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eye or the storm

battling forces of nature and ideology, scott merrill rethinks our best-loved houses.

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ARCHITECTURE · DESIGN Outlook

Portable appliances: An integral part of kitchen design

Mark R. Johnson, FAIA, AIBD

We've noted a trend that I'd like to share with you. More clients are seeking an integrated design solution for their kitchen that not only coordinates cabinetry and the appliance suite, but also complementary portable appliances. It's a desire for aesthetics matched by an expectation of performance...legendary performance. No other appliance manufacturer can promise it quite like KitchenAid[®] brand.



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Mark R. Johnson, FAIA, AIBD Manager, Architectural and Design Marketing

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* Based on a September 2003 survey, KitchenAid was found to be the home kitchen appliance brand chosen most often by members of the International Association of Culinary Professionals when asked about refrigerators, ovens, cooktops, ranges, dishwashers, microwave ovens, electric mixers, blenders, food processors and toasters.

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The path to licensure is filled with potholes and pitfalls. So, is it any wonder some architects are lobbying for a complete overhaul of the process?



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Scott Merrill digs to the roots of our most popular architectural styles to bring fresh beauty and functionality to their felicitous forms. In doing so, he's building a pattern book he hopes will help remodel mainstream housing. *By S. Claire Conroy*

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The language is familiar but the expressions are new. Architects are abandoning literal translations of past styles and rediscovering their elemental and enduring essence. *By Meghan Drueding, Shelley D. Hutchins, and Kathleen Stanley*

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from the editor

the man in the machine

the new modernism doesn't forsake our heritage or our humanity.

by s. claire conroy

admit I provoked our cover guy, Scott Merrill ("Eye of the Storm," page 66), to talk about the divide between modern and traditional architects. At this point in his career, he really couldn't care less about the anachronistic debate that still consumes others in the profession. He's much more interested in doing the best work he can, without reductive labels. And that's what this issue of ra is about, architects who feel free to draw from the whole continuum of inspiration to make warm and inviting houses.

I think the divide may be narrowing a bit these days. Merrill has a monograph coming out shortly on his firm's work. Vincent Scully, one of his teachers at Yale's School of Architecture, wrote the foreword. Scully sees Merrill, who is 49, as one of a new breed of architects not mired in the schism of the last millennium. These architects are unapologetic for loving architecture of the past and for incorporating its grace notes in their work.

We editors notice architects working on both sides of the rift, inching their way toward a more centrist stance. There are practitioners whose work is largely modern in expression taking on the slippery slopes of pitched roofs. And there are card-carrying classicists like Merrill, paring down familiar vocabularies to essential elements. Merrill describes this paring of flourish as "astringent." The word is apt and instructive. It describes in part why Merrill's work seems, for lack of an unburdened term, modern. He adds some cool to the warmth of those familiar forms and materials.

And on the other side, architects edging toward the middle from a modern starting point inject warmth into their work by using materials and geometry linked to our shared heritage. They're even inventing terms for their architecture that sound simultaneously fresh and familiar: "New Regionalism" or "Vernacular Regionalism." They admit to quoting loosely from the past, but drawing mostly from agricultural buildings and other forms less tainted by bad knock-offs than house design.

For his part, Merrill wishes the "cult of singularity" would vanish from the profession of architecture. He already designs as if it had, freely drawing from



Mark Rober

any antecedent that is useful and beautiful. "If you think about it as music or food, it defuses the ideology," he says. "In the '70s, we thought it was our rightful inheritance to make use of all these different influences. It's the opposite of modern to freeze yourself into firm positions. Choosing teams and keeping them is not modern."

Scully believes the rift between modern and traditional architects originated with abstract expressionist painting, and Merrill's work is where traditional architecture might have gone had the movement in art never occurred. Modern architects, he writes in his foreword, envied the freedom of those artists.

We can all enjoy abstract art, even if just for the unexamined experience of its forms and colors. We don't have to find ourselves in the work to appreciate it. Our houses are another matter. We require something of our collective humanity in our dwellings. some morsel of familiarity and comfort. That's why a new, more fluid modernism, grounded in our shared human experience, holds so much promise. In it we find the man in the machine for living. ra

Comments? Write: S. Claire Conroy, *residential architect*, One Thomas Circle, N.W., Suite 600, Washington, D.C. 20005; or e-mail: cconroy@hanleywood.com.

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letters exercise your right to write.

beyond the divide es, there is a divide in the architectural profession, but most good commercial architects I know really appreciate a good house when they see it. I frequently get positive comments, or expressions of envy, regarding the houses we design. Of course there are the academic and the intellectual elitists who think that any house that is not Modernist with a flat roof is a piece of crap, beneath the dignity of any "real" architect.

When I was in the last semester of graduate school at Harvard, I made the choice of having Charlie Gwathmey as my instructor. While all the other famous visiting architects for the semester were telling us their studios would be doing grand projects such as a master plan for the entire coast of New England, from Boston to Portland, Charlie stood up in front of our group and said his studio was going to just design a house. Because I had already worked in an office for a couple of years, I knew this would be an opportunity to get into something in much greater depth, and I guess that was what I was looking for.

During that semester, Charlie made a comment about designing houses that I have never forgotten, and I think it had a lot to do with my developing such an interest in houses as meaningful architecture. He said a house is the most immediate architectural problem, with the most far-reaching implications.

After 32 years, I think that is absolutely true.

R. Christian Schmitt, FAIA Schmitt Walker Architects Charleston, S.C.

the producers

hank you for such an eloquently put editorial ("The Enemy Within, Part 2," January/ February 2005, page 15)! I've been in the architectural industry for 12 years: custom residential, then commercial, then production residential.

I really enjoyed custom work, then I found out that commercial was too boring for me (and I got to work on some pretty good stuff, really), and when I went into production, I couldn't believe the bad reaction I received from colleagues. I'm very fortunate to work with builders who care about what their product is going to do to the community and how it will impact the future. I truly enjoy the challenge of finding the appropriate compromise between art, function, and cost between the different personalities who have input or control in the product. Thanks for being a voice for those of us who enjoy this side of the fence!

Tari Ensign Denver

farewell to fay

hank you for the Perspective article "A Rare Find," by Dale Mulfinger, FAIA (November/ December 2004, page 33). It was my great privilege to have known Fay Jones for more than 35 years, first as one of his students in college, then as one of his employees after graduation, and as a close friend until his passing.

I worked with Fay from 1973 to 1983 and consider those years some of the finest in my life. I cannot begin to relate the incredible education I received from him during that time. After I left his office to start my own firm in 1983, we remained close and often shared holiday meals together with Gus and him and my family. When his workload was too heavy, he referred inquiring clients to me, which greatly assisted my efforts.

Fay's work clearly illustrates the great care he gave to every project he accepted. I can truthfully say Fay Jones never did a bad building, and it is also significant to note that I never knew, or heard of, any of Fay's clients who didn't consider Fay one of their truly close friends, during the design process, construction, and after.

Of course, Fay's chapels and religious structures have gained their just attention and fame, but his residential work, often "forgotten," is some of the finest architecture on the planet. It is puzzling how many architects so often denigrate houses as "not really architecture"; these people have obviously not seen one of Fay's houses.

Fay sincerely believed that everything was worthy of being architecture, from the tiniest things to the largest of structures. Yes, Fay Jones was a rare find. He was also a rare kind of man and an even rarer kind of architect.

> John Calvin Womack, architect Stillwater, Okla.

show me the value

K, so we are telling clients why we cost what we do ("The Charge Brigade," August 2004, page 13). Any suggestions on what to tell them? I'm a lousy salesperson. Am I destined to be broke?

> Thomas Streicher, AIA Via e-mail

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home front

news from the leading edge of residential design

boulevard of dreams

Imagine a slew of developable land parcels facing a brand-new, landscaped thoroughfare, right in the heart of one of the nation's most expensive cities. The entrants of the San Francisco Prize/Octavia Boulevard Housing Design Competition didn't have to rely on their imaginations; they had a crack at the real thing. The program challenged them to devise creative housing solutions for one of four sites along Octavia Boule-

vard in San Francisco's Hayes Val-

ley neighborhood. Currently under

construction, the European-style

despised Central Freeway, which

was severely damaged in the 1989

Loma Prieta earthquake and eventu-

ally dismantled. The private

organizations and city agencies

boulevard replaces the much-



Courtesy George Edwin Tolosa

Second-place winner George Edwin Tolosa employed interlocking building sections to form double-height residences atop a retail base.

sponsoring the competition hoped it would provoke some innovative thinking about integrating housing and retail into the area.

And it did. The eight-member jury of architects and



planners included David Baker, FAIA, of David Baker + Partners in San Francisco; Teddy Cruz of Estudio Teddy Cruz in San Diego; Julie Eizenberg, AIA, of Koning Eizenberg Architecture in Santa Monica, Calif.; and Enrique Norten of TEN Arquitectos in Mexico City and New York. "One of the purposes of the competition is to invigorate the neighborhood architecturally," says Baker. To that end, the judges selected two first-place winners, one by a team from the Oakland, Calif., firm envelope A+D and one by Dorchester, Mass–based designer Amit C. Price Patel.

George Edwin Tolosa of Hayward, Calif., took second place, while Montalba Architects of Santa Monica, Calif.; Kennerly Strong Architecture of San Francisco; and COIL Collaborative of Alameda, Calif., garnered



Courtesy envelope A+D



Courtesy Amit C. Price Pater

honorable mentions. The jury also gave out five "idea" prizes to entries whose overall concepts merited recognition. The design winners received cash awards, but a bigger goal may lie in their sights: Because the city is encouraging developers to work with the winners on their building proposals, these on-the-boards designs may someday become a reality.—*meghan drueding*

hipper habitat

esigned and built by Louisiana State University Architecture School students, this contemporary Habitat for Humanity house in Baton Rouge breaks the organization's typical mold. "We were hoping they would think outside the Habitat box," says Mark Montgomery, AIA, a volunteer general contractor on the house and principal of Montgomery & Waggenspack Architects in Baton Rouge.

"We looked at Japanese architecture and how it handles space," says LSU grad Erica Royalty, now an intern at Post Architects in Baton Rouge. "We focused on making the communal spaces more inviting." To fit the narrow lot, the students gave the 1,111-square-foot house a side entry



Images: Courtesy Habitat for Humanity

and created a courtyard and play area. An open floor plan encourages gatherings; a galley kitchen offers easy circulation. The students speced polycarbonate walls to bring light into the kitchen, and they installed vinyl siding vertically for a contemporary look on the exterior.

"I have to admit I was a little skeptical when I first saw the drawings," Montgomery says. "I was worried that it wouldn't fit the neighborhood. But [the neighbors] love it." The three-bedroom, two-bath house cost a mere \$55,000 to build.—*nigel f. maynard*



"we focused on making the communal spaces more inviting."-erica royalty

home front

calendar



2006 residential architect design awards: call for entries

entry form, fee due: november 15 completed binders due: january 5

Our annual design awards program honors outstanding architecture in 15 categories. Winning projects will be published in the May 2006 issue of the magazine and celebrated during the 2006 AIA National Conven-

Michael Thomas

tion in Los Angeles. Shown: custom home grand award winner, 2005, House in the Blue Mountains, by Peter Bohlin, FAIA. For entry information, see page 80.

custom home design awards 2006

entry deadline: november 14 binder deadline: january 16

Houses designed for a specific client and site may be submitted by builders, architects, and other industry professionals. Winners will be featured in the May 2006 issue of CUSTOM HOME magazine and honored during the 2006 AIA National Convention in Los Angeles. Call 202.736.3407 for more information.

common ground: first step, step two

september 7-october 5 the urban center, new york

Prototypes from an international competition to design transitional housing for the homeless are displayed and accompanied by a lecture series on transient modular shelters. To reserve free tickets, call 212.935.3960.

eileen gray

september 17-january 8 design museum, london

Although renowned for her circular E.1027 table, Gray's heart belonged to houses from her first work in the '20s through



Courtesy National Museum of Ireland

her subsequent 50-year career. Shown is her E.1027 house on the sea, 1926–29, Roquebrune, France. Visit www.designmuseum.org.

marion mahony griffin: drawing the form of nature

september 23–december 4 mary and leigh block museum of art, evanston, ill.

