Dig up in Boston.” Stone was also used on the bumped-out stairwell wall at the entry, which evokes chimneys of the past. This vertical plane sets up a solid/void relationship with the transparent entryway, where the water vista is fully revealed.

In selecting ipe cladding for the house and garage, the architect prioritized performance over provenance. “We had lots of discussions about using a tropical hardwood,” a renewable resource that nevertheless isn’t always ethically harvested, Peter says. “We probably won’t use it again, but the reason we chose it is because it’s extremely durable. It will outlast us and is a system that’s set up for rainscreens, so it sheds water away from the house.” All these materials help the building recede into the site. In addition, the walkway from the garage to the entry is reclaimed granite curbing, and the breezeway is made from galvanized steel with exposed small steel columns—a detail carried through to the interior, where the living room’s exposed steel framing resists wind loads.

Simple Gifts

At 2,800 square feet, the house is neither large nor small. Deeming it just right, the owners experience it as essentially three rooms on the first floor and two on the second. Primary living spaces take full advantage of sun and views, and the back wall of the glassy box containing the kitchen, dining, and living room sits as close to the water as the setback would allow. Throughout, window placements pour in light, sometimes in unforeseen ways. The living room’s clerestory, for example, is “probably one of the coolest windows in the whole place,” Peter says. “It’s above the neighbor’s house to the north, and it gives you a sliver of fabulous views of incoming weather and a nice quality of light.”



The quiet palette of materials allows views to keep top billing. A special delight is the clerestory’s curated glimpses of approaching weather.



Despite their apparent lightness, materials were chosen for hardiness and practicality: triple-pane windows and doors, Caesarstone countertops, clear maple cabinetry, and painted poplar wallboards.





The main suite climbs up a level to grab sweeping views. Wallboards with a natural stain echo the painted ones elsewhere. Long, low cabinets put storage close at hand. Peter perched in the stair hall office during the pandemic.

Because the building is slab on grade, utilities and storage had to be deftly inserted. The spaces overlap, tuck away, and multitask. To the right in the entry hall is a pantry, a laundry room, and a mechanical room for the geothermal system. To the left, a study can double as a guest room, though it's rarely needed given the second bedroom upstairs. The second-floor stair hall, lined with low, built-in cabinetry, can be called into service any number of ways.

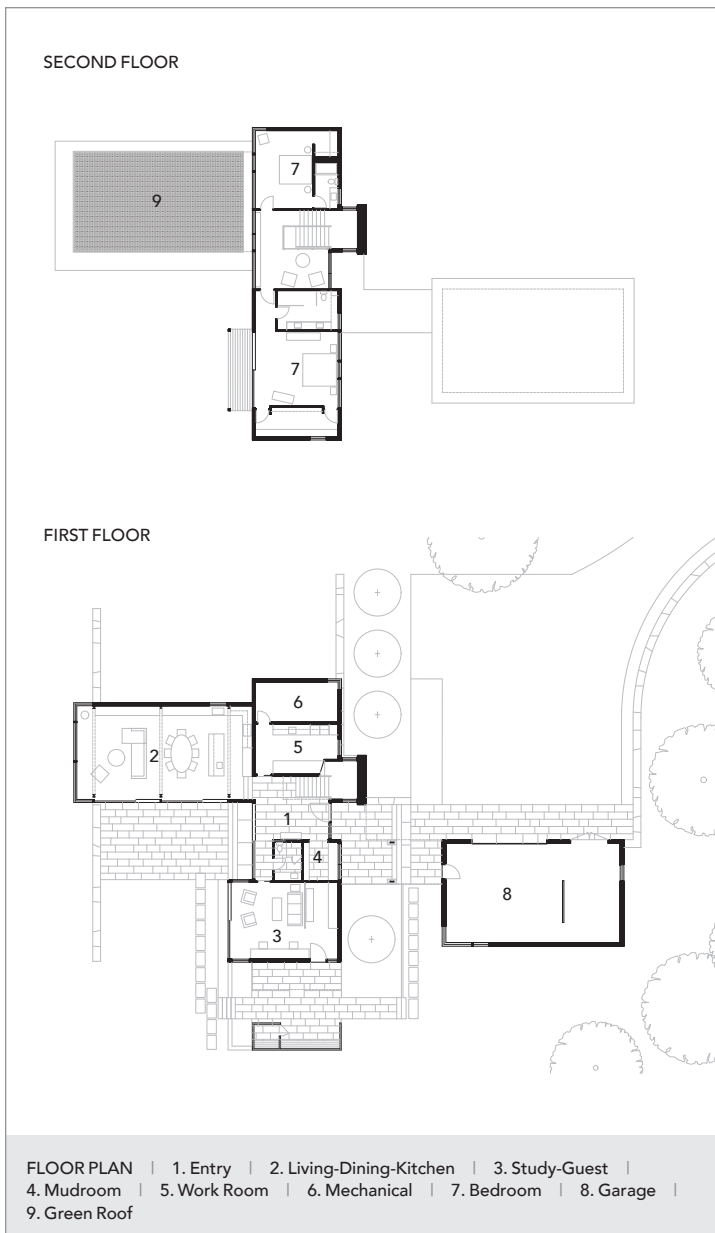
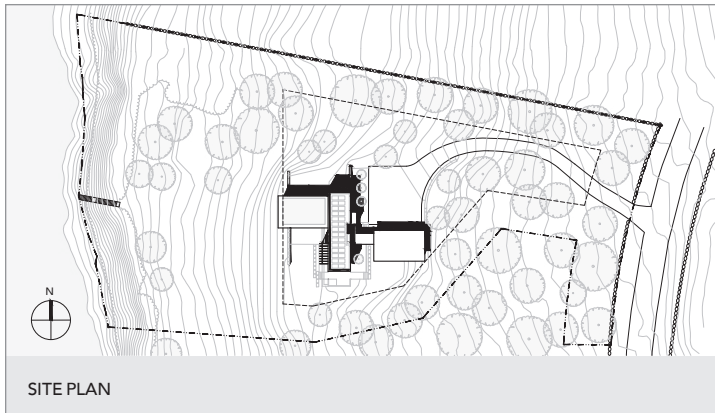
"In the main living area, we decided to have plenty of storage so we're not running around for things," Peter says. In addition to the Caesarstone-topped island, the kitchen's base cabinets continue into the living room. "We wanted something super rugged that we didn't have to worry about staining," he says of the kitchen countertop.

Another guiding light was their admiration for Scandinavian simplicity. The interior material palette consists of clear maple cabinets and woodwork, which is native to the Eastern U.S.; white-painted poplar wall and ceiling boards; plaster; and exposed steelwork. "We had a lot of discussion about how much wood to use," Peter says. "We wanted white for brighter interiors in the winter, something simple so as not to upstage the scenery, and a place where our small collection of modern furniture would be at home. But we used natural wood on the floors, cabinets, and a few interior partitions to warm things up." The slatted dividers—in the stair hall and



study, for example—pick up on the horizontal-siding look of the kitchen island and first-floor walls. Throughout, indirect lighting underscores the sun-washed effect, such as cove lighting in the stair hall and primary bedroom, and uplighting above the kitchen cabinets.

The garage is earmarked for storage of bulkier items, with two bays for cars and an extra bay "for boating stuff. We are avid boaters and fisher people," Peter says. After a day on the water, the outdoor shower near the courtyard is a convenient stop between the garage and the shoreline. It sits at the top of the path to the rocky beach of Mackerel Cove, where their boat is moored.




