

San Diego Home/Garden Lifestyles'

33RD ANNUAL

HOMES OF THE YEAR

Our 2012 winners span the region – from Del Mar and La Jolla to Mission Hills and Hillcrest



BRADY ARCHITECTURAL PHOTOGRAPHY

WE'RE THRILLED WITH THE DIVERSITY of selections from the judges in our annual Homes of the Year contest. An independent panel made a grand-prize selection and chose three other notables.

The top nod went to Taal Safdie and Ricardo Rabines, for a home that seems to float on the side of a La Jolla cliff.

Our other winners: a coastal Del Mar domicile from architect Heather Johnston (shown); the Mission Hills Craftsman modernized by IS Architecture; and (for the first-time ever) a 25-room *apartment* building, a Hillcrest gem by architect Lloyd Russell.

A big thank you to our judges: Kent Prater (Prater Architects); Ted Smith (Smith & Others Architects) and Lisa Wilson-Wirth (Wilson-Wirth Design).

HOMES OF THE YEAR
GRAND PRIZE WINNER

FLOATING IN SPACE

A difficult lot puts great design to the test

BY PHYLLIS VAN DOREN

PHOTOGRAPHY BY VIERA PHOTOGRAPHICS

The main living space of this La Jolla home designed by Safdie Rabines Architects has an angled wall with floor-to-ceiling glass capturing the view. Terrace has glass railings. The open-plan layout allows the owners and their son to all cook at once and easily entertain 50 guests. Sleek indoor and outdoor fireboxes burn clean, fueled by alcohol. Painting by David Dauncey.

ARCHITECTS TAAL SAFDIE AND Ricardo Rabines were challenged with a 100-foot-wide lot on a steep hillside in La Jolla. Together with a great team and design-passionate homeowners, they achieved award-winning success.

They accomplished a smart solution to the owners' requirement to consolidate all the main living spaces on one level of this 80-foot-wide home that turns its back on the street and is open to the abundance of light and ocean beyond.

"Working with educated homeowners who had a strong passion for design made the difference," says project manager Scott Maas.

"Taal gently pushed and pushed us and, sometimes, we pushed back," says the homeowner. "It worked. We wanted a simple, straightforward house that pays homage to the views. It was a very good collaboration."

An angled wall, running the length of the house, is built right up to the limits of its zoning envelope, maximizing access to ocean views, from La Jolla Cove to Blacks Beach, while accommodating the owners' floor plan.

"It was like a little jigsaw puzzle to make it fit," says Safdie. "It got down to inches, not feet, and how to work the garage into the plan."

The home essentially floats above the hill while also carefully stepping down the hillside to create useable landscape with indoor/outdoor terraces. The angled wall is comprised almost entirely of floor-to-ceiling glass sliding doors that erase the boundaries between interior and exterior. The main level is an open-floor plan with kitchen, living room and dining room blended together and oriented to the view and terrace.

Also on this level is the master suite, powder room and laundry room.

The space is seamlessly connected with continuous cabinetry, wall and ceiling panels of walnut veneer with a smoky grey-washed look. Most of the art collection is by San Diego artists, some of it displayed in integral wall spaces, framed by the design.

The lower level comprises three bedrooms, three bathrooms, an office and family room connected to the lower terrace and, again, earth, sea and sky.

The steel stair connecting the two levels is anchored by a two-story wall that is lit by a large skylight. The wall is a composition of alternating bands of stone tiles of three different finishes with subtle variations in texture and thickness. Its perfection attests to the fine craftsmanship in the building of this house.

All three of our Homes of the Year judges applauded the elegant simplicity of the design and the choice of warm interior materials and finishes. "This house meets the ground really well," says HOY judge Ted Smith. "I really appreciate the efficient foundation. The plan is simple and clear and the interior wall finishes warm up the otherwise crisp white modernism."

The homeowners, whose primary residence is in Dallas — and one of who is the Honorary Consul of Spain — were committed to saluting modern Spanish furniture design in their home. They did the interiors and furnishings with the help of two designers from Spain, CasaDesus from Barcelona and Andreu World of Valencia.

