

throwingstones

BUILT: 2005
COST: \$500,000 (on budget)
LOCATION: Redwood City, CA

▼ View of the glass box from the backyard

EXTERIOR

GLASS BOX

The clients asked for as much natural light as possible and joked about living in a glass box. Wood ribs frame the form of this glass enclosure. A master suite sits perched above the living space below. To build a glass box in sunny California, one must be aware of the solar heat gain from the afternoon sun.

CERTIFIED WOOD

It is no secret wood comes from trees. This wood is sustainably harvested and free of formaldehyde as found in most wood. It is treated with non-toxic sealants and is left exposed for looks and to avoid the need for painting. The warmth of the wood comes through.

EXTERIOR FINISH

All natural and integrally colored stucco is durable and will never need painting. The stone base connects the house to the ground and complements the wood. The materials are shown in their honest form and reflect a desire for the natural.

INDOOR/OUTDOOR

The box blurs the line between inside and outside. Although you are sheltered, the space gives the feeling of being outdoors. The shadows of birds flying overhead project onto the floor.

BUILDING REUSE

Saving parts of the existing house is a form of recycling. The garage and entry were renovated and reused to work together as a whole. The existing shields the box from the harsh afternoon sun.

PASSIVE SOLAR

The mass of the house is oriented towards the sun, not the street. We know where the sun is at all times, and we take advantage of it.

INTERIOR DAYLIGHTING

The rooms are flooded with controlled, natural light. Not only does it reduce the need for electricity, but makes people happy too!

NON-TOXIC

All of the paints, adhesives and finishes used in the home were selected for their low or zero toxic content. Vinyl was avoided to ensure a healthy and clean indoor air quality. Even the cleaning supplies were suggested to maintain the low toxins in the home.

RECYCLED

Nearly all of the finishes and fixtures contain a high recycled content. The counters and tiles are made from recycled glass. The floor is made from wood reclaimed from an old barn. The stone is salvaged from older demolished buildings.

CLEAN FIREPLACE

Traditional fireplaces use gas or wood, requiring a chimney and emitting pollution. This EcoSmart fireplace is fuelled by Ethanol, an environmentally friendly renewable energy source. The burning results in a clean emission: Heat, Steam and Carbon Dioxide.

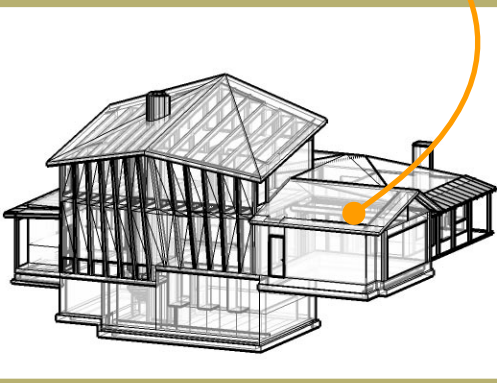
ECO-RESIN

Instead of glass, recycled/able panels made of "eco-resin" were used. Privacy is controlled by using a variety of patterns and translucent colors. The eco-resin controls heat gain, UV light and sound better than traditional glass, plus can accept textures and shapes.

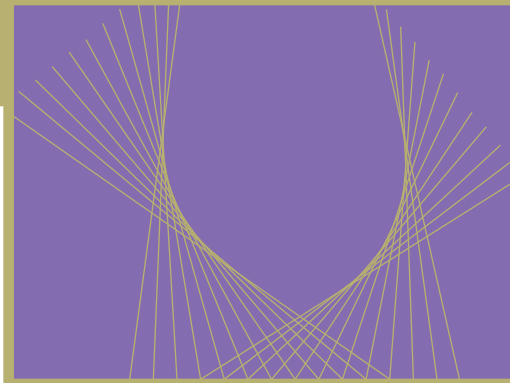
PASSIVE COOLING

High vents around the chimney & low windows at the ground capture the natural breeze to draw cool air through the house. A staircase wraps around this chimney up to the master suite. Thermal mass materials keep the building a regular temperature.

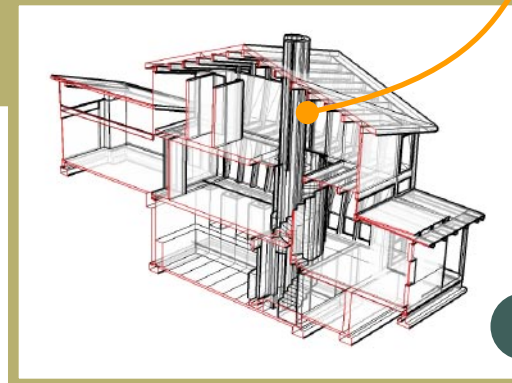
▼ Early study showing connection to existing house



▼ The curve stitching geometry of the structure



▼ Section through living room showing chimney column



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"Build me a glass box..."

Expressing the desire to live in a glass box, a dramatic, naturally lit form encloses an open floor plan and connects to the rear yard. The entire structure is oriented to the sun, not the street. A thermal mass column supports the structure, contains the fireplace and funnels cool air out. A spiral stair ties the floors together.

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