

A man with dark hair, wearing a white short-sleeved button-down shirt and patterned swim trunks, is kneeling on a sandy beach. He is smiling and holding a long wooden stick vertically. The sand in the foreground is decorated with intricate, concentric circular patterns, resembling sand art or ripples in water. The background shows the ocean waves breaking on the shore under a clear sky.

# residential architect

A HANLEY-WOOD PUBLICATION / JULY 2002

## prince *of* tides

michael ryan  
rules the jersey shore

sofa so good / wilderness training  
getting paid / quiet time  
high fenestration / casa mizner

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# contents



Dressed for success: Michael Ryan storms the beach community of Loveladies, N.J. Above and cover photos by Bill Cramer.

**from the editor...** page 11

**letters...** page 13

**home front...** page 22

Décor in the life of Deborah Berke /  
Dotty in Detroit / USM in the USA

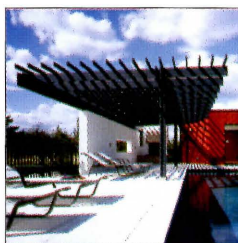
**perspective...** page 28

Students unearth the link between design and  
the environment in the middle of Montana.



**practice...** page 34

Getting paid: Tips on how to collect  
from clients when the bills are due.



**cover story:**  
**shore calling...** page 52

Architect Michael Ryan artfully  
facelifts the sagging housing stock of  
Loveladies, N.J.

*by Meghan Drueding*



**quiet time...** page 60

Getting away from it all: Four vacation spots  
hush the hubbub of everyday life.

*by Meghan Drueding and Nigel F. Maynard*

**doctor spec...** page 74

Finding the right fenestration may be as simple as looking up.



**architects' choice...** page 78

Knight Associates' Robert Knight and  
Peter M. d'Entremont share their picks.

**new material...** page 80

Piping-hot products for your next project.

**off the shelf...** page 82

These super fans cause quite a stir.

**end quote...** page 104

Addison Mizner's grand eloquence.



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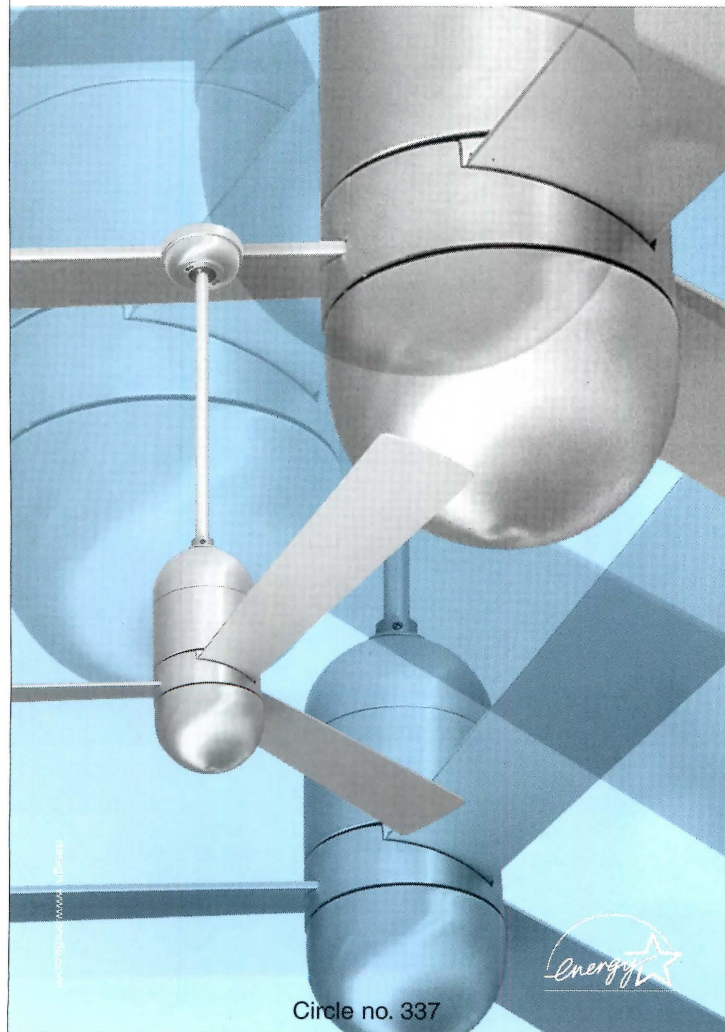
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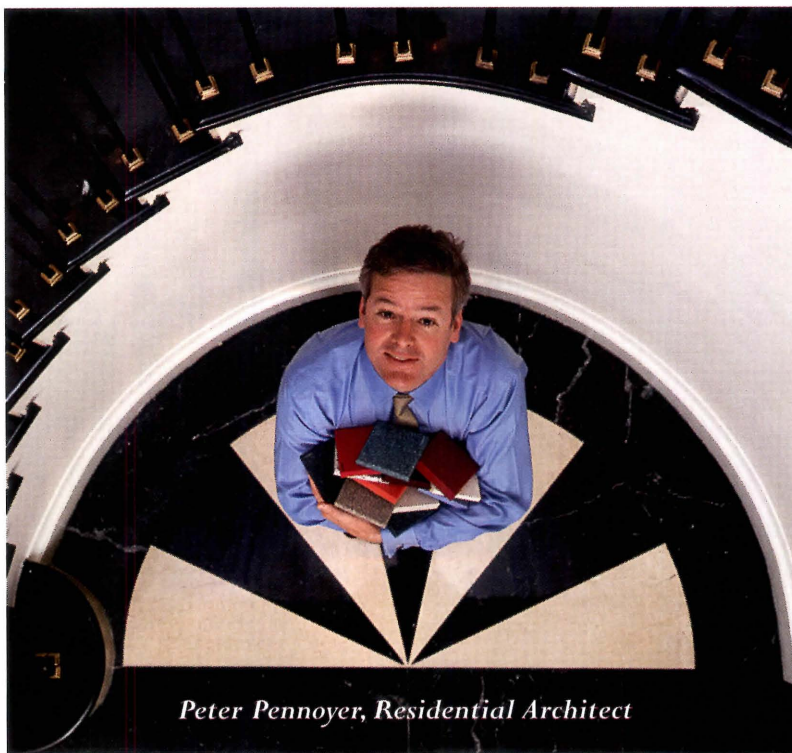
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*Peter Pennoyer, Residential Architect*

textures that make beautiful complements to traditional materials such as wood, tile and stone."

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architect Vitruvius. With a strong residential focus, Peter's designs are as functional as they are stunning. How do Corian® and Zodiac® surfaces live up to such principles? Quite well. "They stand the test of time aesthetically and structurally," Pennoyer says. "And they're available in a wide range of unique colors and

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# is there a house doctor in the house?

buyers of existing homes need your help desperately.

by s. claire conroy

I live in Washington, D.C., which is not known as a cutting-edge town for architectural design. Yes, we have some very talented residential architects plugging missing-tooth lots with something golden, but, for the most part, artfully-designed new houses are nearly impossible to find. If you want to buy a house in Washington or its close-in suburbs and your last name isn't Rockefeller, you're stuck with very dull existing housing. Much of it marches along a tedious timeline of architectural styles, growing uglier by the decade.

After awhile in the market buyers know exactly what they'll see when they go to an open house. They quickly learn to decipher the Realtor code of home styles. If it's a "Cape Cod," they know they'll find a house with a somewhat open floor plan and a little curb appeal but small rooms, cheap trimwork, microscopic closets, and likely no garage. If it's a "Colonial," they'll get a few more rooms and larger proportions, but they'll also acquire a floor plan rigidly divided and expensive to reunite. A "Four Square"

will offer a pleasing front elevation, wonderful public spaces, and good interior flow, but there'll be just one full bath on the second floor and maybe a quarter bath in the basement for the turn-of-the-century day maid.

The best value on the market are the so-called "Ramblers," "Ranches," and "Split-Levels." These houses have much more livable floor plans, larger windows, and more spacious room sizes. They might even have a walk-in closet and a carport. They sell at relatively depressed prices (or less inflated prices in the D.C. metro area) because most people hate the way they look from the street.

What none of these ubiquitous houses has is a proper connection to the outdoors. Side doors, kitchen doors, and basement "recreation room" doors might provide egress, but they don't suit the indoor-outdoor lifestyle today's homebuyer dreams about.

Where does that leave the frustrated buyer? Likely combing the real estate classifieds for language like "updated," "renovated," and "new addition." Or they'll steel themselves to buy the out-of-date house and remodel it over time, triaging it for what needs



Mark Robert Halper

immediate remediation.

Where do you fit into this sad little scenario? I am convinced this dismal assortment of yesterday's tract houses is a lucrative market for you. I realize many of you already have remodeling work in your portfolio, but I suspect most of it comes to you. How much do you go after? Most homebuyers are left to their own imaginations when they go shopping for an existing house. They guess at what changes it might need or the money it might cost to make it livable.

What if you studied your market very carefully, identified the prevailing older house types, and developed a planbook of potential fixes by house style, price

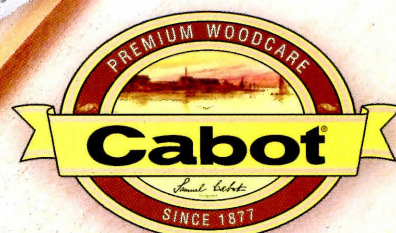
point, and maybe even phases? You might then offer your services (for a fee) to accompany buyers to houses and ballpark what could be done to remodel them. And voilà, you've become the old-house doctor—the expert in reviving terminally dull, ugly, and dysfunctional homes. And you've provided a huge public service: helping disheartened homebuyers envision a brighter future in a better house. *ra*

Questions or comments?  
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# letters

keep those cards, letters, and e-mails coming.

## defending sam mockbee

I am writing in response to a letter titled "Master's Voice" ("Letters," March, page 15). I feel the need to offer a rebuttal to those sarcastic and unjustified comments since Samuel Mockbee is unfortunately unable.

Sam Mockbee was one of the truly great architects and people of our time. He ran an ethical practice and truly cared about his clients and their environments. His Rural Studio, through Auburn University, provided homes and communities for the less fortunate in Hale County, Ala. Mockbee did these deeds while at the same time providing a hands-on design/build experience and a quality educational environment with real clients for his students.

The majority of his work and the Rural Studio's was constructed in areas where building codes may be unheard of and his clients were more concerned with a lack of running water than handrails. Mockbee truly cared about bettering his clients' environments while creating well-built, affordable works of architecture. He is one of the few architects to fuse art, construction, and ethics.

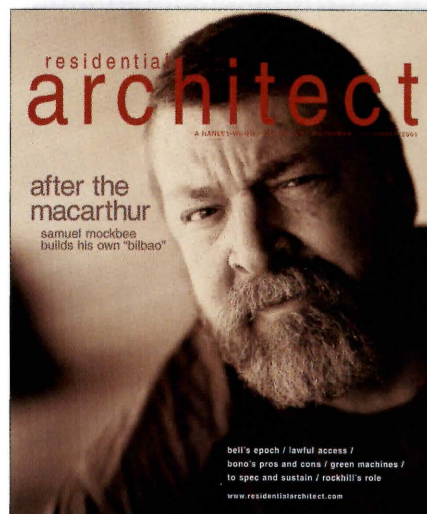
I had the pleasure of lis-

tening to Sam Mockbee speak several months before his unfortunate death and feel grateful to have had the opportunity. I think all architects and people alike can learn something from Mockbee's beliefs and actions, and I can only hope to touch half the lives he did in his lifetime.

*Ben Hooley  
Cornette & Associates  
Cincinnati*

In your "Letters" column (March, page 15), Mr. Coykendall is critical of the lack of a handrail in one of Mr. Mockbee's projects, an omission he believes would endanger the clients' guests. I would assume that the client is not entirely dim and probably had full awareness of that detail. I am of the opinion that your home is your castle and the code police should have no right to come into your residence and dictate how you live. Guests should come into your home at their own risk; it is private property not public.

The code police should have the responsibility of protecting the public in "quasi" public buildings (commercial, office, etc.) but not in your home. Your guests have the right to per-



sonally sue you if they have a complaint or to decline to purchase your home for lack of a handrail. I personally do not like Mockbee's designs—they are too cerebral and offensive to my eye—but we all should have the right to create our personal living spaces without the government dictating safety rules in our private homes.

*M.L. "Mike" Waller  
Charrette Design Group  
by e-mail*

## from the buyer's mouth

I recently picked up your journal in the home of an architect friend and was a little surprised by the article heaping praise on Don Gardner ("Mr. Plan Man," January-

February, page 44), who will surely go down in history as the Thomas Kinkadee of architecture.

I believe this "we know what you really want" approach to design is wrong-headed. Sure, it sells—just drive through any Olde-English-Tuscan-Villa-Greek-Revival subdivision—but there are plenty of us who yearn to live in a clean, functional Modern home. Where do we go for help and guidance? Not to the guy who opted for the Bimmer.

Come on folks, work with us. Ply your trade. Show your skills. Give us some cool, sleek designs we can afford. I think you'll find the market is there.

*Jerry Orren, MD  
Anchorage, Ala.*



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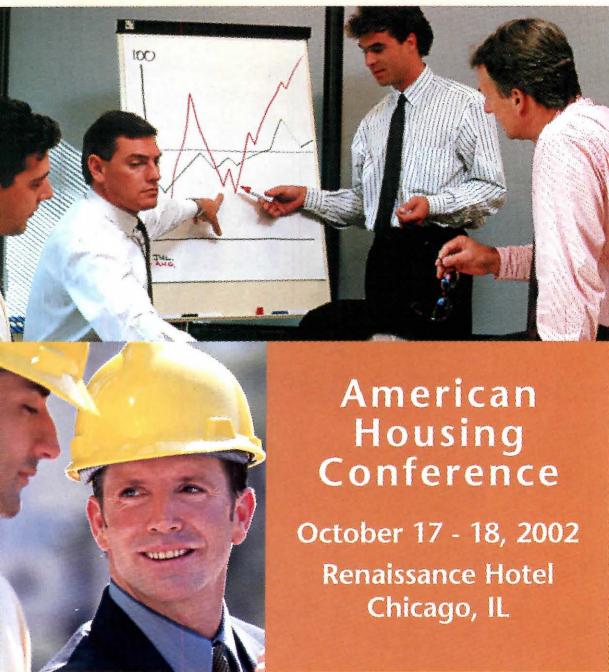
2:00-2:15 pm	<b>Strategy + Growth = Value: An Introduction</b>
2:15-3:30 pm	<b>The Great Divide-</b> <i>Research by Builder magazine and Harvard Joint Studies that explores the gulf between what consumers actually want in their homes and what builders think they want.</i>
3:30-4:30 pm	<b>Growth Markets For the Decade</b> <i>Hear from builders who have engaged in diverse markets to fuel profits</i>
4:30-5:15 pm	<b>Investment Outlook</b> <i>Insight into the debt/equity packages available to builders today with tips on how to prepare your company before you talk with sophisticated financial sources.</i>
5:15-6:15 pm	<b>Financing Growth—Meet the Lenders</b> <i>Ability to meet personally with sources of debt and equity to fuel growth.</i>
6:30-7:30 pm	<b>Networking Reception</b>

#### Day Two - Friday, October 18

8:00-9:15 am	<b>Seize Your Demographic Future</b> <i>Market data on major growth markets with practical tips to convert this data into actionable, profitable plans</i>
9:15-10:30 am	<b>End Games</b> <i>Comprehensive list of exit strategies. Hear from builders who have sold their companies to investors, their employees, and bigger builders.</i>
10:30-10:45 am	<b>Break</b>
10:45 am-12:00 pm	<b>The Acquisition Trail</b> <i>The biggest public builders talk about what they look for in finding companies to acquire.</i>
12:00-1:30 pm	<b>Luncheon The Next Ten Years</b> <i>A look at the new Census data and what it means to household formations and their effect on new home sales in the next decade.</i>
1:45-2:00 pm	<b>Break</b>
2:00-3:00 pm	<b>The Value Proposition</b> <i>Insight to determine your company's worth, based on what investors and other builders have paid for similar companies</i>
3:00-4:00 pm	<b>The Public Markets</b> <i>A window to the public markets and the criteria required to make it a smart, realistic option.</i>
4:00 pm	<b>Conference Adjourns</b>

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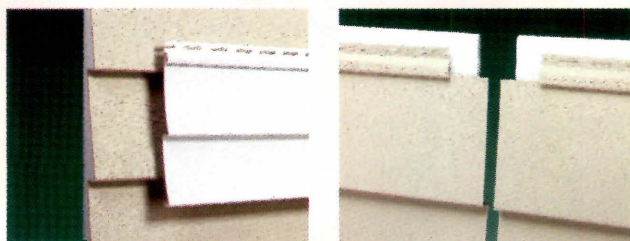
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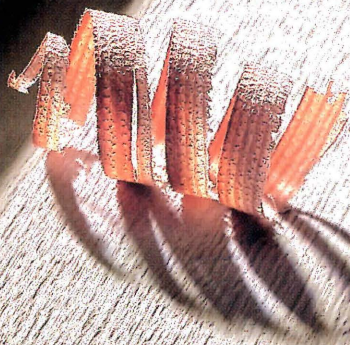
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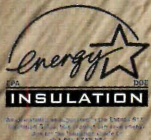


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# home front

tips and trends from the world of residential design

## furniture polish

**t**o hear staff architect Stephen Brockman explain it, the launching of Deborah Berke Architect's new home furnishings line was almost inevitable. "It wasn't like any of us were lying in bed one night and just decided we should start a furniture line," he says. "We've been designing custom pieces for clients for the past five or 10 years, and the collection grew organically out of that." The furniture complements the New York City firm's interiors and architecture departments and is

designed by principal Deborah Berke, AIA; Brockman; and staff interior designer Caroline Wharton.

The sleek, simple pieces are made from natural materials such as wood, stone, and steel. Berke and her team have enlisted craftspeople from all over North America, enabling the firm to keep shipping costs down and stay intimately involved in the production process. "We feel we can control quality better by working with other small businesses who

share our values," says Berke.

The collection features a subtle ecological bent. "The wood we're using is rescued, salvaged, or farmed, which we're very excited about," says Berke. "We're conscious of the fact that we live in a world of limited resources."