Shell Game

While Peter's first schemes had explored a one-story house, stacking the floors minimized the footprint and better captured the views. "We try to convince our clients that going up to a second story isn't always necessary, but the upstairs hallway has great views," Peter says. "I moved my office there during the pandemic, so I had the best views in the house."

The timing was fortuitous in another important way: "We had a fabulous young builder who powered through and finished just before the supply chain problems and cost increases," he says. In addition to installing the large, heavy triple-pane windows and doors within the steel framing in the living area, Ben Rocha of DBR Builders executed an airtight shell. The 2-by-6 framing was filled with both lambswool and low-VOC closed-cell foam. "The lambswool is awesome stuff," Peter says. "It can moderate, absorb, and dissipate moisture without molding, and even though the house smelled a little like a barn when it went in, the odor went away." Rocha's crew also installed a green roof on top of the living room wing, which is visible from the second floor. "The company supplied the crane to drop it in, and we installed it on top of a membrane and a slip of fabric," Ben says. "The 1-by-2-foot planted blocks lock into a grid system, and over time it all becomes one mass that helps retain heat in the winter and deflect it in summer."

That thermal comfort is aided by deep roof overhangs that help shade the glass on the south and west. Radiant-heated floors, a 10kW solar array, and a 3,000-gallon rainwater cistern also help to lighten the home's environmental footprint. "A Twombly-style house is pretty straightforward to build, though their unique tolerances are tight and there's not a lot of room for errors," Ben says.

Peter has found that in winter, the sun heats the entire main living space and holds the heat through the night. While the house isn't quite net-zero because the roof surface limited the number of solar panels, the temperature is so even that they used the wood stove only twice over the two winters they've been in the house. "That's there in case of power or equipment failure," he says.

Peter's carefully considered moves give the house a light, low-key appearance that masks its high level of performance. The outcome is living spaces that are orderly, calm, and grounded to the earth's natural contours. "I hope to live long enough to regret all the stairs," he says. 



Cove House

Jamestown, Rhode Island

ARCHITECT: Peter Twombly, AIA, Estes Twombly + Titrington Architects, Newport, Rhode Island

BUILDER: Ben and Dan Rocha, DBR Builders, Bristol, Rhode Island

INTERIOR DESIGNER: Peter Twombly, AIA

LANDSCAPE ARCHITECT: Studio Cosmo, Somerville, Massachusetts; KP Design, Newport, Rhode Island

STRUCTURAL ENGINEER: Yoder + Tidwell, Providence, Rhode Island

PROJECT SIZE: 2,850 square feet

SITE SIZE: 2 acres

PHOTOGRAPHY: Warren Jagger Photography

KEY PRODUCTS

ACOUSTIC: Acoustiblok

CABINETS: Calderwood Custom Millwork

COOKING VENT HOOD: XO Appliance

COOKTOP: Wolf induction

CLADDING: Mataverde rainscreen siding

COUNTERTOPS: Caesarstone

DISHWASHER: Cove

DRYWALL: USG

ENGINEERED LUMBER: Trus Joist

ENTRY DOORS, HARDWARE, LOCKSETS: Unilux

EXTERIOR LIGHTING: Hunza Lighting, WAC

FASTENERS: Simpson Strong-Tie

FAUCETS: Dornbracht, Hansgrohe

FIREPLACE: RAIS wood stove

GARAGE DOORS: Overhead Door

GREEN ROOF: LiveRoof

HOT WATER: A.O. Smith Voltex hybrid electric heat pump

HVAC: WaterFurnace geothermal

INSULATION: DuPont Thermax rigid foam; Havelock Wool batt; Pro Clima SOLITEX ADHERO house wrap

INTERIOR LIGHTING: Lucifer, Element recessed lights, Louis Poulsen

LIGHTING CONTROL SYSTEMS: Lutron

OVENS: Wolf steam oven

PAINTS/STAINS/COATINGS: Benjamin Moore (interior), SEAL-ONCE (exterior)

PASSAGE DOOR HARDWARE: Valli&Valli

PHOTOVOLTAICS: Solaria

RADIANT HEATING: Uponor

REFRIGERATOR: Sub-Zero

ROOFING: Carlisle SynTec Systems

SINKS: Kohler

SKYLIGHTS: U.S. Sky

TOILETS: TOTO

TUBS: Kohler

UNDERLAYMENT/SHEATHING: Huber Engineered Woods

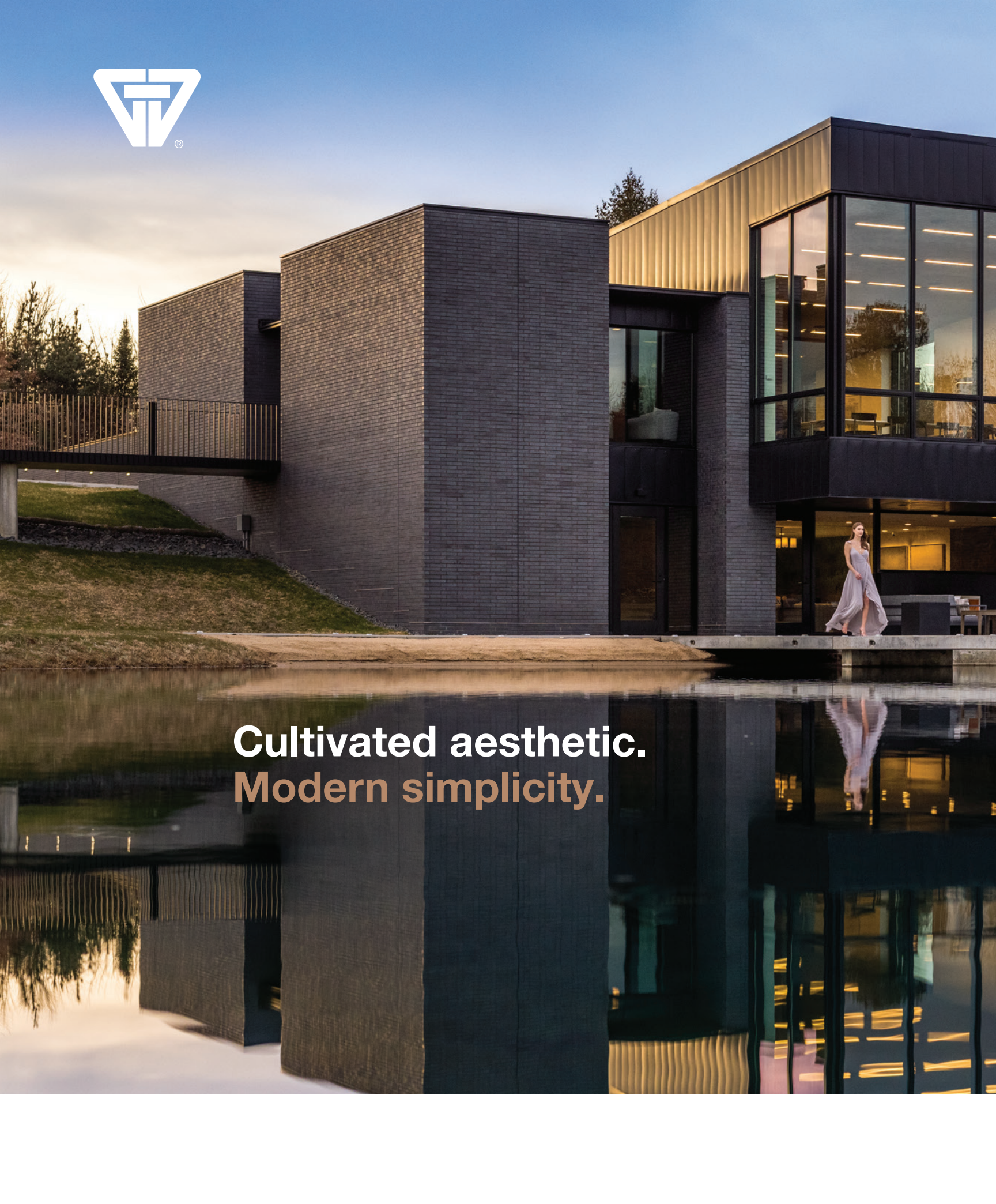
VENTILATION: Broan ERV

WASHER/DRYER: Asko

WINDOWS AND WINDOW WALL SYSTEMS: Unilux

WINDOW SHADING SYSTEM: Savant

WINE REFRIGERATOR: U-Line



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Vacation in Mind

When designed with the landscape as a priority,
every house lives like a vacation home.

