

Triangle

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# HOMIE

DESIGN & DECOR®



*Art* &  
architecture

*Gallery Crawl:*  
A tour of local exhibitions  
Explore the ins and outs of  
a modern minimalist home



A two-car carport fronts the property and frames a large translucent screen reminiscent of a traditional picture window, concealing the outdoor lap pool behind it. The covered entry porch is tucked off to the side under a plantation-style colonnade. The exterior cladding is hand-troweled Charleston Green stucco atop a cast-in-place concrete base.



# *Future* PERFECT

*Award-winning local architect  
designs the modern minimalist  
house of his client's dreams.*

By Elizabeth Lincicome  
Photography by Mark Herboth

The architectural landscape in Raleigh may lean to the traditional, but the modern architecture presence is a burgeoning market with distinguished roots. So when an insurance executive was looking to find a modern, minimalist, and sustainable house to call his own, he knew just who to call.

The homeowner first met John Reese, architect and founder of REESE ATELIER IGNITE, when he was looking into buying a raw unit in downtown Raleigh's Hudson condominiums. Reese, who was working at Clearscapes, PA at the time, was the lead architect behind the Hudson. Candidly, he explained to the potential buyer that the cost of doing an interior upfit to any unit could be well over the price of building a new home from the ground up.

As fate would have it, the homeowner noticed a rundown rental property off Banbury Road. Upon showing it to Reese, the architect says he convinced him it was the perfect spot for the modern, minimalist-style home he envisioned. "While I'm normally not a fan of tearing down houses, I felt a new home would be much more sustainable in the long run," Reese says.

"This home is minimalist, and when something is minimalist it has to be crafted to be mistake-free," Reese says. "One of the

more important things about this house is that the details are celebrated. Because there is no trim to cover up a lack of craft, the joints of the home are also part of the details."

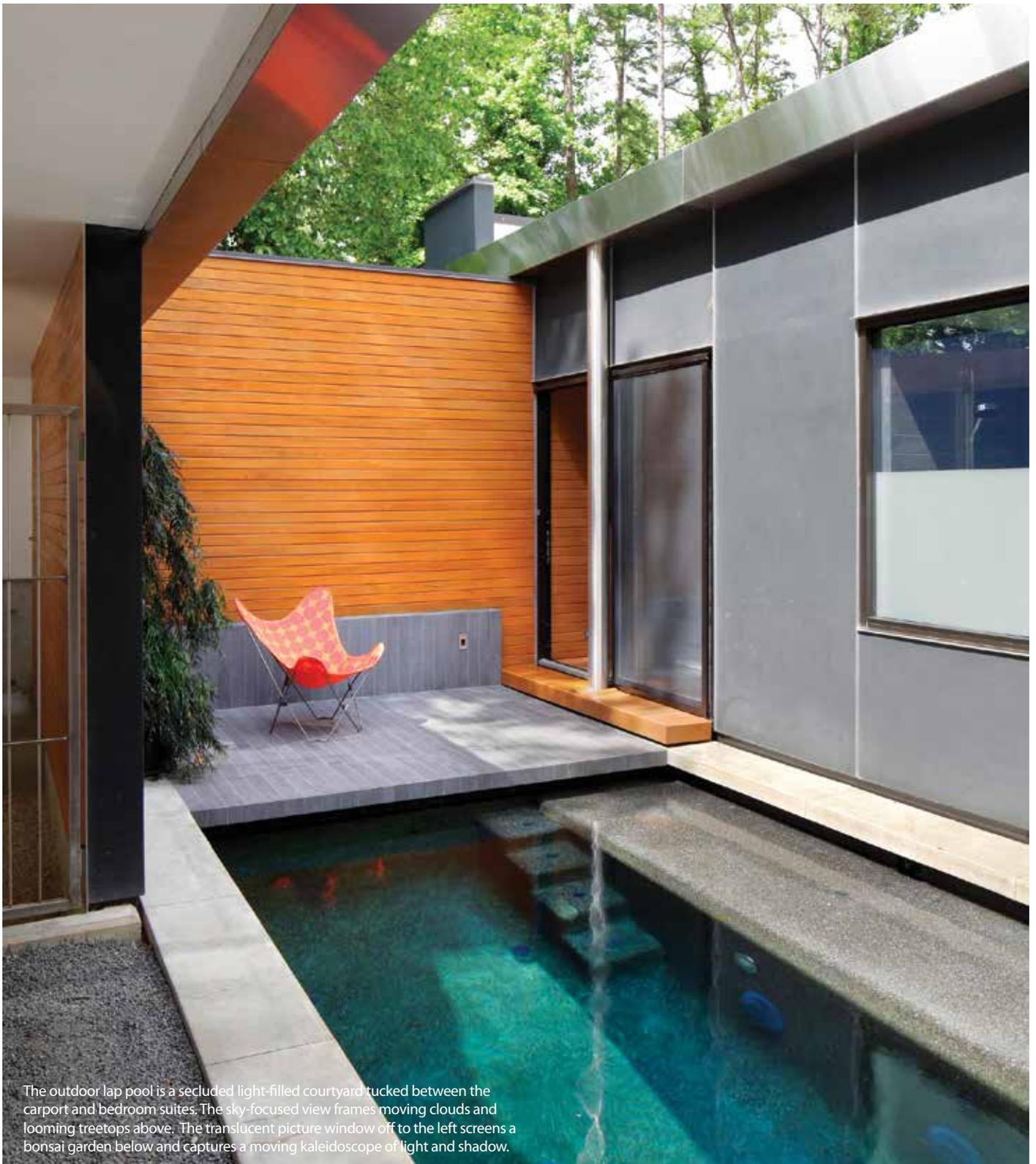
Will Alphin of Rebuild, formerly with Alphin Design Build, was in charge of the construction. "I knew I needed a very high-quality contractor to complete the construction of this highly complex design," Reese says.