Prices range from \$60 for a blackened steel shelf bracket to \$4,500 for a queen-size bed in oak or ash with an oiled or painted finish. For more information on Deborah Berke Architect Furniture, visit [www.dberke.com](http://www.dberke.com), call 212.229.9211, or e-mail [furniture@dberke.com](mailto:furniture@dberke.com).—*meghan drueding*







Courtesy Deborah Berke Architect Furniture



Sleek, minimalist furniture by Deborah Berke Architect—including this sofa, coffee table, tufted chair, dresser, and dining table—looks right at home in the unadorned rooms the firm designs.

## connecting the dots

architect Michael Poris of Detroit-based McIntosh Poris Associates wanted to draw attention to urban renewal, showcase one of his favorite artists, and have fun all at once.

How did he do it? He purchased a 60-year-old house in the Detroit suburb of Birmingham, Mich. Then, to ease the neighbors' fear of change and to focus attention on Detroit's blighted buildings, Poris threw a painting party with friend and artist Tyree Guyton. "It's a common practice in some parts of the world to decorate a building before you destroy it," says Poris. "Tyree had done a similar project with abandoned homes downtown, and I asked him to bring the concept to the suburbs."

One sunny day last July, Guyton, Poris, and about 30 artists, students, and neighbors adorned the "Polka Dot House." Upon completion and until its demise, the painted lady drew thousands of visitors—so many that Detroit's Museum of New Art will hold an exhibit and auction this fall of photographs of the house

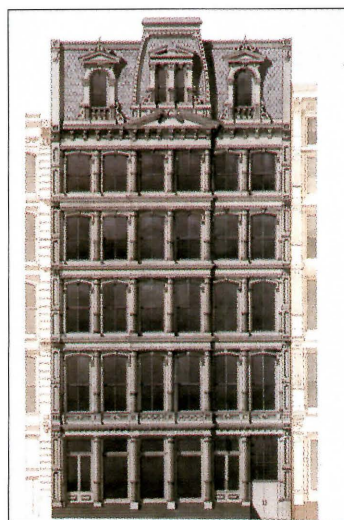


Courtesy McIntosh Poris Associates

Artist Tyree Guyton used multi-colored polka dots on Michael Poris' house to represent diversity.

and portions of its painted walls.

A \$1 million contemporary Craftsman-style residence now stands in place of the Polka Dot House. Meanwhile, McIntosh Poris continues its beautification campaign in downtown Detroit with several projects on the boards, including the design of 100 low-income townhouses and a loft conversion of the abandoned Eureka Vacuum headquarters.—*shelley d. hutchins*



Courtesy USM

"we are very excited. almost two years ago, we decided that we needed a space where our philosophy and our products should be on display."—ted zakowski

## usm in the usa

most designers know that you can mix and match anything as long as each component is a great example of its own aesthetic. Such is the case with the Haller System, the modular furniture classic from Swiss manufacturer USM; an 1827 cast-iron office building designed by J.F. Duckworth; and a new office/apartment complex by New York-based MSM architects. All of the above will coexist handsomely in USM's new showroom and U.S. headquarters at 20-30 Greene Street in Manhattan's SoHo district.

"We are very excited," says company president Ted Zakowski. "Almost two years ago, we decided that we needed a space where our philosophy and our products should be on display. And we think this is the place to put us on the map."

The two-phase renovation consists of a street-level showroom, a lower-level corporate office, a complete facade restoration, commercial rental space on the second floor, three levels of 2,500-square-foot apartments, and a 6,000-square-foot top-floor corporate apartment.

The Haller System, now in the Museum of Modern Art's permanent collection and unchanged since designed in 1969 by Swiss architect Fritz Haller, remains a big USM seller.—*nigel f. maynard*



## calendar

### honor awards for design excellence 2002

boston society of architects/AIA  
deadline: august 19



Courtesy Charles Rose Architects

Shown is the Aquinnah Residence on Martha's Vineyard, a 2001 award winner designed by Charles Rose Architects in Cambridge, Mass. To register, visit [www.architects.org](http://www.architects.org) or call 617.951.1433.

### shinkenchiku residential design competition 2002

shinkenchiku-sha company, tokyo  
deadline: september 2

Submit your ideas for house design in the new millennium. Any architect or designer may create an entry; cash prizes will be awarded. For further details, visit [www.japan-architect.co.jp](http://www.japan-architect.co.jp).

### out of place: contemporary art and the architectural uncanny

museum of contemporary art, chicago  
through august 11

Fourteen international artists including Johanna Bresnick, Monica Bonvicini, and Sam Durant take common living spaces and make them unsettling and unfamiliar. The exhibition demonstrates how ordinary environments can be threatening, underscoring its theme of "place and displacement." The example shown is by Miriam Backstrom. For more information, call 312.280.2660 or visit [www.mcchicago.org](http://www.mcchicago.org).



### hungarian ceramics from the zsolnay manufactory, 1853-2001

bard graduate center, new york city  
july 17–october 13



Since 1853, the Zsolnay ceramics factory has been creating distinctive architectural ceramics for private and public buildings throughout the Austro-Hungarian empire. Over the years, the factory has worked with notable architects such as Otto Wagner, Max Fabiani, and Odon Lechner. Examples are shown at right. For museum hours, call 212.501.3000 or visit [www.bgc.bard.edu](http://www.bgc.bard.edu).

### idca: what matters now

aspen, colo.  
august 21–24

The 52nd International Design Conference in Aspen will feature seminar leader and architect Michael Rotondi of Roto Architects. This year's theme focuses on regrouping, reflecting, and renewing the role of design in a changing society. Visit [www.idca.org](http://www.idca.org) or call 800.815.0059 to register.

### stainless steel for architectural applications

september 10, columbia, md.; september 11, westin hotel, philadelphia; september 12, sheraton new york hotel & towers, new york city; september 13, omni parker house, boston

This AIA-approved one-day workshop introduces innovative and cost-effective applications for stainless steel and also covers issues of selection, aesthetics, design, and maintenance. For registration information, call 800.982.0355 or visit [www.ssina.com/workshop](http://www.ssina.com/workshop).

### continuing exhibits

**Gerald Zugmann: Blue Universe, Architectural Manifestos** by Co-Op Himmelblau, through September 8, MAK Center for Art and Architecture, Los Angeles, 323.651.1510; **Out of the Ordinary: The Architecture and Design of Robert Venturi, Denise Scott Brown and Associates**, through September 9, Museum of Contemporary Art, San Diego, 858.454.3541; **Skin Surface Substance + Design**, through September 15, Cooper-Hewitt, National Design Museum, New York City, 212.849.8400.

—shelley d. hutchins





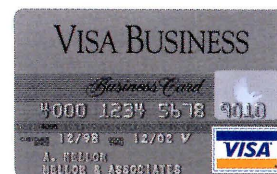
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# wilderness training

in the field, students unearth the link between design and the environment.

by lori ryker, ph.d.

**t**he Northern Rocky Mountains meet the plains in the middle of Montana, where I live and work. It is an inspiring place, where the Absaroka, Beartooth, and Crazy Mountain ranges form around the Yellowstone and Shield rivers. It is one of the few areas in the United States where the wildlife is truly wild. It is also a place that is undergoing development unmatched since the frontier expanded.

As picture-perfect megalog cabins replace undeveloped landscapes, rivers are drained, and wildlife is pushed out of its home, I ask myself, as a teacher and practitioner of architecture: Am I attentive to and critical of this vastly changing environment? How can we reconcile our perceived needs while gaining a clearer understanding of our place in this world?

## natural order

In the shadow of the Absaroka/Beartooth Wilderness, I teach a program at Montana State University called the Remote Studio. It focuses on helping architecture students come to a clearer understanding of their responsibility to the world around them—the

world in which they will someday practice. The key to the program's structure is the students' firsthand experience of the world, referred to by the German philosopher Martin Heidegger as "dwelling."

Heidegger, writing in the 1950s at the height of the housing shortage in Germany, stated that simply building more houses does not attend to the primal condition of the human being. He believed that housing should not only provide shelter, but also make people aware of their connection to the rest of the world through the poet-

ic expression of architecture. Dwelling, he wrote, was the mortal condition of being on Earth, through which we "cherish and protect" the planet and ourselves. Our attentiveness to this condition helps us understand that we are part of a larger whole.

The architect's gift is that of making places that situate us, that give grounding and meaningful context to our experience, thoughts, and actions. We have all been to places that help us recognize nature's continuity and beauty. Le Corbusier conveyed water's restorative qualities when

designing the tiled recliner in the bathroom of Villa Savoye. The entry sequence in Mockbee/Coker's Barton residence reveals a considered sense of living that is intricately tied to the shift from day to night. The residences of Glenn Murcutt even articulate the presence of rain throughout the changing seasons.

## disappearing act

Despite such contributions, I am concerned that these experiences are dwindling from the artifacts we make, and that their disappearance affects our understanding of

*continued on page 30*



Courtesy Lori Ryker

Montana State University's Remote Studio program involves students in every aspect of designing and building a small-scale structure. The 2001 group harvested and milled their own lumber on site.





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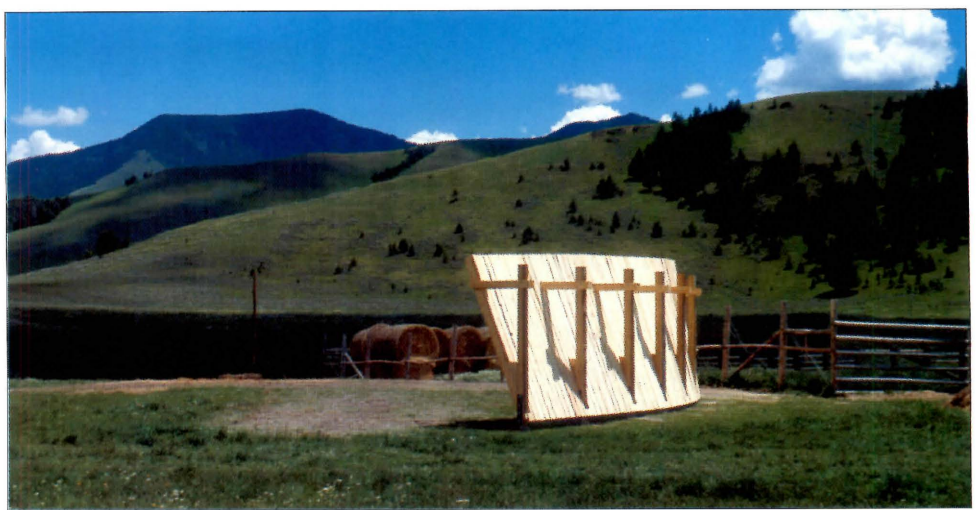
our place in the world. Architects have a responsibility to weave together the experiences of the unbuilt with the built. How we design the fireplace, the bathing experience, and the cooking of food in relation to the natural elements of fire, water, light, and air can become the connector to the world around us rather than the mundane solution of pragmatic function.

Helping students come to an understanding of their creative responsibility is key to the Remote Studio's program of study. The program teaches that deep understanding and compassion come from the first-hand experiences we have, that loving the place in which you dwell is the most

“the architect’s gift is that of making places that situate us, that give grounding and meaningful context to our experience, thoughts, and actions.”

vital step toward taking responsibility for the place, for making holistically considered choices about the built environment.

The Remote Studio takes the place of a typical upper-level semester at Montana State University. The program is run entirely off campus in a rural and semi-



Courtesy Lori Ryker

Ryker's 2001 Remote Studio students used sustainable materials to create a wind shelter for horses living at B-Bar Ranch, near Yellowstone National Park.

wilderness locale. Classes and living spaces are located in cabins throughout Paradise Valley, in Park County, Mont. The program combines an integrated course work of wilderness living, ecological education, discussions of sustainable design methods, and

of Western ecological ideologies be grounded in the students' experiences of the place. During the semester, students learn about how cultural, environmental, and geological influences affect the places in which they live, design, and build.

The knowledge they gain as they participate in the program helps bind them body and soul to the natural world. The aspiration of this binding experience is that as professionals, their architectural propositions will not only support humankind but also support the environment in which they live. To date, the design/build component of the Remote Studio has involved both public and private work. In the summer of 2001, my 10 students worked at the B-Bar Ranch in a valley not far from the border of Yellowstone National Park.

The ranch has a long history of introducing visitors to the Montana wilderness. The students' task was to design and build a wind shelter for the ranch's Bel-

gian draft horses. The students were involved in all aspects of the design, engineering, and construction of the structure, including harvesting and milling lumber from the ranch and mixing fly-ash concrete for the footings.

A future Remote Studio class will build a rental cabin in the Crazy Mountain Range for the local branch of the USDA Forest Service—provided the funding and land exchange proposals come through. Such work provides students with the opportunity both to explore and share with others their understanding of place as it is revealed through the practice of architecture. *ra*

*Lori Ryker, Ph.D., is a professor at Montana State University in Bozeman, Mont. She is also a principal of Ryker/Nave Design and RN Construction, both based in Livingston, Mont., and the author/editor of Mockbee Coker: Thought and Process (Princeton Architectural Press, 1995).*



Courtesy Montana State University

reflection upon these issues through individual small projects and the group design and construction of a small-scale structure.

### learn by doing

It is the intent of the program that reading and discussing the history and philosophical underpinnings



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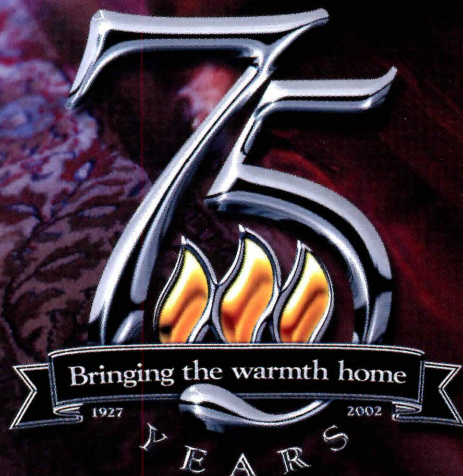
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# getting paid

nobody loves dealing with it; nobody can live without doing it.

by cheryl weber

**f**ew aspects of professional life convey a greater sense of well-being than payments that arrive right on schedule. When accounts are received in good time, the universe is in order. The A-train ticks along like clockwork—bills out, checks in, bills out, checks in. What goes around comes around quickly. Much of the time, though, bill-collecting is not so tidy a routine. And getting every client to fall in with your financial rhythm is no easier than keeping design and construction on track.

Most architects hate the billing process. Because it's tedious, they put off doing it on a disciplined basis. Transferring all those billable hours to invoices is a burden. And if the amount owed is small, they're tempted to hold it another month.

No wonder bill-collecting has such a bad track record in the industry. On average, the collection period in architecture and engineering firms runs 65 to 70 days, says Howard Birnberg, M.B.A., who trained as an architect and heads up the Association for Project Managers, Chicago. In

annual surveys, he also finds that three weeks pass between the time firms complete a billable activity and the time they bill it. Add the two, and it's a 90-day wait for payment.

"The typical architecture and engineering firm has about half or more of their total assets tied up in accounts receivable," Birnberg says. "And the cash they have in the bank is typ-

ically less than 5 percent of their total assets. That's why it's important to encourage quicker payment."

Chasing down delinquent accounts is no fun either.

*continued on page 36*



Phillippe Weisbecker

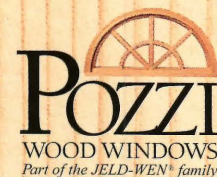


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Birnberg's surveys show that architects never collect 3 percent to 4 percent of what they bill.

## the setup

"It's a cliché to say I would rather concentrate on avoiding

*"keep the accounting period short, and if there are issues, they'll be resolved before you're \$10,000 in the hole."*—mark hutker, aia

the problem than solving the problem," says Michael Hricak, FAIA, Rockefeller/Hricak Architects, Venice, Calif. "But early on in my career, I walked away from quite a bit of money because of the  
*continued on page 38*

## howard birnberg's billing checklist

even though some billing procedures are in the contract, clients don't read them, says Howard Birnberg, Association for Project Managers, Chicago. He asks them to sign this form when they sign the contract and whenever a project changes in scope.