The first female licensed architect in the United States, Mahony Griffin developed her striking



Courtesy Mary and Leigh Block Museum of Art

drawing style in Frank Lloyd Wright's studio. Together with husband and partner Walter Burley Griffin, she designed buildings that reflect their natural surroundings (like the H.M. Mess Dwelling, Illinois, 1912, shown). Call 847.491.4000 to find out more.

2005 national preservation conference

september 27-october 2 hilton portland & executive tower, portland, ore.

"Sustain America: Vision, Economics, and Preservation" is the theme for educational sessions and tours during this conference, put on by the National Trust for Historic Preservation. Topics include historic buildings, international modernism, green building design for preservation projects, and preservation-based development. To register, call 202.588.6324.

tilt-up convention 2005

october 12–15 grand hyatt, atlanta

This first Tilt-Up convention offers tracks for architects, contractors, engineers, and marketing pros. Discussions cover sustainability, design, and cost. Call 319.895.6911 for more information.

frank lloyd wright conference & archifest october 19–23

los angeles

In conjunction with the FLW Building Conservancy Conference, the Los Angeles City Council has declared October architecture month. Area museums and architecture groups are contributing tours, exhibitions, and other events. Among the destinations are buildings by Wright, Frank Gehry, Greene and Greene, Richard Neutra, R.M. Schindler, and John Lautner. Call 312.663.5500 for more.—*shelley d. hutchins*



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Once you look, it's all you'll see."

k+b studio

kitchen: bungalow unbungled

These San Antonio homeowners adore the charm of their early-1900s bungalow and didn't want to disturb the fabric of its historic neighborhood. What they did want was a contemporary kitchen that flowed into expanded living spaces; and they sought privacy from their neighbors without losing valuable natural light. Craig Duncan, AIA, gave his clients a streamlined floor plan, revitalized ties to private outdoor spaces, and a hip kitchen that fuses bungalow craftsmanship with lean, clean detailing. "We wanted to blend existing historic ideas with an architectural state-



A tree grows in San Antonio: Just outside the glass wall and capping the kitchen at due north, an existing oak shades a new deck. Elongated steps wrap around the opposite corner, leading guests beyond the tree branches to a protected brick patio.

30

ment that tells where we are in the world today," says the architect.

"We cleaned up the trim and did simple, sticklike cabinetry with a clear coat over natural wood rather than painted wood," says Duncan. Fir was the wood of choice for all the custom cabinetry, as well as the island. All the wood was handpicked, then carefully cut so the distinctive grain flows in the same direction. Only the trimless cabinets around the sink have a slightly altered hue; their pale green wash alludes to painted millwork elsewhere in the house. Duncan opted for flat-front cabinetry to set the abstracted Arts and Crafts woodwork on the island in relief. "We didn't want elaborate detail," he says, "but what we did do we wanted to show off."

To update the floor plan, Duncan stole a few feet from an adjacent hallway. That helped create a galley kitchen wide enough for walking space on both sides of the cooking island. Three sets of retractable doors line the wall opposite the cabinets. They conceal a computer workstation, laundry, and hot-water heater. One end of the room segues directly into dining, which moves on to a spacious living area. The kitchen's opposite edge is entirely steel and glass, allowing a 10-foot-wide-by-nearly-8-foot-high infusion of daylight. The asymmetrical steel framing "isn't too modern and devoid of detail, but conveys a simple idea of craft and design," says Duncan.

"We felt like this design does the original architecture justice," says the architect, "but gives the clients a more modernized kitchen."—*shelley d. hutchins*



architect/general contractor: Craig Duncan Architecture, San Antonio

custom cabinets and millwork: Victory Furniture, San Antonio

resources: countertops: Richlite; dishwasher, refrigerator, and oven: GE Appliances; doors and windows: A & S Windows; hardware: Häfele; plumbing fixtures: American Standard



Photos: rjwphotography.com





As a backup to the sink, iridescent mosaic glass tiles are a sparkling counterpoint to the abundance of warm wood. A decorative metal band draws attention to randomly placed metal solo squares.

k+b studio

bath: northwest hybrid

"We knew we wanted the house to fit its Northwestern context," says architect Dave Pelletier, "but our clients had a willingness to be adventurous and try new things-like a steel countertop in the master bath." And so, homeowners and architect commenced their translation of the locale's contextual language into a more contemporary idiom.

The master suite is the sole occupant of the home's top level. That exclusivity gave Pelletier and his partner, Pearl Schaar, the freedom to make a few daring moves. "The



shower was the important element to the owners," says Schaar. "It's practically a ceremonial object for them." And a ceremonial object deserves a processional; this one starts with raw steel stairs that ascend to the loft and culminate in a concrete bridge spanning public spaces below. The bridge leads to the master bedroom, where its final concrete square doubles as the floor of the glass shower.

That's right, the 4-foot-square transparent shower is the centerpiece of the master bedroom. Technically, its glass door swings open to the bath, but the bathroom is open to the sleeping area. With no walls and abundant glass, the view from the top of the stairs, therefore, extends across the bridge, through the shower, and directly to that cantilevered, solid-steel countertop. The designers didn't jump off the deep end, though. Undermount art-glass sinks soften the industrial edge. And Douglas fir moldings and warm cherry cabinets connect the room to the densely wooded Washington island it calls home.-shelley d. hutchins

architect: Pelletier + Schaar, Stanwood, Wash.

general contractor: Holbeck Construction & Design, Stanwood metal fabricator: Wesweld, Stanwood

resources: cabinets: Cascade Cabinets; plumbing fittings: Kohler; plumbing fixtures: Kohler, Grohe, and Vitraform





Downpours aren't limited to rainy days at this Northwest home. Ceiling fixtures above the bathtub and shower, and wall spouts above the undermount sinks, keep the water flowing from above.



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numbers game

when home buyers confuse quantity with quality, everybody loses.

by peter pfeiffer, faia

enjoy operating a multifaceted office with my business partner, Alan Barley, AIA. But of all the building types, we find that homes provide the greatest challenges and by far the greatest rewards. Over the past few years, though, we have noticed a distinct and troubling shift in the way homes are perceived by the public. The erroneous presumptions behind this shift are having a profound and overarching effect on the quality of building in this country.

Our generation has become very adept at quantifying things. We "crunch the numbers" with great efficiency. But I believe we have too often lost sight of the bigger picture in doing so, ending up with undesirable results. The design of our homes, and the construction of them as well, is falling victim to this "efficiency."

When you buy a Ford Taurus, you know what level of quality you are purchasing and that the car is built to the latest D.O.T. safety and performance standards. You can opt for leather seats, but you know you are still buying a Ford, just with nicer seat coverings. Alternatively, when you buy a



Outdoor rooms, such as the porches at Pfeiffer's own house in Austin, Texas (left and below), add value to a home. But because they raise the overall building cost and are not included in typical square footage counts, they have a disproportionate impact on the price per square foot.

luxury sedan, such as an equivalently sized Mercedes E-class, you have a different set of expectations about the quality of what you are purchasing. Not only will there be finer-grade leather seats and other obvious accoutrements, but there is an expected increase in craftsmanship, performance, safety, durability, and overall quality "under the skin"the things you can't see but know are built into the car. You might even be able to purchase the car from a competing dealer for a bit less money, confident you are still buying an equally

well-built E-class with all the same features and craftsmanship.

This is where the problem comes in. People think they can treat buying a house like buying a car. They think that if they can buy a "high-end" house for a lower price, they're still getting the same house. What they don't understand is that if they keep

continued on page 40



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perspective

looking for the lower bid, they're going to end up with lower quality.

the pricing myth

We've mixed up the adjectives "quantity" and "quality" by relying too heavily on the all-too-ubiquitous "price-per-square-foot" yardstick for evaluating homes, especially the highend custom ones. Oftentimes you end up getting four "spec-quality" homes combined to make one big one that may or may not comply with building safety and durability codes. Sure, you may have the trophy kitchen, the Palladian windows, the multiple crown moldings, and the profusion of meaningless steeply pitched roof angles that prepare you for shedding snow during the next big Central Texas blizzard. But all too often these "high-end" homes just end up becoming a series of disparate details, the sum of the parts and nothing more. What's

"encourage your clients to look beyond the price-per-square-foot yardstick."

> more, these homes usually have "behind-the-scenes" components—like plumbing, air-conditioning systems, waterproofing methods, structural elements, windows, and siding—that are no better than those used in the starter homes

being built across the tracks. They can be expected to last about as long as the starter homes before experiencing expensive maintenance problems or, worse, unhealthy conditions that might affect well-being, like water leaks and mold. Their building science is as lacking as their souls.

The price-per-squarefoot yardstick is a relatively new phenomenon that started gaining popularity in the early 1980s. Before then, folks were more creative in their assessments. Attributes like floor plan, flow, responsiveness to the setting, craftsmanship, and even "livability" were used to make the decision to accept the design or buy the home. Per-square-foot pricing has its roots in the volume home building business, where there was little else to distinguish the various models. Most three-bedroom, two-and-a-half-bath homes had approximately the same sized two-car



garage, an attention-grabbing front entry, and a modest back patio. Except for shape, rooflines, and interior appointments, there was not a lot of variation.

Not so with a truly custom, site-specific home designed and built for you and your family's values, on your particular piece of property, and incorporating unique views, topography, and trees. It's not unusual for a custom home designed for our Hill Country environment to have half again as much space in outdoor areas (screened porches, decks, cabanas, and patios) as in the interior living or "conditioned" area. These value-adding areas do greatly affect the overall price to build the home, but they don't add to the conditioned area. So, encourage your clients to look beyond the price-per-square-foot yardstick. It makes about as much sense as evaluating that new blouse or sport coat hanging in your closet on its price per square inch.

big deal

Another frightening occurrence of the past decade the super-sizing of the new American home — also owes its existence, at least partially, to the price-persquare-foot yardstick. Homes have become bigger for two reasons: It's easier to get the price per square foot lower if the house is bigger, and we tend to overestimate our need for space.

When we endeavor to design and build a fine home, we have to investigate more than the obvious. Let's not forget attributes like cohesiveness of design, human scale, comfort, climatic responsiveness, and regionally appropriate design. (No, Central Texas has not collided with Tuscany through a mysterious shift in plate tectonics, nor is its climate the same.) Fine designs that "live" well require a lot more than drama and street appeal to carry the day. The design recipe includes ample amounts of comprehensive thinking, a fair bit of soulsearching, ample time for critical evaluation, and well-honed talent. This recipe isn't adequately measured on a price-per-squarefoot basis.