BY CHERYL WEBER AND S. CLAIRE CONROY



Wabi-Sabi

EMIGRATION CANYON, SALT LAKE CITY, UTAH
SPARANO + MOONEY ARCHITECTURE

Wabi-Sabi, a house for a young family tucked into Utah’s Emigration Canyon, could also be called Yin-Yang. Yes, it revels in the earthy imperfections of nature, but it also balances the opposing yearnings of the human heart—one for stimulation and one for repose. It strikes the perfect poise between urban house and rural escape—just 15 minutes from Salt Lake City and a world away.

Designed by Sparano + Mooney Architecture, the house taps into its site opportunities with two cantilevered volumes, one oriented to peaceful mountain views and one trained on

Salt Lake’s kinetic cityscape at the undulating canyon’s base. The domestic program occupies the mountain view volume, located to the north and arranged on an east-west axis. The public volume steps down with the hill and splays southwest toward the lights of the city.

Mountain Blend

As careful as the house is to capture views for its occupants, it also does its best to preserve the views for others. “It’s not a canyon that’s heavily traveled, but quite a few hikers do go by,” says Anne Mooney, AIA. “We did try to



The entry sequence traces the topography of the sloped site, moving through screened views of the canyon panorama and stopping along the way at a built-in “mudroom” bench.



This page: The house's cantilevered volumes nestle below the ridgeline, preserving views from the road. Outdoor living is clustered in patios that also serve as fire breaks. A blackened steel firepit warms cool nights, and a board-formed concrete dog run protects the family pet from predators.

reduce the mass of the house and embed it in the site. Those cantilever volumes float off the ground, but we were careful to ensure that sightlines were preserved and that we did not build on a ridgeline. It's such a spectacular place.”

The street above the house sits on the ridgeline, but hikers who might gaze down from the road would see Wabi-Sabi's vegetated roof camouflaging the volumes as they mimic the surrounding terrain. Cedar cladding stained black and glazing shaded by screens help the house recede into the shadows of the canyon walls.

The firm's design targets LEED Gold and complies with Architecture



This page: The two volumes split at the entry hall, with one stepping down to the great room and the other continuing on to the family wing. Both kitchen and living area take in the sweep of the canyon's descent into Salt Lake City, while the bedroom wing terminates in a mountain view.



“Those cantilever volumes float off the ground, but we were careful to ensure that sightlines were preserved and that we did not build on a ridgeline.”

—Anne Mooney, AIA

2030 goals. “LEED is nice because it hits different areas of sustainability and water conservation,” says Anne, who is LEED accredited. In keeping with those benchmarks, the architects took great care to reduce construction waste by dimensioning materials in standard sizes. As architect Nate King, AIA, explains, “We worked with our wood supplier pretty early on to determine the height of the home and reduce overall waste. We ultimately chose Select-Tight-Knot cedar for its tighter knots and longer lengths.”

The high-performance building envelope comprises a 12-inch-thick double-framed wall assembly with a thermal break, closed cell insulation, and blown-in blanket insulation. The roof assembly combines 6 inches of rigid insulation and 16 inches of cavity insulation. Glazing is strategically placed to reduce heat gain and facilitate natural





This page: Sleek interior finishes keep the eyes moving to framed views of canyon, mountains, and city. The clients, who collect art, requested space to display their favorite pieces.



ventilation. And the firm worked in symbiosis with the site to maintain the natural flow of stormwater runoff.

“It was about nestling within the natural site and almost being one with the landscape,” says Nate. “The two volumes are the same proportion and there are integrated pathways along the natural topography. The whole idea about indoor-outdoor relationships was a critical way of thinking on the project.” John Sparano, FAIA, concurs. “Living outside is an integral part of building in the intermountain west.”

Mind the Pets

Concrete patios form the key outdoor entertaining spaces on the hilly property. Off the great room, a southern patio captures vistas from canyon to city, with a custom blackened steel firepit for cool nights and a board-formed concrete dog run to protect the family



dog from predators. “There are coyotes, bobcats, and mountain lions in the canyon,” Anne observes. Another west-facing patio tucks beneath the cantilevered primary bedroom suite, providing shelter from the sun and privacy for a hot tub.

The patios also serve a more essential purpose—as a fire break. “There are fire issues up here, and, although the house is clad in wood, it’s designed to resist fire,” says Anne. “There are no overhangs except for the cantilevers, the base is concrete, and the wall assembly has a fire rating.”

“We worked with the fire department to incorporate defensible space,” Nate adds. “We curated the landscape within 50 feet to be less prone to fire

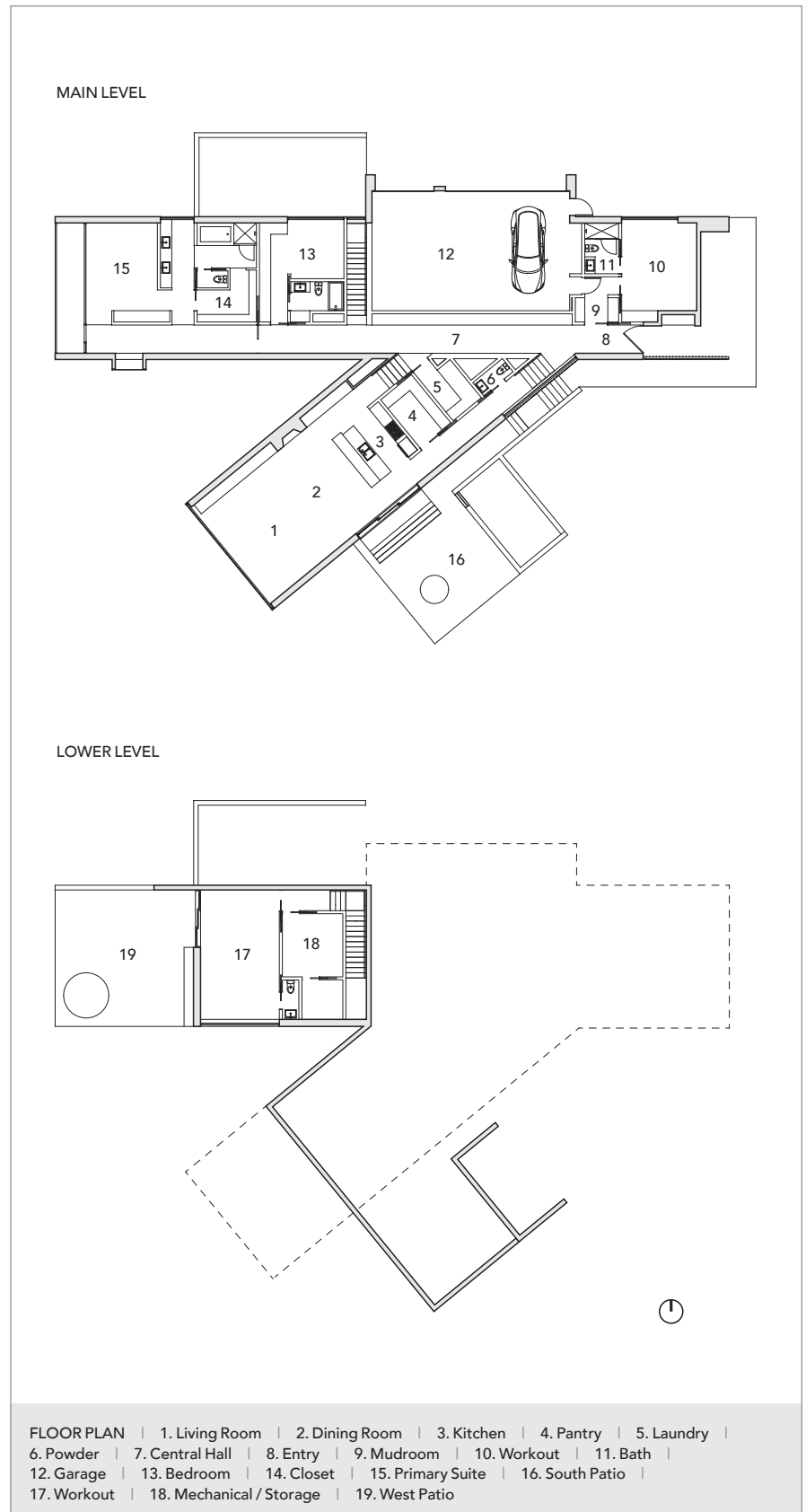
“The whole idea about indoor-outdoor relationships was a critical way of thinking on the project.”