### Date prepared:

Project number: \_\_\_\_\_ or change order no: \_\_\_\_\_

### Project name:

### Client name and address:

### Client's contact for billing questions:

### Architect's contact for billing questions:

### Send invoices to (name and address):

### Others to receive copies of invoices (name and address):

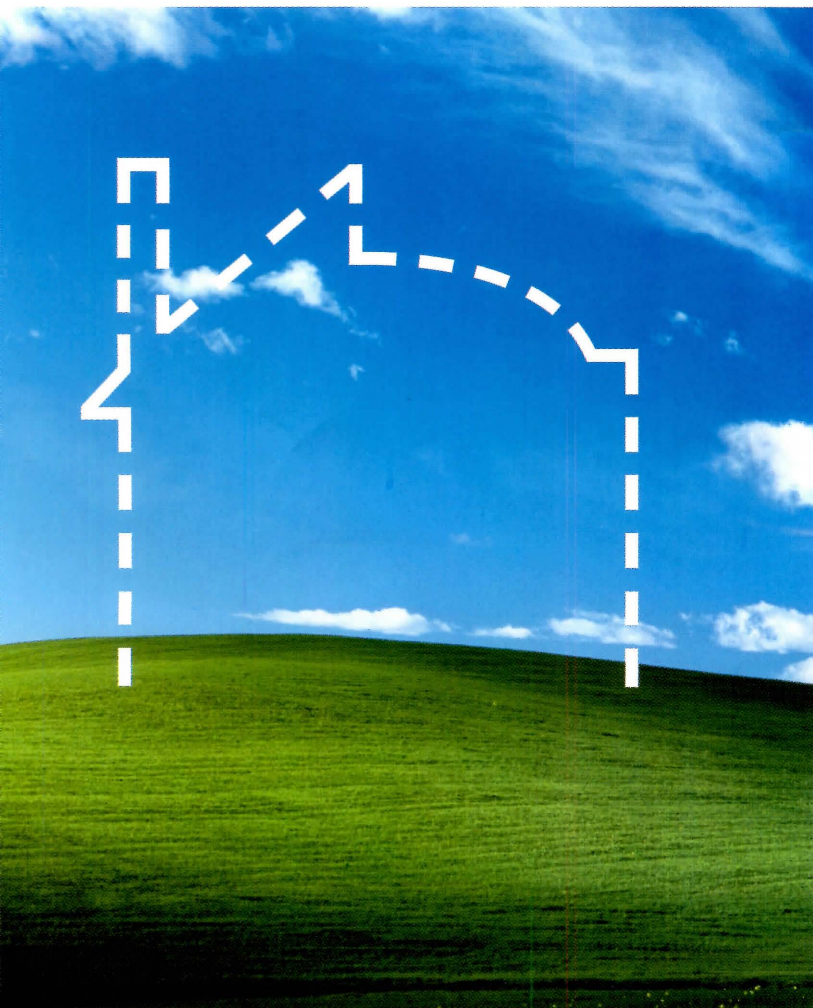
### General questions:

#### 1. Is a client billing form required? (If yes, attach a copy.)

#### 2. Backup required:

- all vendor and consultant invoices?
- vendors only?
- consultants only?
- other

*continued on page 38*



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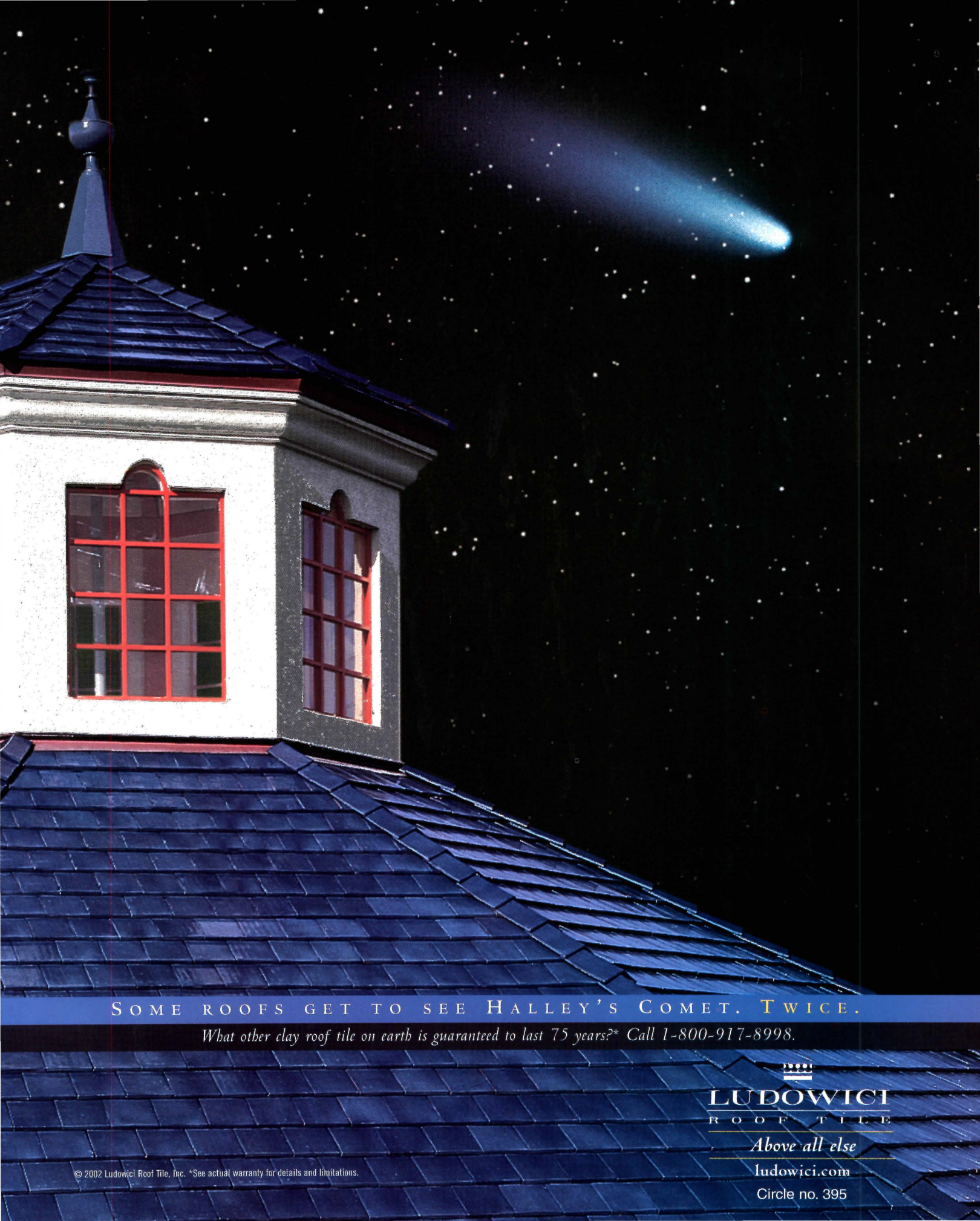
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psychic energy it takes to chase fees.”

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*“you've got to look [clients] right in the eye and say, 'if you've got cash flow issues that affect me, I want to know it up front.'”*—mark hutker, aia

money, the wisdom goes, they'll believe you're being careful with theirs, too. “Clients, deep down inside, want architects to be very good with figures, budgets, schedules,” Hricak says.

“While the client might  
*continued on page 40*

### 3. Time-sheet copies required?

### 4. Audit required (for public projects)?

### 5. Day(s) of the month client processes invoices

#### Specific questions:

##### 1. Fee basis:

- multiple of direct salary expense
- multiple of direct personnel expense
- professional fee plus expenses
- percentage of construction cost
- fixed amount
- hourly billing rates
- other (explain)

##### 2. Maximum fee

##### 3. Reimbursable maximum (if any)

##### 4. Reimbursable markup percentages:

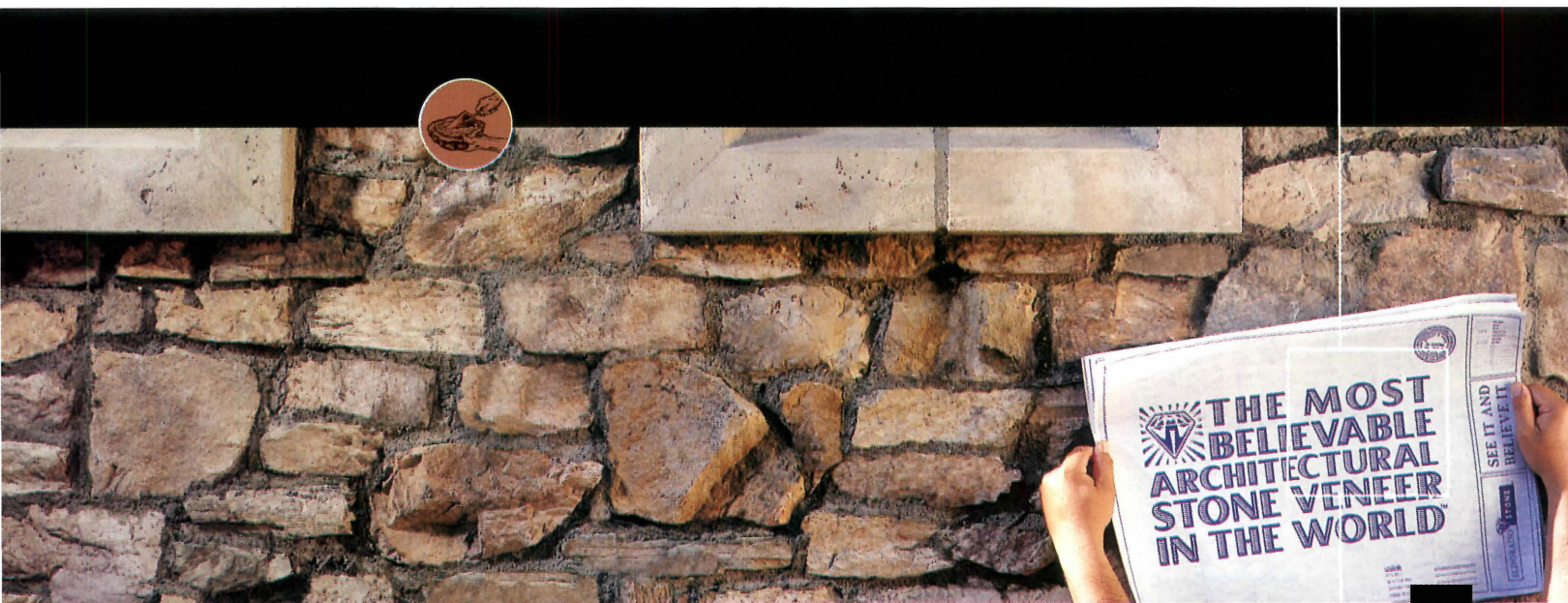
- all items equal?
- if different percentages to be used, list and include percentages used

##### 5. Interest on delinquent receivables:

- percentage per month
- after how many days from the invoice date?

Client approval and date \_\_\_\_\_

Design-firm approval and date \_\_\_\_\_



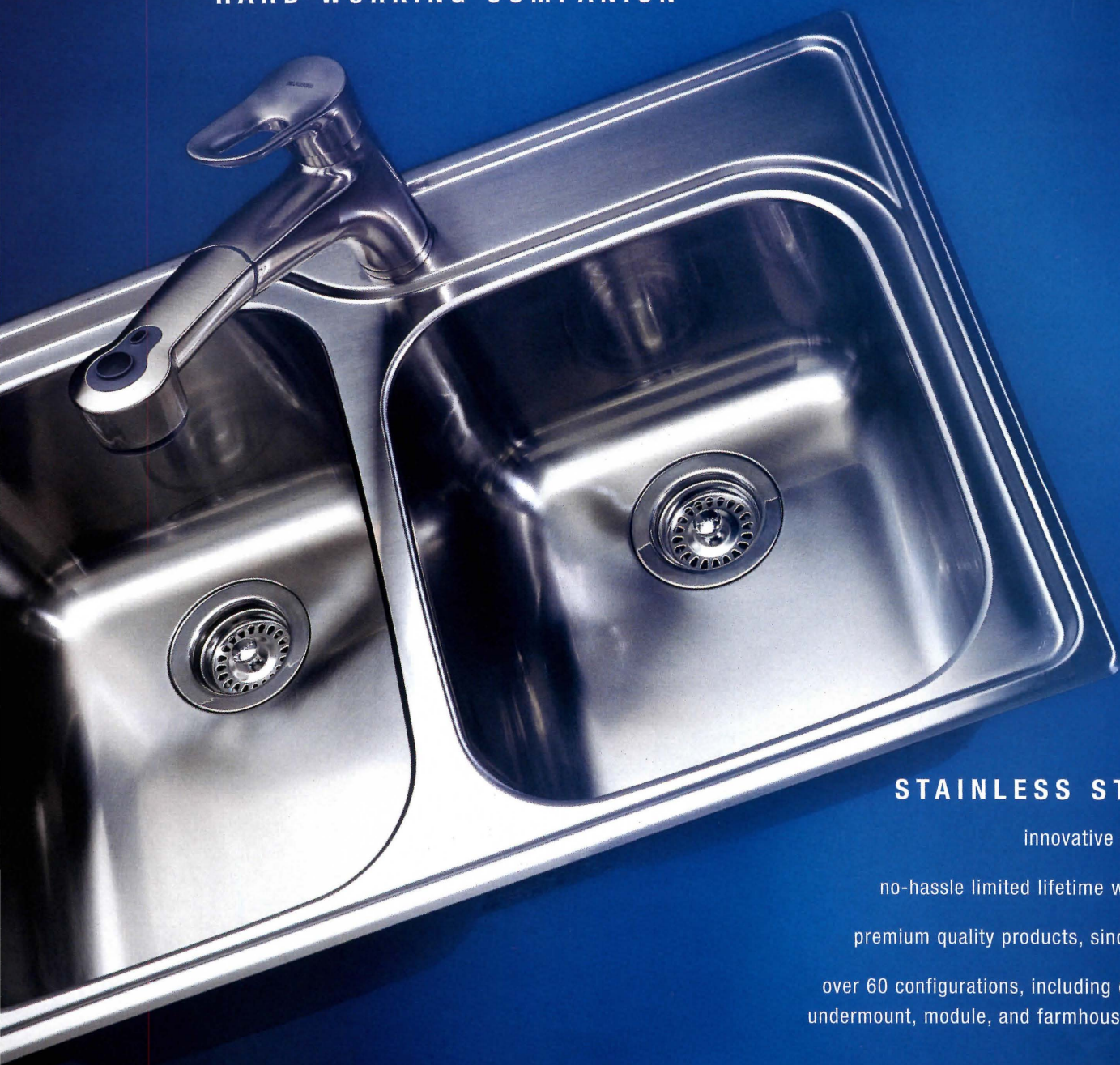
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want the best possible deal in terms of a fee, once that deal is struck, I find that most clients, if they're receiving perceived value for the money spent, will gladly pay it."

Hricak preempts un-

*"failure to address added services at the point of origin is the root of payment failure."*—michael hricak, faia

pleasant surprises by giving the client a payment spreadsheet when the contract is signed, showing approximately how much money will be due each month. For clients who want an even monthly cash flow, he'll simply divide the total cost over a one-year period—the

average amount of time the firm takes to finish a residential project. "It sets out a level of expectation that you are planning for this project to break ground and be done in X amount of months. You can also tell the client, 'By the way, that means I'll need decisions from you at the end of May, September, and November. I've built into this schedule five working days for you to review drawings and make decisions. If it takes longer, we'll have to extend the schedule by this amount.'"

Hricak's office works the payment pipeline, nailing down all the pedestrian details to define relationships and expectations. He asks who will review the

invoices and write the checks, what days of the month checks are written, and, on large residential projects, whether there's a business manager or accountant involved. "I like to meet those people so we're not just a voice on the end of the line," Hricak says. "We'll show what our invoices look like before we bill them, to make sure it's acceptable. Half of it is due diligence, half is just plain schmoozing."

Indeed, a lot of billing issues are procedural rather than contractual. Birnberg has devised a two-page billing checklist that clients sign along with the contract and when the project's scope changes (see sidebar,

page 36). It goes over such basics as where to send the bill—strangely, a piece of information that's often overlooked, Birnberg says—whom to contact for billing questions, what backup documents are required, and how the fees are determined. "It establishes the ground rules up front and shows the client that getting paid is important to you," Birnberg says.

### a short leash

Mark Hutker, AIA, leaves no doubt in clients' minds that getting paid is important. With an 18-day average turnaround time on invoice payments, his firm is far ahead of the industry

*continued on page 42*

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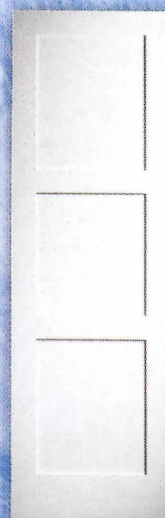
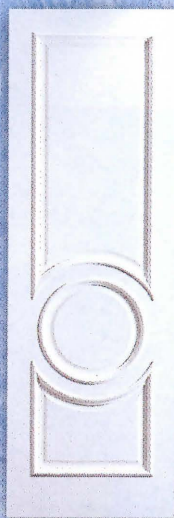
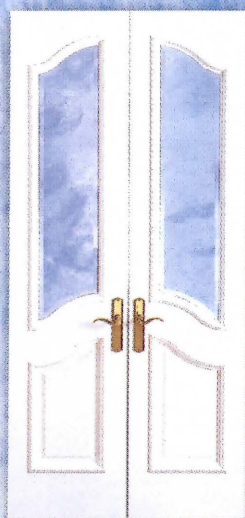
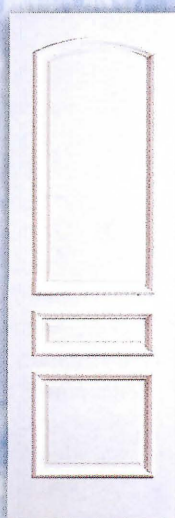
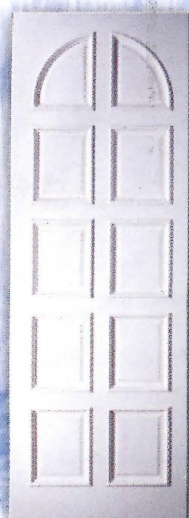
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standard. "We're blessed to have an extraordinarily efficient payment situation, and I know it changed dramatically when we switched to billing twice a month," says Hutker, of

Mark Hutker & Associates Architects, Vineyard Haven, Mass. As he explains to his clients, "If you put two people on a project and send an invoice once a month, you've put in 320 hours at

an average of \$100 an hour. Who's the banker in this scenario? The bottom line is, that's a huge amount of front-end cash an architecture firm has to carry."

Twice-a-month billing

has its psychological benefits, too. People want to get their first bill out of the way before they receive the second one. And if there's a question or grievance, the clients react more quickly. The practice also keeps architects accountable. Says Hutker: "You need to listen intuitively to your gut as you're signing the bill. If you haven't had major meetings with the clients and they haven't seen anything you've done, you need to call and say, 'We've been

*"clients want you to be aware of the value of money and be fiscally responsible, because you're looking out for their investment."*

—michael hricak, faia

working our tails off; we've got 300 hours in here.'

Communication up front is 90 percent of the battle.

Keep the accounting period short, and if there are issues, they'll be resolved before you're \$10,000 in the hole."

Hutker relies on his business manager to stay on top of the game. If a bill hasn't been paid by the time the second one rolls around, she attaches the previous one. And if there's still no word within two or three days, rather than wait for the client to call, she picks up the phone to ask if there are questions. "If it's a larger question about the stage of the project, she'll give me a heads-up and I'll call,"

*continued on page 44*



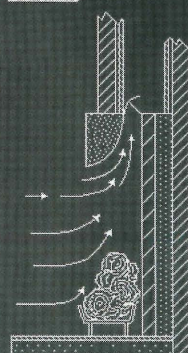
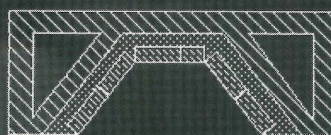
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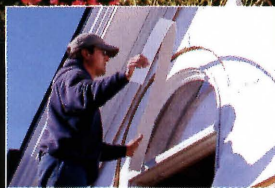
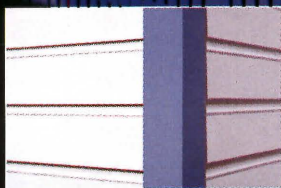
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Hutker says. "It has served us well." The firm takes a retainer large enough to ensure that the work never gets ahead of the money. Fast-track projects require more money up front

because the hours pile up faster.

The large multifamily and mixed-use projects in James, Harwick + Partners' niche take on a slightly different perspective. The Dal-

las firm's real-estate-developer clients receive a package of invoices monthly, along with statements of outstanding invoices. The firm expects payment in 30 to 45 days, and the partners

in charge of the projects stay abreast of potential snags. "Perhaps a closing has been delayed," says partner Bob James, AIA, "and that's where 80 percent of the money is coming from." An interest provision—more than what it would have to pay at the bank—kicks in after the invoice is past due. "We don't always assess that," James says. "We make a judgment call."