When negotiating a fee with your client, or the cost per square foot with the client and the contractor, make sure the client understands there are other, better ways to calculate a house's value. If they just go by the price-per-square-foot model and take the lowest price, they may well end up getting what they asked for. And it may not be what they expected.

Remember, they can easily sell that leather-seated Taurus without much loss of personal energy, time, and investment if the car doesn't live up to their expectations. They can't do the same with the custom home you designed for them. **F**a

Peter Pfeiffer, FAIA, is a principal of Barley & Pfeiffer Architects in Austin, Texas. He specializes in sustainable building practices. A version of this article appeared in the Austinbased magazine Tribeza.

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practice

the architecture track

is the path to licensure paved with good intentions, or mired in a maze?

by cheryl weber

our years ago, Marc Swackhamer, a 1997 graduate of Rice University's master of architecture program, reached a milestone in his fledgling architecture career: He finished all 700 training units of the Intern **Development Program** (IDP) and was ready to sit for the exam. But then his road to registration took a detour. Swackhamer accepted a job as assistant professor of architecture at the University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, got busy with research and teaching, and put licensing on the back burner. Now, his estimatedtime-of-exam is next summer, and he's prepared to study hard.

Swackhamer has no problem with internship per se; it's the tedious regulatory process that has him frustrated. "IDP was, in my point of view, just maniacally complex," he says. "I'd get these forms and letters that made my eyes cross."

Swackhamer is referring, of course, to the structure of the IDP, administered by the National Council of Architectural Registration Boards (NCARB) in Washington, D.C. With less than 50 percent of architecture school graduates going on



to get licensed, the methodology is being questioned fairly seriously around the country. In fact, it's the topic of a conference (www.designingtomorrows architect.com) to be held in late September and sponsored by the AIA and NCARB. For the AIA, a steady supply of licensed members is a matter of survival. "When the number of licensed architects dwindles, the opportunity for maintaining membership numbers in a professional organization dwindles," notes John Senhauser, FAIA, Cincinnati, a member

of the AIA board of directors. "We're still graduating more students than in any other time, so the interest in architecture as an educational pursuit is not dwindling, but the number of people who actually enter the profession may be." *continued on page 47*

an image of you.



practice

politics and pros

he Intern Development Program, devised by NCARB in the late 1970s, was certainly established with noble goals in mind. Officially, they are to define the basic skills and knowledge best acquired in an internship; to encourage a wide range of training; to provide a system for tracking progress; to offer a high level of professional information; and to provide access to educational opportunities that bolster training. The fundamental problem, critics say, is that the language masks the regulatory nature of the program. Although it's the state boards, and not a national association, that are legally empowered to regulate the profession, the IDP has become mandatory for most of the nation's interns.

What's also troubling is the idea that the IDP's effectiveness is uncertain. In her analysis of a study commissioned by NCARB two years ago, Beth Quinn concluded that the IDP's success is limited, because NCARB can't require employers to provide the diverse, quality training on which the program is based ("Building a Profession: A Sociological Analycontinued on page 48

In response to accusations that the IDP's overly developed bureaucracy is bogging down an already long and arduous process, NCARB president Carlton Godsey, FAIA, points to a lack of hard data on the state of registration.

"The numbers being discussed are 5,000 graduates per year, but no one is able to document that number, because schools don't share that information," says Godsey, a partner at Godsey and Associates, Louisville, Ky. "We're seeing an average of 2,100 people passing the Architectural Registration Exam [ARE] every year, about 50 percent.

"One of my goals for this year is to figure out how to get graduation data and start collecting it so we have a good, clear picture of whether we have a problem and, if so, what the problem is," Godsey says.

Indeed, the reasons for a licensing shortfall are difficult to untangle. Many architects have suggested that professional licensing needs to be imbued with greater status. "I'm not sure why interns are saying, 'I don't need to get a license, because I don't stamp drawings," Senhauser says. "Stamping drawings is hardly the point; you went to school to become an architect, not an intern." Part of the problem, he believes, is that architecture firms are giving nonlicensed employees increascontinued on page 48



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practice

ing responsibility and placing less importance on licensure as a rite of passage. Godsey agrees. "A lot of interns don't see a reason to be registered," he says. "They go to work for large firms, which tend to have projects sealed by one person, and they don't see any financial or other reward. But how many projects can fit on the head of a pin? How many drawings can one architect responsibly look at?"

Then, too, as the marketplace evolves, an architecture degree is morphing into ever more diverse permutations that don't require a license. "Architecture is under some pressures that are competing for the best and the brightest," Senhauser says. "A lot of it is just the nature of modern practice, and not solely related to the idea that licensure has become a rather punitive [form of] gatekeeping."

Anecdotal evidence suggests that many architecture school grads are pursuing real estate development or design/build practices. Others are going to work for computer animators, jobs that pay more right out of school than doing CAD redlines and staircase details. William Braham, associate chair of the University of Pennsylvania's architecture department, recently polled 300 master's program graduates to see where their career paths had taken them. "Often the stories I get told are, 'Well, I got out in 1988 and couldn't find a

sis of the Intern Development Program," *Journal of Architectural Education*, May 2003). "Should we not question the success of an educational program in which 43 percent of the participants feel their experience is 'adequate' at best and 'very poor' at worst, and one out of four feel they are learning little to nothing?" she writes. "Can a program be justified when more than one-third of participants feel it does not help or even detracts from their experience?"

As residential architect went to press, the AIA and NCARB were convening a conference ("Designing Tomorrow's Architect") that attempts to address these concerns. Ana Guerra, AIA, chair of the event, thinks it's promising that for the first time since 1999, all the entities that govern the profession (the AIA and NCARB, plus the Association of Collegiate Schools of Architecture, The American Institute of Architecture Students, and the National Architectural Accrediting Board) have agreed to participate. "I do think the openness and awareness is there at a level it's never been before," Guerra says. "We all have opinions about what is wrong with the process. We're trying to bring all those viewpoints together to make sure we have a place to discuss them." With so much at stake, the future of registration is an issue the whole profession needs to deal with. -c.w.

job for that first year, so I went to work in construction-related sales or lighting design, and within two years I was making much more money than I could make as an entry-level architect," he says. "It's difficult for them to come back into architecture."

competent to practice

On the one hand, it seems wise to do away with gratuitous regulations that keep graduates from getting registered. On the other, this issue isn't just about improving the numbers. By definition, a profession needs to have a technical basis for exercising its authority and assuring the public that its services are trustworthy. But how best to test for that competency is a point of contention.

One common complaint is that although NCARB's licensing requirements were designed to take roughly five years to complete, it often takes twice that long. That time line, by itself, doesn't strike Jim Cutler, FAIA, as out of proportion. He compares it with the 10 years physicians spend in school and completing an internship and argues that, like doctors, architects are capable of doing enormous harm, whether or not they are able to shelter people continued on page 50

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practice

beautifully. Even so, Cutler admits that licensing pre-IDP was less fraught. After finishing up his master's degree in 1974, he apprenticed for three years, stamping his first set of drawings by 1977.

Perhaps in hindsight, Cutler sees architecture as a highly experience-based, generalist profession. "On a daily basis, I am looking at the diameter of bolts on a plate; how a toilet flushes and how I will get the effluent out given a certain floor thickness; how light is reflected as it hits the floor and bounces around the space; how the compression of a door will emotionally impact people as they move through it," says Cutler, of Bainbridge Island, Wash. "It takes a really long time to integrate all that information to a point where you can synthesize it into your own work. Even in terms of competency there are so many pitfalls that the idea of not being registered and not having apprenticed for several years so you can learn those pitfalls would be the height of foolishness. It would be lawyer fodder."

What irritates Cutler is the exam itself, which he describes as "a bit puerile and childish on occasion."

Registered in eight states, Cutler says that in some jurisdictions, test-takers are expected to read the study guide and spout back the answers verbatim, or fill in multiple-choice answers. "To me, that's like high school," he says. "Having architects sit down with a group of peers and be questioned about the depth of their knowledge of architecture and ethics seems to me to be a better way to register architects."

ironing out the idp Still, the IDP training units, which some view as overly

prescriptive, are the punching bag for internships that drag on. The IDP was begun in the late 1970s as a voluntary program to make sure interns got a broad range of experience. Over the years, more and more states made it mandatory, until now 50 out of 55 jurisdictions require completion of the training units. In 1996, NCARB increased its political grasp by requiring the IDP for certification, which helps architects get reciprocity in other states. So what could be wrong with this picture? Critics complain that it's continued on page 52





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virtually the only track to registration, that it hasn't changed measurably since its inception, and that it hasn't been proven to be more effective than an unspecified (and generally speedier) internship. "IDP was never intended to be regulated or mandated," says John Cary, of ArchVoices, Albany, Calif., "so it just doesn't function well as a standard program."

The idea was that the IDP would provide superior training. However, the first empirical study of the program, commissioned by NCARB in the early 2000s, didn't support that premise. Beth Quinn, writing in the May 2003 Journal of Architectural Education, concluded that, although there were some positive findings, there were no significant statistical differences in satisfaction and rates of learning between IDP interns and those in unstructured programs.

Stephen Kieran, FAIA, Kieran Timberlake, Philadelphia, is another architect who breezed through a three-year internship before all the reporting and monitoring became de rigueur. He offers several reasons why the IDP can be an impediment to licensure. Contrary to Cutler's analogy, he believes the generalist medical model on which it is based is less relevant to architecture. "Many architects wind up in specialties of different sorts. There's an increasing argument that the full depth and breadth of the required training isn't as relevant as it was 50 years ago," he says.

And because the success of the IDP ultimately rests on the goodwill and resources of the employer, in the wrong firms it can take more than three years to fulfill the requirements. Even if a firm is committed to the IDP, it has to make money off of employees, and architecture firms have relatively low profit margins. "I wonder if there could be some revisions made to the requirements that are more difficult to get, such as field experience," Kieran says. "I think there could be more of an averaging-'Here's the range of experience we want you to have; get 80 percent of this range.""

Speaking as a historian, Braham also notes that a safety net exists that wasn't there 50 or so years ago *continued on page 54*





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practice

when licensure began. Some of the things a license ensures have been taken up by building officials and engineering firms.

knowledge vs. practice

A second part of this debate revolves around whether interns should be able to take the ARE during their internship, which could shorten the time line. Senhauser says the AIA's position is that interns should indeed be able to sit for the test upon graduation, but be



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DiNardo says the IDP didn't expose him to aspects of practice he wouldn't have gotten on his own, and that the intuitive understanding he gained during internship had little to do with what's on the exam. Two years ago he enrolled in a seminar with a well-known professor on how to pass the graphics division. When DiNardo said the information wasn't what he learned in school, the professor replied that he wasn't teaching architecture, he was teaching how to pass the exam.

Karl Wallick, an assistant architecture professor at the University of Cincinnati, echoes the opinion that because large parts of the test have little to do with actual practice, the exam shouldn't have to wait. For example, he says the predesign section was a grab bag of elements, such as site contracts and lending issues, that were foreign to him. "A lot of my design experience had to do with trying to fold programming and environmental and mechanical factors into one holistic design," he says. continued on page 56



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"Maybe it's just tough to test that with multiple choice."

The ARE's timing is determined by state registration boards, and 11 states allow interns to finish it up

during the IDP. While NCARB is currently studying policy recommendations, Godsey's opinion is that the exam is mostly practice-based, and that

therefore interns should put in the hours first. "If you take the exam right out of school, you're retesting what you learned in school," he reasons. "It's





better to temper the education with the experience you gain during an internship."