The private residence stands out in this suburban neighborhood full of traditional, mid-century dwellings that are nestled amid old growth pine and undulating earth.



*Top:* The entrance hall is a transitional space that blends exterior and interior materials. The frame for the glass wall is embedded flush with the cypress wood above and the concrete floor below. Ambient southern light illuminates the space and is borrowed by other spaces to balance the change in daylight from east to west.

*Bottom:* A wall of glass that opens up to a covered outdoor court highlights the view from the main living hall. Two pairs of sliding doors allow the interior space to extend into the landscape. Two skylights above the kitchen provide plenty of natural light for cooking and other activities while the dropped ceiling refracts the harsh west sun and washes the surface of the recessed wall pockets.



The outdoor lap pool is a secluded light-filled courtyard tucked between the carport and bedroom suites. The sky-focused view frames moving clouds and looming treetops above. The translucent picture window off to the left screens a bonsai garden below and captures a moving kaleidoscope of light and shadow.

Completed in 2007, the home took a year to build and includes 2,508 square feet of heated space in addition to 1,825 square feet of open-air outdoor space.

The modern entryway welcomes a clear transition from exterior to interior spaces, which include a den-living-kitchen area, two master suites, and a home office. These are integrated with an open-air exterior complete with a private court, lap pool,

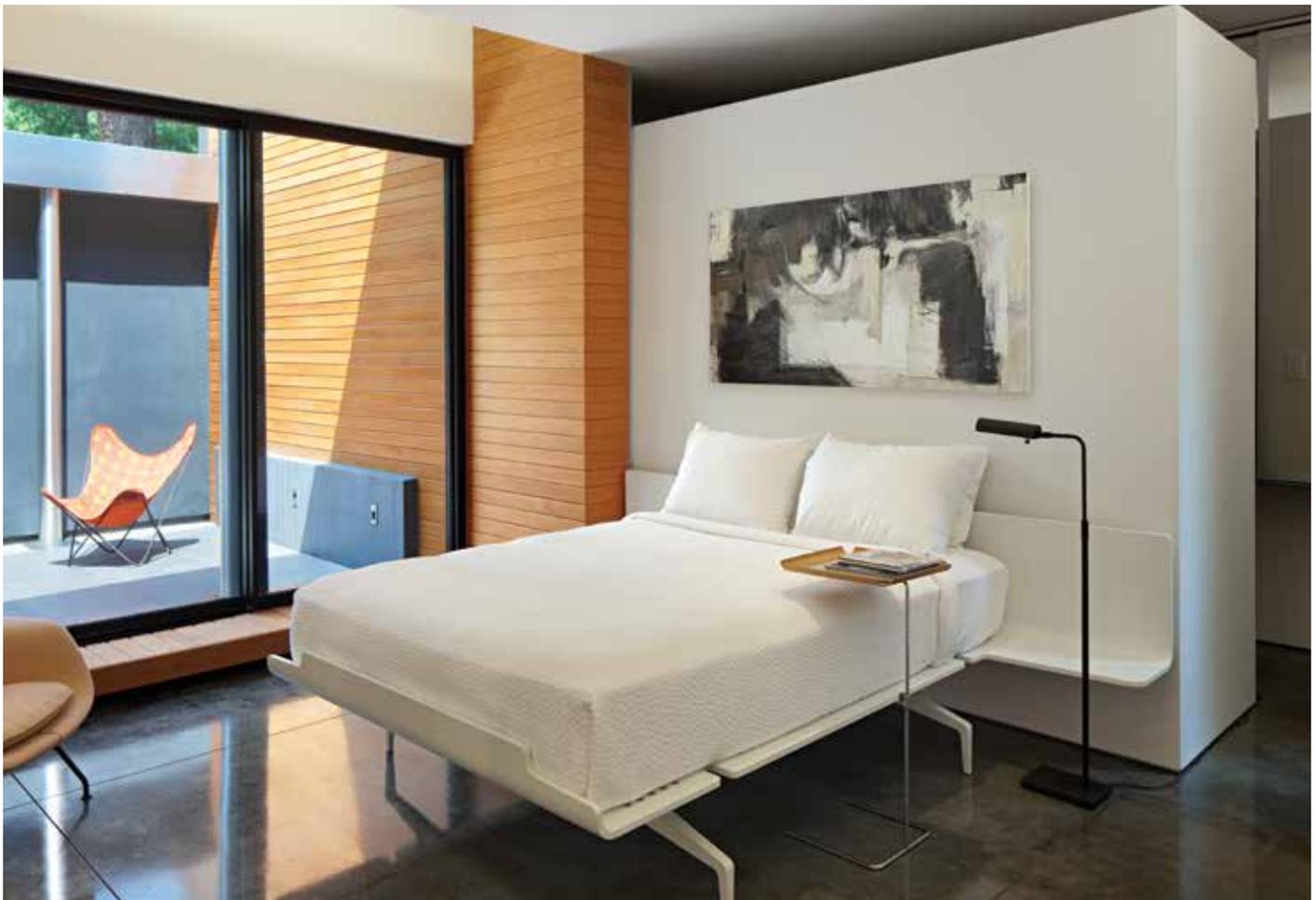
and carport. “The design is rigorous, yet kinetic in its spatial sequence, contrasting relationships and careful use of controlled daylight,” Reese says.

The lot sits across the street from a portion of the heavily protected Greenway Park, and the backyard is full of native trees. But perhaps most importantly, the contour of the land provided the perfect opportunity to create various levels

throughout the house by following the natural slope of the land. “This house is a complete response to its context,” Reese says. “It grabs hold of the land.”

Certain features and elements make the house truly unique. For example, instead of using two-by-fours, the home was built using structural insulated panels, which Reese described as “the ice cream sandwich” of insulation. He says construction was quite the spectacle with the panels arriving on huge trucks before being hoisted by cranes. Other materials include cast-in-place concrete, hand-troweled and color-integrated Charleston-Green stucco, commercial storefront glazing, and polycarbonate roof panels.