The firm works hard to establish bookkeeper-to-

*"good businesspeople are looking for a reason to pay you what you're asking for. if you can demonstrate that, you can get paid."*

—michael hricak, faia

bookkeeper communication, to make sure no administrative issues are holding up payment. "Maybe there's a \$20 print bill attached to a \$20,000 invoice and they don't understand why," James says. "We make sure we're clean with their accounting department before we start pursuing aggressive measures in collection."

In fact, few offensive moves are necessary in JH+P's world of real estate, where relationships are everything. The firm has done between 10 and 20 projects with almost everyone in its client base. So rather than call in the lawyers to collect outstand-

*continued on page 46*

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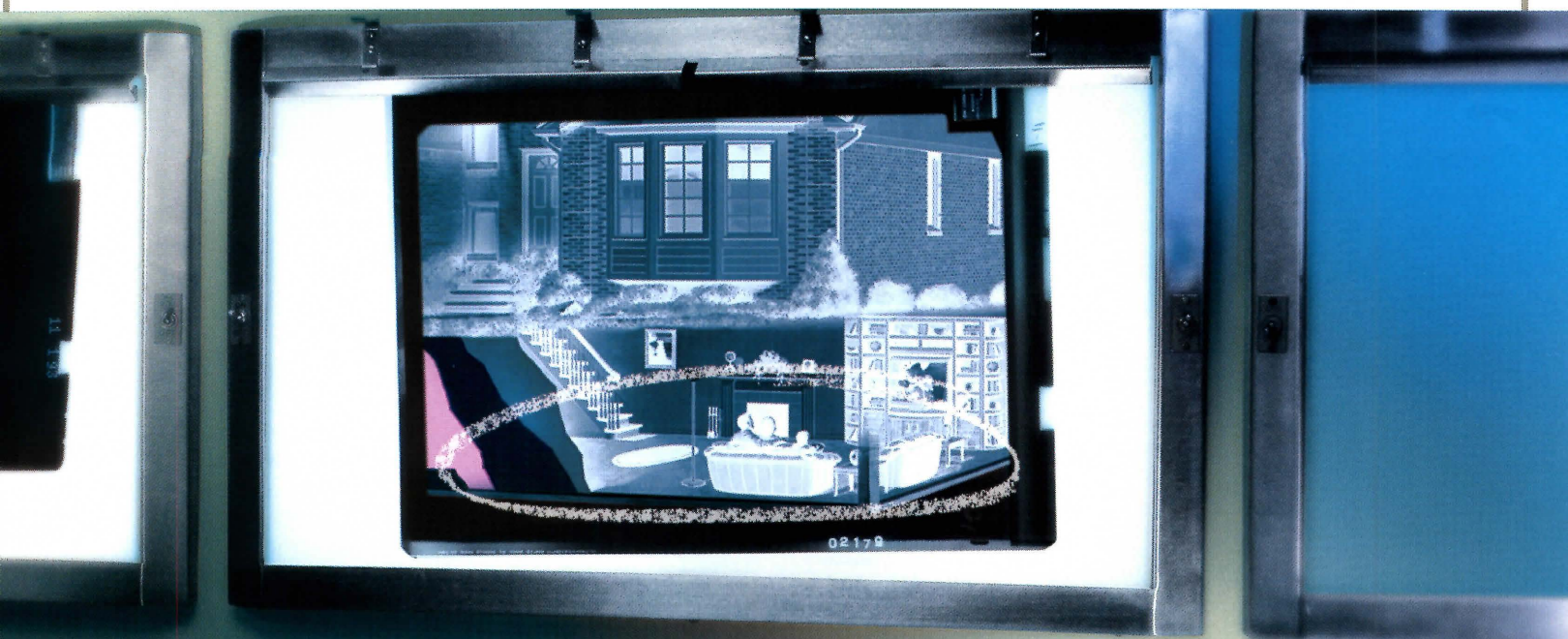
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ing feasibility-study fees on projects that never materialized, the bookkeeper adds the amount to the developer's next project. "We'll say, 'We spent \$5,000 in pursuit of the old project, so we need to clear this up and add it to the next item,' "

James says. The lag time is the cost of doing business with that client.

## lords of the dance

So, what are the sticking points in this billing business? Hricak says change

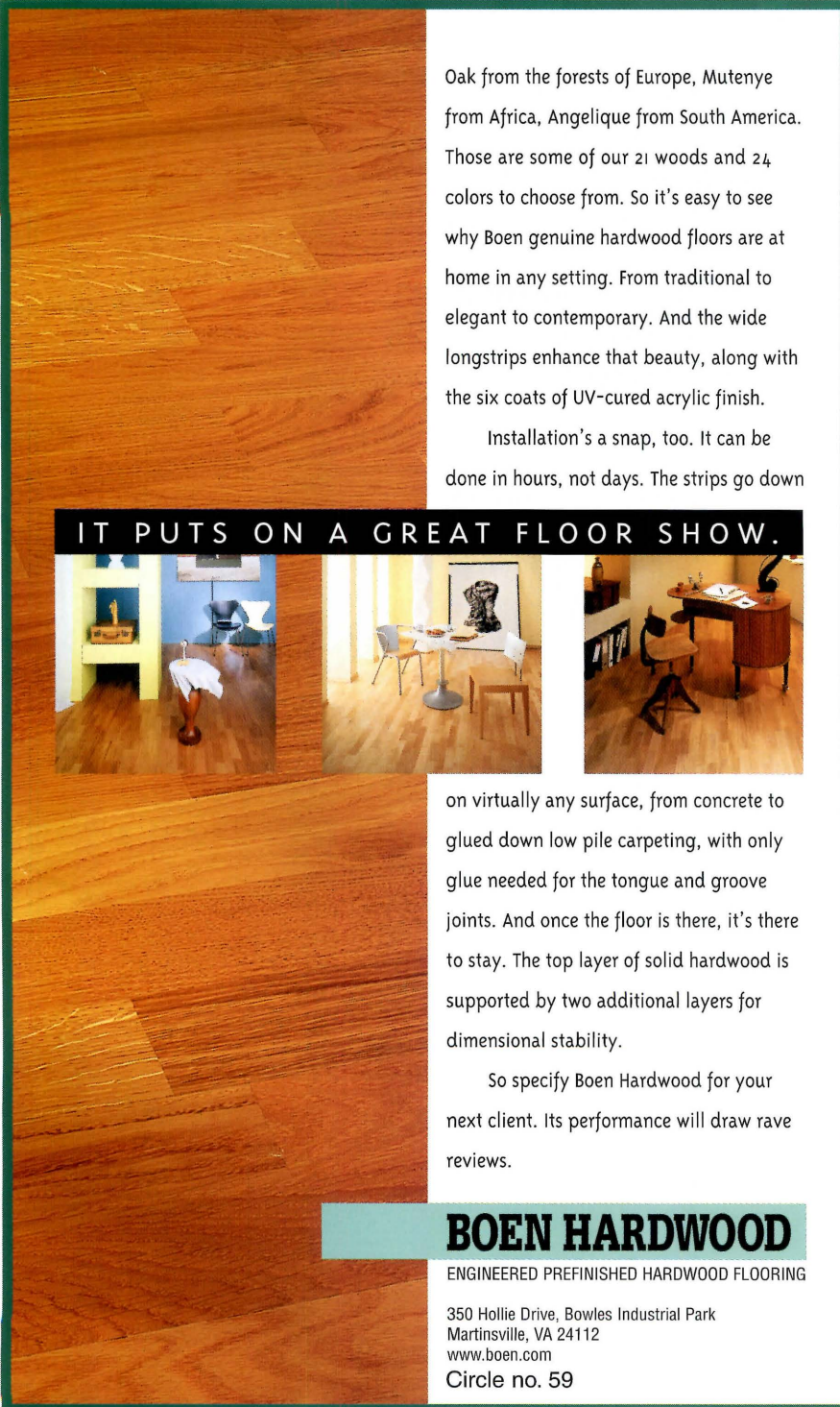
orders and scope creep contribute the most to collection problems. His mantra: Manage fees in the margins. "Failure to address added services at the point of origin is the root of payment failure," he says. The architect brings a card to client

meetings that is filled out on the spot when an additional service is requested. It includes the work, the estimated fee, and the client's signature. "The client's request could be something as benign as, 'Let's do several more design studies,'" Hricak says. " 'Well,' we say, 'that will cost another \$5,000,' and maybe the client says, 'Maybe I don't need that study.' "

The same discussion is in order when the contractor delivers the bad news that the project will run on another six months. "As the client's trusted advocate, you're extremely reluctant to add to their discomfort by saying, 'We need X amount per month to manage this project,' " Hricak says. "But talking about the relationship between time and money throughout the project is extremely important. Clients want you to be aware of the value of money and be fiscally responsible because you're looking out for their investment."

Reimbursable items are often points of contention, Birnberg says. Contracts should spell out what can be reimbursed, whether it will be marked up, and what supporting documents are required. JH+P's developer clients routinely ask for backup of all reimbursables, so if questions arise the information is right there. Hutker nips nitpicking in the bud by billing reimbursable items as a percentage of each invoice. "We

*continued on page 48*



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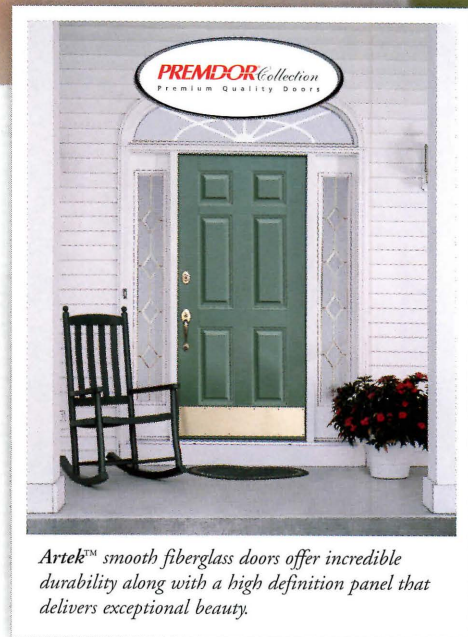
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have about 20 active, serious projects going on at once," he says. "To track phone calls, copies, prints, stamps, is extraordinarily time-consuming." Over the past five years, the firm researched the amount it spends on various and

sundry expenses and came up with a percentage of the overall cost of the project. "We negotiate that right up front," he says. "All the time it used to take to track that for each project, we put toward marketing."

Billing by the hour opens

up the potential for squabbles, too. Tom Price, of Tom Price Architects, Orlando, Fla., says in the few cases in which he's had to settle for a percentage of payment toward the end of a job, the dispute was over hourly services. As a result, "we

spend a great deal of time documenting every tenth of an hour, just like we're lawyers," he says. Architect Barry Isakson, AIA, Architectonica, Redondo Beach, Calif., agrees that one of the chief ways to be unprofitable is to not accurately track your time. His firm ([www.architectonica.com](http://www.architectonica.com)) custom-tailors time-and-expense software and invoicing systems for architects. "For small offices, the biggest problem is recording the time and getting paid," he says. "Being able to shorten that line is especially good for hourly work."

Hutker's architects log their hours onto an Excel spreadsheet, which can be collected quickly and formatted into an invoice almost verbatim. "We're not just pushing a button, but we're creating a description of what we're doing," he says. "I review the invoices to make sure we're being straightforward."

## reading the tea leaves

But even the savviest billing system won't save a relationship in which the early warning signs went unread. Clients who negotiate hard in the contract stage for little or no interest on past-due statements are telling you outright that they're not going to pay on time, says Hutker. "You've got to look them right in the eye and say, 'If you've got cash flow issues that affect me, I want to know it up front. If

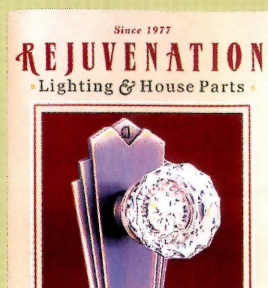
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you're struggling with lines of credit running all over the place, it isn't a fruitful environment for getting creative." And Birnberg says mediation clauses are often counterproductive. For some

clients, they're an invitation to negotiate rather than pay the bill.

Price refuses to do feasibility studies for private residential clients trying to decide on one single-family

home site vs. another.

Before he begins work, he asks for a survey to confirm that they own the land, so he can lien the property if they don't pay. "When you do that, you foreclose any

possibility of future work with the client," he says, "but all for the better."

Although formal background checks for financial stability are generally taboo, most architects retrace a client's referral path. "We'll definitely call whoever referred a client, to thank them and also to get the scoop—are they fun to deal with, are they happy people? What are they motivated by?" Hutker says. He also recommends checking with the attorney or real estate agent who closed on a client's property. Price reads the Web sites of business-owner or CEO clients to find out more about them.

Nobody wants to resort to those last-ditch efforts of stopping work or engaging a third party to solve a conflict. Architects agree that after friendly negotiations fail, they've lost the game. It means they've done a poor job of managing the finances, and an awful lot of things were left unsaid. "You've got to dig deep and find out what the symptoms of nonpayment are," Hutker says. "You can get through most issues if you have a willing client who wants to solve the problem."


Hricak agrees. "Even our most difficult clients have been fair," he says. "Good businesspeople are looking for a reason to pay you what you're asking for. If you can demonstrate that, you can get paid." *ra*

*Cheryl Weber is a contributing writer in Severna Park, Md.*

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Carefully chosen exterior materials protect Ryan's beach houses from the salt-infused air. This 2001 oceanfront home in Loveladies, N.J., defends against the elements with cedar cladding and a concrete-block privacy wall. Inside, Ryan and project designer Chris Jeffrey selected Australian cypress for the floors and the second-floor bridge.







michael ryan's blank canvas  
is a spit of land  
on the jersey shore.

# shore calling

by meghan drueding



Photos: portrait by Bill Cramer; all others: © Paul Warchol



When architect Michael Ryan spied a 1950s commercial building in the beach community of Loveladies, N.J., he knew he had to have it. He learned that the building's 80-year-old owner still went to the office every day, so he began to drop by once a week with coffee and pastries. "This was a really interesting man," says Ryan. "He was a local developer who wanted to make the area into an arts community. He gave no-interest home loans to artists and writers during the 1950s and '60s, and some of those families are still coming here."

After months of getting to know the developer, Ryan worked up the nerve to ask about renting the building for his newly formed architecture firm. The older man acquiesced, and soon Ryan and his staff of three were renovating the office. They moved in March 1989, leased the space for five years, and bought it in 1994. The firm, now six people strong, still occupies the building.

This focused, personal approach to getting the results he wants is still Ryan's hallmark. Each house he designs ends up a small gem, tailored exactly to the clients' needs and budget. Whether it's an oceanfront home on Long Beach Island, the 18-mile-long strip of land off New Jersey's southern coast that contains Loveladies, or a permanent residence farther inland, Ryan's attention to detail is borderline obsessive. "He knows every project inside and out," says Brian Smith, a Bucks County, Pa., builder who's worked with Ryan on several houses.

## soup to nuts

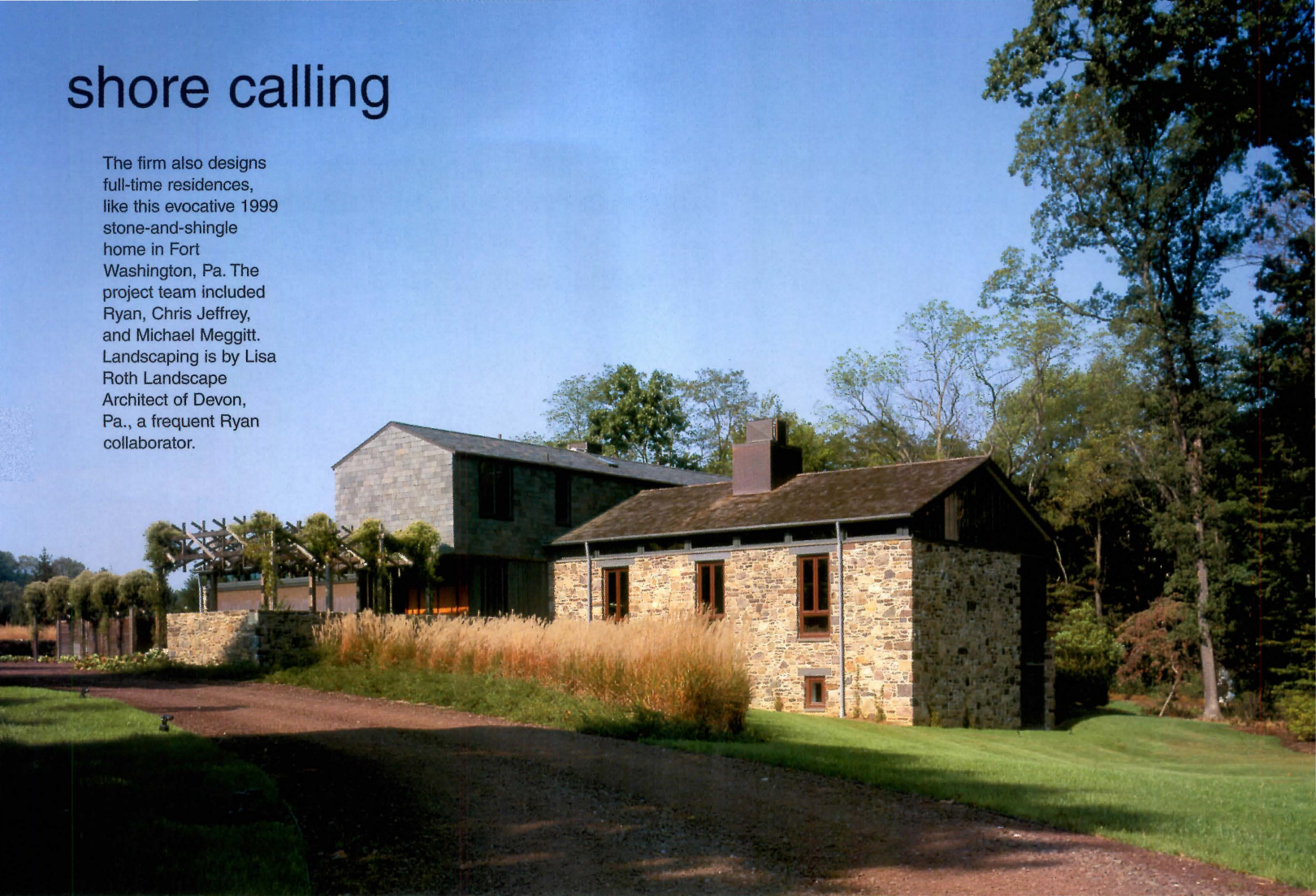
Part of this meticulousness is simply Ryan's nature. It's also the consequence of the way he's set up his business. Michael Ryan Architects is an uncompromisingly full-service firm. He and his staff of interns design the projects. Then Ryan's wife, interior designer Randee Spelkoman, helps the clients choose finishes and furniture. The architects create much of the furniture themselves, and what they don't design, Spelkoman finds, buys, and resells to the client.