While NCARB doesn't

foresee major changes in the current system, it continues to nip and tuck. Updated test specs were released last February, after an 18-month study to reassess the skills critical to practice. Godsey says the ARE is evolving into a more practice-oriented exam. "Years ago, the questions were more knowledge- than practice-based," he says. "Now, it's more practicebased, but we think it could

ty of earning the breadth of training units, NCARB is also searching for other ways to fulfill its requirements. Several years ago, it began allowing communityservice time to count toward the IDP, as well as the hours worked for an engineering firm, as long as they were supervised by an architect. This year, Godsey has asked the IDP committee to look into using the online Emerging Professional's Companion as course work that would substitute for hard-to-"IDP is now mandatory

in 49 out of 50 states [and Washington, D.C.]," Godsey says. (Arizona is the exception.) "That's good, in my opinion. We feel like it's a good process to go through. The architecture profession is grossly underpaid for the training we have," he adds, "but that's a whole other subject." ra

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MONDAY, DECEMBER 5

9:00 am to 4:00 pm Housing Tour*

Visit South Florida's cutting-edge residential architecture.

AQUA, Allison Island

Dubbed a "tropical urbanist neighborhood," AQUA is the brainchild of developer Craig Robins and town planners **Duany Plater-Zyberk** (DPZ). AQUA brings together luxury mid-rise multifamily buildings and town houses inspired by Miami's waterside locale and its history as a modernist's town. Anchored at the water's edge, AQUA's three condominium buildings were designed by and named after **Alison Spear**, **Walter Chatham**, and **Alexander Gorlin**. AQUA's 46 town houses, or "island homes," are the work of **Hariri and Hariri**, **DPZ**, **Allan T**. **Shulman Architect**, **Suzanne Martinson Architects**, **Brown Demandt Architects**, and **Albaisa Musumano Architects**.

Villa Allegra, Sunset Island III

Architect **Chad Oppenheim** is changing the face of downtown Miami with his much-talked-about luxury high-rise condominium designs. Named by AIA Miami as Young Architect of the Year in 2001, he recently won an AIA Florida merit award for his own waterfront house in Miami Beach, Villa Allegra.

Strang Residence, Coconut Grove

Architect Max Strang is rapidly developing a name for himself in South Florida as an architect sensitive to site, place, and the environment. His own house, which he calls "tropical industrial," has recently won merit awards from both AIA Miami and AIA Florida. He was named AIA Miami's Young Architect of the Year in 2003.

A separate registration is required for the housing tour-\$35 per person.

6:30 to 8:30 pm Welcome Reception

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TUESDAY, DECEMBER 6



Brian MacKay-Lyons



Frank Harmon



Ted Flato



Allison Ewing



Elizabeth Plater-Zyberk

Keynote Breakfast

Resting Lightly on the Land* - 7:30 to 8:45 am

Presenter: Brian MacKay-Lyons, Hon. FAIA, FRAIC, RCA, MacKay-Lyons Sweetapple Architects, Halifax, Nova Scotia. Internationally-known architect MacKay-Lyons excels in works of simple, quiet grandeur. His monograph, "Plain Modern", was recently published by the Princeton Architectural Press. sponsored by

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Building is an act of intrusion on our delicate and dwindling landscape. Yet architecture that learns from vernacular traditions, makes use of local materials, and responds carefully and sensitively to the site helps mitigate the incursions. MacKay-Lyons sheds the limitations of style to see more keenly the beauty and promise of the landscape and to preserve its power to delight. The best lessons in sustainable design are the inherent principles of great architecture.

General Sessions

Regionalism as Green Design* – 9:00 to 10:30 am

Are the key elements of sustainable design found in the wisdom of local building traditions? What can residential, industrial, and agricultural structures tell us about safe, sound, and satisfying shelter? Find the universal truths in specific solutions. Rediscover what regional architecture can teach us about climate-, material-, and site-sensitive design.

Panelist/Moderator: Frank Harmon, FAIA, Frank Harmon Architect, Raleigh, NC. Harmon is the recipient of many awards, including a Business Week/Architectural Record international honor award and this year's *residential architect* Leadership Award for Top Firm. Also a professor at the College of Design at North Carolina State University, Harmon leads a practice that specializes in regional and sustainable design.

Ted Flato, Lake/Flato Architect, San Antonio, TX. Flato has earned a national reputation for straight-forward regional design. His projects, which incorporate indigenous building forms and materials, are sensitive to site and climate and have won numerous national, state, and local awards, including *residential architect's* Project of the Year in 2004.

Brian MacKay-Lyons, Hon. FAIA, FRAIC, RCA, MacKay-Lyons Sweetapple Architects, Halifax, Nova Scotia. See bio under "Resting Lightly on the Land."

Coffee Break - 10:30 to 10:45 am

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Paradigms of Place* - 10:45 am to 12:15 pm

Greening the one-off house is a first step on the long road to sustainability.

We must also look beyond the house to neighborhoods and towns that weave sustainability into the fabric of the community. One irresponsibly designed dwelling is a problem for its occupants; multiples are a public threat. How can we design where we live to improve how we live?

Panelist/Moderator: Allison Ewing, AIA, LEED AP, Hays + Ewing Design Studio, Charlottesville, VA. Prior to starting her own firm, which focuses on integrating the principles of ecology and modern design, Ewing was a partner at William McDonough + Partners, where she led a range of award-winning institutional, residential, and mixed-use projects.

Elizabeth Plater-Zyberk, FAIA, Duany Plater-Zyberk & Company, Miami, FL. A founder and leader in the New Urbanism movement, Plater-Zyberk's groundbreaking work has profoundly influenced place-making both nationally and internationally. Also the dean of the University of Miami School of Architecture, she's co-author of "Suburban Nation: The Rise of Sprawl and the Decline of the American Dream."

Ross Chapin, AIA, Ross Chapin Architects, Langley, WA. Co-founder of The Cottage Company, Chapin spearheaded changes to local ordinances in his hometown to allow for smaller, denser housing organized around common greens. His developments have attracted national attention and applause and provided a template for sustainable pocket communities across the country.

Awards Lunch - 12:15 to 2:15 pm The 2005 residential architect Leadership Awards

Presenting the winners:

Hall of Fame: Sim Van der Ryn, Van der Ryn Architects, Sausalito, CA. A visionary in the practice and teaching of sustainable design, Van der Ryn has motivated countless architects to design with ecological and social responsibility in mind. He has taught at the University of California, Berkeley, for more than 30 years and is the author of seven books, including "Sustainable Communities" (with Peter Calthorpe), "Ecological Design" (with Stuart Cowan), and his most recent, "Design for Life."

Top Firm: Frank Harmon, FAIA, Frank Harmon Architect, Raleigh, NC. Since 1985, Harmon's small firm has dedicated itself to designing buildings that are rigorous in their aesthetic execution, their environmental conservation, and their fundamental livability. His high standards as a practitioner and as a teacher at the North Carolina State University have encouraged young architects to fight the good fight for better, sustainable design among all building types.

Rising Star: David J. Hacin, AIA, Hacin + Associates, Boston, MA. Hacin's diverse firm excels in many different design disciplines, including a special talent for the reuse of existing structures. Hacin's sensitive adaptations and reapplications of historic Boston buildings have won much acclaim and numerous awards. Working within the demanding context of one of the country's oldest cities. he's brought fresh life and appeal to decaying, vulnerable structures.

Breakout Sessions - 2:30 to 3:45 pm

Greening the New House*

Leader: Peter Pfeiffer, FAIA, Barley + Pfeiffer Architects, Austin, TX. Pfeiffer has spent nearly 30 years developing, implementing, and leading the battle cry for green methods and materials in residential construction. His practice focuses on "real world" green design that's practical and applicable to mainstream housing.

Greening the Community*

Leader: Ross Chapin, AIA, Ross Chapin Architects, Langley, WA. See bio under "Paradigms of Place."

Greening the Existing House*

Leader: Kendall P. Wilson, AIA, IIDA, LEED AP, Envision Design, Washington, DC. Wilson is the founding principal of a multidisciplinary design firm with a focus on sustainable design. He serves on the US Green Building Council's LEED Core & Shell and the LEED Commercial Interiors Core Committees. His green remodel of a mid-century Modern house by Charles Goodman won a 2005 residential architect Design Award.

Greening Multifamily: Adaptive Reuse*

Leader: David J. Hacin, Hacin + Associates, Boston, MA. See bio under "residential architect Leadership Awards,"

Coffee Break - 3:45 to 4:00 pm

Future Shades of Green* - 4:00 to 5:30 pm

What will the next wave bring us in green technologies, products, and principles and how will they influence the design of our dwellings? Drawing from best practices and best guesses in the realms of cutting-edge residential, commercial, and civic design, we can make some educated predictions about the future of sustainable building.

Panelist/Moderator: Kendall P. Wilson, AIA, IIDA, LEED AP, Envision Design, Washington, DC. See bio under "Greening the Existing House."

Rick Harlan Schneider, AIA, LEED AP, Inscape Studio, Washington, DC. Named an AIA Young Architect of the Year for 2005. Schneider specializes in sustainable design of houses and other building types. He's served as chair of AIA/DC's Committee on the Environment and has won a number of awards for his sustainable work.

Jason F. McLennan, BNIM Architects, Kansas City, MO. McLennan is director of renowned green design firm BNIM's sustainable consulting division. An adjunct professor at the University of Kansas, he's served on AIA National's Committee on the Environment and the technical board for the US Green Building Council's LEED rating system. Founder of Ecotone Publishing, a green design imprint, he's written several books, including "The Philosophy of Sustainable Design."

Reception - 5:30 to 7:30 pm

Take advantage of this opportunity to meet with your fellow symposium attendees to discuss your ideas for the Green House of the Future. Transportation will be provided after conference programming concludes for the day to this beautiful, off-site venue in Miami.



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WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 7

John Connell



Sim Van der Ryn



Peter Pfeiffer



Breakfast Panel Discussion Sustainable Materials and Methods for

Residential Design* - 7:30 to 9:00 am

sponsored by



Are the greenest materials hardy old favorites like stone, wood, and glass? Or are engineered products the high-performance building blocks of the future? Can we rely on tried-and-true construction types or should we consider rammed earth, straw bale, and other methods that may encounter resistance among the public? Sorting through the myths, promises, and realities of sustainable design.

Panelist/Moderator: John Connell, AIA, CORA, 2morrow Studio, Warren, VT. Connell is founder of the Yestermorrow Design/Build School, promoting through a hands-on approach a broader appreciation of sustainable residential architecture, and principal of a green design/build firm, 2morrow Studio. His most recent book is "Creating the Inspired House."

Sim Van der Ryn, Van der Ryn Architects, Sausalito, CA. See bio under "residential architect Leadership Awards." Peter Pfeiffer, FAIA, Barley + Pfeiffer Architects, Austin, TX. See bio under "Greening the New House."

Coffee Break - 9:00 to 9:15 am

Design Charrette

Greening the American House* - 9:15 am to 12:15 pm

Putting our ideas where our pens are, we'll develop the sustainable American house of the future. At event registration in Coral Gables, attendees will learn the design problem and the names of their charrette team members. Seize any opportunity to communicate with teammates prior to the Wednesday session, where we'll divide into our groups for the final brainstorm.