The floors are heated through a geothermal well system; rainwater is collected through an underground cistern; even





the chrysanthemums have a dedicated misting system.

Reese says he is guided by the late American architect Louis Kahn's design philosophy. "You emphasize the big picture, you prioritize the details, and you let the middle work itself out." Kahn's style was monumental and monolithic, and he was famous for his meticulously built works and heavy buildings that didn't conceal their weight, materials, or how they were assembled.

Reese was recognized for his astonishing work on this incredible house when, in 2012, he was awarded the inaugural George Matsumoto Prize. The award is North Carolina's highest honor for modernist residential architecture and features \$3,500 in awards, a blue-ribbon jury of internationally-known architects, critics, and designers, and online public voting. North Carolina Modernist Houses (NCMH) created the prize in honor of Matsumoto, one of the founding faculty members of North Carolina State University's College of Design, where Reese serves as an adjunct professor of architecture and visiting critic. The accolade showcases exceptional modernist architects.

Reese says that at the end of the day his ultimate goal is to implement resilient design concepts while building and maintaining long-term relationships with clients, colleagues, and communities. "I run a small operation that mainly focuses on residential design. But to be honest, I choose work based on the client rather than the project itself. For me, the personal connection is the most important aspect of anything I take on." ♦

*Opposite Top:* Two private bathrooms off each master suite offer spa-like bathing experiences with luxurious body-spray showers with expansive views to the lap pool courtyard. This bath provides a platform-like soaking tub, while custom lavatories, illuminated mirror cabinets, and material palettes are distinct in both layout and design.

*Opposite Bottom and Left:* Two ultra-sleek and minimalist bedrooms are accessible through a pair of hallways off the main foyer and study. Sliding glass doors lead to a private lap pool courtyard. Cypress wood siding weaves through the interior and exterior spaces.

Beautiful custom-designed interior transoms add architectural interest throughout the living room. The homeowner stitched the needlepoint on the piano bench using colors selected by interior designer Claudia Beck.





# CITY *Chic*

*A sophisticated palette of blues and greens turns  
a neighborhood condo into a relaxing home sweet home.*

By Dana W. Todd  
Photography by Smith Hardy



**H**elen Aman stumbled upon Fairview Row, a set of condominiums constructed in the heart of the historic Hayes Barton neighborhood in Five Points, quite by accident. As was her custom, one day she walked to nearby shops to complete her daily errands in the neighborhood where she and her husband, Gene, lived in a single-family residence. Across the street from one of her retail stops, marketing literature about a new construction project not yet underway piqued her interest.

The project consisted of a set of three historically

respectful buildings that together contained a total of fourteen condominiums. Although the couple said they would never consider living in a condo, Fairview Row caught their attention with the way it seamlessly blended with the historical architecture of nearby homes. As empty nesters, they were looking for a simpler lifestyle but wanted to keep close to friends and favorite entertainment spots in their current neighborhood. A condo at Fairview Row fit the bill, and they purchased one before it was even under construction.

“There is no yard work at Fairview Row,” Aman says. “I can walk to the dry cleaners, the bank, post office, and our favorite



*Left:* Taking square footage from a guest bedroom elongated the living room. Three windows open onto the terrace for fresh air.

*Top:* A mirrored vanity opens up the powder room while Thibaut wallcovering coordinates beautifully with the linen-colored quartz countertop.

restaurant, just like I have always done. It's a little community here."

Beacon Street Development, a firm that specializes in infill development and who constructed the Fairview Row project, purchased three older homes that were being used as shops on the outskirts of Hayes Barton. With the support of the neighborhood, the firm removed those homes and built three large traditional Fairview Row buildings that complement the existing architectural tone of the neighborhood.

"We found a great street and offered something that didn't exist," Jim Wiley says, president of Beacon Street. "We designed Fairview Row as if we were designing a single-family home, not an

abbreviated version of one."