In fact, the firm purchases most of the nonstructural products that go into each home—from light fixtures to countertops to faucets—and resells them at an appropriate markup to the homeowners. By



# shore calling

The firm also designs full-time residences, like this evocative 1999 stone-and-shingle home in Fort Washington, Pa. The project team included Ryan, Chris Jeffrey, and Michael Meggitt. Landscaping is by Lisa Roth Landscape Architect of Devon, Pa., a frequent Ryan collaborator.



Photos: © Paul Warchol





taking on the role of procurer, one that's usually reserved for the contractor and subcontractors, Ryan exerts complete control over the execution of his projects. "It makes things a little messy around here because we have to check everything in and sometimes store it at the office," he says. "You have to establish a system, and it does take time. But it saves time down the road because there are fewer mistakes and change orders. We're basically stripping out the subjectives." The method only applies to local projects—long-distance jobs necessitate a more typical supplier arrangement.

Contractors don't seem to mind the unusual process. "It's always a challenge," says Tom Tallon, a Long Beach Island builder who frequently teams with Ryan. "But the projects always turn out looking very good." And it can be cost-effective for clients, who benefit from Ryan and Spelkoman's experience in finding the best available prices. The firm makes enough money from the procedure that it doesn't have to charge a separate interior design fee. "It's one-stop shopping," says Barbara Kaplan, a suburban Philadelphia client for whom Ryan's firm designed a beach house in Loveladies. "You don't have to mediate between a third party and the architect."

Ryan's method of painstaking, comprehensive architecture also weeds out potential clients who may not want to take design as seriously as he does. That's all right with him. He limits the number of active projects to about 15. (Most of them are residences, but he does take on some light-commercial work.) The self-imposed cap enables him to keep the office small, which makes for a relaxed atmosphere.

## on holiday

Relaxed atmospheres are even more important in the beach houses that make up a large percentage of Ryan's portfolio. Most of his vacation-home clients fit a similar demographic profile: They're empty-nester couples from Philadelphia, northern New Jersey, or New York City with grown children and possibly grandchildren. They still have active careers but are beginning to spend more time telecommuting rather than working in the office. Many opt to own a city apartment plus the beach house, rather than keep up the big suburban homes where they've raised their families. Their vacation homes must accommodate overnight guests and facilitate large parties and gatherings, but they also must suit the couple when it's just the two of them.

So Ryan makes a point of isolating the master suite from the children's and guest bedrooms. "It's like a really great one-bedroom apartment," he says of one master suite in an oceanfront residence. "The owners don't feel like they're rattling around in this big house." New beach houses by the firm average 4,000 square feet; Ryan often finds himself talking clients into smaller houses than they'd originally requested. "I try not to design a lot of 'dumb space,'" he says. "We usually make the bedrooms pretty small because you're not using them a lot when you're at the beach. We try to maximize the space in those rooms with built-in furniture."

The space saved on the bedrooms gets applied to the homes' public areas, such as wide-open kitchen/living/dining rooms. "That's another thing that makes vacation homes different," says Ryan. "They're much



Photo: © Catherine Tighe

*"that's another thing  
that makes vacation  
homes different.  
they're much more  
of a magnet for family  
and friends."*

—michael ryan

Ryan is fond of employing dashes of color to punch up lower-budget projects. Here, an earthy red enlivens a 1993 beach house in Barnegat Light, N.J.



# shore calling

Public and private spaces receive equal attention in a Ryan-designed house. This 1999 bayfront home in Loveladies, by Ryan, Chris Jeffrey, and Bill Bloomfield, includes both an expansive *central living area* and a restful master-bedroom suite.





*"i like to use materials that will weather. it helps them gain a little soul."*—michael ryan



Photos: © Catherine Tighe



more of a magnet for family and friends. You really need a large public space where people can gather, more so than in a traditional house."

The quiet north end of the island, where the majority of Ryan's vacation-home commissions are located, has few restaurants or bars; much of the residents' dining and entertaining happens at home. Ryan's projects contain many sight lines between the central living space and other rooms, making everyone in the house feel part of the action. The main rooms are often double-height and large enough to hold a pool table or other rainy-day amenities.

## deep roots

Except for a couple of years spent working for Philadelphia firms, Ryan has practiced in the Long Beach Island area since graduating from the University of Pennsylvania's architecture school in 1980. And the Chester, Pa., native grew up spending summers in Avalon, N.J., another beach town south of the island. His commitment to the southern New Jersey shore shows in the choices he's made—to locate his business there, to live there (he and Spelkoman bought and remodeled a 1960s kit house on the island a year ago), and to embrace the local environment with his designs. Each of his firm's houses artfully smudges the line between indoors and outdoors. Some have large sliding windows that open entire walls to sea breezes. Others contain walls of pocket doors leading to porches or decks, connecting those outdoor spaces to interior rooms.

He chooses interior and exterior materials that will age gracefully in salt-laden air, among them cedar shingles and steel sealed with linseed oil. "I like to use materials that will weather," he says. "It helps them gain a little soul." Many of the new houses on the island are built atop timber piles for support against hurricane winds, but Ryan goes the extra mile: He designs shear walls sheathed in plywood that extend through every floor and down to the foundation, for even greater stability.

Due to the firm's full-service approach, Ryan and his colleagues have established relationships with dozens of craftspeople in Pennsylvania, New York, and New Jersey. Contacts from his and Spelkoman's undergraduate years at Penn State and from his time at Penn have helped them find collaborators like Boston architect Brian Healy, with whom they designed several beach houses in the mid-1990s. Those same contacts prove handy when it comes to landing interns who might otherwise look to big cities for places to hone their talents. "One of the interns in my office, Rich Villa, came at the recommendation of one of my former Penn State professors," Ryan says. "People generally hear about us through word of mouth. If someone gets in touch with me, I interview them—even if I'm not hiring. That way, I always have people I can call when I do have an opening."

Ryan's refined, Modern buildings are an exception to the rule on the island, where clumsy mega-houses are gradually replacing the modest beach cottages that once lined the orderly streets. But the visual cacophony doesn't bother him. His desire for quality control stops at the property lines of his projects. "The island is kind of like a campground," he says. "Everyone has picked their spot here and can do what they want with it. I like the diversity of it." **ra**



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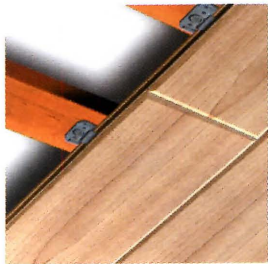
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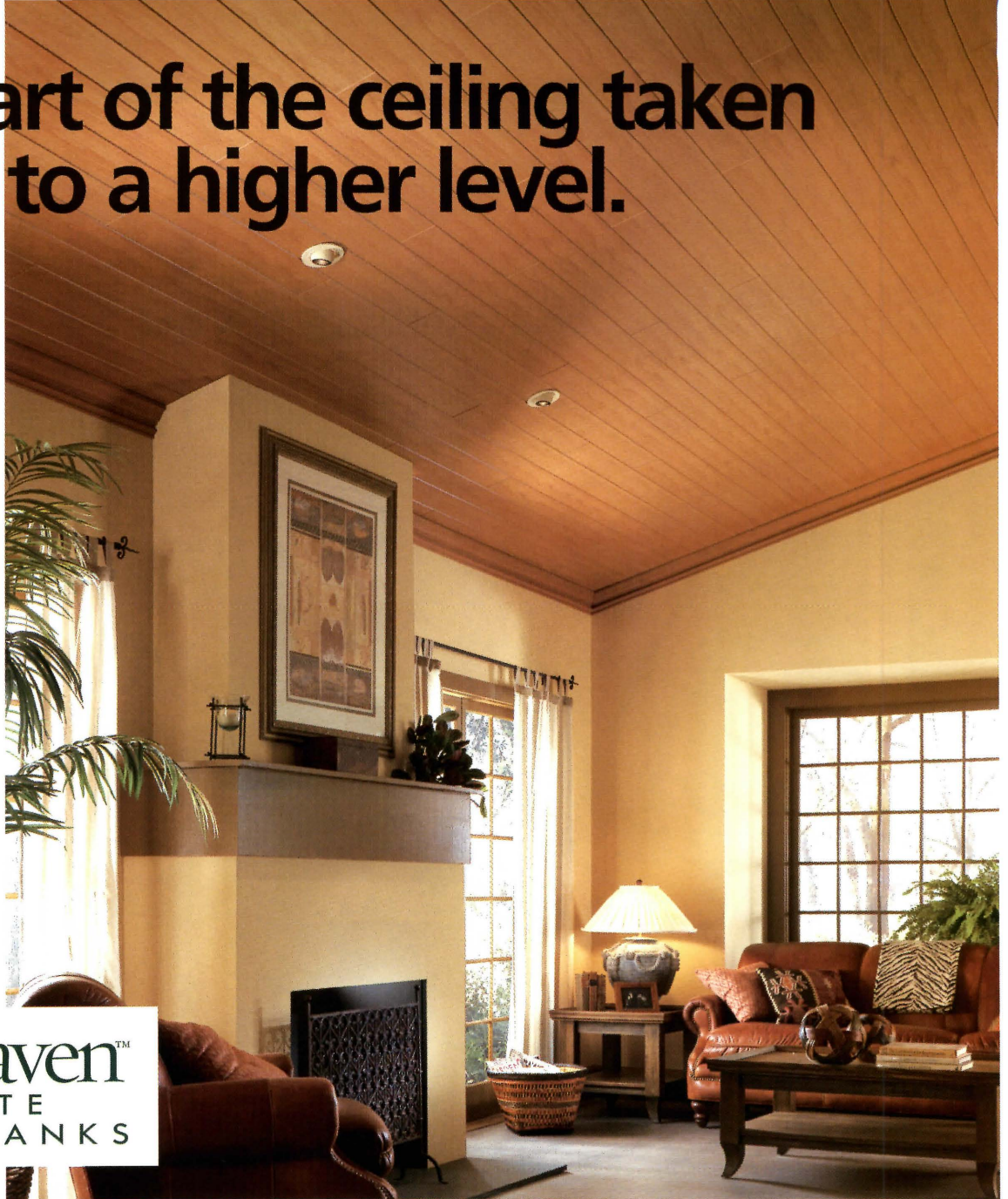


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# quiet time



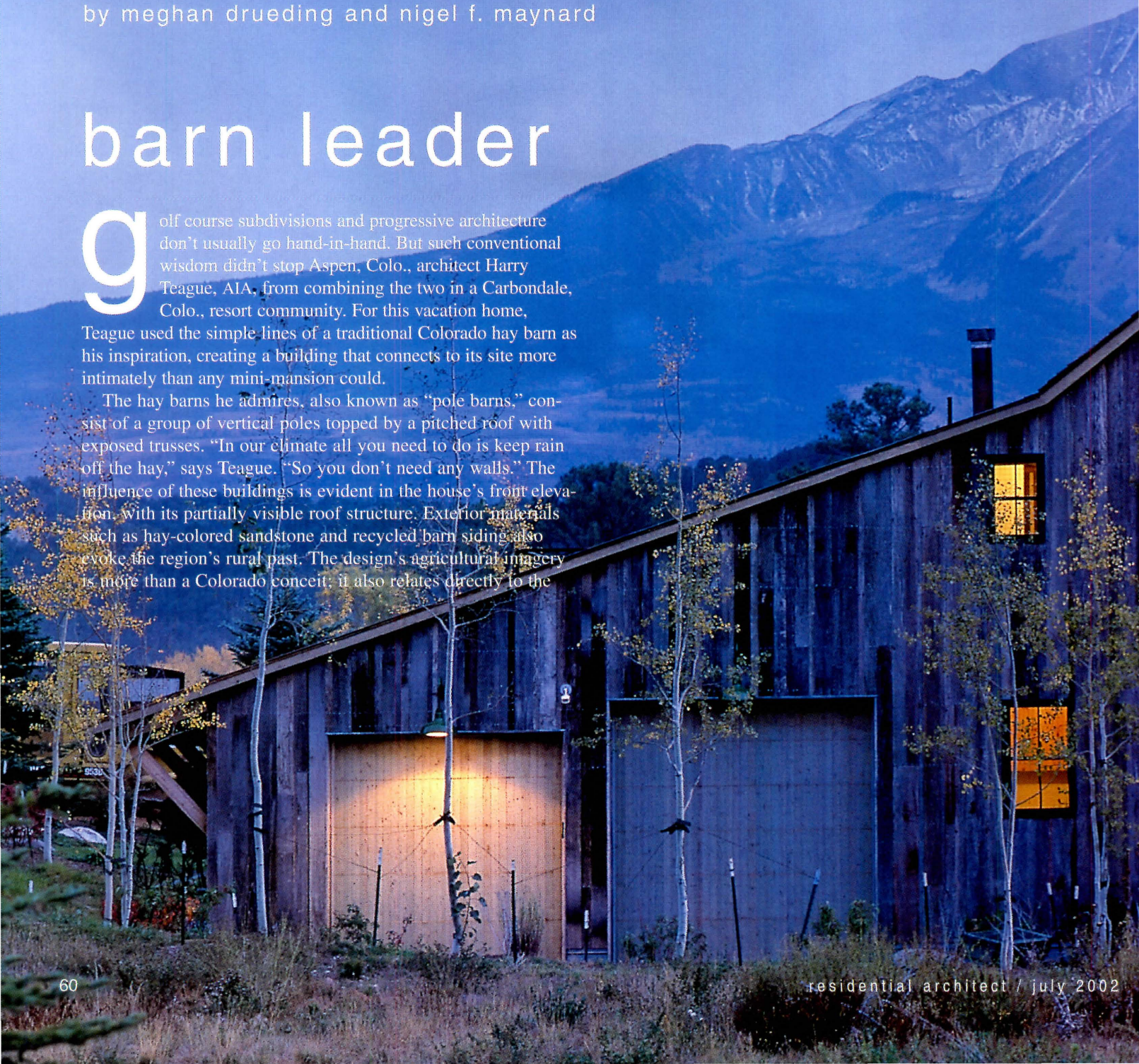
four vacation spots hush the hubbub of everyday life.

by meghan drueding and nigel f. maynard

## barn leader

**g**olf course subdivisions and progressive architecture don't usually go hand-in-hand. But such conventional wisdom didn't stop Aspen, Colo., architect Harry Teague, AIA, from combining the two in a Carbondale, Colo., resort community. For this vacation home, Teague used the simple lines of a traditional Colorado hay barn as his inspiration, creating a building that connects to its site more intimately than any mini-mansion could.

The hay barns he admires, also known as "pole barns," consist of a group of vertical poles topped by a pitched roof with exposed trusses. "In our climate all you need to do is keep rain off the hay," says Teague. "So you don't need any walls." The influence of these buildings is evident in the house's front elevation, with its partially visible roof structure. Exterior materials such as hay-colored sandstone and recycled barn siding also evoke the region's rural past. The design's agricultural imagery is more than a Colorado conceit; it also relates directly to the







Harry Teague Architects used forms borrowed from local farm buildings, a sympathetic color palette, and native landscaping to root this house in its Colorado setting.

Photos: © Robert Millman



# quiet time

subdivision's history as a working ranch. Those cues continue inside, right up to the exposed roof trusses on the topmost floor.

The upper level contains the home's public spaces, part of Teague's upside-down floor plan. "Putting the living areas upstairs allows them to be part of one big, wide-open room," he says. "That way, you get views in all directions. And when a group of people are in it, they have a feeling of being together in the same space, even if they're doing different activities." Decks on the east and west sides extend the living area outside; and a stair connects the eastern deck with a ground-level hot tub.

Because the Chicago-based clients often bring friends or family when they come out to golf, ski, and fish, Teague knew the house would have to sleep as many as possible. In addition to the three bedrooms he designed on the ground floor, he included a TV room with sliding doors that converts into another bedroom.

Despite a relatively modest budget (by exclusive resort standards), a design review board, and the golf course handicap, Teague's barn-inspired solution saved the day. And best of all, it suits its owners and its location to a tee.—*m.d.*

**project:**

Hacker residence

**architect:**

Harry Teague Architects, Aspen, Colo.

**landscape architect:**

Greg Mozian & Associates, Aspen

**structural engineer:**

KL & A of Colorado, Golden, Colo.

**builder:**

Connors Construction, Basalt, Colo.

**size:**

3,600 square feet

**construction cost:**

Withheld

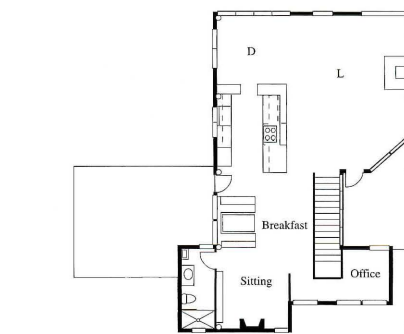


The house is angled for maximum solar gain during the winter. Extra insulation between roof joists helps retain the heat rising from radiant floor slabs.

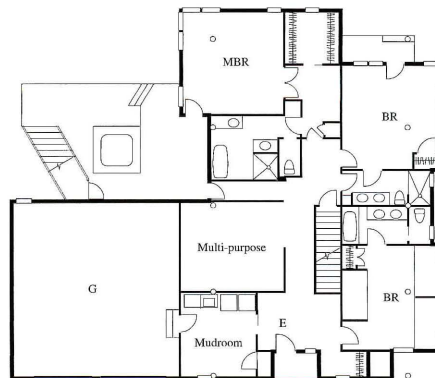




Decks on the east and west sides of the upper floor give the clients plenty of space for open-air entertaining. Strategic window placement in the upper-level public spaces provides privacy and views.



upper level



lower level

The home's casual atmosphere fits the owners' rugged vacation lifestyle. An open kitchen/living room/dining room contributes to the sense of informality.



quiet time

# vineyard haven

**m**ore relaxed, less formal, lower maintenance. That's the customary mantra architects hear from clients commissioning vacation homes. But it wasn't that simple for Boston's Brad Walker, AIA, of Ruhl Walker Architects, when he started an addition and renovation on Martha's Vineyard, Mass. His clients had asked him to transform their 25-year-old weekend retreat into a full-time residence for the two of them, while still maintaining a vacation feeling for visits from their grown children. Walker had to balance the practical needs of a permanent residence with the happy-go-lucky ambience of a beach house—along with all of the other complications remodeling brings.