Closing remarks - 12:15 to 12:30 pm

Conference Adjourns

Bonus Program

Continuing Education Credit with CEDIA* - 12:30 to 1:00 pm

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- O Single-family production

O Multifamily

O Remodeling

O Community planning

O Interior design

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Indicate your company's average annual total revenue.

\$10 million or more
\$5 million to \$9,999,999
\$3 million to \$4,999,999
\$1 million to \$2,999,999
\$500,000 to \$999,999
\$250,000 to \$499,999
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None
I do not wish to disclose

Do you specify, recommend, or influence the purchase of building products used in residential construction projects designed by your firm? O yes O no

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While town architect at Seaside, Fla., Scott Merrill designed phase one of the Honeymoon Cottages (1988-99). The sextet of buildings were inspired by a cottage Thomas Jefferson lived in while building Monticello. www.residentialarchitect.com

ENT

battling forces of nature and ideology, merrill, pastor & colgan rethink our best-loved houses.

eye of the storm

1 mm h

by s. claire conroy

cott Merrill, AIA, knows something about storms. Last year his adopted hometown and workplace, Vero Beach, Fla., weathered four—two of them major hurricanes spaced just three weeks apart. The one-two punch of Frances and Jeanne took out the headquarters of Merrill, Pastor & Colgan Architects. Until just recently most of the 13-person firm was huddled together in temporary digs above the Pak Mail store, conveniently located along the evacuation route out of town.

Toiling in hurricane alley while building out the New Urbanist communities of Seaside and now Windsor in Vero Beach, Fla, has cemented Merrill's practical side. His first design objective is to protect the occupants of his houses and secure their investment in them. If, after that's achieved, there's budget left for invention, well, he says, he'll weigh the costs and risks of such indulgence. There are functional reasons for some of the familiar forms that resonate powerfully with the buying public, and to abandon tried-and-true performance for the follies of form is, in his opinion, irresponsible.

Merrill talks tough about his work designed in what many architects would call a "historicist" vocabulary. Maybe that's because this magazine editor has prodded him to explore the seemingly age-old division between so-called modern and traditional architects. The 49-year-old architect doesn't admit to

Steven Brooke

eve of the storm

hard knocks over his chosen niche, but his impatience with the durable debate is clearly visible. Why all this dither about what's modern and what's not? Although he dwells at the beach, he doesn't care a bit for lines drawn in the sand.

"I wish we'd stop having this argument over and over. After awhile you wonder if we're all from the same species," says Merrill with weary exasperation. "Again and again we put ideology where it doesn't belong. Clients just want us to solve the problems and do it well. Architects take relatively small problems and give them an importance they don't have. What's worse is a simple idea that you make complicated. It's a form of hype."

In Florida, the problems that need solving are many. The hurricanes, with their fury and drama, get all the attention, but



it's the calm after the storm that brings the tenacious, pervasive infection: mold. "Last year was a horrible, horrible year. We had widespread catastrophic damage, but 12 times as many houses were affected by mold. Behind the walls, the damage seeped through for days," he says. The 125,000 blue tarps draped over decapitated houses didn't begin to cover the extent of the local ruin.

These days, following Katrina's devastation, everyone is thinking about the awful power of nature's destructive forces. Merrill, who was born and raised in Ohio, and educated at the University of Virginia and Yale architecture school, has been

thinking about it since he moved to Florida 17 years ago. Since then, he's witnessed and participated in a tremendous housing boom-much of it densely clustered along Florida's lengthy, vulnerable coastline. "We're building very expensive housing, commissioned by intelligent people, at 6 feet above sea level," he says.

But right now the only issue people are willing to tackle is building technology. "We've seen incredible increases in wind load standards with the adoption of uniform Florida standards. We now have glass you can hit with a baseball bat," he says. "What we discovered in these last storms is that the high impact glass performed as advertised, but the sustained water resulted in leaks. The damage was mostly cosmetic but substantial to floors and so forth. The old windows with storm panels fared better. So, we'll probably go back to storm panels. In some ways, it's easier to address standards than the bigger questions about where we should build."







The dunes mask the height of the small-but-tall Honeymoon Cottages. Phase two of the buildings (1994-95) were larger and placed behind the beachfront set (plan, right). The cottages were Merrill's (pictured opposite, left) first explorations into the power of repeated form.

Scott Merrill







Courtesy of Windsor

residential architect / september · october 2005



Until that day of reckoning, he'll continue to balance cost versus risk when he specs those technological marvels, he'll weigh his clients' desire for open, easy-living houses against the greater protection of a more closed building envelope, and he'll choose clear-cut solutions over more fanciful ones, even if it means holding his muse at bay. "We deal with things that are longstanding problems. We still don't have some of the basics of shelter solved," he says. "We don't have mitigation of mold solved. We make many concessions to water and clients here. What we do is realistic and practical in Florida." Fortunately, Yale prepared him to think defensively about structure. "I had a teacher who thought and taught so much about water droplets," he says. "You could go to the extreme of building a bunker."

Instead, he consults the collective wisdom architects have assembled through experience. For instance, he points out, "certain profiles of roof simply take wind better, like hipped roofs. Broad profiles take it full force." At this line of discussion, his frustration builds steam again. Why take clients down a path of experimentation that exposes them to unnecessary risk and continued expensive maintenance? "We have a huge inheritance we can either accept or reject," he says, addressing his colleagues in architecture. "We reject what we think has been vulgarized. We make off-limits certain architecture that could contribute simply because it's been badly done. Is there something about basic strategy that can yield interesting results? Can we expand the DNA we draw from?"

pattern power

Even though he's a card-carrying member of several classical design organizations, Merrill isn't interested in cloning the past. He began his career in Washington, D.C., working for top firms McCartney Lewis and Cass & Pinnell, but he couldn't envision a happy future there. Extending, remodeling, and reinvigorating old houses is the Washington architect's bread and




The firm's work in densely sited resorts has taught it good manners. Highland Park House (opposite and above), located in an older Dallas suburb, mitigates a myriad of neighborhood styles and deemphasizes its size on street and flanking elevations.





Merrill's floor-plan hierarchy for courtyard houses: Living rooms trump bedrooms, bedrooms trump service rooms, and, where possible, circulate through rooms.

Merrill, Pastor & Colgan Architects

eye of the storm

butter; everyone chases the same kind of work for the same clients. Merrill speaks highly of his very talented mentors, but he didn't want to follow in their footsteps.

So he decamped to Florida for the new town of Seaside, which offered the exciting opportunity to build fresh from the ground up. The now storied prototype for Traditional Neighborhood Development (TND) was spearheaded with visionary zeal by developers Robert and Daryl Davis and designed by nascent New Urbanists Andrés Duany, FAIA, and Elizabeth Plater-Zyberk, FAIA. of DPZ, with consultation from traditional architect and theorist Leon Krier. Merrill served as Seaside's town architect for two years, completing among other projects the sextet of Honeymoon Cottages (1988-89). In 1990, he followed DPZ to another resort TND at Windsor and established his own practice in Vero Beach, but he returned to Seaside for other commissions, including phase two of the Honeymoon Cottages (1994-95) and perhaps his most perfect building yet, the Seaside Chapel (2001). The Honeymoon Cottages and the chapel (both winners of AIA National Honor Awards) make manifest the early concept of Seaside: a modest beach town based on vernacular building traditions.

Building new drew Merrill to Seaside, but so did the power and potential of patternmaking. DPZ's original vision called for just a few patterns, meticulously defined and repeated across the 80-acre site. The comforting refrain of pleasing building types would also make better design more attainable. The explicit pattern book meant a contractor could build a handsome house without an architect. But in a way, Seaside was a victim of its own success. Soaring real estate values turned it into a haven for the rich and an architect's playground. "Ultimately, the town ended up developing in a way that was unforeseen," says Merrill. "I was so enamored of the ideas that drove Seaside originally—the repetition of types."

What lured him to Windsor was the promise of exploring even more building types. He lured others there, too. In 1991, he hired George Pastor, AIA, fresh out of the University of Miami and the University of Virginia's master's program in architecture, both strong in traditional design. "I spent a summer working at Monticello, crawling around the roof as they were restoring it," says Pastor, who oversees construction of the firm's work. In 1997, Merrill made him a partner, and in 1999 they promoted David Colgan, AIA, a Notre Dame grad, to partner as well. Colgan now operates out of a small satellite office in Atlanta.

Through a mixture of speculative and custom residential commissions, the firm is exploring a number of house types Merrill thinks offer solutions for other densely planned communities. His enthusiasm for the right-brain wrestle of site, program, and budget is palpable. The 416-acre, gated Windsor











Photos: Courtesy of Windsor

Commissioned to design a town center for Windsor (above and left), where there is no town, the firm oriented apartment buildings, a fitness center, and the mail room, to form a series of garden plazas.

At Windsor, guest houses, garden walls, and main houses all push to the lot lines, creating private courtyards amid the density. This house (right) takes advantage of a 6,000 square foot triangular lot.



Renderings and floor plans: Merrill, Pastor & Colgan Architects





is a high end experiment in patternmaking, but he hopes that repeating and perfecting its building types will make them more affordable in the long run. "Most people have to buy within a price range that can only be delivered through the economies of repetition," he says. "But we as a culture exalt singularity. It's unattainable. Our concentration on houses singularly matched to a singular person belittles the dignity of the repetitions of houses most people live in. Wouldn't it be valuable to take patterns and repetitions and ennoble them?"

singular sensation

For all his talk about repetition, Merrill and his partners don't simply replicate the past. Looking at one of their houses evokes that experience we've all had: You think you see some-one you know at a distance, but when you get up close you discover a stranger. Maybe we should call it *deja* new. The forms and references feel familiar, yet you can't pinpoint the specific antecedent. This is what sets Merrill, Pastor & Colgan apart and yes, one might argue as Vincent Scully does in an upcoming monograph on the firm, what makes them modern.

Because, as much as Merrill emphasizes the clever plans and siting of the firm's house types, what stands out is the ingenuity of the architecture. It's deftly proportioned, beautifully understated, and, within a language we all understand, original. The path to this kind of rigor and invention wouldn't suit





The Sideyard House type (1990-91) makes the most of narrow, deep lots. In multiples, it can use the blank wall of the adjacent house to complete its private courtyard.

Scott Merrill





Sideyard House photos: Courtesy of Windsor

residential architect / september \cdot october 2005

eye of the storm

the lazy or flighty mind. It requires distilling our best-loved architecture styles to their essence — mapping their DNA and using the basic genes to build stronger, better organisms. "So many of the traditions are just about the pure joy of composition," says Merrill. "You have to take them and find out their root appeal and work from there. For instance, English Arts & Crafts and Shingle Style are all about joy in manipulation of roofs. You have to be careful about how you take them on. They can all be done in pretty bad ways. But there are endless way to configure things that are readily accepted by conservative clients."

"There are several good reasons for architects to be conservative," he adds. "Among them is to save your clients embarrassment down the road." Market acceptance is important to Merrill's firm, because it's important to both his developer and private clients. Beyond those exigencies, marketability means a greater possibility of implementing the firm's designs on a wider scale. "Architects say they want to do good by changing the very way we build and think about architecture," he says. "But it's reasonable to suggest that how you do good is through incremental improvement leveraged over multiple projects." The goal feels even more imperative given Florida's unprecedented building boom, which has advanced largely without direct contribution from architects.