—Nate King, AIA

danger and added natural irrigation to keep the site less dry. It is fairly remote up there.” There are sprinklers inside the house as well.

Originally, the plan was to wrap one volume in zinc and one in shou sugi ban, which would have also added fire resistance, but budgetary constraints came into play. Instead, the stained cedar cladding achieves a similar look. At the front of the house, the cedar morphs into a screen as part of an entry procession punctuated by glimpses of the panoramic view. A “mudroom” bench tucks into a niche along the way, addressing the view.

“You can sit on the bench, take your shoes off, and elongate that threshold experience before you go in the front door,” says Anne. “We wanted the





The west patio off the lower level offers private mountain views and shelter for a hot tub. Rough board-formed concrete walls move inside the adjacent workout room and flex space, segueing into polished concrete floors.

entrance to be an orchestrated experience—to see the cladding dissolve from a solid mass into a screen and to acquaint the visitors with the view.” Once inside, guests are drawn down the stairs of the public volume toward the great room and cityscape beyond. Family, however, can follow the level path straight to the



private bedroom wing, terminating in the mountain view.

Materials on the main levels are bright and warm—white walls, white oak flooring, and white Caesarstone surfacing. Tile floors in the hallways were laid out to reduce waste. “Every end cut is on the opposite side,” says Nate. “We try to select materials pretty quickly after we have the schematics,” Anne adds, “so we can alter to accommodate certain products rather than cut to fit.”

Below the primary suite, a workout space with a powder room shares the exterior’s board-formed concrete walls and concrete flooring, handy for trips back and forth to the nearby hot tub. Inside, the floors are radiant.

The original plan for the house was to run the gamut of LEED Gold certification, but the COVID pandemic set the timetable back. Even if the glittering goal falls by the wayside, the firm is unfazed. “The standard is embedded in our process whether our clients ask for it or not,” says Anne.

With LEED the metrics are clear, but what it doesn’t calculate is the value of designing a custom home that lives like two houses—a primary dwelling and a vacation escape, negating the need to build both. —*S. Claire Conroy*



Wabi-Sabi

Emigration Canyon, Salt Lake City

ARCHITECT: Anne G. Mooney, AIA; John P. Sparano, FAIA; Nate King, AIA; Jun Li (renders); Drew Olguin (model builder), Sparano + Mooney Architecture, Salt Lake City

BUILDER: Living Home Construction, Salt Lake City

INTERIOR DESIGNER: Sparano + Mooney Architecture (in collaboration with the client)

ENGINEERING: McNeil Engineering, Sandy, Utah; Structural Design Studio, Salt Lake City

LANDSCAPING/SPRINKLER SYSTEMS: Kappus Landscape Sprinkler LLC, Salt Lake City

PROJECT SIZE: 4,000 square feet

SITE SIZE: 9.96 acres

CONSTRUCTION COST: \$400 a square foot

PHOTOGRAPHY: Matt Winqvist (exteriors); Lucy Call (interiors)

KEY PRODUCTS

CLADDING: 1x6 western red cedar

ENTRY DOOR: Iron Door Works

FASTENERS: Hilti; Simpson Strong-Tie

FAUCETS/SHOWERHEADS: California Faucets

FIREPLACE: Heatilator

GARAGE DOOR OPENER: LiftMaster

HOME/LIGHTING CONTROL: Control4

HVAC/HUMIDITY CONTROL: Bryant Heating & Cooling

KITCHEN APPLIANCES: Thermador

PAINT: Benjamin Moore; Tnemec

ROOFING: TPO; green roof/rock ballast

SINKS: ROHL (kitchen); California Faucets (primary bath); Lacava (utility)

SKYLIGHTS: Aladdin Industries

TOILETS: Duravit

TUB: Dornbracht

UNDERLAYMENT/SHEATHING: AdvanTech by Huber Engineered Woods

VENTILATION: AprilAire Air Cleaners

WASHER/DRYER: Asko

WINDOWS: USI Supplier; Weather Shield

WINDOW WALL SYSTEMS: Weather Shield



Timber Frames Provide a Bright, Airy Space In a Modern Setting

Though timber frames are often used to create a rustic look, this project proves they're equally at home in a more modern setting. We used heavy timber trusses in the foyer and vestibule of this custom home, as well as unique laminated curved barrel trusses throughout the project. The painted white timbers in the kitchen and living room provide a bright, airy space perfect for entertaining.

This home proves that timber frames are well-suited for more than just "the rustic look."

There's a perception that timber frames make a home feel "dark." These painted white timbers do anything but!

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Cabin in the Woods

MILL VALLEY, CALIFORNIA

RICHARDSON PRIBUSS ARCHITECTS

The logs were long gone by the time Richardson Pribuss Architects was invited to renovate this 1,600-square-foot cabin, the last of four original log homes built among Mill Valley's second-growth redwoods. The year is unknown, but it was likely built in the decade or two after the 1906 San Francisco earthquake, when many urbanites fled to Mill Valley and never left, and others discovered it as a sweet summertime escape. What did remain of the original cabin was a distinctive triple-gable roof, one gable hidden by a shed-roof bedroom addition; and an imposing, rounded-stone fireplace that severed interior sightlines and views of a nearby creek.

"The house had been renovated too many times," says Heidi Richardson, FAIA, who got hold of the previous renovation drawings. "The last owner added a carport that partially blocked the view of the house from the street. And because they didn't change the entry approach, people were forced to walk through the carport and down to the front porch."

Heidi and partner Andrew Pribuss, AIA, are experts at reimagining a house's relationship to the land—and navigating Mill Valley's complex building codes to enhance those connections. Most of their work is based here, thanks to an abundance of tech industry clients with strong environmental ideals and

deep pockets. The new owners of this cabin, however, are New York artists, empty nesters who spend part of the year on the West Coast. They weren't interested in a teardown or expansion, nor would such invasive interventions have been allowed. The challenge, then, was to bring the building up to 21st-century standards and rework its visual and physical connections to the site.