He rolled up his sleeves and got to work. The original site plan included a main house and separate master suite, staggered on a bluff about 30 feet above Vineyard Sound and the Atlantic Ocean. Walker designed a new cottage for the master bedroom, placing it along the same east-west axis as the main house. "Before, the master suite was located on the most public part of the property," he says. "It was the first building you saw when you pulled up the driveway."

The current version gives the owners more privacy and a better view of the water from their bedroom. Local home- and boat-builder Jeff Robinson, who built the first house 25 years ago, came back for the encore. He applied the same cedar shingle siding and roofing he used the first time around on the new addition but upped the weatherproofing factor with a rubber roof membrane. Walker turned the former master suite into a home office for the clients, who are both therapists. Its location, close to the property's entrance, allows the owners to conduct business without sacrificing the separation between home and work.

Meanwhile, the original main house underwent a makeover of its own. Walker replaced an attached greenhouse that blocked the southern sun from fully entering the home with a deck. He also moved the kitchen from the north end of the main house to its own niche in the building's north-western corner. The move opened the center of the home for a combination living/dining room, still maintaining the kitchen's proximity to those areas.

The rearranging didn't stop with the floor plan. Walker joined with Freeport, Maine-based landscape architect Michael Boucher to integrate a series of decks and terraces into the site, each one carefully placed to maximize sunlight and views for certain times of the day or year. "The clients lead very active lives, and the old house didn't facilitate that," says Walker. "They needed better ways to get outside."

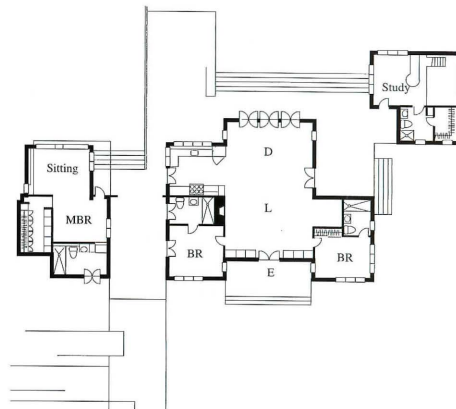
The new distribution of spaces helped Walker achieve the duality the owners wanted. When it's just the two of them, they have access to everything they need in a full-time home. When they have guests in the main house or in the office's upstairs bedroom, the house offers ocean views, access to the outdoors, and the sunny luxury of an open floor plan. It's a vacation home inhabiting the body of a full-time residence—or maybe it's the other way around.—*m.d.*







Walker used cedar shingles and similar forms and proportions to make the new master suite (this photo, left of entrance) look like part of the original house.



**project:**

Pilot Hill residence

**architect:**

Ruhl Walker Architects, Boston

**landscape architect:**

Michael Boucher Landscape Architecture, Freeport, Me.

**builder:**

Jeff Robinson, Vineyard Haven, Mass.

**size before renovation:**

1,280 square feet (main house)

**size after renovation:**

1,780 square feet (main house and addition)

**construction cost:**

Withheld

Photos: © Glenn Daidone



The interior surfaces in the master bedroom remain unfinished, except for a painted plywood floor and lilac plaster wall. The wall extends to the outside, lending a splash of color to the weathered gray rear elevation.





quiet time

# sea worthy

**m**odest, charming bungalows used to permeate the landscape in Rye Beach, N.H., but that's changing as more wealthy families buy lots and build bigger, more opulent homes. The owners of this custom vacation home are a breed apart—they sought to honor the original architectural vocabulary of this beach town, and they valued quality over quantity. To realize that goal, they turned to the Techler Design Group in Watertown, Mass.

The clients wanted something minimalist, with the deceptively simple, crafted beauty of a classic yacht. An open living space was important, and a streamlined kitchen with the feel of fine furniture was another must. To make things even more challenging, the postage-stamp-sized lot demanded a small footprint. "Our task was to design the most spacious-feeling small house we could," says principal Timothy Techler.

What the lot lacked in size it made up for with its enviable location by the Atlantic Ocean. But that also meant the house required hardy materials to withstand New Hampshire's harsh coastal weather. So, Techler and his team clad the exterior in white cedar and treated it with bleaching oil to achieve a uniform color. "White cedar is one of my most favorite materials and one of the most durable," Techler says. The architects also chose painted aluminum-clad windows and a coated-copper standing-seam roof.

To avoid a word-for-word translation of the bungalow vocabulary, Techler used the style as his filter. One outcome was the two-stage roof, articulated as a wave-like shape evoking the nearby surf. "It's a bungalow form, but we did a modern take on a common element," he says. A modern turn also is evident in the tapered aluminum columns custom fabricated by a flagpole company.

The house's interior has an open plan with a clearly defined sense of public and private space. Service and utility rooms hunker down on the entry facade, while the public rooms embrace the beachfront views. Patio doors and glass openings provide visual access to the water.

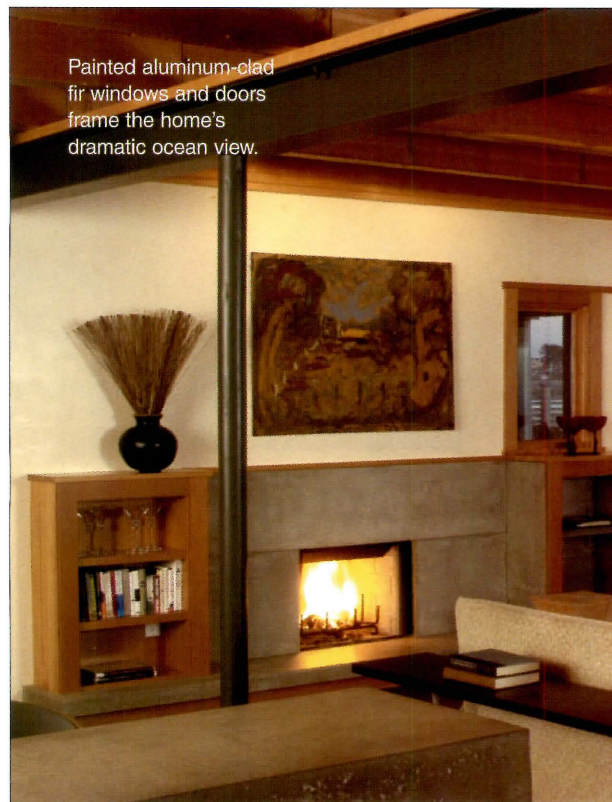
With Sitka spruce cabinets, mahogany floors, fir windows, doors, trim, and beams, the house's materials are definitely yacht worthy. "The materials used are common, and we tried to use as few as possible," Techler says. "They have a calming effect, and everything is simple." An ipé deck, tinted plaster walls, and concrete counters round out the palette.

The sum of those parts is not exactly a bungalow and not exactly a yacht. But it's exactly what the clients asked for—an elegant spot to while away the summer hours with family and friends. "People are always coming and going," Techler says. "And the homeowners love it. They would love to move there permanently."—*n.f.m.*

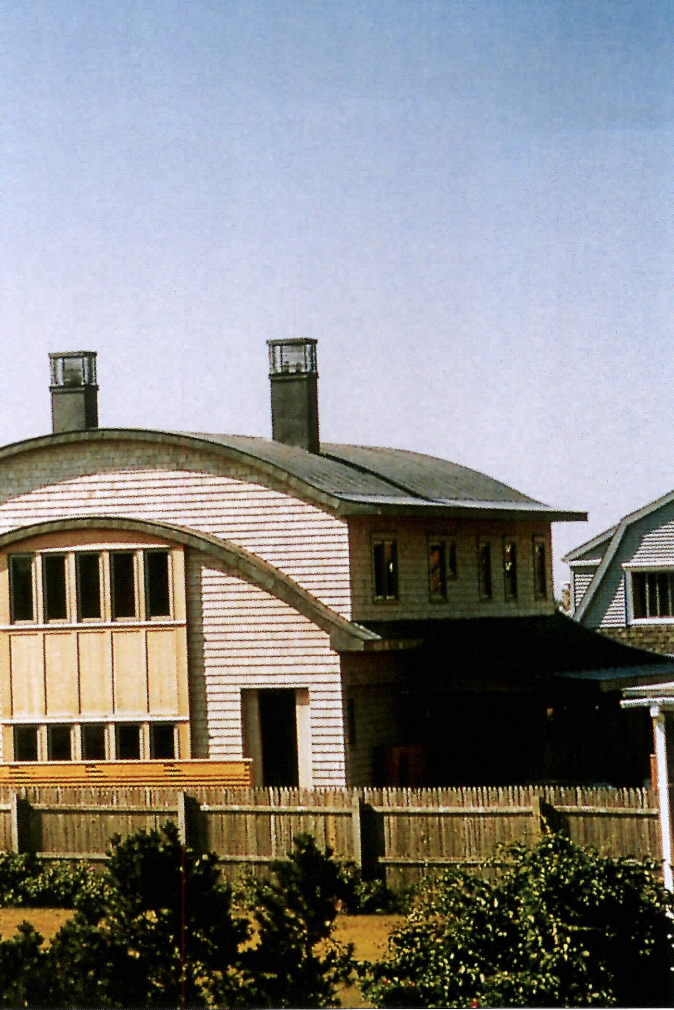
Techler Design Group used a coated-copper roof, oil-treated cedar shingles, and aluminum columns to tame the coastal climate. The roof's form hints at a bungalow vernacular.



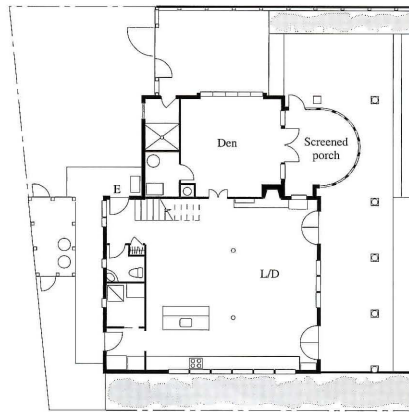
Painted aluminum-clad fir windows and doors frame the home's dramatic ocean view.



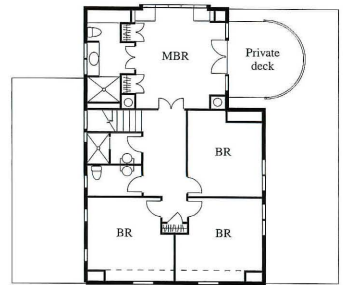




Photos: © David Henderson



lower level



upper level



**project:**  
Beach house, Rye, N.H.  
**architect:**  
Techler Design Group, Watertown, Mass.  
**general contractor:**  
Glen Farrell, YFI Custom Homes, Cape Neddick, Maine  
**project size:**  
2,098 square feet  
**construction cost:**  
Withheld



A zone of service areas—including the utility rooms, pantry, powder room, and kitchen—wrap and define the main living area.



quiet time





# rustic origins

**W**heeler Kearns Architects' clients knew they wanted a spacious weekend retreat to entertain family and friends—they just didn't know where to put it. But when they found this 29-acre site in Three Oaks, Mich., they knew it was a perfect fit. "The property was attractive to the clients because of a spring-fed pond and two wide open fields," says Dan Wheeler, FAIA, a principal at the Chicago-based firm.

Located about 90 minutes from Chicago, the site once was used as a farm, and the homeowners wanted to reference its rustic past. They also wanted a guest wing at a friendly but private distance from the main house. The rest of the design criteria were left in the architects' hands.

Keeping with regional traditions, the designers situated the house on a north-south axis and kept the massing simple with a modified "dog trot,"

The configuration keeps homeowners and weekend guests on friendly terms. Wheeler Kearns Architects designed this Michigan retreat as a modified dog trot, which comprises a main house flanked by a guest wing.



Photos: © William Kildow



# quiet time

connecting the main house to the guesthouse by a staircase. "Normally, a dog trot would be one long gable end with a hole in the middle," Wheeler says. "Here, we blew it up in scale and intersected it."

Although the house bows to the vernacular, a hint of Modernism can be found in the flushed-surface siding and wrap-around windows. The architects organized each detail, including the 8-inch-wide cedar siding, on a strict 24-inch horizontal and vertical module.

"The windows are vertically placed on exactly two-foot increments, so there are only three windows that do not align exactly with a horizontal joint in the siding," Wheeler says. Fixed louvers a foot apart over the entry and stairs temper the sun and reduce the dominance of glass.

The guesthouse, which is offset a half-level from the main house, has two bedrooms and bathrooms. The main house contains the master bedroom, the kids' bedrooms, and a loft. Its first-floor living area is one large room separated from the screened porch by two back-to-back Rumford fireplaces.

Given the home's agrarian roots, the homeowners didn't want an overly Modern interior. As a result, the most progressive touch is the fireplace's red wall. Southern yellow pine floors, tall moldings at the base of the walls to house the outlets, and white trim and cabinetry accent the interior. A ribbon of windows along the north facade provides a sight line to the adjacent pond.

At nearly 30 acres, there's plenty of room to grow. Meanwhile, the clients are happy simply to escape the grit of Chicago for the pastoral pleasures of their new weekend home.—*n.f.m.*

## project:

Private retreat, Three Oaks, Mich.

## architect:

Wheeler Kearns Architects, Chicago

## general contractor:

Dave Thomas, Great Lakes Builders, Three Oaks, Mich.

## project size:

5,000 square feet

## construction cost:

\$100 per square foot



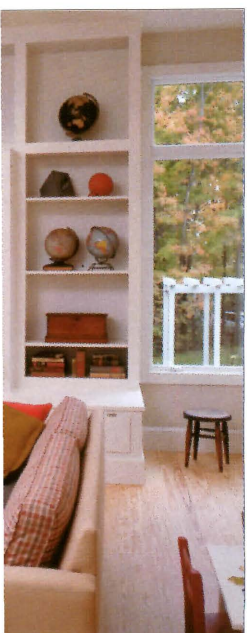
A pigmented stucco masonry wall containing shelving and back-to-back Rumford fireplaces adds color to the white-painted millwork interior (below right).



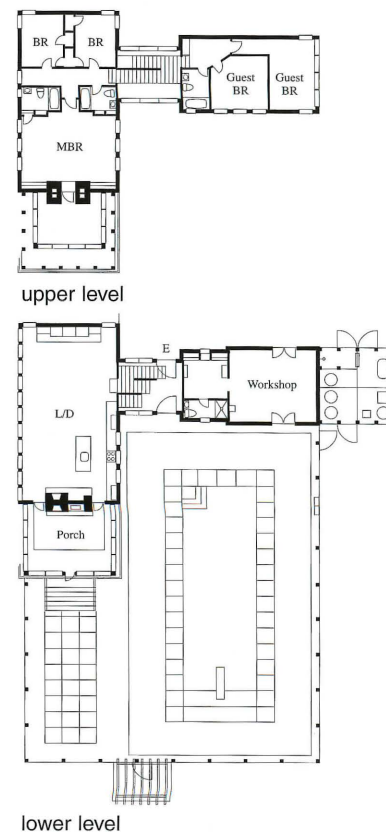




The screened porch features an outdoor fireplace and a three-sided view of the surrounding 29-acre landscape.



A ribbon of windows punctuates the flat-surfaced cedar siding and provides views of a spring-fed pond. Fixed louvers (above and facing page) shade walls of glass.





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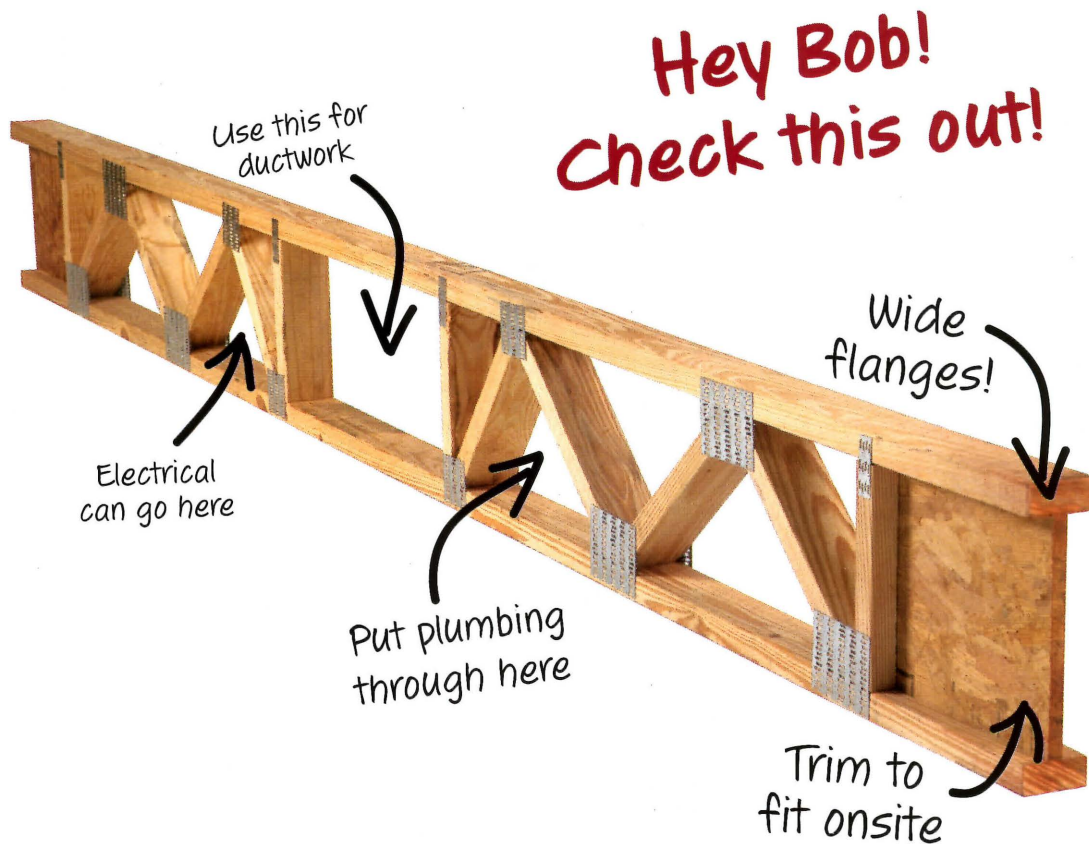
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# the sky unlimited

finding the right fenestration may be as simple as looking up.

by nigel f. maynard

**Y**ou understand the importance of natural light: It provides an environmentally-responsible and energy-efficient source of illumination—not to mention the many health and wellness benefits. That's the easy part. The dilemma is determining the most effective way to capture that light. Many designers turn to traditional fenestrations; others prefer dormers. But some look up to a loftier source: skylights.

