

DESIGN +DECOR

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SEAMLESS SERENITY

Two wildly different design aesthetics come together in a symbiotic riverside retreat.

Story by Heather Shoning | Photography by Barry Hyman Photography





To keep the home from feeling too large, architect Peter Cadoux designed it as three smaller buildings connected by hallways that provide abundant natural light throughout the home. Careful planning included low-maintenance exterior materials and natural grasses on rooftop areas that are visible from many parts of the home.

Imagine his home: gallery space for art, French chateau-inspired dark-wood furnishings, and copious plants. And now consider her design style: Scandinavian-inspired, with clean lines and no fuss. Marrying these two concepts into one home design might seem like an exercise in futility, but not for Peter Cadoux Architects of Westport, CT. Peter easily visualized the solution, designing a fresh take on a modern farmhouse that fits the riverfront location in Westport perfectly, while providing a clean backdrop to showcase the homeowners' curated decor. In the process, he assembled a team that included Diana Jonason Interior Design and HSL Building Company.

Fresh and Timeless

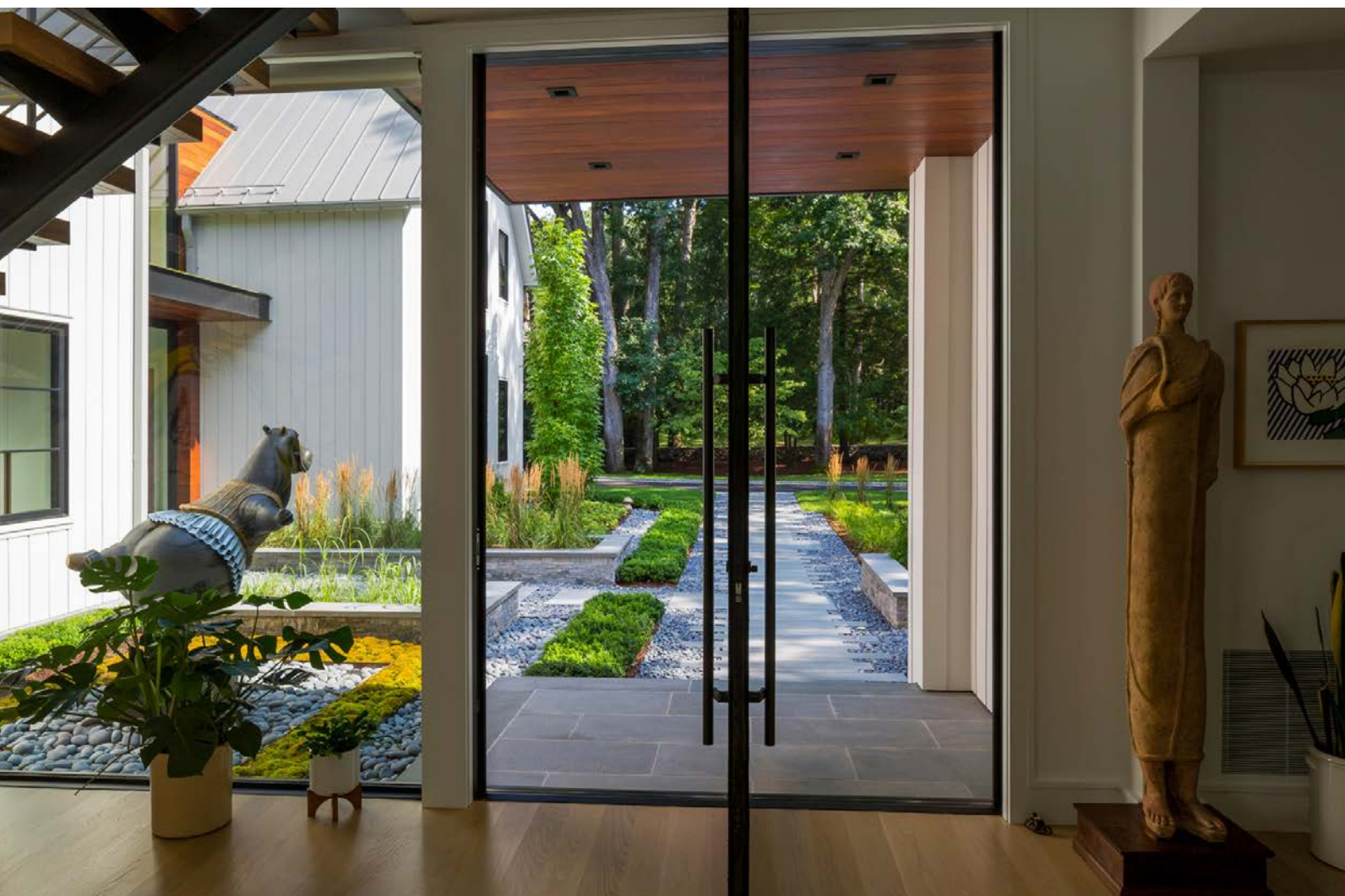
The couple sought out Peter to build a new home on the site of the husband's existing residence. For the structure, Peter created a design that looks like three separate buildings. "That provided a reduced scale to their home and a modern aesthetic that would meet their needs and complement their natural setting simultaneously," he says. The clients didn't want a big three-story home, but they did ask for five bedrooms, five bathrooms, a screening room, two home offices, a gym and a sauna. "They weren't saying 'modern farmhouse,' but that's what they were describing," Peter says. The couple also required a great deal of interior light that a more typical home would not provide.

On the exterior, many of the finishes are convincing synthetic materials geared toward luxury appeal with easy maintenance. The composite wood dormers and connectors contrast with the painted siding, metal detailing and green roofs, all combining





The front entrance to the home sets the tone for the overall design. A large sculpture greets visitors in front of an oversized pivot door.