Spatial Shifts

As part of the gut renovation, the architects' first site-strategy move was to improve the approach from the street. They stabilized the carport foundation and built a back wall. A new entry path along the side of the carport steps down



This page: Renovating this former log cabin from the early 20th century was more about removal than addition. The biggest moves: restoring its original third gable and reorienting the front entry.



This page: Located in a redwood forest, the house suffered from a lack of natural light—a major negative for the clients, who are both artists. To bring in more light and views of the nearby creek, the architects and builder paired manufactured windows with custom metal skylights, giving the appearance of single units.





to the front porch, where the grade was raised to mediate the slope. “It was the biggest move we made, besides restoring those three gables,” Heidi says. “It was very simple, but it made all the difference. After that, the rest of it kind of fell into place.”

At the front of the house, they pulled back the addition’s shed roof and rebuilt the original third gable. Under the middle gable, the old entryway was reclaimed for a larger kitchen and the front door shifted to the right-side gable. Now, the two left gables define the public area: kitchen, dining, and living room. These moves sacrificed a bedroom but added a new entry core containing a mudroom fitted with a bench and cubbies, and a laundry room behind it. Down the hall to the right of the entry are two bedrooms with en suite baths. “This was more of a subtraction project in some ways, getting rid of these odd entry pieces and rooflines and then restoring it to a

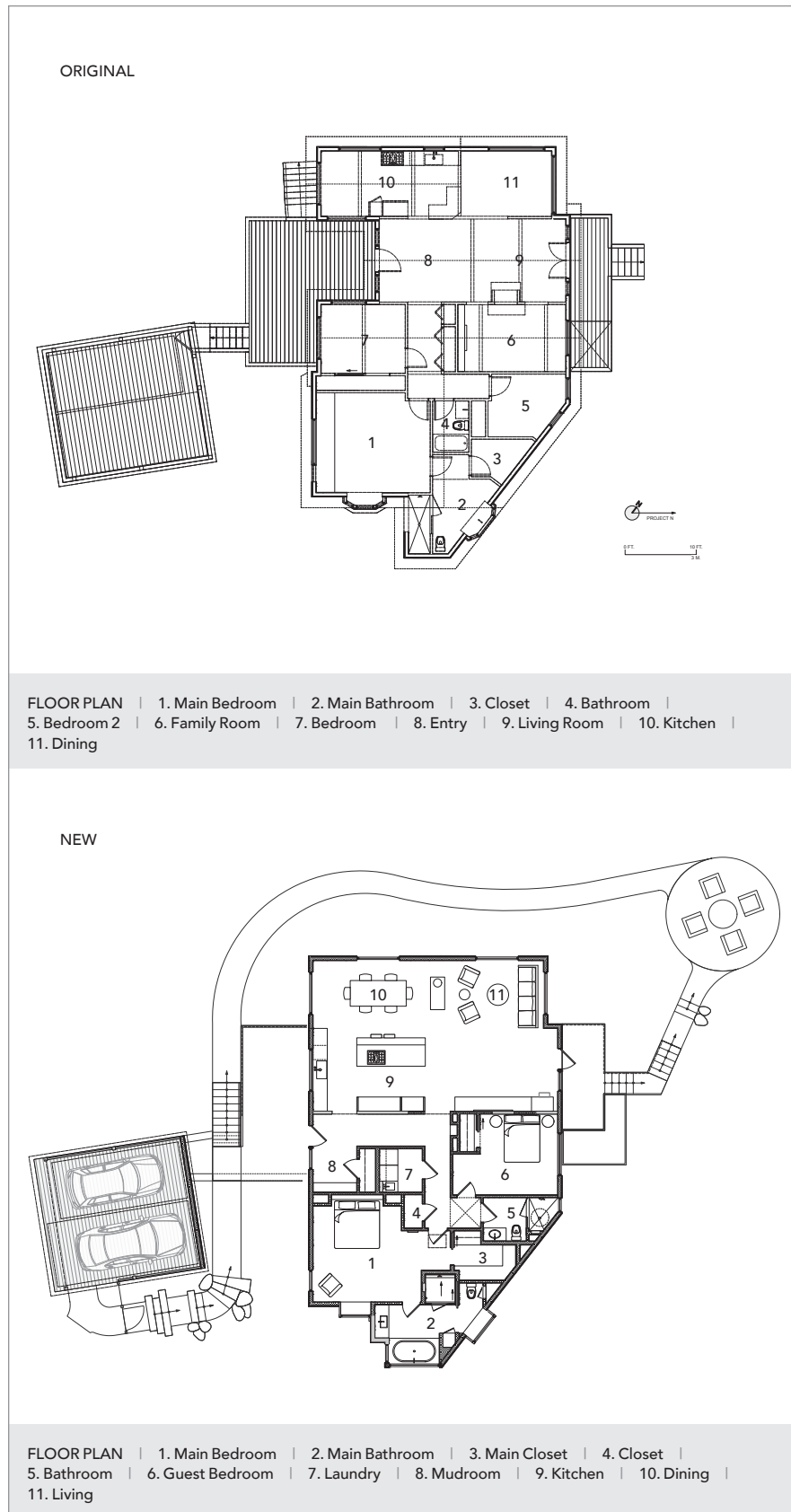
simpler form,” Heidi says. “Of course, we added those big windows.”

In many rooms, the steel windows go right down to the floor, opening the house to the forest and creek. Chosen for their low profile, they bend up into the roof in the living room, dining room, and primary bedroom. “In a redwood grove, bringing in natural light is required; it was pretty dark before we did that,” Heidi says. “The window at the sofa is the obvious place you’d sit in the house, but you never saw the creek from there. Now you can see the quaint bridge over the creek, and the idea was to carry the glass up and over so you could feel you’re in the middle of nature.”

When the cost for such a single-unit glazing system proved prohibitive, the architects devised a steel lintel that ties the window and skylight glass plates together. “The window manufacturer didn’t do skylights, so we ended up having an artisan metalworker create



This page: Restoring the third gable, relocating the entry from the center of the house to an end gable, and eliminating a bedroom added welcome space to the great room and a new mudroom for the revised entry hall.



frames that screwed into the hemlock ceilings at the same profiles and dimensions to make the skylight and window look like they're integrated," says Andrew Earnhardt of Abacus Builders. Down the hall to the primary and secondary bedroom, another skylight tips light into the sleeping wing. And in the primary suite, a window bay provides an intimate view of the garden.

All this seems relatively uncomplicated, but of course the construction was not. Much effort went into making the cobbled-together cottage plumb and level. "It would have been easier to tear down and rebuild, but we had to leave a certain amount of existing structure in place," Andrew says. "There were a lot of very tricky details because it went from having no real design to having no baseboards or casings," Andrew says of the modern, trimless look. "It was like building a ship in a bottle." Groundwater issues required parts of the foundation to rest on helical piers. And new cambered steel beams were attached to parts of the old framing to carry two of the ridges that span the large public space.

"We adjusted the height and angles of the wood ceilings a bit so we wouldn't end up with 1-inch slivers of exterior siding," Andrew says. "And we balanced those geometries to be able to center the light fixtures within the joints of ceiling boards or centered on a board. We ended up recladding the entire ceiling structure in plywood substrate so the hemlock siding would sit perfectly flat."

Into the Woods

Interior and exterior finishes enhance the relaxed atmosphere expressed by the spatial reorganization. The clients had a limited wish list but were specific in their request for an efficient fireplace and Dineson oak flooring. In the main living area, unstained hemlock on the



This page: A simple, clean palette of steel, various light-hued species of wood, and limestone combine with multiple new windows to make the house live larger and engage its surroundings.