Totally enthusiastic about the whole team of San Diego architects, artists and craftsmen that worked on their house, this Dallas couple says, "Neither one of us is in the design field, but we live for design!" ♦

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More photographs follow

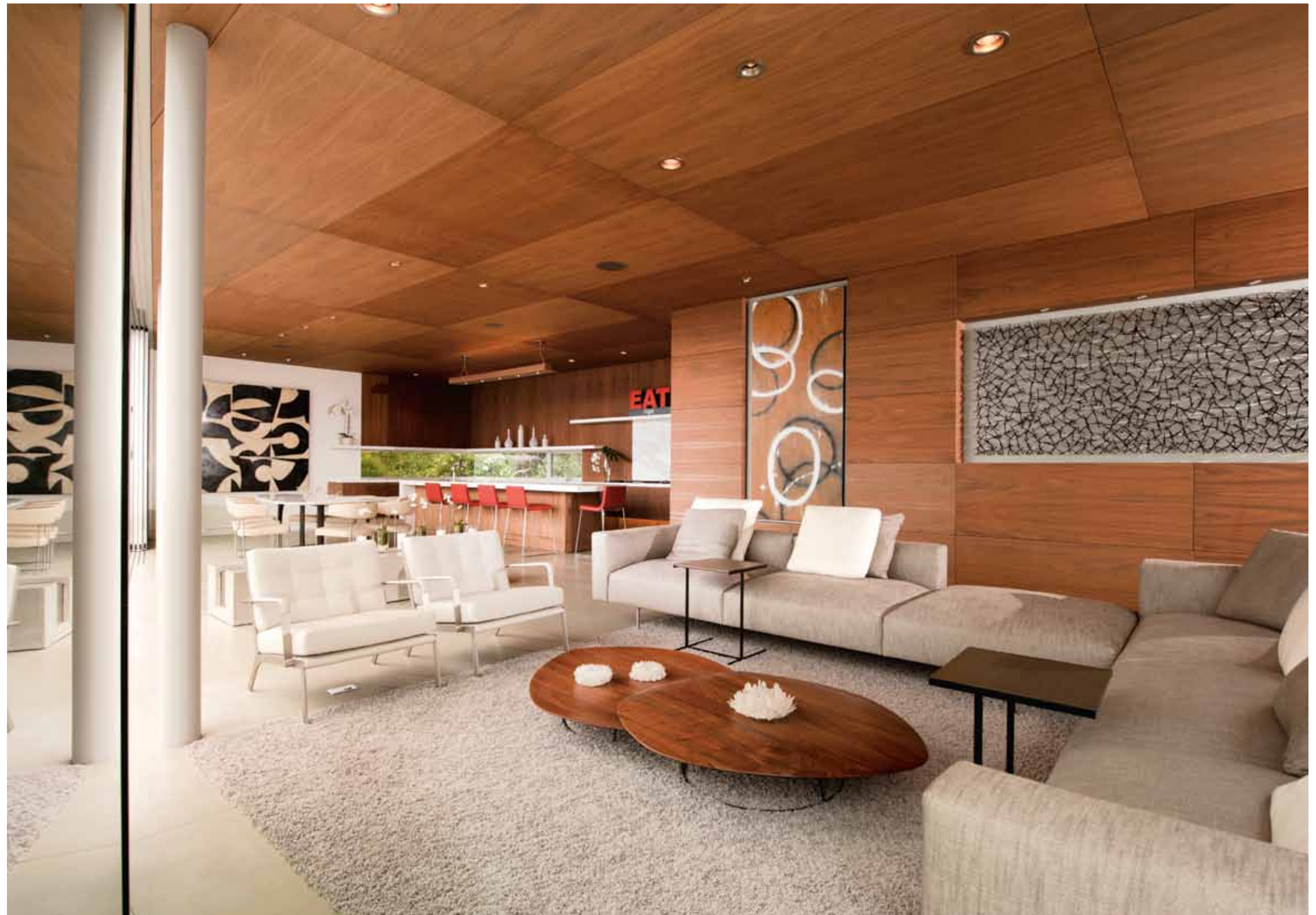
Master suite is on the main level to the left of staircase. On the lower level there are three more bedrooms and baths, family room and home office computer stations.



