Crisscrossed concrete, mahogany, glass, and steel surround the entryway. *Laurie Lambrecht Photo*

A Modern House Insists on Its View

With a tip of its horizontal hat to architecture greats

By Christopher T. Cory

From the road, the mysterious structure might almost be a tidily landscaped factory.

Yet on second look, you see that the off-white walls are textured with raised, crisscrossing patterns, some of which resemble chenille, and that the double garage door is made of rich mahogany. A tantalizing set of steps curves up an incline, seeming to vanish just as they reach the walls.

Climb the path and you quickly find that it actually leads between two walls, one set back from the other, which are connected by floor-to-ceiling glass windows and a glassed entry. Go through the door, drawn by the view through additional tall windows of a deck, a swimming pool, and an old oak tree on a lawn sloping down to Accabonac Harbor. As you enter, the interior space seems to explode into a sweeping, high-ceilinged living area.

This is an old Frank Lloyd Wright trick, pulling visitors through a constricted entryway into a soaring interior space as he does at the Guggenheim Museum. The architect of this house in Springs, Michael Haverland, is delighted to have recreated some of the "drama" of that

Continued ...

The view's the thing. While the unifying ceiling extends everywhere, steps from the entrance foyer lead down to the living room area, with a conversation pit at a lower level. Custom steel windows and full-length doors welcome gazes and breezes.
Paul Warchol Photo

American master, but he also has deftly integrated touches from other boldface names in modern architecture.

"The best architects are steeped in architectural history," he said recently, explaining that he and the owners, who he said worked "very collaboratively" on the design, also acknowledge influences from Le Corbusier, Mies van der Rohe, Robert Venturi, and Eero Saarinen. Architectural masters, indeed.

The Corbusier note is the deep overhang of the roof and the width of the arcade of columns that march across the side of the house facing the water. The columns act as a Corbu-esque "brise soleil" to keep out some of the high-angle summer sun and let in light through the unbroken wall of the 14-foot glass windows and doors. Van de Rohe's "Miesean rigor," as Mr. Haverland called it, shows in the unbroken plane of the roof, the black steel mullions that subdivide the windows into panes with the proportions of Shingle Style houses, and the subtle repetitive grid of the interior spaces.

Mr. Venturi, who designed two houses on the South Fork and with whom Mr. Haverland once interned, is known for "establishing order so that when it is broken, it has more impact," Mr. Haverland said. That inspired a wall of windows in one section that turns inward, creating a three-sided exterior alcove off the deck which serves as an outdoor dining room. It has a fireplace (one of four in the house), and Mr. Haverland finds it "a little bit mannerist."

In combination, the house's windowless side and windowrama facing the water mean "your attention is really driven in a certain direction," said David Steward, a media and direct-marketing executive who is one of the owners. "It was pretty important to us to really have a sense of design," added his partner, M. Pierre Friedrichs, a private chef in East Hampton who said he also is a farmer who grows his own vegetables and herbs.

Frank Lloyd Wright's influence extends to the L-shaped lay-

Continued ...

Clockwise From Upper Left, Including Opposite Page: *The kitchen was designed by one of the owners, a professional chef. The fireplace in the living room is one of four in the house. A pair of sinks and a bathtub are in the master bedroom, which opens onto a sunken garden. A screen divides bath and guest room. Steps descend from the foyer to the outdoor level. And in the dining room, the side wall looks into a kitchen garden.*

Laurie Lambrecht Photos

out of the 5,000-square-foot house. At right angles to the cathedral-like expanse of dining room, living room, outdoor dining room, and master bedroom, a wing provides an office and two guest rooms. Mr. Haverland, whose latest project is a new house that Calvin Klein is building in Southampton, said he believes bedrooms should have reasonably low ceilings to make them more intimate than public rooms. But instead of lowering the house's unifying flat ceiling, he raised the floor of the office and guest bedroom wing. The rooms are reached by going up eight steps. (A game room is downstairs at the garage level.)