"We have to deal with tremendous numbers," he explains. "So much energy is spent on transformational change. But certain patterns make sense for money or for climate reasons. That's what makes it interesting to return to the courtyard house again and again."

Despite its accomplishments in the realm of multiples, the firm is building a portfolio of sumptuous one-off custom homes. The freedom is almost disorienting after so many years dotting the i's and crossing the t's of DPZ's master plans, but it's also exhilarating. "Everything in Windsor is orthogonal, so to have a sloped site where the site section is integral is great," says Merrill. "But the funny things is, even with a 90-acre site, you still run up against the setbacks and wish for more space."

The private clients with beautiful parcels of land bring new possibilities for invention—and trips out of Vero Beach. So, too, does the firm's occasional institutional and commercial work. But in general, the challenge in those projects is to add value to something already desirable. What appeals most to Merrill is to take a building lot—or even a whole communi-ty—and create something valuable out of nothing. "Windsor was a grapefruit grove, other than that there was nothing at all interesting about the site," he says. "We often inherit a feature-less site. The specificity comes with the lot configuration, the clientele, the program. That is modern." ra







Merrill, Pastor & Colgan Architects

The firm's talent with densely packed resort housing serves it well in breaking down the mass of large custom home programs, such as this compound in Buzzard's Bay.

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100

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where?

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ow?

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modern traditions

sometimes the most livable houses are those that blend contemporary influences with time-honored forms.

field's edge

When it comes to architectural richness, not many places can top the Berkshire Mountain region in western Massachusetts. The area boasts great depth in its collection of 18th- and 19th-century farmhouses and agricultural buildings, in addition to some well-preserved Shaker-built structures. Architect Andy Burr,

> FAIA, drew from all three traditions when designing this modern-day farmhouse in Alford, Mass. "We don't want to be slavishly traditional, but a lot of clients come to us and want something that fits in with the vernacular of the area," he says. "We try to get a little inventive while still using that local language."

> The house clearly belongs to its site and region. White-painted cedar clapboards cover its gabled forms, which are topped by classic standing-seam metal roofs. Burr and his staff calculated the roof overhangs for solar gain during winter and shading during summer, another time-honored strategy. "The old-timers were very sensi-

tive to sulight and wind orientation," he says.

A separate garage with an upstairs guest suite recalls typical rural outbuildings. History even played into the house's placement at the outer rim of its 15-acre site, where the open meadow meets a dense forest. "We felt strongly that the house shouldn't be out in the field," Burr explains. "It ruins the view for everyone else, and it's not traditionally where the house would be put. If it were an older house, it would be at the edge condition where it's pro-

The architects interwove evocative imagery from existing local barns and farmhouses, such as deep front porches, crisp clapboard siding, and old-fashioned metal roof ventilators.





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modern traditions

"a lot of clients come to us and want something that fits in with the vernacular of the area. we try to get a little inventive while still using that local language."—andy burr, faia





The home's combination of the living room, dining room, and kitchen into one central space falls in line with modern tastes. So does its strong emphasis on outdoor living spaces.







second floor (barn)







tected by the trees behind it."

The fenestration on old local barns served as a model for the garage–guesthouse's six-paned windows and barn-door–like shutters. But subtle hints of modernity eased their way into the design too. Rather than facing in one direction,

the gables of the main house meet to form a 90-degree angle dictated by the T-shaped floor plan. "It's not a traditional way to put buildings together," says Burr. "Typically, the gables wouldn't crash into each other like that." Most of the home's windows are larger than those in an older house. One 42-by-22-foot space with a vaulted ceiling incorporates the entire kitchen, living room, and dining room—a far cry from the formal, chopped-up rooms and lower ceilings of the past. A freestanding refrigerator and walk-in pantry give the kitchen the currently popular unfitted look, a style that had its first heyday before the advent of built-ins.

A parallel for the house's blend of modern and traditional design ideas can be found nearby at the restored Hancock Shaker Village. The spare, unassuming buildings there acted as a touchstone of sorts for Burr, who

used granite columns on the home's front porch in a tribute to similar columns he'd seen at the village. "We do look at the Shakers a lot," he says. "They distilled the vernacular of the area." Two centuries later, he and his firm strive to do the same.—*meghan drueding*

project:

Private residence, Alford, Mass. architect: Burr and McCallum Architects, Williamstown, Mass. general contractor: Albert J. Cummings IV, Williamstown project size: 2,850 square feet site size: Withheld construction cost: Withheld photographer: Ken Gutmaker

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found in translation

When an interpreter translates a sentence, he doesn't reiterate it word for word. Instead, he communicates the speaker's fundamental meaning, adjusting structures and expressions from one tongue to another. Stephen Muse, FAIA, performed a similar adaptation for this Washington, D.C., house, which conveys the

> spirit of Japanese architecture without actually reproducing elements from it. "We didn't want to do a bridge crossing over a koi pond," says Muse. "We were looking more for the essence of Japanese architecture."

> The impetus for this nonliteral interpretation came from the owners, who had spent many years living in Japan. They shared their collection of Japanese architecture books with Muse and project architect Kuk-Ja Kim, AIA, pointing out photos that appealed to them. "We had to figure out what it was about these Japanese rooms they liked," says Muse. "It turned out to be the strong feeling of geometry, the connection from room to room, and also the connection from interior to exterior." So he and Kim created a simple floor plan whose room sizes and openings line up more precisely than in a typical American house. Their emphasis on geometry also extended to the interior detailing, rendered in flat surfaces

of maple and painted wood to reference the exposed framework and paneling of the Japanese tradition.

The woodwork's clean lines signify a modern aesthetic that, according to Muse, came about by happenstance. "Solving the problems of the site and expressing what the owners want in a house led us into something very light and more contemporary in feel," he says.

The house sits atop a steep, wooded hill too steep in front for anyone to climb regularly. So the main entrance lies around back, where the driveway leads from a public alley up to a stand-alone garage. The architects created an entry sequence that starts in the garage, leads



daily treks up and down the

steep incline at

the front of the

Muse Architects

entry at the rear

(left and oppo-

site (above),

placed the home's main

site page).



modern traditions





A gracious entry sequence leads through a glassedin gallery (above and above left) and up into the main house (above right).





"we didn't want to do a bridge crossing over a koi pond. we were looking more for the essence of japanese architecture."-stephen muse. faia







out to a window-lined gallery flanked by landscaped terraces, and ends in the skylit stair hall of the main house. Along with an ample number of windows, French doors, and outdoor rooms, the entry procession strengthens the home's tie to the landscape—a goal consistent

with modern as well as Japanese architecture.

But the design also has its traditional points, like its Shingle Style exterior vocabulary. Muse chose the Shingle Style because of its distant roots in Japan and its relationship to structures in nearby Rock Creek Park. And it works well with the site: Cedar cladding and roofing echo the wooded surroundings, while sharply pitched gables keep the home's scale from overwhelming the hilltop. In addition, old-fashioned true dividedlight windows echo the panes of the sliding shoji screens that separate the main public rooms. Copper Craftsmanstyle light fixtures mediate between the Shingle Style and Japanese motifs.

Taken as a whole, the house radiates the simplicity of Japanese design while fitting into its American neighborhood. Like master translators, Muse and his team found a way to express the design themes of one culture through the language of another.-m.d.

project:

Private residence, Washington, D.C. architect:

Muse Architects, Washington general contractor: Peterson and Collins, Washington landscape architect: Jordan Honeyman Landscape Architecture, Washington project size: 6,048 square feet site size: 0.3 acres construction cost: Withheld photographer: Maxwell MacKenzie

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Minimal trim and clean details update old-fashioned touches such as the mix-and-match furniturestyle kitchen cabinetry. Exposed and raw materials like the steel stair and ceiling trusses are softened by painted-wood built-ins. The home's exterior palette was meticulously selected to fit the owners' vibrant personalities and



"i like to realize where influences are coming from but let each individual house just flow based on listening to the client and the site."-bernie baker

tout their designer paint store.





living history

Progressive vernacular is what Bernie Baker calls his architecture. And he's both amused and pleased that clients from both sides of the great style divide seek out his firm. "A lot of people are drawn to us because they see the traditional bent of our work," he says. "And some people see the same collection of houses and look at it as contemporary."

"I like to think of architecture as something moving and living that goes beyond a set of styles," he says. The architect has been revising his vision of home for 60-plus years but admits his upbringing among Pennsylvania Shakerstyle buildings is a lens through which he still gazes. Mostly, though, his decades of practice have been an exploration of what makes a house truly livable, regardless of its vintage or label. And that's taught him to kick back and just design, without regard to the party line. "I like to realize where influences are com-

ing from but let each individual house just flow based on listening to the client and the site," he says. "I don't really know where all of my reference points will pop out in a house. It just happens."

What pops out in this Bainbridge Island, Wash., house is a doublepitched roof like those found on utility buildings coast to coast. Corrugated steel roofing, shiny cylindrical smokestacks, and shiplap siding extend the outbuilding vocabulary. A few unexpected moves push these time-honored forms into the modern world: extreme angles to the roof pitches, compressed fenestration with staggered window sizes, and square dormers. "The dormers are completely modern," concedes Baker, "but I wanted to add an edge and control where light entered the building."

Industrial touches, like a wood-andsteel bridge that doubles as a greatroom ceiling and second-story floor, update the interior spaces. Inside is where Baker focuses most keenly on his ideas about livability. It starts with a simple floor plan, one that moves easily and contains few divisions. "There can be mystery and intrigue," he says, "but keep it moving."

Fill those flowing spaces with natural light from at least three directions, not all of them necessarily horizontal, advises Baker, who has an affinity for skylit cores. Then mix in texture and vary volumes for a balance of intimate and grand moments, he adds. Those moments include the 10-foot-high great-room ceiling/ bridge with double-height openings on either side. And then there's the kitchen ceiling, which drops to a cozier scale, and the daybed cubby retreat under the stairs.

Ultimately, Baker isn't seeking some earthshaking fusion of modern and contemporary in the houses he designs. What he wants most to discover about his houses is: "Do people enjoy living in them?"—*shelley d. hutchins*

project:

Private residence, Bainbridge Island, Wash. architect: Bernie Baker Architect, Bainbridge Island general contractor: Michael C. Raymond, Port Townsend, Wash. interior designer: Bill McKnight Designs, Bainbridge Island metalwork: Paul Schneider, Seattle case work: Arkadia Woodworking, Seattle project size: 2,100 square feet site size: 0.21 acres construction cost: Withheld photographer: Bill Holt

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"certainly part of the idea was that the house should look like it had grown over time."-wayne l. good, faia



Architect Wayne L. Good used rustic materials-stone, cedar siding, metal roofing-and a grown-over-time design sensibility to link the riverfront Thompson residence to the summer colonies that dotted the Chesapeake tidewater area in the '20s and '30s. A carefully scripted entry sequence saves the best-the water viewfor last.



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river approach

Annapolis, Md., architect Wayne L. Good, FAIA, is known for his stylized tweaks on traditional domestic architecture. That sense of updated tradition sets the tone at the Thompson residence, a vacation home near Annapolis that Good designed for a family of four and sited on a slender, forested ridge overlooking Valentine Creek. Its controlled, rustic outlook—a series of

> hybrid wood, stone, and glass structures-was meant to evoke the feeling of a rural camp. In fact, it has what Good calls "inherited architectural genetics" that date back to the '20s and '30s, when waterfront colonies popped up in the Chesapeake tidewater regions. There was Sherwood Forest with its Adirondack-style cottages; Scientists' Cliffs with its chestnut log cabins; and Piney Point with its Victorian gazebos and sleeping porches. "This house was inspired by the spirit of all those summer camps," says Good. "Certainly part of the idea was that the house should look like it had grown over time."