Unlike larger metropolitan areas, Raleigh was built as a planned community with a small downtown and one inner ring of suburban residences. Dense housing complexes, such as Fairview Row, were never planned or built. However, with Raleigh's current urban growth, transitional housing such as condominiums is attractive to those who wish for a more pedestrian lifestyle and daily community engagement on the street with neighbors.

Even though the Aman family never planned to live in a condo, the charm of a community of like-minded neighbors living in proximity, along with the extra conveniences like designated off-street parking, central elevator, climate-controlled storage spaces, and security appealed to them. And since Beacon Street Development engineered the buildings with commercial-grade concrete and steel, there is as much



privacy and serenity as you would have in a detached single-family home.

Since the homeowners purchased the Fairview Row condo while it was still under construction, their interior designer, Claudia Beck of Claudia Beck Interiors, was able to customize the space for how the family lives, removing walls to allow an open flow suitable for entertaining. She scaled back the size of the guest bedroom and added the square footage to the living room. The master bathroom features his-and-hers sinks with a walk-in shower between them. By rearranging spaces, Beck designed a home in which the family feels the coziness of a

single-family dwelling while maintaining the Aman's mandate of a non-condo look or feel.

As a starting point for the interior design, Beck set the tone for a restful environment by choosing a color palette of aqua, mineral green, and cream, which she used throughout the space to unify the rooms. She added a touch of the homeowners' personality by integrating Aman's needlepoint artistry into several rooms, even to the point of shopping and choosing the embroidery yarn in the correct colorways for the piano bench in the living room and pillows on the den sofa. The rooms are traditional but light and bright as the homeowners requested.



“The color palette is one of the most important parts of this design,” Beck says. “Also important are the inclusion of beautiful fabrics and the proper proportion, balance, and scale in every room.”

“My favorite room is the living room, which boasts a French fireplace and white upholstery punctuated by aqua and green silk fabrics. A beautiful silver leaf Friedman Brothers mirror over the mantle hangs between two specially commissioned works of art.”

Coastal artwork is reminiscent of the homeowners’ love of water, and the coastal theme is represented in paintings

*Top Left:* Custom-designed interior transom windows throughout the condo mimic the exterior transoms on the building. The wallcovering is a Scalamandre damask, and the dining chairs are upholstered in a Brunschwig & Fils aqua stripe silk. Sunbrella fabric on the side chairs is just right for the grandchildren.

*Top Right:* The kitchen is highlighted by a granite island with a decorative ogee edge and custom corner corbels.

*Bottom Right:* A sisal and jute chevron carpet pattern is a practical addition to the sunroom. Aqua and white ticking fabric covers the sofa and two club chairs. Remote-controlled shades disappear behind mock fabric valances when not in use but block the rays during the warmer months.



The same aqua shade used throughout the home suddenly takes a warm and comforting turn in the family room when it is paired with taupe. Grasscloth wallcovering surrounds comfortable furniture including the leather chairs from Hancock & Moore. An ottoman is upholstered in Cowtan & Tout animal print.





*Top:* Coastal artwork in the master bedroom creates a restful reprieve. A single Schumacher linen damask fabric is used throughout the room and on the bed, which is flanked by two French chests topped with marble.

*Right:* Helen Aman's side of the master bathroom is accented with custom drapery made from Schumacher Coin Silk Plaid and a Visual Comfort crystal chandelier and coordinating sconces.

throughout the residence. It is a happy reminder of the couple's upbringing on the eastern North Carolina coast and is a subject that meshes well with the aqua and light green color scheme.

"The colors were new to me, but I was ready to go for it," Aman says. "In the past, I have always used traditional reds and greens. The pastels in this home are restful yet upbeat. I don't care for the darkness. There are no dark areas in this house."

The open layout and colors make this a perfect home for entertaining, which the Amans do frequently. They are able to invite those friends who make up their community – the ones they see each day walking the neighborhood streets, just steps outside their home sweet home. ♦

