To heighten the drama of the interiors, Haverland gave the 5,000-square-foot floor plan multiple level changes, one of which occurs at the entrance to the travertine-floored living room. The 14-foot-high steel-framed glass walls and doors bring the outdoors in. Austin the dog eyes the pool.

FROM THE ARCHIVES

Michael Haverland Constructs a Cast-Concrete Home in East Hampton

The windowless property sits on the same land as Jackson Pollock's former farmhouse and studio

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Photography by Paul Warchol

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It certainly wasn't proximity to art-historically hallowed ground that David Steward and his partner, Pierre Friedrichs, were looking for when they went property hunting in the Hamptons—rather, the large parcel they settled on just happened to abut the five acres that contain the painstakingly preserved farmhouse and studio of Jackson Pollock. As they would discover, the painter's roving spirit still pervades the landscape.

The bayside hamlet of East Hampton known as The Springs had long exerted a gravitational pull on the artistic temperament, and Pollock moved out here in 1945, hoping for a necessary miracle—what he called "a change of light and space." And it was here that he consolidated his legend: baking bread and apple pies, going clamming behind the house, getting roaring drunk, and famously making paintings. Including, at white heat in the upstairs bedroom, the *Accabonac Creek* series, named after the body of water that his—and by extension Steward and Friedrichs'—property redolently ends in.

"Ironically, it was the constraints of the site—the buildable area was small because of the protected wetlands—that generated the unusual form for our house," says Steward, a technology and media executive. The site in question is triangular and opens like a fan—narrow, then widening to encompass the vistas. The 5,000-square-foot house that architect Michael Haverland designed to sit on it stands as a study in extreme contrast

—mysteriously, forbiddingly opaque in front and luminously permeable in back. The blind, privacy-ensuring, fenestration-less façade (an interesting way for an architect to approach a house in this light-filled part of the world) consists of two simple rectilinear volumes, and it is only from the deliberately constricted glass-walled entrance courtyard between them that one can see clear through the building to the unfolding views beyond.

Haverland was determined to expand in a highly original way on the idea of the textile-block house. The use of decorative cast-concrete blocks for an exterior had of course been pioneered by Frank Lloyd Wright (witness what he called the "integral ornament" of his celebrated Hollyhock House in Los Angeles) and Edward Durell Stone (see the lacy grillwork of his American embassy building in New Delhi). Himself exploring sculptural form in the service of innovative architecture, Haverland went on to design tactile three-dimensional 20-inch-square blocks for the façade of the StewardFriedrichs house. Each block would feature two patterns (one horizontal, to draw the eye across the façade; the other vertical, to draw it up to the fathomless sky)—an overlapping, exotic-looking plaid that would catch light and create shadow.

David Steward and Pierre Friedrichs hired Manhattan architect Michael Haverland to design a house for their five-acre plot in The Springs, an area of East Hampton, New York. On the street-facing side, windowless plaid-textured walls made from cast-concrete block emphasize privacy.

At the sides, as in the rear, the architecture opens up tall and wide.

The southerly exposed master bedroom flows out to a planted terrace. The low table and the Harvey Probber headboard are counterpointed by the wavy Yngve Ekström bentwood armchair.

Friedrichs, a chef by profession, was a hands-on client if there ever was one: He made all of the 970 blocks himself. "It's a lot like baking a cake," he explains. "One part this, three parts that—in this case, cement and sand. You add water, mix it, put it in a mold, then shake it to get the bubbles out. Then you let it sit and cure for 24 hours. And then you scoop the foam off, and what's underneath is the impression, the block." Haverland adds that some of the sand came from the site and was used to "establish a connection with the land."

The rear elevation. “The muscular stucco colonnade protects the delicate steel-and-glass windows and doors from wind and storms,” says Haverland. Richard Schultz outdoor furniture.

The house is raised on a plinth to capture views from the sides and rear, and this additional height allowed for a ground-level media room and garage. The roof is a continuous flat plane—it's the floor levels that change, altering several ceiling heights, as one moves from room to room ("No house should be tall everywhere," the architect maintains). One steps up into the entrance hall and then down into a Turkish-travertine-floored, glass-walled, 14-foot-high loft that embraces a study area, a sunken travertine-sided conversation pit, a living room, a dining room facing the Pollock wetlands, and an open kitchen with an outsize island designed, unsurprisingly, by the clientchef himself.

The steel-and-glass rear façade has four pairs of floor-to-ceiling double French doors that open to the terrace, where the Turkish-travertine floor continues right into the outdoor dining room. "I like the tradition and ritual of opening doors," Haverland says, pointing out that his "glide beautifully." Beyond these expanses of glass are 13 stucco-clad columns forming a rigorous arcade.

At the southeast corner of the house can be found the airy master bedroom, which is entered by stepping down from the entrance hall. From here one steps not only back up to the entrance hall but up again to a wide mahogany-plank-floored corridor leading to three generous guest rooms. The rhythm of openings and doors all along this corridor echoes the columns in the arcade (a nice touch is the leather pulls on all the interior doors—refreshingly soft and floppy compared to the severity of most of the sur faces here).

And so, in an area of East Hampton that has remained rural in character, this house takes its elegant place.