Although it combines varying rooflines and a mix of materialsnatural stone, board-and-batten siding, cedar tongue-and-groove siding, and zinc-coated steel roofingthere's nothing jumbled about this house. The peninsula-like building site dictated the shape of the floor plan, "which was basically very long and skinny," says Good. One of the plan's primary design features is the tight sequence of arrival, entry, and the unfolding of both water and woodland views. "With waterfront homes, I like to choreograph how you get to the ultimate thing, the water view," says Good. "It's been described as a kind of burlesque treatment, where you slowly reveal the payoff."

From the auto court, that sequence begins with passage through a narrow dogtrot bookended by two sin-

modern traditions

"with waterfront homes, I like to choreograph how you get to the ultimate thing, the water view, it's been described as a kind of burlesque treatment, where you slowly reveal the payoff."—wayne l. good, faia







Knee braces, boardand-batten siding, and cedar tongue-andgroove details are repeated inside to reinforce the notion that the Thompson residence has evolved over time. Throughout the house, steel windows-done up in orderly grid patternsreveal and frame views of Valentine Creek and the forested parkland that surrounds the house.





second floor





gle-car garages that resemble stylized machine sheds. It emerges onto a long, light-washed boardwalk. At the front door, a 10-foot expanse of steel and glass, visitors get a glimpse of the pool out back, but it's not until you turn left into the living room that the full, panoramic sweep of the river view is revealed.

The family's more public spaces—the living room, kitchen, and a generous screened porch—are clustered at the river end of the house. The less public rooms—the dining room,

> media room, a guest bedroom and bath, and a mudroom—are lined up along the long boardwalk, which is made of Brazilian walnut Ipé. Upstairs there's a game room, a play space, a master suite (with sitting room), three bedrooms, and three baths.

In the tradition of summer camps, which often encompassed huts, sheds, and other use-specific outbuildings, there's a separate twostory structure at the southwest corner of the site that has its own special function. "When we were designing a bathing facility for the pool area, we came up with the idea to give the family a little gazebo on top," says Good. "The two boys were avid chess players, so it became known as the chess tower and became a place for them to play chess." How apt that such a rigorous game would play a role in this tightly controlled home.kathleen stanley





project:

Thompson residence, Crownsville, Md. **architect:** Wayne L. Good, Good Architecture, Annapolis, Md. **general contractor:** Winchester Construction Co., Millersville, Md. **project size:** 8,400 square feet **site size:** 3.7 acres **construction cost:** Withheld **photographer:** Celia Pearson

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doctor spec

rock on

should you spec granite in your next kitchen or counter with quartz?

by nigel f. maynard

ranite is one of the most prized countertop materials, the ultimate status and style symbol in the kitchen. And with good reason-it's water-, heat-, and scratchresistant: durable; and virtually maintenance free. It's a rich, lustrous natural material that upgrades the look of the whole kitchen. But manufacturers claim their latest foray into man-made stone, quartz surfacing, tops even granite in both aesthetics and function.

A relatively young category, quartz surfacing is a manufactured product that contains 93 percent natural quartz and 7 percent resins and pigments. By comparison, granite contains about 50 percent quartz, which is one of the reasons makers say quartz surfacing is more durable and scratch-resistant. "Only three other natural minerals-diamond, sapphire, and topaz-are harder than quartz," touts the Web site of Stafford. Texas-based Cosentino USA, which produces Silestone quartz.

Just how scratch-resistant is the stuff? A favorite marketing quip is that a slip of the knife will hurt your Henckels but not your countertop.

star performer Companies say quartz aggregate improves upon granite in a number of ways. For one thing, unlike granite, the product has no fissures. This consistent surface makes it nonporous and less likely to harbor bacteria. Sealing granite guards against absorption, but the material requires

periodic resealing to keep it food-safe. Quartz surfacing, in contrast, requires no sealers. Quartz's impenetrable surface also makes it highly resistant to stains and the etching effect of acidic liquids such as wine, lemon juice, and vinegar.

In addition to quartz's performance benefits, the manufacturing process enables companies to mimic other, even more troublesome natural countertop materials, such as limestone, which is very soft and prone to scratching, and concrete, which is porous.

For those consumers who are not fans of the shiny look, quartz manufac-



Courtesy CaesarStone

Quartz-surfacing manufacturers boast that their product performs as well as, if not better than, granite and that it can assume looks that the natural stone can only dream of. This apple martini countertop by CaesarStone, for example, displays the design versatility of quartz.

turers offer a limited number of honed finishes. Quartz is also available in vibrant hues that Mother Nature has neglected to provide, including bold and iridescent reds, yellows, and blues.

Kieran Liebl, principal of Royal Oaks Design in Shoreview, Minn., first encountered quartz a few years ago but was less than moved by manufacturer performance claims. He is now a convert. "I am really impressed with it," the architectural designer says. According to Liebl, the product has proved durable, waterproof, and highly resistant to staining. "The maintenance is no different from granite," Liebl says.

Apparently, the rest of the world is catching on too. "Quartz is now the fastest-growing segment of the countertop surfacing category," says Valerie A. Aunet, marketing manager for the residential builder division of Wilmington, Del.-based DuPont, whose quartz surface is called Zodiaq. Cambria, in Le Sueur, Minn., supports the claim as well. Between the years 2000 and 2002, the company says, quartz surfacing sales grew more than 2,000 percent, or from a 0.3 percent market share to a 9 percent share.

The material has several continued on page 102

doctor spec

sources in addition to Cosentino, DuPont, and Cambria, including Cincinnati-based Formica; Caesar-Stone in Sun Valley, Calif.; Korean conglomerate LG; Italian manufacturer Seieffe Corp.; and Houston-based U.S. Stone. All manufacturers use virtually the same quartz-resin composition, and their fabrication processes are essentially the same. But color and pattern availability differs from company to company.

naturally controversial

So who's buying quartz and exactly why are they buying it? Chris Wicki, director of Select Design Studio in Plano, Texas, says her firm's clients usually want a product with the performance of granite and the color and consistency of a manufactured product. "Some people are searching for a specific look," she says. "A countertop may look different from the granite sample once it's fabricated, so the consistent color of quartz works better with their overall scheme."

While manufacturers play up the benefits of a consistent product, purists say this is the main reason they avoid quartz altogether. "Granite is just more natural-looking," says Jeff Sheiner, co-owner of The Granite Shop in Smyrna, Ga., who has an obvious bias. "Quartz doesn't have the natural depth."

Alexandria, Va., architect Charles Moore, AIA, concedes more positive attrib-





utes to quartz, but he, too, is turned off by its uniformity and lack of visual interest. Ultimately, the architect, who's known for his high-end remodels of old houses, finds stone-look quartz products unconvincing. "For us, the materials are seen as an imitation, so we prefer to use the real thing," says the principal of Moore Architects. A material that tries to imitate another product draws more attention to itself, underlining the fact that the client couldn't afford the real thing, he concludes.

But manufacturers contend that the material's true strength is its ability to assume unique looks. "Quartz is competitive with the hard, shiny look of granite, but it offers more colors," says Aunet. This gives consumers the option Photos: Courtesy Formica A sophisticated yet rugged material in the kitchen, quartz is flexible enough to use in the bathroom, as well (above). Despite their ability to take on bright looks, offerings that mimic the look of natural stone, such as Formica's desert gold (left), account for the lion's share of the market.

of choosing bold reds, concretelike grays, and bright yellows and blues. Moore agrees that the ability to take on a bold look is the product's main advantage. "Almost everybody will ask for [real] stone, but every now and then someone will ask for blue Silestone," he says. "When someone asks for a funky color, then that's a better argument for quartz."

As noted above, quartz colors, patterns, and finishes vary from manufacturer to manufacturer. Formica produces 16 colors, Cambria sells 28, and DuPont offers 33. CaesarStone's 40 and Cosentino's 49 are the most in the industry. Caesar-Stone offers several outlandish hues, such as apple martini and tequila sunrise, plus six honed finishes. Cosentino also has bright colors, as well as products with Microban antimicrobial protection and a new finish that simulates the look and feel of leather (see "Solid Ground," page 121).

Cosentino public relations manager Gina Covell says the company's 10 manufacturing lines allow for more colors and finishes. "We also offer vanity tops, integrated sinks, and backsplashes," she says.

Contrary to popular assumption, quartz is not necessarily cheaper than stone. In fact, with the widespread availability of lower-priced granite from a number of different countries, including the United States, quartz is frequently more expensive. Prices range from \$50 to \$85 a square foot, compared with \$39 for some of the budget granites. "Buyers always expect [quartz] to be cheaper, but it's not," says Wicki.

The Granite Shop's Sheiner also counters companies' claims that quartz is substantially easier to maintain than his wares. Granite is not that susceptible to staining and only requires resealing every two years, he says. "Sealing is really simple: Spray on the sealer and wipe it down with a cloth."

Still, the force of quartz's popularity and acceptance, and the options and benefits it offers your clients, cannot be ignored. The product, manufacturers say, is harder than granite, consistent from slab to slab, and never requires sealing. With these advantages, it's a solid alternative to stone. **Fa**



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network news

structured wiring offers some extravagant possibilities.

by rebecca day

hese days, high-end home buyers expect to have music in every room and a palette of viewing options at every TV. Internet in every room isn't far behind, making cable and data outlets as much a part of the room planning as the AC wiring. As more and more people opt for structured wiring, there are more reasons to put it in. Now, even the more esoteric upscale amenities in the luxury home are getting in on the networking act. First it was the refrigerator that could dial out to the e-grocer. Now, the home piano and the wine cellar are plugging in and logging on.

connected connoisseur

If wiring the wine cellar for an Internet connection seems like overkill, consider the possibilities for the pampered homeowner. You're planning a dinner for eight important guests and want the perfect robust red to go with filet mignon. Today, you might look up a spreadsheet wine program on the PC, scratch down the rows where you've stored Cabernets, Bordeaux, or Barolos, and head down to the cellar with paper in hand. In the home with the

eSommelier wine management system, the computer lives in the wine cellar, as a touchscreen monitor that houses an all-in-one PC. You can search a 1,000bottle wine collection in seconds by sorting through the collection by varietal, country of origin, color, or year and get a list of all wines ready to drink now. For special guests, search for wines with the highest ratings from respected wine reviewers. The system comes bundled with some 140,000 wine listings from Wine Spectator magazine.

Add a \$1,000 scanner to the \$8,000 PC, and homeowners can scan in bottles when they bring home a case or two. When they pull a bottle from the cellar, they can deduct the amount from the log to keep inventory accurate. When running low on a favorite bottle, they can place a note to order more. If shipping laws allow, they can punch a few keys and send an online order to a favorite wine merchant.

Users make selections from a menu-based interface using on-screen buttons that help guide the search. The interface follows the model of other home control functions for operating HVAC, lights, spa control, and entertainment. With its onboard RS-232 jack and support from AMX and Crestron, eSommelier can pop up as another control feature on home management touchscreens throughout the house. That way, homeowners can look up the location of the bottle they want

using the kitchen touchscreen before heading down to the chilly cellar.

