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sketch artist

EARLY OUTLINES OF AN ARCHITECT'S VISION TRANSFORM INTO A SCULPTURAL HOME ON MERCER ISLAND WITH ACCENTS OF WARM WOODS AND METALS.

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ARCHITECTURE Richard Sundberg, Sundberg Kennedy Ly-Au Young Architects
HOME BUILDER Thom Schultz and Jeffrey Wenzel, Mercer Builders
BEDROOMS 4 | **BATHROOMS** 4 | **SQUARE FEET** 3,700



Before he was hired by a Mercer Island couple to design their new home, architect Richard Sundberg was already sketching. In an interview, he listened to the potential clients' desires for privacy from adjoining houses, to better capture the view of Lake Washington, and to balance her preference for raw, edgy architecture with his favoring of refined sophistication. Sundberg's sketchpad quickly became filled with the outlines of what would become the residence, which today seems to effortlessly unite all of the above.

The site's gently sloping hillside prompted Sundberg to place the combined living, dining and kitchen areas on the second floor along with the master suite. The home's L-shaped design, with the master wing

One enters the residence over a small bridge. The copper and blackened-steel exterior façade gives way to the interior via an entry door made with African black limba veneers; the door was designed by architect Richard Sundberg and fabricated by craftsman Steve Clark.



The home's entry hallway—with shelving crafted by 12th Avenue Iron—was designed to allow exhibit space for the owners' art collection. Chinese wood panels from Kyoto Art and Antiques nestle into custom steel frames. An Abbott Pattison bronze stands on a custom pedestal beyond.



A rug from Designs By Ferdod grounds a setting in the living area that includes an occasional table from Glenn Richards and the architect's custom end table crafted by Weld and Glue Furniture Design and Fabrication. The sphere above the fireplace is by Robert Sperry.



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cantilevering over the ground on columns, also screens off the nearby next-door house, so that public and private spaces look out at the water and at each other instead of onto the neighbors. "In the study, as one looks back through the windows into the great room, it's a gorgeous perspective," the husband says, "especially at night."

Inside and out, materials define the home. Cedar siding clads the exterior of private areas such as the master suite, while the main two-story portion is adorned with copper panels, selected for their natural patina. "It's an organic material that will age into the look of an old penny," says builder Thom Schultz. "It will be stunning." Inside, Sundberg's design creates a wide-volume main space topped

The living area's fireplace nook features a Montigo firebox with a blackened-steel surround designed by Sundberg and fabricated by 12th Avenue Iron. The coffee table is another design by the architect, fabricated by Steven Heino, and the B&B Italia sofa was purchased through Diva Group.



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by a band of clerestory windows that bathe the interiors in light. But the design also carves cozier, more intimate spaces within the larger whole, such as a fireplace-wrapped corner of the living room that has a partial lower ceiling. “Maybe this is Frank Lloyd Wright whispering you need a small place to retreat to, even within a large public space,” Sundberg says.

The team made sure the black concrete floors, which run throughout the public areas, were immaculate. “The polished concrete floors look like glass,” Schultz says. “They’re incredible.” They also used blackened-steel details on elements like the living room fireplace, balanced through the

Natural light fills the kitchen through clerestory windows. Walnut cabinets also incorporate a bar area, with a black granite countertop and stools by Mario Bellini for Cassina, acquired through Diva Group. The blackened-steel backsplash was fabricated by 12th Avenue Iron; the range is by Viking.



Sundberg designed the dining room table using white ash and blackened steel; it was engineered and fabricated by Steve Clark. The chandelier, which hangs from aircraft cables, was a collaboration of Sundberg, builder Thom Schultz and Dana Kruse. The dining chairs are by Arper.



The home is nestled against a sloping hillside, with the copper-clad main body of the house giving way to a cantilevered master wing, sheathed in cedar, that blocks the view of a neighboring house. Loewen windows let in sunlight, but the configuration of the home still allows for privacy.



Next to a cedar-paneled wall continuing from the outside, the floating stair treads are made from steel that was blackened and sandblasted; they were a collaboration between the architect and the builder. Sandblasting created a soft texture but also provided traction to avoid slipping.



Above: An office was included in the master wing, separated from the bedroom by walnut screens. A Herman Miller chair pulls up to the desk, crafted by Superior Manufacturing. The armless chairs were designed by Ingmar Relling. Left: Blackened-steel shelving turns a passageway into a library.



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interior with wood, from the Douglas-fir ceiling to the walnut kitchen cabinetry. In the entry, a set of aged-wood panels is inscribed with Chinese characters telling a story of respect and love between parent and child; the panels sit in a custom blackened-steel frame whose fabrication was overseen by Schultz and his son, superintendent Jeffrey Wenzel; working together, the pair seemed to embody the story written on the panels. Sundberg conceived numerous custom furnishings, such as a wood-and-steel dining table and a glass-topped coffee table in the living area. And the interiors get pops of color from the clients' extensive art collection—mostly paintings and sculptures by Pacific Northwest artists, as well as the husband's mother, an acclaimed sculptor from Chicago.



French limestone, installed by Lambert Tile & Stone, envelops the master bath. Sundberg designed the shower enclosure, from Distinctive Glass, and the cabinetry in the closet beyond, fabricated by Superior Manufacturing. The tub is by Zuma Collection.



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The master suite—which includes the bedroom and adjoining office bathed in walnut and the spa-like bathroom encased in limestone and eucalyptus cabinetry—provides a softer retreat. “The wing lends a soothing feeling in contrast to the black concrete and granite of the public spaces,” the architect explains. “It’s about thinking about where you are during the course of the day and how we can make you feel more calm or comfortable.”

Although it’s hard to top the beauty of the picturesque waterside view, the home itself is a piece of art. “Richard was able to take our personalities and make this work,” the wife says. “There is that cutting edge, but it’s elegant and warm. Richard is very much an artist.” **L**

The master bedroom was designed as a retreat from the rest of the house. A Paul Horiuchi collage on an antique Japanese screen, from Woodside / Braseth Gallery, adds an artful element above the bed fabricated by Rom Lee Designs. Kelvin LED lamps from Flos offer reading light.



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