"People who hire an architect to design a house usually have a nice view, so bringing in more light and exploiting the view is centrally important," says Tom Meyer, AIA, principal of Meyer, Scherer and Rockcastle in Minneapolis. "A skylight in those projects is a plus."

Anthony Barnes, AIA, likes to explore all his options, but he generally prefers skylights. "You can get the sun to warm things up, and you are almost never looking at trees or other soft-scape," says the principal of Barnes Vanze & Associates in Washington, D.C. "The net amount of light is extremely high compared to a window."

Skylights bring maxi-

mum light to an interior because of their location, which is both a blessing and a curse. Though effective light sources, the units receive constant assault from the sun and rain, causing many people to incorrectly view them as inefficient energy hogs with a tendency to leak.

"That is no longer true," says Joe Patrick, product manager for residential

products at Velux America in Greenwood, S.C. "When many architects think of skylights, they think about older technology—mainly the plastic bubble units that break down over time. It has given the skylight industry a bad name."

## copious choices

Most window manufacturers offer many sizes of fixed or venting skylights



Courtesy Milgard Windows

Because skylights are under constant assault from the elements, manufacturers such as Milgard offer sealed glass units with glazing options to keep out unwanted heat or cold.



Courtesy Velux America

Velux skylights and roof windows can be outfitted with various shading systems for light and heat control.

and a multitude of coordinating shades, screens, and blinds.

Milgard Windows in Tacoma, Wash., manufactures curb-mounted fixed and venting skylights with heavy-duty anodized aluminum frames. The units can be opened manually or with an electric wall switch or remote control. Several glazing options also are available.

Velux makes a new electric venting skylight (VSE) that comes pre-wired with a concealed motor-control system for improved aesthetics, rain sensors, and an infrared remote control with timer. Designers can choose from four types of coverings: pleated shades, venetian blinds, LightBlock shades, and Heatblock awnings.

*continued on page 76*



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# 63

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The curb-mounting units pass requirements for hurricane-prone areas.

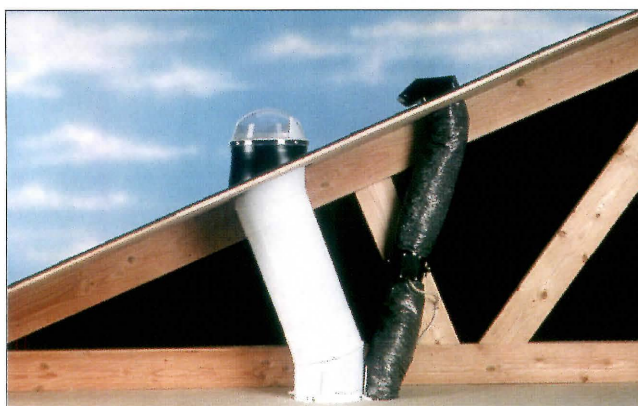
Andersen, in Bayport, Minn., also manufactures venting roof windows and skylights with rain sensors. Custom sizes are available in any increment from 16-by-27 inches to 44-by-72 inches. The units use a snap-in sash for faster installation, and energy efficiency glazing options and custom colors are available.

Iowa-based Pella produces units with solid and laminated pine frames, aluminum construction with thermal breaks, and various glazing options. They come in venting or fixed styles in 10 standard sizes and with a standard motor system. A rain sensor, a wall-mount

**"i have no problem putting a hole in the roof, but ... you have to watch to make sure it's done right."**  
—architect paul wanzner

keypad, and fabric-pleated shades are available.

SPD Systems in Plantation, Fla., has a unique solution to shading unwanted light: its skylights contain "suspended particle devices" (SPD). With the turn of a remote or in-wall dimmer (available with a timer), homeowners control the amount of light that passes through the skylight's glass layers by electronically aligning or dispersing light-absorbing



Courtesy Solatube International

Solatube's tubular skylights are designed to be easily reconfigured to accommodate future interior layout changes. Their single, seamless construction helps prevent leaking.

microscopic particles. "During the day the product would give you some automatic variability," says So-Young Kim, vice president of sales and marketing. "On a cloudy day it would let a little more light through, but when it's bright it would go to the dark end."

Double-glazed construction and Low-E glass with SPD lamination make the company's skylights energy efficient and shatter resistant, SPD Systems says. The extruded aluminum products are curb mounted and can be made with Lexan polycarbonate sheets if clients need hurricane-rated glazing.

Another alternative product is the tubular skylight, light pipe, or light tunnel. With these devices, sunlight enters through a clear dome on the roof and is channeled down to the ceiling, where a translucent diffuser lens disperses the light. Solatube International in Vista, Calif., offers 10-

and 14-inch products that can fit almost anywhere in the home—from a walk-in closet to a windowless bathroom, the manufacturer says. Other manufacturers are Sun-Tunnel Systems in Campbell, Calif., and Sun-Tek, Manufacturing in Orlando, Fla.

## dealing with drawbacks

Skylights, however, are not for every client, nor for every architect. Barnes likes to add natural light in alternative ways. "We try to use a dormer before a skylight and see if it can offer some architectural impact," he says. "Most skylights look bad on a roof. They don't really contribute much. But dormers bring in light and they add character to the roof-scape."

Architect Phil Eagleburger has another strategy: "If we want to hide the skylight from the curb, we try to blend it with the roof form or we may try to hide

it with another part of the architecture," says the principal of Treacy & Eagleburger in Washington, D.C.

Eagleburger also finds that skylights can introduce climate-control issues. "It can get quite hot if you have windows and skylights everywhere," he says. That's why manufacturers always recommend that architects spec blinds or a shading system when choosing skylights. Velux's Joe Patrick agrees: "Skylights are not like vertical windows. The blind is an important function."

And while most skylights may no longer be prone to leaking, the area around them is susceptible, warns architect Paul Wanzner, principal of Wanzner Munizza Design Studio in Seattle. "I have no problem putting a hole in the roof, but the actual installation is what you have to watch to make sure it's done right," he explains. "Most of the time I find that the leak does not occur in the unit itself; it's usually in the installation."

Skylights and roof windows bring light into a space as no other fenestration can. Careful planning will take care of energy issues, air infiltration, and design, while attention to detail and proper installation will ensure trouble-free performance. Take these measures and your clients will not only look up to the sky but to their architect as well. **ra**



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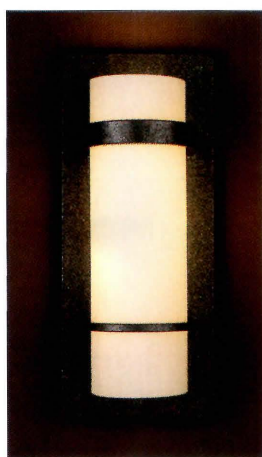
### hung up

Knight says Marvin's Ultimate double-hung window is "a step ahead of everybody else in terms of design and function." The window has a bare- or primed-wood interior, a bronze sash lock, and insulated glazing, available in simulated or true divided lites or with a grille. Exterior choices include bare or primed wood and 12 colors of extruded-aluminum cladding. Custom colors also are possible. Marvin, 800.328.0268; [www.marvin.com](http://www.marvin.com).

## knight associates



*robert knight and  
peter m. d'entremont  
blue hill, maine*



### forge field

Hubbardton Forge produces hand-made fixtures with clean shapes and pleasing forms, says Knight. "They also throw a nice light." This wire-banded wall sconce with a natural iron finish is a firm favorite. Measuring 5 inches wide and 12 inches long, it has a 4-inch projection. A 3-inch opal glass tube uses a 60-watt bulb or a single fluorescent lamp. Hubbardton Forge, 802.468.5516; [www.vtforge.com](http://www.vtforge.com).



### foam home

Knight Associates uses Corbond polyurethane spray-in foam insulation because it successfully achieves thermal, air, and moisture isolation. "It gives us a good seal on our walls, which is important for houses along the coast," Knight says. Because the product is its own vapor barrier, no additional one needs to be installed, says the manufacturer. "You only need about 2½ to 3 inches to get R-30 walls," Knight adds. Corbond, 406.586.4585; [www.corbond.com](http://www.corbond.com).

—nigel f. maynard



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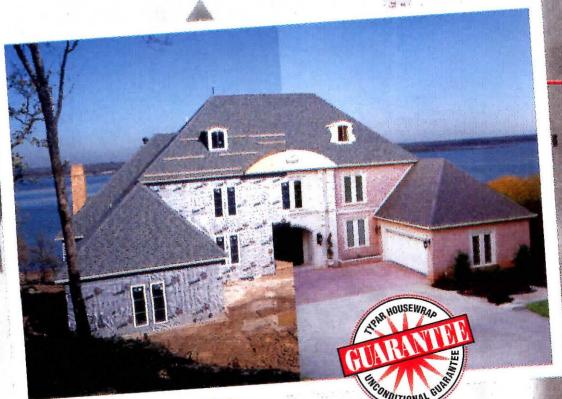
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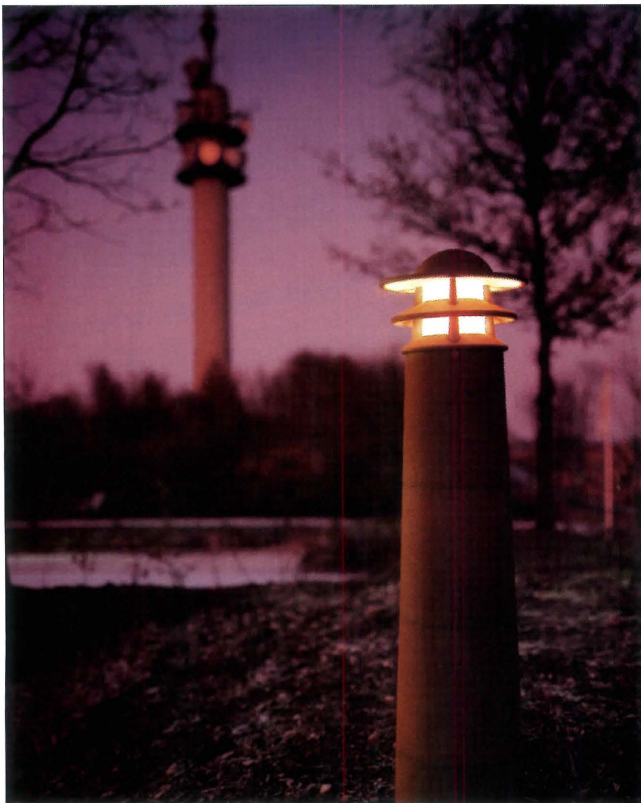
### it's a snap

Installing a traditional bracket-mounted gutter system is a tedious and time-consuming job. But Rheinzink, a German company with North American headquarters in Burnaby, British Columbia, thinks it can save both time and money with its new snap-lock system. Here's how it works: A C-profile mounting rail is nailed to the fascia, and the gutter brackets are twisted into place. The company's half-round zinc gutter or any type of metal gutter then can be snapped on top. The bracket is made from aluminum. Rheinzink, 604.291.8171; [www.rheinzink.com](http://www.rheinzink.com).

### solar system

No external power source is needed to drive these light-emitting decorative outdoor tiles from Seoul, Korea-based SolarCap Lighting.

Each piece contains eight photovoltaic solar cells that recharge within one to three hours in the sun or within eight hours on a rainy day. The light comes on at dusk and turns off at dawn. Measuring 8-by-8 inches, the tiles are 2 inches thick and come in six colors. Custom shapes are available. SolarCap Lighting, 310.320.5358; [www.solarcap-lighting.com](http://www.solarcap-lighting.com)



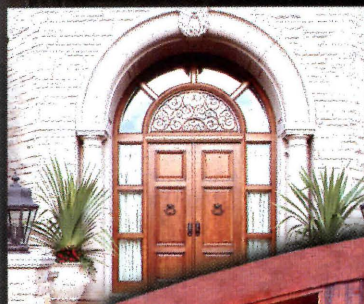
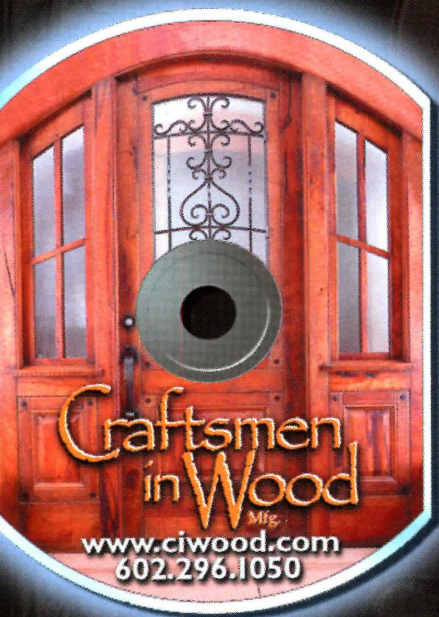
### point of light

With a cast-aluminum column and canopy and a protective powder-coated finish, the Lighthouse fixture from Carpinteria, Calif.-based Forms + Surfaces offers rugged durability for coastal applications, says Laura Camp, the company's marketing manager. The fixture, which is 41.8 inches high with a 9-inch base, accommodates compact fluorescent or high-intensity discharge lamps. Eighteen standard colors and almost 200 custom colors are available in glossy, textured, or metallic finishes. Custom metals can be substituted. Forms + Surfaces, 877.828.0099; [www.forms-surfaces.com](http://www.forms-surfaces.com).

—nigel f. maynard



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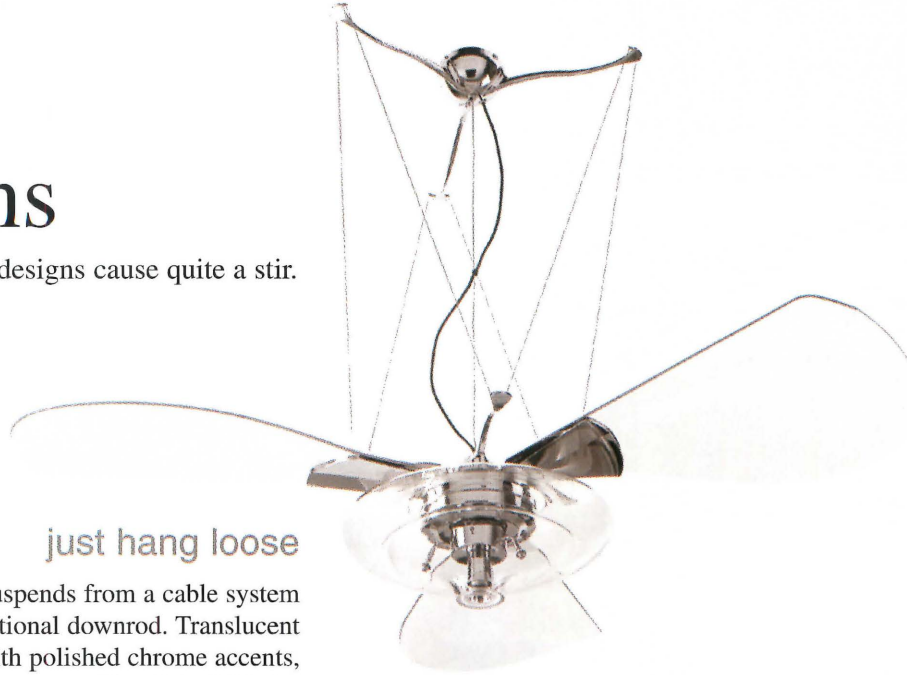
off the shelf

## super fans

these new designs cause quite a stir.

### just hang loose

The Jellyfish fan suspends from a cable system rather than the traditional downrod. Translucent blades and fan body, with polished chrome accents, lighten the look even more. The 58-inch blades attach to an 8-cable system that dangles at lengths ranging from 6 to 72 inches. The new 50-watt GU-10 halogen bulb is included along with a wall control for easy operation. Quorum International, 800.443.4626; [www.lightingandfans.com](http://www.lightingandfans.com).



### different strokes

The Arch's oversize blades extend 60 inches and use a 12-inch pitch to effectively circulate air. Simple lines mean that with any combination of finishes such as brushed steel or pewter, and blade styles ranging from driftwood to weathered pine, this fan will complement as well as cool any room. Integrated up- and downlighting, wall-mount remote control, and 78-inch lead wires for high ceilings complete the list of features. Monte Carlo, 817.927.5100; [www.montecarlofans.com](http://www.montecarlofans.com).

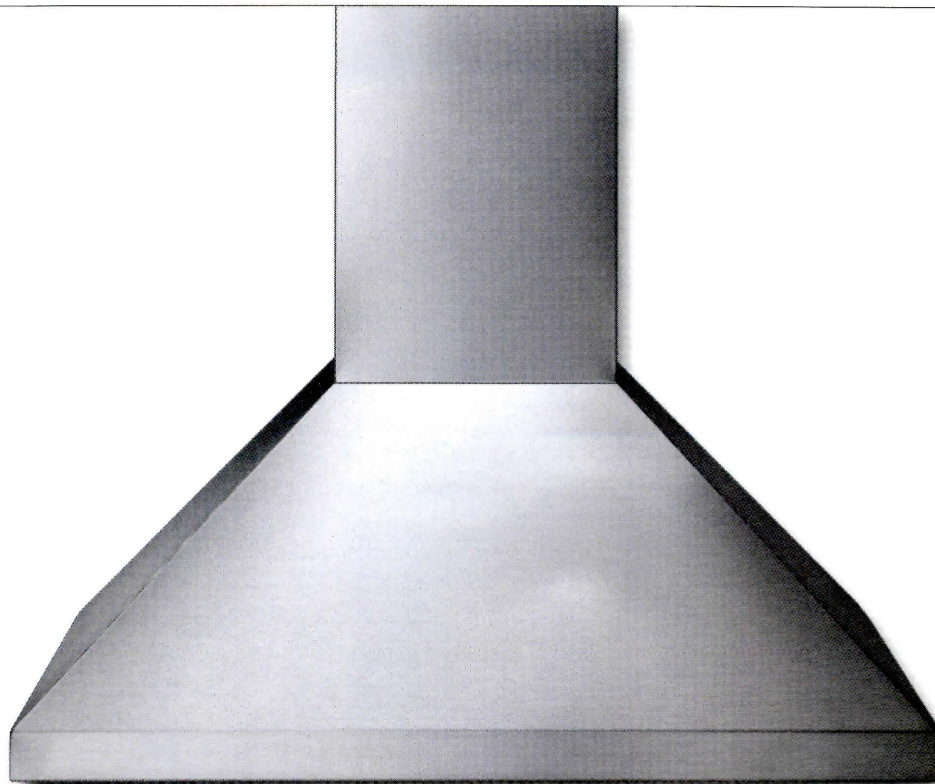


### concave dweller

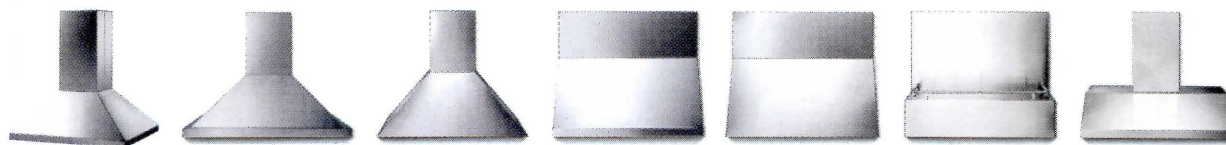
Designed specifically for low ceilings, the Concept fan uses concave blades to scoop air in tight locations. The hanging depth of 10½ inches allows for plenty of head room; a cap masks the built-in light fixture. Among the finishes are brushed nickel with silver blades or white on white. Also available as a downrod fixture, the fan comes in 44- and 52-inch sizes. MinkaAire, 800.307.3267; [www.minkagroup.net](http://www.minkagroup.net).