And because eSommelier packs Ethernet jacks, it can be wired into the home PC network. Users could even access the inventory over the Internet while traveling in Tuscany to see if there's room for a few more cases of Sangiovese. Rack-mountable eSommelier units are available for integration with home control systems.

sound investment

Wire the cellar with in-wall speakers and homeowners will be able to listen to the upstairs piano while sipping port. Yamaha's Mark IV Disklavier 21stcentury player piano has gone the networking route too. A favorite of interior



The eSommelier lets homeowners manage a large wine collection via a touchscreen monitor in the wine cellar or through the main control system in other rooms.

designers for decorating large living spaces or of Liberace wannabes who never learned to play, Disklavier grand pianos have been popular in upscale homes for both their design appeal and entertainment value. A Disklavier can be played as a conventional acoustic grand piano or as a *continued on page 108*

residential architect / september · october 2005

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digital home

software-driven player piano.

In the latter mode, Disklavier pianos read specially formatted media that allow the piano to play by itself using digital data to control the keys. The latest version of the player extends the Disklavier into the multiroom realm. Now, homeowners can send a digitized stream from the acoustic piano to other rooms in or outside of the house. The piano can also be wired to play as a conventional grand piano while speakers in the room play backup orchestration.

The Mark IV Disklavier comes with a Wi-Fi remote control and a 10-inch touchscreen Tablet PC. Both enable homeowners to operate the piano from other rooms-and through walls and ceilings. Users can select the piano as an audio source over a standard multiroom audio system and then use the remotes to change songs or create playlists from the 80-gigabyte hard drive built into the piano system.

The piano requires a standard 110-volt electrical outlet for power. Its analog and digital audio outputs run to the central music system, which sends the sound of the piano to other sound-ready rooms. The built-in Wi-Fi card allows the piano to communicate wirelessly with PCs on a home network, and an Ethernet port allows for connection to a more robust wired home network.

Homeowners can take

advantage of the PC connection by downloading music from the PC to the piano. Or they can create music on the fly and then send it from the piano to a PC using software that captures the notes and puts the work into printable form. They can then store or print out the sheet music from tunes they just hammered out.

Down the road, the networking capability will lead to Internet applications, Yamaha says. Piano students could participate in online music competitions with other students from around the globe. They could take up online music lessons with a teacher across the state or across the country. Extending the reach of the piano to the Internet opens up a world of possibilities.

tune in

The piano is one new source for the multiroom audio system. The ubiquitous iPod is another. Multiroom audio company Sonance has devised the iPort, a custom wall plate for the iPod or iPod mini that wires the portable music player into the whole-house or local audio system. iPod owners can place the iPod in the iPort dock when they arrive home and the device appears as a separate audio source on a Sonance multiroom system. It can also work with home control systems from AMX, Crestron, and Elan.

Users control the iPod on the device itself, which is charged by a DC power supply while resting in the in-wall dock. A video version of iPort works with iPod Photo players. Homeowners with photos on an iPod can view images from iPod Photo players on a TV located either in the room or elsewhere in the house.

Currently, slightly more than half of new homes are built with structured wiring. For luxury-home owners, the benefits of networked electronics will grow exponentially as companies devise useful ways to benefit from devices that talk to each other within the home. With the wine cellar, grand piano, and iPod in the picture, the case for home networking just became a little more enticing. ra

Rebecca Day specializes in writing about home electronics. She can be reached at customhomerd@aol.com. A version of this article originally appeared in residential architect's sister publication CUSTOM HOME. Yamaha's Mark IV Disklavier comes with a Wi-Fi remote control and Tablet PC, enabling homeowners to operate the piano from anywhere in the house. The iPort (below) connects an iPod to the whole-house or local audio system.







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architects' choice

product picks from the pros



neat sheet

Johnsen Schmaling Architects is drawn to Acrylite sheets. "The range of stock colors is far superior to other products," says Schmaling. Made from acrylic, the sheets are economical and provide tight thickness tolerances and high optical characteristics, the company says. For the Parts House Pavilion (shown), JSA sandblasted the panels to achieve different textures and levels of opacity. Acrylite is available in 4-, 5-, and 6-by-8foot sizes. CYRO Industries, 800.223.2976; www.cyro.com.

slight light

JSA sings the praises of the Westwood 913 light. "It's the most elegant and minimal line-voltage fixture we have been able to identify," Schmaling says. "It's small and looks just gorgeous." Measuring 9½ inches long and 4½ inches in diameter, the light's housing and hood are made from machined aluminum, brass, or copper; stainless steel hardware is standard. Aluminum products come in powder-coat colors; brass or copper units are left unpainted. Lumière, 770.486.4800; www.lumiere -lighting.com.



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clear value

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-nigel f. maynard



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Round caps finished off the ends of this radius wall perfectly. Aluminum mulls were used to connect the three radius walls together, while a flat cap mounted the units to the top of the curved wall.

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Aluminum mulls were used to connect these flat panels and radius walls together. A flat cap and mounting channel were used to mount the units to the base and the walls. Flat caps were also used to connect the desktop to the top of the panels.

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new material



steel this roof

Frank Gehry isn't the only one who can have

fun with shiny metal roofs. Barrington, Ill.-based Millennium Tiles' new stainless steel residential roofing lets you show your mettle, too. The company says that unlike other roofing materials, stainless steel has an infinite life span and contains at least 75 percent recycled content. Measuring



15 by 9 inches, the tiles are angled at the edges to eliminate glare as well as noise from rainfall. In addition to a natural finish, the tiles come in amber bronze and slate. Custom hues can be fabricated using an oxidation technique. The maker claims the tiles won't fade, peel, or chip. Millennium Tiles, 866.842.8585; www.millenniumtiles.com.

centre of attention

The Aquacentre kitchen station by Quebec-based Julien is a fitting choice for many houses, but it truly shines where space is precious. An all-in-one food prep and cleaning module, the unit is outfitted with a 10-inch-deep sink, a stainless steel countertop with integrated drainboard, a built-in dishwasher, and optional drawers. The module measures 54 inches wide, but custom sizes are available, as are custom door panels. Julien, 800.461.3377; www.julien.ca.



cold storage

This double-drawer refrigerator is by no means the first of its kind, but at 36 inches wide it's the largest. Designed and manufactured by Ariston, of Italy, the unit offers 6.7 cubic feet of storage space and has stainless steel racks and removable baskets and bins. The drawers measure 17 inches high by 22 inches deep and accept custom panels and stainless steel handles. Ariston, 888.425.0845; www.aristonappliances.us.

-nigel f. maynard

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The members and employees of the National Association of Home Builders (NAHB) extend our heartfelt concern and sympathy for our fellow Americans who have been affected by Hurricane Katrina. In the days and months ahead, we pledge our support as they rebuild their homes and their lives.

Unfortunately, many planned events in New Orleans have been affected by this national disaster. This includes NAHB's Custom Builder Symposium. For the most up to date information about the Custom Builders Symposium to be held on November 11–13, please visit www.nahb.org/custom.



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viatera firma

Product powerhouse LG adds quartz surfacing to its list of wares. Twelve colors launch the Viatera line, each representing a radiant earth tone from a distinctive global locale. Palermo, San Tropez, Cairo, Cabo, Tenerife, Morocco, Sedona, and others come in 2- or 3centimeter thicknesses. The nonporous surfaces resist stains and scratches. LG, 866.544.4622; www.lgviatera.com.



concrete addition

DuPont Zodiaq debuts four colors (alabaster, sand beige, clay brown, and papyrus) that provide the aesthetic of concrete with the easy care of quartz. A matte finish with a monolithic appearance makes these colors a good fit for contemporary as well as rustic spaces. Rich, soothing hues saturate the quartz slabs entirely for an even, consistent look. DuPont Zodiaq, 877.229.3935; www.zodiaq.com.



hue granted

CaesarStone collaborated with Italian designer and color expert Roberto Cannovaro to produce Embellish. The collection's eight colors, geared specifically to architects and designers, align with predicted material trends for the next few years. The hues range from mod shades like apple martini, iceberg, and tequila sunrise to the more subdued rosemary, mocha, brick, cinder, and cement. CaesarStone, 877.9.QUARTZ; www.caesarstoneus.com.

continued on page 122

off the shelf



hide tide

Silestone's Leather series takes the matte finishing of quartz to a new plane. Ambiguous veining and deep shadows simulate the look of tanned hides in such colors as caramel, gold and tan, slate gray, and buttercream with chocolate accents. Some existing colors are available in the leather look as well. Leather comes with the company's exclusive Microban protection to inhibit microbial growth. Silestone, 800.291.1311; www.silestoneusa.com.



limestone cowboy

The soft countenance of limestone takes on the rough and rowdy strength of nonporous quartz with Cambria's new Yorkshire color collection. Available in a standard polished finish, Yorkshire can also be honed to a more organic matte. The material doesn't require sealing and won't absorb bacteria. The company backs the surface with a 10year warranty. Cambria, 866.CAMBRIA; www.cambriausa.com.

counter espionage

Trasluce gives architects the option of four glowing colors—literally. Okite's translucent line transmits light while maintaining the stain-, burn-, and scratchresistance inherent in quartz surfaces. The Italian company isn't revealing the secret to its durable, seethrough surface, but it backs its claim with a 10-year warranty. Okite, 713.849.3800; www.okite.com.

-shelley d. hutchins



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what?

Any home or project completed after January 1, 2001

when?

Entry forms and fees are due no later than November 15, 2005. Completed binders are due January 5, 2006.

where?

Winning projects will be published in the May 2006 issue of residential architect magazine. Winners will also be honored at an awards dinner in Los Angeles on June 9, 2006.

how?

A panel of respected architects will independently select winners in 15 categories, based on design excellence. Judges may withhold awards in any category at their discretion.



entry form

To register, contact Shelley Hutchins, associate editor, residential architect:

phone: 202.736.3407

mail: residential architect design awards 2006 One Thomas Circle, NW, Suite 600 Washington, DC 20005

fax: 202.785.1974

e-mail: shutchins@hanleywood.com

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number of entries categories

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 - 8. Adaptive Re-Use (end use must include residential)
 - 9. Campus Housing
 - 10. Architectural Interiors* (residential)
 - 11. Outbuildings*
 - 12. Kitchen*
 - 13. Bath
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1 single-family - custom 5 interior design 2 single-family - production 6 landscape architecture	9 34 59 84 109 134 159 184 209 234 259 284 309 334 359 384 409 434 459 484 509
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3. Which of the following best describes your job title at your firm? (check only one)	13 36 55 56 113 133 103 103 106 213 238 203 288 313 338 363 388 413 438 453 488 513 14 39 64 89 114 139 164 189 214 239 264 289 314 339 364 389 414 439 464 489 514
 3. Which of the following best describes your job title at your firm? (check only one) 01 managing principal/CEO/ partner/corp exec. 08 construction administration 02 job captain/staff architect 09 planner 03 chief architect 10 draftsperson 04 designer 99 other (please describe) 05 specification writer 	15 40 65 90 115 140 165 190 215 240 265 290 315 340 365 390 415 440 465 490 515 16 41 66 91 116 141 166 191 216 241 266 291 316 341 366 391 416 441 466 491 516
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 An advertiser was inadvertently left out of the residential architect August Ad Index. Here is the advertiser's contact information if you would like to learn more about their product.

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moorcrag, windermere, england, 1898 c.f.a. voysey

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Martin Charles

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