Cabin in the Woods

Marin County, California

ARCHITECT: Heidi Richardson, AIA, and Andrew Pribuss, AIA, Richardson Pribuss Architects, Mill Valley, California

BUILDER: Abacus Builders, Corte Madera, Mill Valley

INTERIOR DESIGNER: Jack Dakin and Danielle Velasco, Richardson Pribuss Architects

LANDSCAPE ARCHITECT: Gretchen Whittier, Arterra Landscape Architects, San Francisco

STRUCTURAL ENGINEER: Turbin Structural Engineering, Mill Valley

PROJECT SIZE: 1,600 square feet

SITE SIZE: 0.18 acre

CONSTRUCTION COST: Withheld

PHOTOGRAPHY: Thibault Cartier Photography

KEY PRODUCTS

CLADDING: Nusky Fireblock

COUNTERTOPS: Custom from M. Teixeira Soapstone, custom hemlock

DECKING: Western red cedar

ENGINEERED LUMBER: Douglas fir

ENTRY DOORS: Sun Valley Bronze hardware, Della Lever

FAUCETS: Dornbracht

FIREPLACE: Ortal

FLOORING: Dinesen white oak

FOUNDATION: Helical piers

HARDWARE: Rocky Mountain Hardware

ICEMAKER: Sub-Zero

LIGHTING: Unique Lighting, Allied Maker spot, StickBulb pendant

OVENS/DISHWASHER: Miele

PAINT: Benjamin Moore Hidden Falls 712 (exterior); C2 Scallywag C2-727 (kitchen cabinets)

REFRIGERATOR/ICE MAKER: Sub-Zero

SHOWER ENCLOSURE/TUB: Kohler

SINKS: Blanco, custom from Haussmann Natural Stone

SKYLIGHTS: Royalite

TOILETS: TOTO

WALLBOARD: Eco Stucco lime plaster

WINDOWS: Jada Windows



ceilings and select walls is carried out to the eave soffits. Plastered walls and rift-cut oak cabinetry, including wall niches in the main bedroom, complement the flooring and hemlock. In the main bath, limestone on the tub surround, floor, and backsplash tiles keeps the look simple and modern. The lighting also elevates the cabin aesthetic. “With those beautiful ceilings, you don’t want to add a lot of recessed lighting, and it doesn’t feel rustic and cabinlike,” Heidi says. “We found this line of light fixtures that had wood on them, some long and linear and some small and directional.”

As artists with an eye for color, the clients chose the cerulean blue hue

“There were a lot of very tricky details because it went from having no real design to having no baseboards or casings. It was like building a ship in a bottle.”

—Andrew Earnhardt

for the kitchen cabinetry. Richardson Pribuss then selected a matching color from another paint company whose VOC levels met California restrictions. A similar process resulted in the paint

color on the exterior redwood siding, which needed to be patched. “The clients came up with a range of paint colors for the exterior that they had used before,” Heidi says. “But the light looks so different here than in New York. We photographed a similar color and said, ‘I think this is the one you want.’”

Although the project was built during the height of the pandemic, it didn’t seem to suffer. “The clients aren’t very tech-minded, so there were few Zoom meetings, only photos going back and forth,” Heidi says. “They just really trusted us. When they finally saw it, all they said was, ‘We just love it; it’s simple and it works.’” —By Cheryl Weber

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Marrowstone Island Residence

NORDLAND, WASHINGTON
SHIPLEY ARCHITECTS



Just a small corner of this island parcel was buildable, with many restrictions on construction near the bluff. So architect Dan Shipley's design splits the plan in two and cantilevers portions to protect vegetation and catch scarce sunlight, and tips roofs to shed rainwater away from the shoreline.

Marrowstone Island is a remote finger of land surrounded by the waterways of Puget Sound above Seattle. It sits just south of Port Townsend and the Strait of Juan de Fuca, a place that Dan Shipley's client had passed through during a stint in the Navy. He liked the area, and after moving there full-time, he purchased 5 acres of wooded wetlands at the northwest end of the island. "He liked the property because on a clear day he can see the Olympic Mountains to the west across Port Townsend Bay," says Dan Shipley, FAIA.

Coincidentally, the owner is from Texas, Dan's home base, and this is the third house Dan has designed in the area. The connection came circuitously through the client's Realtor, who recommended Peter Bates and Aaron McGregor of Good Home Construction; they had built Dan's first house there and made the referral.

What is not a coincidence is that Port Townsend is known for its wooden boatbuilding tradition. The Port Townsend Shipwright's Co-op has been in the news lately because John Steinbeck's wooden boat, *Western Flyer*, is being restored there. "Peter and Aaron have boat building experience and are quite a few cuts above," Dan says. "They are seeing a lot more pixels per square inch than your average carpenter does."

Because of the wetlands and other restrictions, only a small corner of the heavily wooded lot was buildable—fortunately, the part with the fewest trees. And a 40-foot setback from a 100-foot bluff that drops almost straight down was required to preserve the shoreline. Dan and the builders leaned an extension ladder against a tree and climbed up to survey the view. In addition to the





This page: The house floats above the site's thick and thorny vegetation like a seafaring vessel. The steel-framed dogtrot, fitted with only a partial roof, helps bring much-needed light into the great room. Thermally treated ash cladding and decking, applied in random lengths, resists the maritime climate.





most dramatic vista across the bay, there are lovely secondary views of the trees toward the east. Dan set up the house as a two-part plan with the long side oriented north-south. The north volume contains the garage and guest suite and an upstairs accessory dwelling, while the south volume houses the living and bedroom spaces. Joining the two sections is a 14-foot-wide dogtrot entryway that frames the western panorama.

Other aspects of the site revealed themselves slowly, and the design evolved alongside these more subtle cues. On an open part of the site, for example, they discovered a beautiful thicket of thorny vegetation. “Pretty soon we understood that if we put the house too close to ground level, you’d have to maintain this natural bluff vegetation, so we raised the house about 5 feet in the back, above the thicket,” Dan says. “It makes the house more vessel like, as though the vegetation is a surf that comes rolling up to the deck.”

With few neighbors or community amenities, there is little ambient light at night and the island feels wild and rugged. To heighten that sense of exploration and discovery, the owner requested a meandering approach to the house. Down a long gravel lane, visitors arrive at an open, amorphous motor



This page: Interior materials are just as hardy as those applied outdoors: tile floors in high-traffic areas, lacquered maple plywood sheets for walls and ceilings, and a dark, metallic-look tile to hide the TV in the fireplace surround.



The primary bedroom bumps out with a cantilever to capture southeastern light and views.

court, where wide wooden steps lead up to the dogtrot. “The entrance is not hyped,” Dan says. “The dogtrot is the real entrance; you can go right or left, and the front door is on the left.”

Attuned to Nature

The main entrance on the left opens on a colonnade of hemlock timbers—salvaged, sandblasted, and slightly charred—that separates the entrance and kitchen. Farther along on the dogtrot is a glass door to the open living and dining room. The room’s full-height glass faces west to the water and north onto the dogtrot. “The sun is always low in the sky in the Northwest, so the roof of the dogtrot doesn’t enclose it entirely,” Dan says. “We left a few feet of framing open so there will always be light coming into the north face of the dogtrot, and those exposed roof beams become a sundial that tracks the movement of sun through the day.” In addition, the kitchen, which looks across the living room, has a bay window facing east, connecting it to the approach and the water view. Skylights

in the kitchen and living room help to balance the light reflected off the water.

