

Santa Barbara
SEASONS

Winter Skyline
Goes Modern

4 LOCAL GETAWAYS
Retreat, Refresh, Renew

Chumash
Ceremony:
Festival at Sunrise

Winter 2004 \$4.95





The residence is cantilevered over a concrete plinth that anchors the home and serves as both a retaining and rear garage wall. As the building form breaks to accommodate the hillside topography, it exposes both a staircase and splendid views upon entering the home. The dramatic juxtaposition of horizontal and vertical design elements is heightened by board-formed concrete and dark-stained, custom-milled vertical redwood siding that wraps the exterior of the guest suite. Above, the surface is integrally colored, smooth-troweled plaster.

Living Large

STORY BY JANE ELLISON

PHOTOGRAPHS BY JIM BARTSCH



IT WAS A LEAP OF FAITH TO BUY A HILLSIDE lot that others regarded as too risky. For these visionaries, it was just right. “How many vacant parcels in Santa Barbara offer a view as spectacular as this or provide as much solitude—a respite from the constant freeway buzz,” they asked themselves. With so many positives, they were certain that an architect capable of meeting the challenges of this narrow hillside lot could be found to design the modernist home they envisioned.

Through mutual friends in New York, they were introduced to Santa Barbara architects Ferguson-Ettinger. It was a perfect fit. With degrees from the Southern California Institute of Architecture (SCI-Arc) as well as Brett’s

New York experience with the firm of Tod Williams and Billie Tsien, Pam Ferguson and Brett Ettinger were no strangers to innovative design.

“We relish modernism, although we are not limited to an exclusive style. We approach each design as a creative response to site and climate—an indigenous modern architecture that results from our interaction with the existing context,” notes Pam.

Given their compatibility, it is not surprising that a close collaboration between client and architects resulted in a home that epitomizes the best of modernist design.

Dreams of an all-glass structure gave

Above: Inserted into the loft-like living area, the kitchen looks toward the southwest. The long marble countertop rests on cabinetry of dark-stained mahogany that masks appliances. The sleek design of this flat surface, punctuated only by cutouts, is continued throughout the home and repeated in the master bedroom dressing room and bath. **At right:** The hallway, adjacent to an office/bedroom, leads to the master bedroom suite. Diffused light illuminates the interior via a large expanse of tempered, sandblasted panels of glass that provide the desired opacity.



The composition is calming with a monastic sense of order that invites contemplation.

Dreams of an all-glass structure gave way to a composition of concrete, stucco and glass.

way to a composition of concrete, stucco and glass. "It provided us with more alternatives and ultimately, a more creative solution," Brett explains.

"With the integration of warm materials [wood] and cool [concrete and stucco], we achieved a combination of crisp smooth surfacing that wraps the entire structure and rough-hewn materials that ground it."

There's room for a lot of living in this 2,260 sq. ft. home with 2 bedrooms, 1 1/2-baths up and 1 bedroom, 1 bath plus music studio comprising the guest suite below.

Private spaces are tucked back toward the oak canopy, while "public" rooms engage the city and mountains, inviting the outdoors inside in a conversation that is the essence of modernism.

Cantilevered as it is, the living area appears to float over the city spread out before it. This loft-like space incorporates



Floating above the city with a magnificent mountain view, the living room, with floor-to-ceiling windows, interacts with its surroundings. The suspended ceiling adds to the sensation, while the concrete floor anchors the room. All three "walls" glide open, heightening the connection between exterior and interior space. The silk and wool rug, designed by Pam Ferguson, adds warmth and color to the setting.

the kitchen, dining area and living room which no doubt hearkens back to Pam's New York experience, where her firm completed a number of loft renovations.

Floor-to-ceiling glass panels on three sides of the living area glide open further blurring the division between interior and exterior spaces. "When opened, the space is transformed into an outdoor terrace," Brett points out.

The play of light on unadorned walls and overall restraint of the design bear witness to the fact that decoration is superfluous when a strong connection between house and land exists.

The composition is calming with a monastic sense of order that invites contemplation. Perhaps it is true after all as has been noted "Modernism is more a way of life than a style."

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PHOTO: TIM BONNER

Counterclockwise from top: The private wing of the residence reaches back toward the oak canopy and demonstrates the play of horizontal versus vertical design elements. Above, the master suite boasts a view toward the southwest. Below, the guest suite and music studio are wrapped in concrete and a specially fabricated, redwood siding that adds warmth and texture, reinforcing the structure's connection to the earth. **Lower left:** the guest suite and studio are completely removed from the residence. Accessed by an exterior staircase from the second story and with its own entrance. Here, again, is a strong connection to the exterior, with views toward the southwest and the oak canopy just steps away. **Lower right:** A concrete ramp anchors the residence to the hill and connects guest parking to the front entrance. The entire composition resembles a minimalist painting à la Richard Deibenkorn.