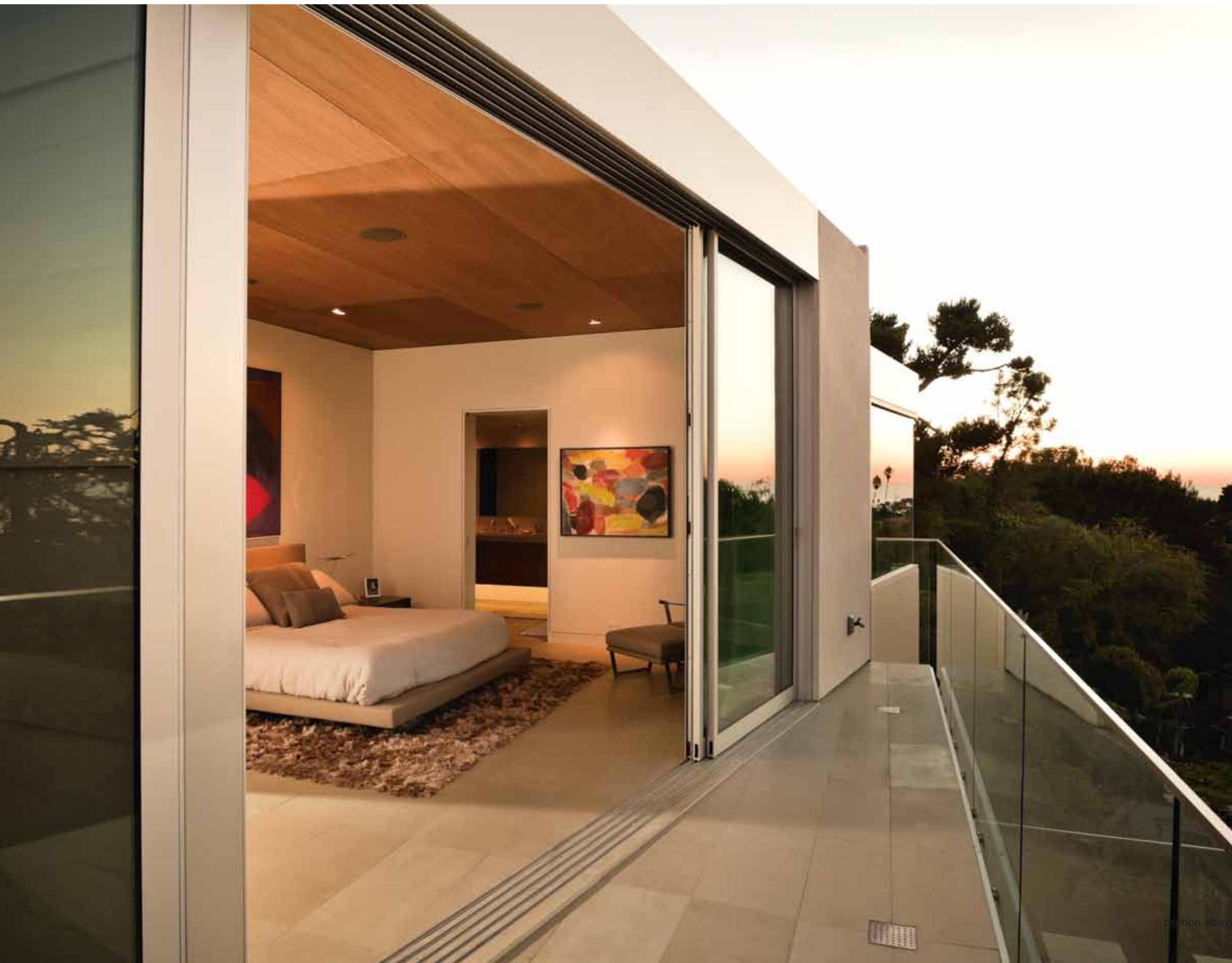
“An excellent marriage of cool and warm material with a subtle play of geometry.”



Walnut paneling, on walls and ceiling, warms the interiors and frames some of the art. Step leads to front door. Walls that aren't walnut are smooth-as-suede plaster. Charles Arnoldi painting is near entry.



Furnishings in living room of the main level are all from Spain except the coffee tables, two Ligne Roset walnut *Pebble* tables and the custom marble dining table shaped like a guitar pick. Circle painting by Larry Graeber; rectangular sculptural installation is by San Diego artist Matt Devine.



Master suite opens to the outside where the angled wall creates a narrowing of the terrace.



Staircase leading to the main level has rolled steel stairs and railing with a patina finish. The two-story wall is a composition of alternating bands of stone tile in three different textures lit by a large skylight above.

“The neutral palette complements the surrounding landscape, encouraging a sense of connection to ocean, earth and sky.”

Stairs from the street lead down to the hidden front door, a design in walnut with trellis overhead.



Exterior stone wall is a random design of varying textures and thicknesses.



The home is basically two cantilevered boxes on a steep hillside. Open to the view on the ocean side, narrow windows frame the best view from other angles. The Marcie Harris landscape will be a mixture of textures and colors from blue gray to yellow green when mature.