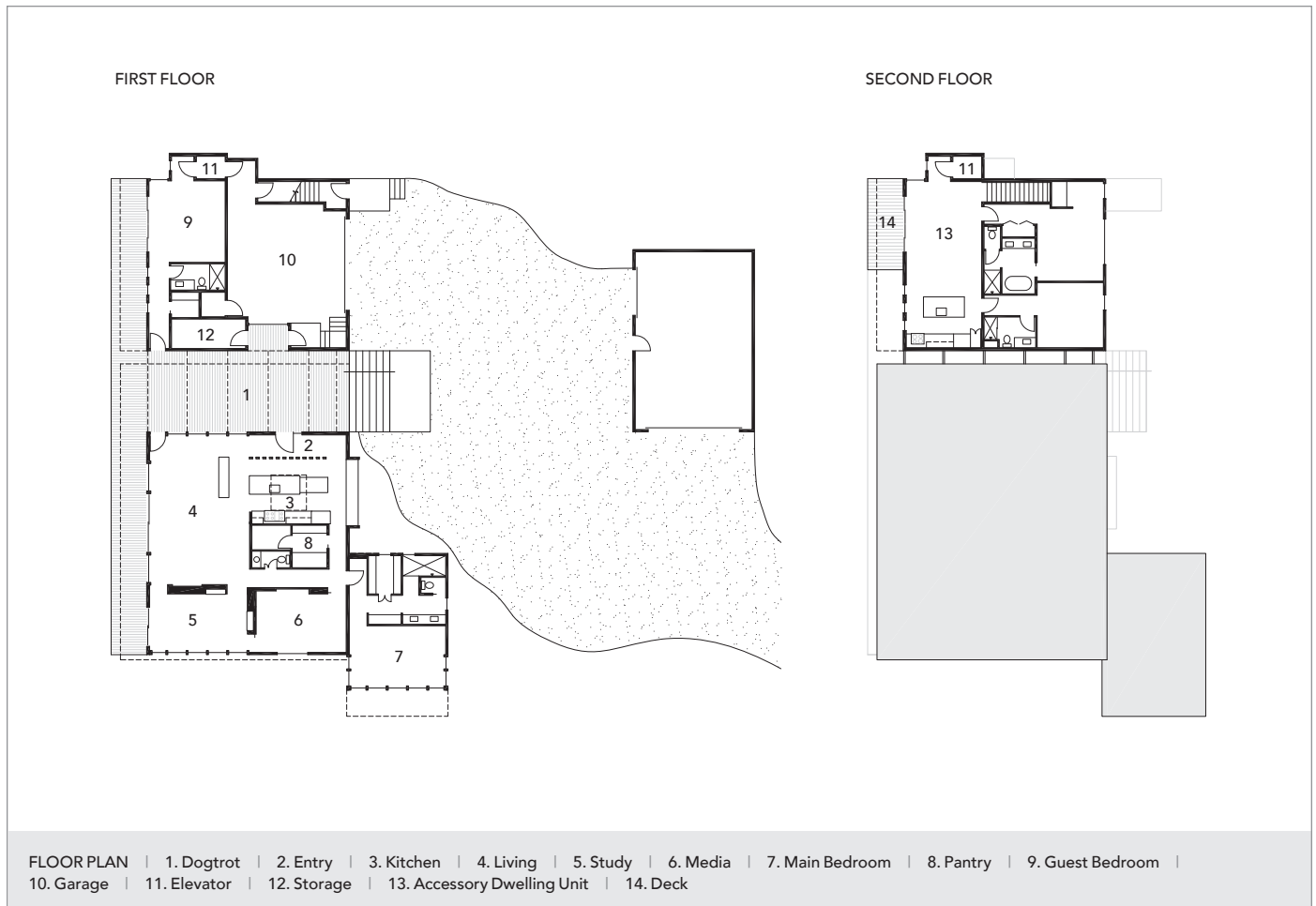
A pantry is sandwiched between the kitchen and a media room at the back of the house, with an adjacent study behind the living room. Oriented to the woods on the southeast corner, the primary bedroom has a cantilevered bump-out to avoid disturbing roots while projecting the room into the trees. These articulated volumes ensure that

all the primary spaces are within 12 feet of a natural light source to counter the long periods of cloudy weather and short winter days.

The design also addresses a requirement that prohibits rainwater from draining into the ocean. Each roof form is oriented to move water away from the bluff: The two-story north volume and the south volume’s bedroom bump-out shed water east toward the driveway, while the living room volume slopes down to the south.

In many ways, the client was ideal, giving the design team creative freedom within his budget. “When the client lived in Texas, he had a house designed in the early 1960s by Eugene George,” Dan says. “There were qualities of that house that he liked and wanted to replicate, such as the blurring of interior and exterior through abundant windows and skylights, but he left it up to me to make the house. He didn’t prescribe too many things other than the basic program.”





Practical considerations led to the singular use of thermally treated ash for the exterior cladding and decking, which is stable and resists rot. “The unfinished boards look different in different light and moisture conditions,” Dan says. “It was hard to get full-length boards, and I love the quality of the different lengths of siding. To me, it has a great relationship to the vertical trunks of the trees.” Dark window frames keep the focus on the house’s main forms and the void of the dogtrot. On the kitchen’s east wall, a copper-clad bay window counterparts that void, “coming back at you at a smaller scale,” he says. “The copper is variegated and bronzy.”

Marrowstone Island Residence

Nordland, Washington

ARCHITECT: Dan Shipley, FAIA, Shipley Architects, Dallas

BUILDER: Peter Bates and Aaron McGregor, Good Homes Construction, Port Townsend, Washington

ENGINEER: Brett McElvain, KL&A Engineers, Golden, Colorado

PROJECT SIZE: 4,200 square feet

SITE SIZE: 5 acres

CONSTRUCTION COST: Withheld

PHOTOGRAPHY: Robert Tsai Photography

KEY PRODUCTS

CEILING FAN: Big Ass Fan

CLADDING/DECKING: Thermory Ash

COOKTOP/VENT HOOD: Wolf

DOOR HARDWARE: Omnia

ENGINEERED LUMBER: Boise Cascade

FAUCETS: Dornbracht, Hansgrohe

FIREPLACE: Ortal

FIREPLACE SURROUND: Interceramic tile

HOUSEWRAP: Tyvek

HVAC SYSTEMS: Daikin VRV

LIGHTING: B-K Lighting

REFRIGERATOR: Sub-Zero

ROOFING: Carlisle TPO

SINKS: Kohler

SKYLIGHTS: VELUX

WINDOWS AND WINDOW WALL

SYSTEMS: Marvin

VENTILATION: Panasonic



House Blend

Inside, a hallway wall is clad in lacquered maple plywood sheets with the grain turned in different directions, its variability also echoing nature's patterns. Warm, reddish vertical-grain fir floors add a cabinlike touch, while the entry and kitchen floor are protected with travertine tile. In the living room, a dark porcelain fireplace surround helps to hide the TV above it. "I always hate a TV above a fireplace, but he insisted, so we used the dark tile," Dan says. "The darkness of the TV and gas fireplace make it work together as a unit. The tile has a nice streakiness to it, almost like metal."

For builder Peter Bates, the challenges were in the details. "We used

to say, 'the next easy thing in this house will be the first easy thing,'" he says. One puzzle was how to adjust the maple plywood joints to create intentional-looking registers when the

"We used to say, 'the next easy thing in this house will be the first easy thing.'"

—Peter Bates

owner decided to add air-conditioning after the house was framed. The plans also called for a hybrid framing system to support the breezeway roof, deck, and eave overhangs, which meant joining a steel square-tube frame and

C-channel to the wood frame. "The owner came up maybe twice during construction, and the last time he saw the house before he moved in was when windows had just gone in," Peter says. "I was white-knuckled when I knew he was arriving to see the house for the first time after it was finished."

