

residential architect

hanley wood

MAY 2007

07

residential architect
design awards

brian johnsen and
sebastian schmaling
are this year's standouts
with camouflage house



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custom / more than 3,500 square feet
merit

oshry residence, bel air, calif.

studio pali fekete architects (spf:a)

culver city, calif.



What impressed the judges most about this house was the way Zoltan E. Pali, FAIA, used public and private space to break up its long bar shape. The two linear blocks were Pali's response to the site's unstable soils and to prevailing canyon views. Other than removing 90 feet of dirt, "the only way to get to structurally supported soil was with a system of piles spanned by concrete-grade beams," he says.

The spaces unfold along the property's eastern edge. On the first floor, an open courtyard separates the garage, utility area, and maid's quarters from the living spaces. The airy second floor holds the master bedroom and bath and, across the glass bridge, a study and second bedroom suite. "You experience the views when you're moving through the house, as opposed to in just one room," Pali explains.

The judges admired the way the design provides "all the benefits of shading without impeding the view."—*c.w.*

principal in charge / project architect: Zoltan E. Pali, FAIA, Studio Pali Fekete architects (SPF:a); **developer:** Scott Oshry, Los Angeles; **general contractor:** Richard Loring, Archetype, Beverly Hills, Calif.; **landscape architect:** Jeff Feldman, Blue Door Gardens, Rolling Hills Estate, Calif.; **project size:** 5,000 square feet; **site size:** 0.5 acre; **construction cost:** \$250 per square foot; **photography:** John Edward Linden. See page 118 for product information.



Pali designed an indoor-outdoor house that maximizes canyon views (top). The exterior walls are made of limestone on the lower portion and are finished with smooth plaster on top. Limestone louvers create light shelves that let in winter sun. Inside, first-floor living spaces float free of the perimeter walls.

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Zoltan E. Pali, FAIA, and Judit Méda

Fekete, LEED AP, developed and

designed the building of their dreams.

And once they built it, people came. The

structure contains their new offices, the

self-curated Museum of Design Art and

Architecture, a restaurant, and seven live/

work lofts (one of which the architectural

couple occupies). These energetic spaces

helped spawn a new neighborhood

called the Culver City Arts District,

and what once was a “no man’s land

is now a destination,” Fekete says.

Not only does the building serve as a



Photos: John Edward Linden

venue for public events such as town hall meetings and architecture-related lectures and exhibitions, it’s also been designated an “Architecture as Art” landmark by the Culver City government. The handsome three-

dimensional façade, which pays homage to Culver City’s Art Deco heritage, serves a practical function too. “The air gap lets hot air escape instead of coming into the building,” Pali explains.

The building’s public face benefits the office culture as well.

Pali likes that “the staff gets exposure to things not usually experienced in an architecture office.” Visitors pass through the office to reach exhibitions, for example, and the museum doubles as a lively conference room for the firm. Owning the building has connected the architects to the community and advanced their personal goal of bringing together people and objects that exemplify what Pali calls the “synergy between architecture and art.”—*shelley d. hutchins*