*continued on page 84*





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A single 60-inch blade makes the Enigma stick out in the world of ceiling fans. The blade sits at an 18-inch pitch for maximum air movement, resulting in a pulsating puff. Control the three fan speeds and built-in halogen uplighting via remote or wall plate. Available in satin nickel and matte white. Fanimation, 765.482.2055; [www.fanimation.com](http://www.fanimation.com).



### turn, turn, turn

The fan for every season, Outdoor Elements will survive even harsh weather conditions. UL listed for wet locations, five plastic blades with a 52-inch span cool things down on porches or patios. Raw copper casing will patina naturally, or select from satin white and raw aluminum finishes. Two outdoor floor-mounting systems make locating this durable fan a breeze. Hunter, 800.4HUNTER; [www.hunterfan.com](http://www.hunterfan.com).



### double feature

Fluid metal arms support the Vent-Bettina's twin fans and 13-inch blades. The blades spin clockwise as the entire system rotates counter-clockwise on its axis. Measuring 42 inches from end to end, the unit comes in polished chrome or brushed nickel and with either aluminum blades in decorative guards or exposed mahogany paddles. Light attachments are available; downrods are offered in 10-, 29-, 30-, or 48-inch lengths. Matthews-Gerbar, 773.281.7959; [www.matthewsgerbar.com](http://www.matthewsgerbar.com).

—shelley d. hutchins



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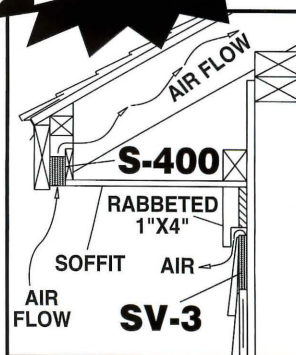
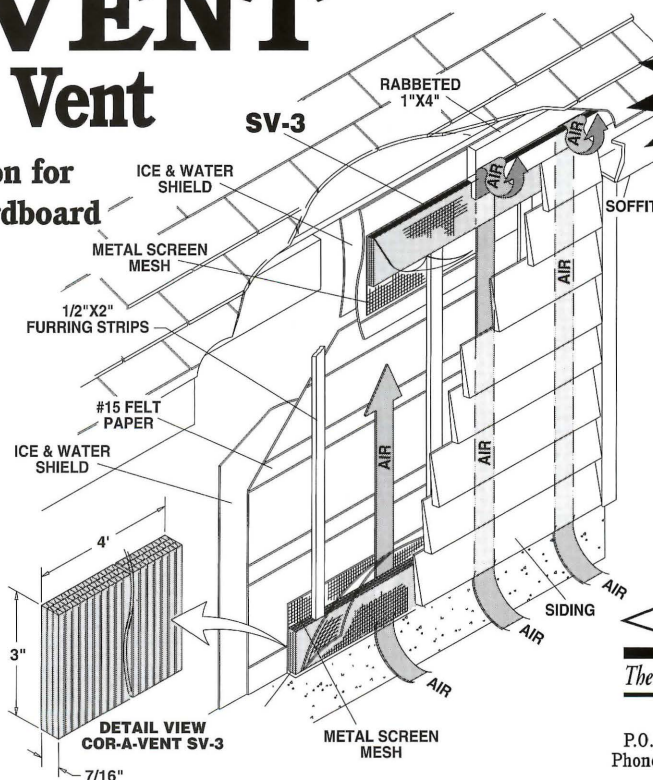
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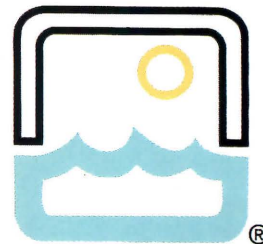
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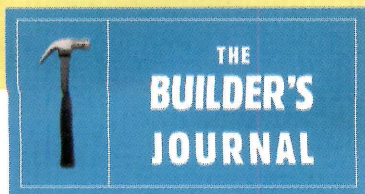
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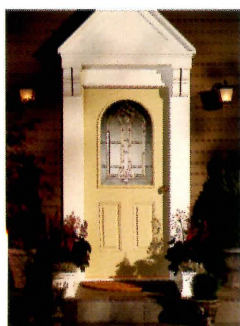


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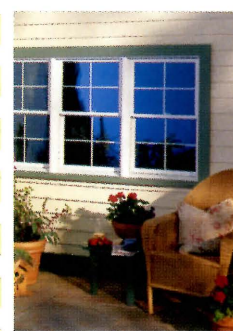
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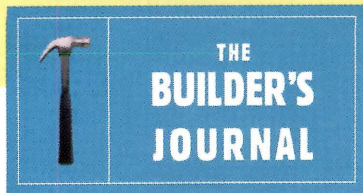
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# doors&windows



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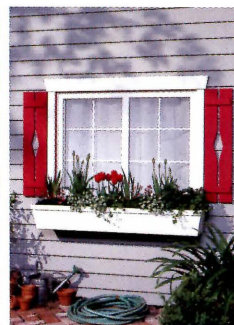


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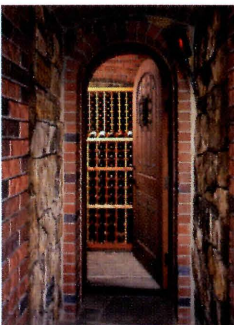
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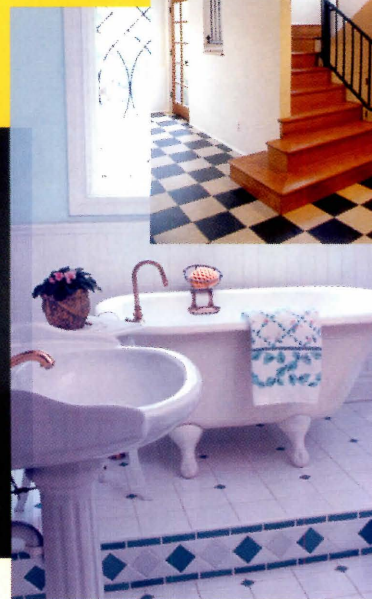
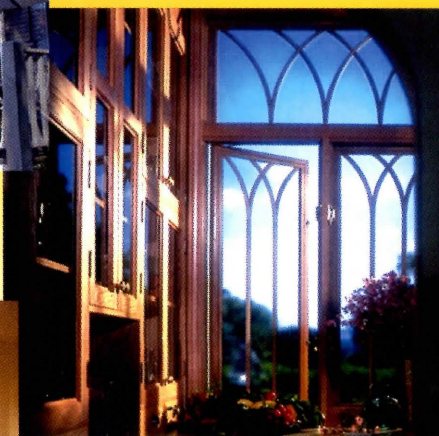
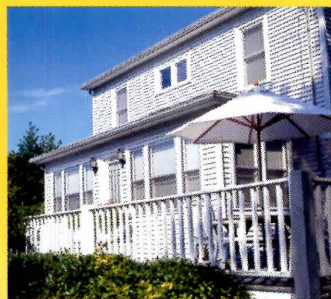
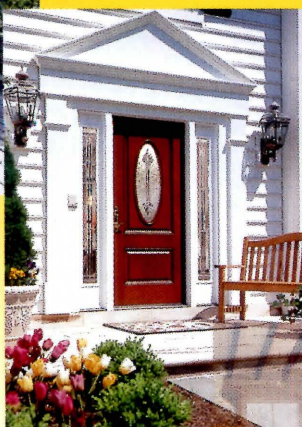


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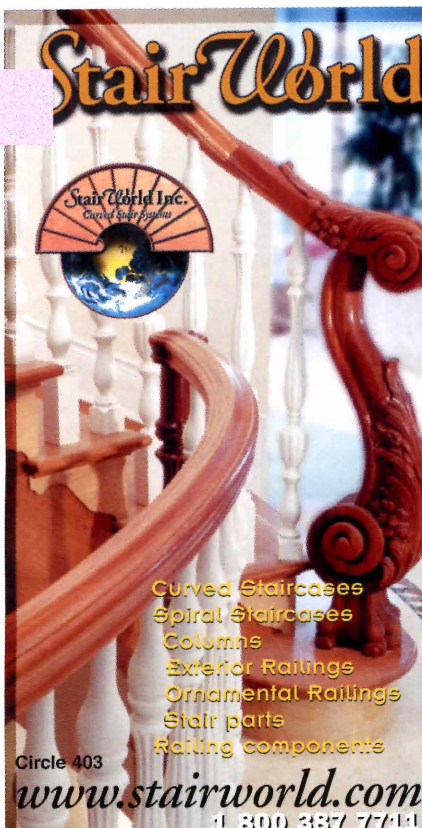
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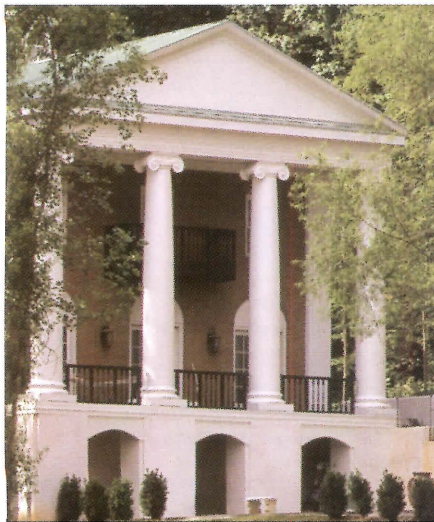
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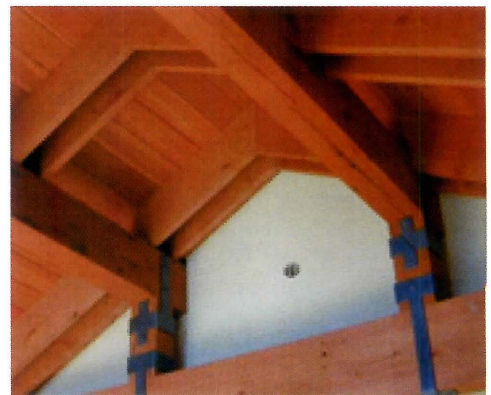
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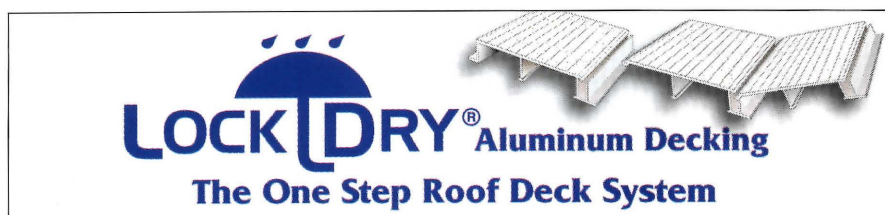



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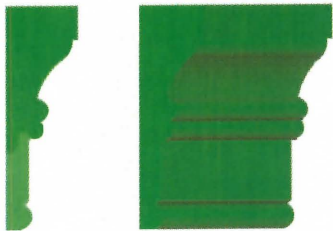
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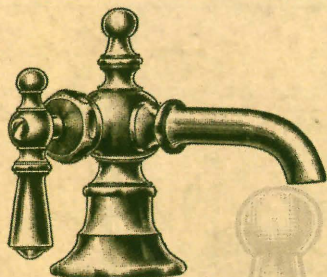
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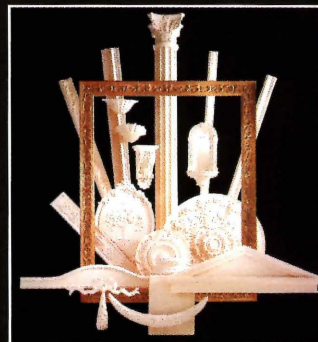
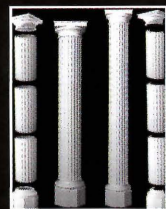
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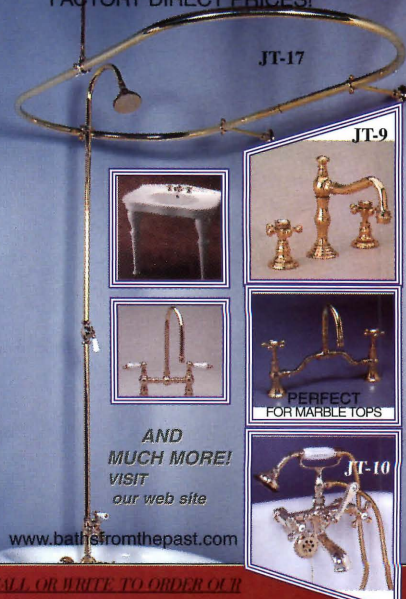
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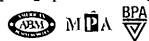


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Designer Doors, Inc.	50	74	800-241-0525	www.designerdoors.com
DuPont Corian	10	314	800-426-7426	www.corian.com
<i>ebuild.com Manufacturing List</i>	88	—	—	www.ebuild.com
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Eco Star	32	210	800-211-7170	www.premiumroofs.com
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Heatilator	33	200	800-927-6841	www.heatilator.com/www.fireplaces.com
<i>American Housing Conference</i>	16-17	—	800-867-9018	www.builder-ahc.com
<i>Hanley-Wood Exhibitions Remodeler's Show</i>	94	—	800-681-6970	www.RemodelersShow.com
Inclinor Co. of America	91	276	800-343-9007 Dept. 77	www.inclinor.com
Jeld-Wen	92-93	1-5,7-13	800-877-9482	—
Jenn-Air (a Maytag Company)	29	120	866-459-6298	—
Knauf Fiber Glass	4	82	800-825-4434	www.knauffiberglass.com
Koch Waterproofing Solutions	45	292	800-DRY-BSMT	www.TUFF-N-DRI.com
Kolbe & Kolbe Millwork Company, Inc.	9	277	800-955-8177	www.kolbe-kolbe.com
Marvin Windows and Doors	20-21,26-27	99,272	800-267-6941	www.integritywindows.com
Masonite International Corp./Premdor	47	64	—	www.masonite.com
Milgard Windows	14-15	92	800-MILGARD	www.milgard.com
Millennium Tiles*	58	288	866-842-8585	www.millenniumtiles.com
Modern Fan Company	8	337	888-588-3267	www.modernfan.com
National Pool and Spa Institute	86	227	800-323-3996	www.nspi.org
Norco (a division of Jeld-Wen)	C4	218	888-476-6726 N9	www.norcowindows.com
Pella Corporation	C2-1	19	800-829-9051	www.pella.com
Phoenix Door Manufacturing	41	215	800-622-0688	info@phoenixdoor.com
Portland Cement Association	72	39	888-333-4840	www.concretehomes.com
Pozzi (a division of Jeld-Wen)	35	222	800-257-9663, xP12	www.pozzi.com
Raymond Enkeboll	89	216	310-532-1400	www.enkeboll.com
Reemay, Inc.	79	388	800-321-6271	www.reemay.com
Rejuvenation Lamp & Fixture Co.	48	40	877-745-1900	www.rejuvenation.com
<i>residential architect Reprints</i>	58	—	212-221-9595 x333	www.magreprints.com
Sherwin-Williams Co.	51	20	800-524-5979	www.sherwin-williams.com
Simpson Strong-Tie Company, Inc.	75	26	800-999-5099	www.simpsonstrongwall.com
Softplan Systems, Inc.	40	79	800-248-0164	www.softplan.com
Southern Cypress Manufacturers	87	44	877-607-SCMA	www.cypressinfo.org
Southwest Door Co.	87	284	520-574-7374	www.southwestdoor.com
Sunrise Specialty Company	49	6	800-444-4280	www.sunrisespecialty.com
Superior Clay Corp.	42	383	800-848-6166	www.superiorclay.com
Timberpeg	91	85	800-636-2424	www.timberpeg.com
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Unico System	36	54	800-527-0896	www.unicosystem.com
Viking Range	83	205	888-845-4641	www.vikingrange.com
Visa Business	25	34	866-566-2488	www.firstunion.com
Warm Board	44	286	831-685-WARM	www.warmboard.com
Weather Shield Manufacturing, Inc.*	6-7	25,134	800-477-6808, x2663, x1398	www.weathershield.com
Whirlpool Corporation	2-3,103	348,361,360	800-253-1301, 800-422,1230	www.insideadvantage.net/www.kitchenaid.com

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# grand eloquence

rasmussen-donahue house, palm beach, fla., ca. 1923–1924

addison mizner

*“[my goal is to] make a building look traditional and as though it had fought its way from a small unimportant structure to a great rambling house.”*

—addison mizner

**f**lorida architect Addison Mizner was at the peak of his popularity when he designed this Mediterranean

Revival home in Palm Beach for food merchant George Rasmussen. Mizner’s trademark combination of Italianate and Spanish influences is evident throughout the residence in elements such as red-tile roofs, Venetian-cusped window arches, and first- and second-floor loggias. The loggias also provide excellent cross-ventilation during Florida’s steamy summers. The wrought-iron entrance

gates and meandering drive reflect the sense of romance and grandeur that characterized the Roaring Twenties. The house, originally dubbed “Casa Nana,” still serves as a private residence.—*meghan drueding*



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