The Marrowstone Island house provided the architect and builder with the refreshing opportunity to create a full-time residence, rather than the vacation houses for which this area is known. Balancing comfort with a constant awareness of the natural world, it reflects the client's desire for an intentional and meticulously detailed design that focuses its gaze outdoors.

—Cheryl Weber

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Natural Selection



1



2



3



4

1. NATURE'S WAY

Working with leading residential firm BSB Design, James Hardie has developed a new line of architectural panels that broaden the choice of finishes beyond smooth or wood-look. Among them are Sea Grass, Fine Sand, Sculpted Clay, and Mounded Sand. The offerings will roll out by region. JamesHardie.com

2. SHINE ON

Brick is gaining in popularity again, even for decidedly modern residential applications. Fortunately, there's a new twist available from maker Glen-Gery—a brick with a subtle sheen called Metallix. The new line comes in three light-reflecting colors: Platinum, Titanium, and Cuprum. Glengery.com

3. TOP COPPER

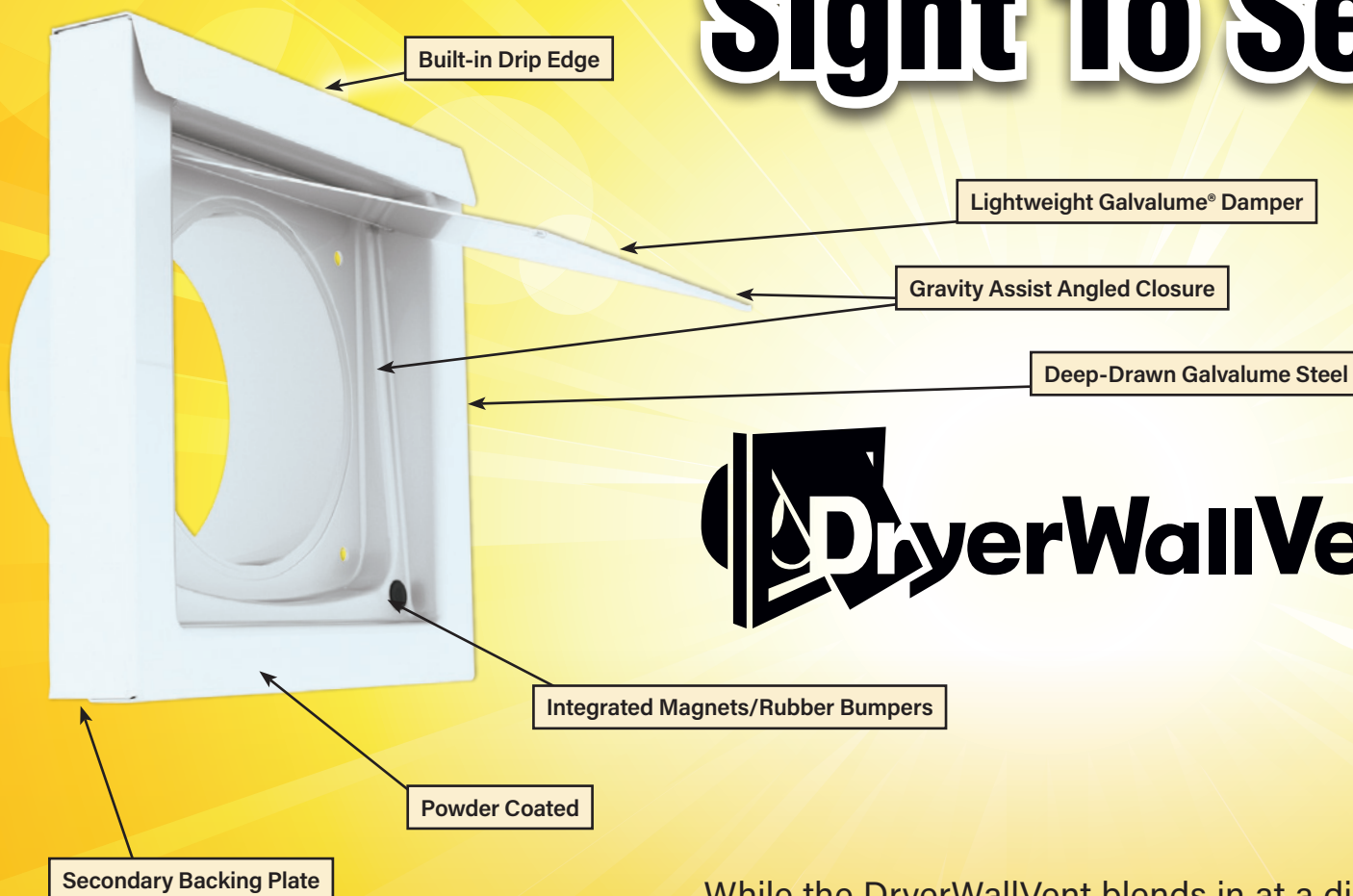
Craft sink-and-tub maker Native Trails expands its finish offerings with two new sheens—Polished Copper and Polished Nickel. Copper sinks are made from 100% recycled copper and are hand-hammered by artisans. Finishes can be protected with a proprietary sealer. Nativetrailshome.com

4. STONE SOUL

Caesarstone's new Pebble Collection takes its hues from nature. Moving from lighter to darker are Riverlet (shown), Stonebusrt, Wyndingo, Agger Grey, and Raindream. All surfacing meets NSF and American Greenguard standards and includes up to 42% recycled materials. Caesarstoneus.com

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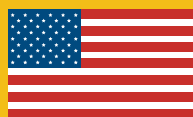
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Water Everywhere

ROCKAWAY BEACH RESIDENCE
BAINBRIDGE ISLAND, WASHINGTON
EERKES ARCHITECTS

When we dream of living at the beach, we often think of gazing at wide, open water. But the reality is, that gets a bit boring over time—especially after dark. The better water views encompass a modicum of human vibrancy—ships, ferries, and sailboats passing by, a kaleidoscope of twinkling lights and colors. This parcel of land—a double lot—on Bainbridge Island has it all, and Eerkes Architects is capturing the full scope in a new coastal house.

“It’s on an outcropping of rocks, so there are near views, far views, ferries, and orcas,” says Les Eerkes, AIA. “There are views of Seattle, Mount Rainier, Mount Baker, and the rest of the Cascades. And there are magical sunrises.” And yet, this is not the kind of pristine beach you’d find in Florida. “It’s 80% rocks, gravel, barnacles, and seaweed, and our tides change about 12 feet a day,” he adds. So the water-loving clients, who also have a house in Hawaii, are slaking their liquid lust with a large indoor pool.

Arranged in an L-shape and pushed to the lot’s northern edge, the house showcases both water displays from all key rooms. Window wall systems will open both the pool and the house to the outdoors on temperate days, enabling lifestyle not unlike Hawaii’s. “The difference between Seattle and Hawaii is we can only do that three months out of the year,” says Les.

The primary bedroom, located on a second level, is the other showstopper in the 6,000-square-foot house—reaching out to the view with a dramatic cantilever that also shelters outdoor space below. Really, who needs Hawaii, after all? —*S. Claire Conroy*

Project: Rockaway Beach Residence, Bainbridge Island, Washington; architect: Les Eerkes, AIA, principal, and Jonathan Thwaites, AIA, project manager, Eerkes Architects, Seattle; builder: Toth Construction, Seattle; project size: 6,647 square feet; 994 square feet (garage); site size: 0.55 acre; renderings: Notion Workshop.



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