MICHIEL HAVELAND
GREAT ARCHITECTURE

exists at that intersection of solid engineering know-how and aesthetic flair. A serious building can’t have one without the other.

Case in point: the varied projects of New York-based architect Michael Haverland, which are wonderful to look at but that also incorporate technology in often surprising ways. “I don’t like obvious solutions,” says the eloquent but soft-spoken Haverland. “The best things come from figuring it out, and you edit along the way.”

New York architect Michael Haverland combines aesthetic flair with engineering expertise to create distinctive, thoughtful houses and public spaces — such as this one in Palm Springs, which he restored and renovated. Photo by Julius Shulman
Haverland taught architecture at Yale for a decade before his career really took off, in 2004, after the publication of a project that nicely demonstrates the science-meets-beauty proposition: his own weekend house in the Hamptons, a community where he has done a lot of work since.

The low-slung, modernist home — which he shares with his partner, Philip Galanes, the Social Q's columnist at the *New York Times* — is distinguished by long walls composed of large-paned windows. Haverland offhandedly refers to it as the Glass House, though the influences are more 1940s factories and Mies van der Rohe than Philip Johnson.

Called Glass House — for rather transparent reasons — Haverland’s home in the Hamptons combines expansive window walls and steel mullions to create a highly supportive structural web. Photo by Billy Cunningham
The steel mullions of the house’s glass façade may be thin, attractive and fragile-looking, but they’re also essential. “The whole house acts as a web,” says Haverland of the structural support the windows provide, which he had to tease out with lots of study. “It’s not just the roof and the frame. It’s all designed as an integral whole.”

The expansive windows also give the house the air of not being in the Northeast. “We wanted all the great attributes of modern living,” says Haverland, “and to bring the outside in and get lots of light. But this is not California so it had to be cozy and comfy in the winter.”

The house isn’t large, and the interior is loft-like, mostly one large space divided by screens (covered in William Morris wallpaper) and dotted with the modern furniture that Galanes collects. Haverland likes to employ colors you don’t see every day, like a pink Eames lounge chair — once owned by cosmetics queen Mary Kay Ash and covered in her signature hue. “I’m not afraid of color,” says Haverland. “But it’s hard to use.”
The result is a composition that, like a lady at a dinner party, doesn’t reveal its age. “People came over last Saturday, and they couldn’t tell if the house was built in 1950 or 20 years ago or last week,” says Haverland. “That’s exactly what I want to achieve. There’s nothing worse than architecture that is datable.”

The house was published in the Times and the offers rolled in. “Michael was a very good client for himself,” says art collector Barbara Jakobson, a Museum of Modern Art life trustee who has worked with Haverland on projects at some of her homes. “When I saw his house for the first time, I said, ‘Bingo!’ He’s highly original, and he has a great grasp of the history of architecture.”

Another notable Hamptons project is the surprising, Janus-like residence Haverland created for clients in East Hampton. As you approach it, the building shows off an elaborate cast-concrete façade, replete with a dense plaid pattern — and devoid of glass. On the waterfront side, however, it’s a chic modernist box with large windows, stretched out along an attractive arcade.
We wanted the front side to be very opaque,” says Haverland. And that’s where science, once again, came in. “A student of mine at Yale was experimenting with how to use 3-D foam cutters for casting. So this façade is cast-concrete, inspired by some of the shapes of Frank Lloyd Wright.”

The East Hampton home presents a surprising rear façade: walls of floor-to-ceiling glass. Photo by Paul Warchol
With 16-foot ceilings and exposed concrete, this New York loft retains its industrial bones, but Haverland warmed it up with walnut floors and window trim. Photo by Carl Wooley
On nearby Shelter Island, meanwhile, Haverland added on to a client's existing cottage by creating two pitched volumes, not just one, and then staggering them. “It was about pulling apart parts of the program and not making it feel massive,” he says. “I don’t like the typical suburban typology, with a house plopped down and a front yard and a backyard. I approach it like an urbanist. Outdoor rooms are as important as the indoor rooms.”

That urbanist sensibility also came in handy in an actual city environment—the often-mean streets of New Haven. From his perch at nearby Yale, Haverland worked with the local community to create an L-shaped addition to the public Dwight School, located in one of the roughest neighborhoods in town. Instead of maintaining the bunker-like style of the existing 1963 building, however, Haverland opened it up in ways literal (big windows that engage the street) and figurative (it doubles as a community center when school isn’t in session).

Dramatic signage becomes word art at the new entrance and addition Haverland designed for the Dwight School in New Haven, Connecticut. Photo by Andrew Bordwin
believe in urban design and community planning," he says of the project, which won two awards from the American Institute of Architects and was funded with public money, including a HUD grant. "That’s the success story of the Dwight School — it didn’t exist until we had a neighborhood committee and knew their needs. It was a way of developing the project from the ground up in every way."

Haverland didn’t skimp on decorative touches either, alternating white- and green-glazed bricks for the façade and adding artful, over-scaled signage.

For the wall surface of a Manhattan duplex’s double-height living room, Haverland reinterpreted the pattern of the original coffered ceiling. Photo by Stephen Smith and Kristi Stiff © Imaginare Co.
Indeed, for the professorial Haverland, words can be a valuable tool. When Jakobson enlisted him to tackle a problem at her East Hampton home — a neighbor had cut down much of the foliage between their two houses — he collaborated with her on a witty textual solution.