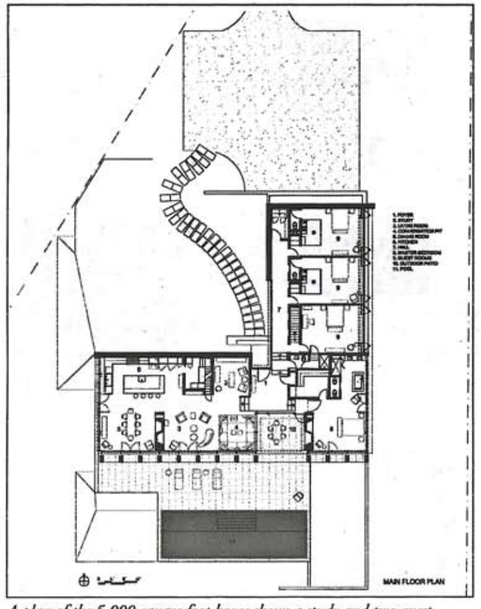
Wright's inspiration is most pronounced in the facade facing the road, which bows to the "textile block" houses Wright constructed of concrete panels cast in patterned molds. Mr. Steward and Mr. Friedrichs have made pilgrimages to many Wright sites. Visiting his Freeman house in Los Angeles when it was being restored, they spotted one of its damaged panels in a Dumpster and managed to obtain it. It is now on display in one of their bookcases.

For the bas-reliefs on the exterior walls, Mr. Haverland experimented with half-round forms, using simulations to see how they would cast shadows and let rain run off. Eventually he came up with two basic designs that work as what he called plaid.

Wright's concrete blocks often rusted as decades went by because they had to be molded around steel reinforcing bars. In the Springs house, the blocks did not have to be reinforced because they function only as a thin "rain screen." They are "clipped" to the solid masonry walls behind them with stainless steel hardware usually used for much bigger "curtain wall" buildings. They should stand up well to hurricanes, Mr. Haverland said.

Once the design was set, the recipe for the 20-inch square panels was executed by Mr. Friedrichs. Working with the contractor, Ben

Continued ...



A plan of the 5,000-square-foot house shows a study and two guest rooms, which are accessed by a short flight of stairs.

Krupinski, the chef whisked concrete together with local sand carefully chosen for its color. Using computer-designed molds made of foam, he was able to turn out 48 squares on his best day. "I wanted to say 'I made these,' " he said proudly.

He also had a strong hand in creating a sunken garden off the master bedroom and a kitchen garden off the kitchen and pantry, which he planned.

The influence of Eero Saarinen went into a conversation pit sunk into the floor of the living room. The owners had spotted one in photos of a house Saarinen designed in Columbus, Ind. Lined with multicolored pillows, it is "a little bit like a harem," Mr. Steward said, creating yet another level that "makes the drama of the room's height all that much more amazing."

The owners have furnished the house with their varied collection of mid-20th-century furniture. Some of it has slight signs of wear, Mr. Steward admitted, but the pieces have "great lines, and it's nice to have a place that doesn't look like it was all bought at once from Design Within Reach."

Despite its expanses of glass and its meticulous detailing, "the house is crazy solid," Mr. Steward said. "There is no shimmy, shaky anything."

"We love living in this house," he said. "We have a combination of big sky, trees, land, and a bit of water. We feel connected to the land and disconnected from the world." ✱

The rear elevation of the house is reflected in the swimming pool just after sunset, to stunning effect. *Paul Warchol Photo*

Contents

On The Cover: *Homage to the Greats*
Laurie Lambrecht, Photo
Paul Friese, Design

It's Got Personality . . . Plus 9
Text and Photos by Durell Godfrey

Our Town 13
By Helen S. Rattray

Victorian by the Sea 15
By Irene Silverman

A Modern House Insists on Its View 19
By Christopher T. Cory

Weaving the New Into the Old 27
By Erica Broberg Smith

Fish Isn't Sold Here Anymore 31
By Christopher Walsh

Pools Pools Pools 37
Photos by Durell Godfrey

Contributors

IRENE SILVERMAN is The Star's editor-at-large. She is at large at the moment in Amagansett.

ERICA BROBERG SMITH is a practicing architect in East Hampton and New York City, with a love of historic houses.

CHRISTOPHER WALSH is a reporter at The Star. Although he keeps an apartment in the Williamsburg neighborhood of Brooklyn, he would gladly trade it for a cottage in Amagansett.

CHRISTOPHER T. CORY took the same architecture history course at Yale taught by Vincent Scully for which the architect of this house was a teaching assistant.

DURELL GODFREY can be seen looking at things, buying things, and taking pictures of things for The Star.

THE EAST HAMPTON STAR

August 22, 2013

Editorial Staff
Helen S. Rattray, Editor
Jane Bimson
Baylis Greene
Jane Schacher
Debra Scott

Art and Production
Paul Friese, Manager
Matthew Charron
Jordy Mark

Advertising
Min Spear Hefner, Manager
Jane Bimson
John Wyche
Zach Zunis