The floating staircase allows the foyer to maintain a light, open feel. Its steel and wood construction aligns with the other finishes throughout the home.

beautifully and resulting in a contemporary farmhouse with scaled-back detailing to keep it clean and light. Inside, rich walnut and white oak floors throughout adorn the home with warm tones and neutral walls. The use of natural light and organic materials like stone and natural-look wood siding connects the home to the flora and fauna on the beautiful property.

Blending Styles

Peter designed an L-shaped, open-concept space where an office is

cleverly removed—behind barn track doors—but adjacent to the kitchen, dining and living room spaces. These, in turn, embrace the outdoor poolside dining, entertaining and seating areas. The indoor kitchen and dining areas feature a mixture of walnut and white cabinetry that beautifully contrast with each other. The oversized island has a white quartz waterfall top and a large walnut inset to differentiate the seating area with a warm, natural material. The heart of the family room centers around the large, two-sided fireplace that





The indoor/outdoor living connection is strong in the living room. A custom curved sofa by Thayer Coggin ensures beautiful outdoor views from every position. Custom wall shelving fits each piece of family art perfectly.



looks through to the backyard pond. The entire indoor formal area opens wide to the entertaining spaces in the backyard through large glass doors that expand the living area and blur the line between indoors and out.

To create warmth and depth, Peter, who custom designs all the millwork and cabinetry in his homes, brought the wood tones from the exterior inside. He specified walnut wood cabinetry, naturally dark and rich, with white panel accents that pop and contrast perfectly with the dark bronze hardware selected by interior designer Diana Jonason. The high-contrast design is consistent with walnut wood room doors, white walls and dark hardware accents peppered throughout the home. Rich, black anodized window frames set into white interior walls practically disappear visually when one looks to the view outside. The black and white custom light fixtures that Diana created enhance the theme. She brings in a touch of soft elegance and complements the design with beautiful hardware that includes brushed brass, pewter and stainless steel.

“Since the architecture was very modern, I knew the furniture and finishes would have to take that vision as





well,” says Diana, “but we had to find a way to bring in the husband’s things, too.” Creating gallery spaces for artwork was a primary goal for the design of the home, starting with the concrete pad right outside the front door, which is adorned with a ballerina hippo statue. The design team used the white walls as backdrops and created gallery spaces throughout the home, bringing order to the art and family photos in a way that fits the simple vernacular with extensive window space.

While the neutral palette allows gallery spaces to shine, however, they don’t provide quite enough color for the homeowners, so Diana added more color in the screening room. Calming and meditative deep turquoise walls and high-gloss lacquered turquoise trim set this room apart from the rest of the home. The furnishings are clean-lined, but an array of texture in the geometric-print rug and tactile wallpaper create a level of warmth.





The interior finishes and furnishings design was a collaborative effort. “The homeowner would come up with an idea, and our team would figure out how to make it happen,” says Diana. “The wife found this picture of little lights hanging over a dining table; we loved that concept, but I suggested we do it with a canopy of walnut wood that would be an accent piece on the ceiling.” The end result was exactly what the homeowners—and the design and construction team—were looking for. It adds a level of interest to the open-concept, modern dining area.

The primary suite is a serene respite: bright with large, white sloping ceilings, warm with a deep azure accent wall, and nature right outside the window wall. And, for personal health and wellness, the team designed a well-equipped gym with an attached outdoor yoga area. The sloped ceilings in the bedrooms created a challenge for determining exactly where the lighting fixtures should be hung so the electricians could run the power prior to the drywall installation. “I made scale mock-ups for every one of these light fixtures,” says Diana. “With longer-than-necessary strings attached, we could rearrange them to just the right height to get the perfect drop.”

The clients’ shared love of travel is evident in their vast collection of art. Indeed, while on a trip during construction, the homeowners spotted some sea-salt accents in a sauna, and HSL Building Company was able to source the same sea salt to create backlit accents for the homeowners’ personal sauna.

Connecting to the Outdoors

Natural light was another major factor in the design of the residence. Because of the many windows, there are vistas from the second floor, where the homeowners can



The outdoor living area allows the homeowners to connect with nature on their riverfront lot. The spa is separate from the pool so it can remain open all year long. There are several points of entry from the deck to the yard.



look out and see the rooftops of other areas of the home. Peter made sure the views were pleasant by specifying a live roof on the flat sections. He merged huge expanses of glass with wood details to bring a softness to the black and white structure. He also designed an eight-foot-tall, dual-sided fireplace that connects the indoors and outdoors. “There’s definitely a symbolic gesture toward earth, fire and water,” Peter says. The large window wall that opens to the backyard also boosts the connection to nature and leads to the pool and spa area.

“People are using their homes more than ever,” Peter notes. To ensure this couple can enjoy their outdoor space year-round, he planned the space very thoughtfully. “The spa is separate from the pool because, in New England, we close down our pools in the winter,” he says. “This way the spa stays open all winter and the masonry connecting the changing room to the spa is heated. So, whenever it snows, it never collects.”

Because the home was new construction on an existing homesite, Peter took care to document the existing trees to retain as much of the natural surroundings as possible during construction. As a result, the house looks as though it has been there for years, surrounded by mature trees. A path leading away from the outdoor living





area draws the homeowners to the river.

“We gathered all the materials we felt would be somewhat indigenous to the property, we took into consideration the view, and we created a home that would incorporate the clients’ previous life experiences and heritages,” says Peter. In end, the overall design is exactly to the wife’s taste and personal style. And her husband found himself surprised at how comfortable and warm a modern home can be. Ultimately, the finished product is reflective of both of them.

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