“I love word-based art — I’m a big Lawrence Weiner fan,” says Jakobson. “So I got the idea of putting up a billboard saying: ‘Thick Foliage Obscuring View of Neighbor’s Driveway.’” Haverland did about 50 mock-ups to get the color, font and background right (orange letters against a leafy scene). “And that billboard still stands,” Jakobson adds wryly.

At the Robert Marc eyewear showroom, in New York, Haverland designed a series of concave and convex surfaces to act as lenses, capturing and reflecting light. Photo by James Nelson
The rear of the waterfront East Hampton house reveals a muscular stucco colonnade that protects the delicate steel-and-glass façade from storms; the order of the columns breaks for a recessed outdoor dining area. Photo by Paul Warchol
Mock-ups are right in Haverland’s wheelhouse. Although he can’t speak on the record about it, Haverland employed a grand version for one of his most high-profile recent projects: Calvin Klein’s new East Hampton home on the site of the old DuPont mansion, Dragon Head. For this undertaking, it was reported that Haverland constructed a full-scale model of the unbuilt house out of plywood and filled it with foam-core furniture to better understand the proportions—a rare move for an architect these days, given the profession’s reliance on computer imaging.

In a town house Haverland renovated overlooking Manhattan’s Gramercy Park, 12-foot-high double-hung windows flood the space with light. Photo by David Paler.
This distinctive process — which employs high-tech solutions when necessary, and old-fashioned ones where appropriate — helps Haverland approach each project afresh, free of assumptions or an automatic style.

“I love collaborating with all my clients, and they all have an eye — many of them are in fashion or retail,” he says. “If you go to Richard Meier, you want a Richard Meier house. But if you come to me, you want your house. It’s defined by your site and who you are.”

“There’s nothing worse than architecture that is datable,” says Haverland, who prides himself on creating timeless spaces whose era can’t quite be pinned down. Photo by Paul Warchol
FASHION:
Hermès and Loro Piana plus Steven Alan and Joe Fresh. And, of course, Tod’s and Robert Marc. But I stopped wearing Calvin Klein underwear when we started working together.

TRAVEL:

GARDENING AND FLORAL:
Beach roses, peonies and sculptural branches when I can find them.

FABRICS:
Holland & Sherry, Rogers & Goffigon and Knoll. Also Carolyn Ray wallpaper.

ART AND DESIGN:
For art, Josef Albers (for his color theory), Sol Le Witt (for the beauty of the line — I miss drafting by hand), Cindy Sherman, Louise Lawler, Peter Nadi and Almond Zigmund. For design: Collaborating with Joe D’Urso on several projects was remarkable. He has a terrific sensibility and taught me to design from the inside out, at the scale of a door swing and hardware, as well as simultaneously from the outside in — the building and site — as architects typically do.

HOW GREEN ARE YOU?
Very. Achieving “green” is not just specifying green materials or using solar panels. It is how material is used efficiently, where it comes from and how much energy is used in its fabrication and transportation. Rigorous design and simple forms are usually more economical to build, use less material and labor and therefore are more “green.” I hate waste.

BOOK:
Social Qs by Philip Galanes (my personal advice columnist!), Complexity and Contradiction in Architecture by Robert Venturi and Learning from Las Vegas by Robert Venturi, Denise Scott Brown and Steven Izenour. They are still two of the most influential books that inspire my work and remind me how to think, theorize and analyze, not just make something beautiful. Also Jean Royère by Jacques Lacoste and Patrick Seguin.
**ENTERTAINING:**

Fresh mozzarella with tomato and basil for lunch outdoors or cozy dinners around our Nakashima dining table in East Hampton.

**GIFT:**

Dog accessories from Doggy Style in New York

**HOTEL:**

The Palace in St. Moritz because there is bridge in the late afternoon, perfect after a day of skiing. And, anyplace Chiccio, our dog, is welcome.

**COLOR:**

I love blue and am not afraid of bold color juxtapositions. Anything all beige is boring.

**MUSIC:**

Right now I am working my way through the 30 albums that Questlove said influenced him.

**FAVORITE APP:**

Bridge Baron is perfect for a three-minute break on the subway or in a car.

**RESTAURANT:**

New York City: Il Cantinori, Knickerbocker Bar and Grill, Marquette and Newbar on University Place for coffee and their excellent sandwiches. East Hampton: Nick and Toni’s, Fresno, Nichol’s and Sam’s Pizza.

**MUSEUM:**

The Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, originally designed in 1925 and with two additions by Mies van der Rohe, for it’s rigorous design and contextual site strategy — also, the site of my very first commission, a gallery renovation. The Museum of Modern Art right now for the superb Le Corbusier show. In general, I prefer museums more for their architecture than their collections, like the Jewish Museum, in Berlin (Daniel Libeskind, 2001); the National Gallery, in London (addition by Venturi, Scott Brown, 1987); the Neue Staatsgalerie, in Stuttgart (James Stirling, 1984); the Heidi Weber Pavilion, in Zurich (Le Corbusier, 1960) and the Yale Art Gallery, in New Haven (Louis Kahn, 1953).
MICHAEL HAVERLAND’S Quick Picks from 1stdibs.

1950s Sciolari chandelier, offered by Orange

Osvaldo Borsani Model No. AT 16 adjustable coat rack, offered by The Gallery

Charlotte Perriand wardrobe and desk, offered by Formelibre

D’Urso low rolling tables, offered by 20CDesign.com

Hermès Paul Duprè-Lafon decanter set, offered by Branded Luxury

Georg Jensen Acorn flatware service for 12, offered by Drucker Antiques, Inc.