

Texas Architect

Texas Society of Architects The Voice for Texas Architecture



Texas Architect

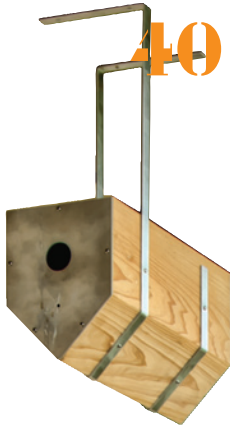
Articles	
5	Front & Center
6	Contributors
8	Of Note
11	Calendar
14	Recognition
19	Paperwork
55	Portfolio Restaurants
60	In Between ... with Clovis Heimsath, FAIA <i>Lawrence Connolly, AIA</i>
65	Trends and Marketplace
68	The Bike Shed <i>Canan Yetman</i>

Features	
22	Dwelling: To Have or to Be <i>Joe Self, AIA</i>
24	Dot's Place <i>Larry Paul Fuller</i>
30 cover story	Modesty is a Virtue <i>Ben Koush, AIA</i>
36	Simple Serendipity <i>Eurico R. Francisco, AIA</i>
40	A Triangle and A Tree <i>Catherine Gavin</i>
46	Place Matters <i>Michael Friebele, Assoc. AIA</i>

More Online
texasarchitects.org
Coy Talley on the Landscape Design of the Perot Museum
Ray Bailey (1942– 2012)
2013 Texas Society of Architects Leadership Elected

63
01

Residential Design



In Between



This issue on Residential Design explores the multiple dimensions of the term “dwelling.” As introduced in the opening essay, there is an art to dwelling and a magic to certain spaces within a home. Architects are a resource for the creation of these spaces and it is their understanding of the clients’ desires that can ultimately result in these unique elements or resting points in a house.

The following articles illustrate houses that connect with their sites and respond to the specific lifestyles of the individual homeowners. They represent a diversity of design solutions for the common quest of creating a home.

Residential Design

22

Dwelling: To Have or to Be

Joe Self, AIA

24

Dot’s Place

Dot Brandt House, Dallas

Michael Malone Architects

Larry Paul Fuller

30

Modesty is a Virtue

The Fisher Street House, Houston

Donna Kacmar, FAIA

Ben Koush

36

Simple Serendipity

Wildwood Pool House, Dallas

Upchurch Architects

Eurico R. Francisco, AIA

40

A Triangle and A Tree

64 Vanguard Way, Dallas

Max Levy Architect

Catherine Gavin

46

Place Matters

Gurley Place at Jubilee Park, Dallas

buildingcommunityWORKSHOP

Michael Friebele, Assoc. AIA



Dot's Place

by Larry Paul Fuller

Project Dot Brandt House, Dallas

Client Dot Brandt

Architect Michael Malone Architects

Design team Michael Malone, AIA; Bob Borson, AIA; Richard Smith, AIA

Photographer Steven Vaughan



For Dot Brandt and her architect, the enthralling pathway to a custom house was very much in sync with the language of Charles Moore, Gerald Allen, and Donlyn Lyndon in their book, *The Place of Houses*: “You bind the goods and trappings of your life together with your dreams to make a place that is uniquely your own.”

The odyssey began, prosaically enough, after Michael Malone, AIA, planted the obligatory jobsite sign at one of his residential projects near Dot’s former home in Dallas’ affluent Preston Hollow. Observing the house under construction, Dot was motivated to call the number on the sign in pursuit of a similar new house for herself. During their first meeting at Malone’s office, the connection was immediate. Talk of budgets and administrative matters soon gave way to the sharing of aspirations — dreams — for the house. And so began a very rewarding client engagement that would lead to a great house and, even more cherished, a great friendship.

Talk of budgets and administrative matters soon gave way to the sharing of aspirations — dreams — for the house.

In Malone’s own book, *The Architect’s Guide to Residential Design*, he refers to his clients as “patrons” who bring their own preconceptions to the table but who also have “taken a leap with me and ... allowed me latitude to explore ideas that I thought were important.” It is this adventurous dynamic between client and architect — venturing into unexplored realms together — that Malone finds so gratifying.

As a prolific and accomplished artist, with strong opinions about all things visual, Dot Brandt brought with her no shortage of ideas. But she found during the design process that she and Michael usually saw things the same way, at least eventually. “I can push and he can push,” she says.



Previous spread *A welcoming glass-walled entry is the exception on the otherwise mostly opaque elevations viewed from the street. The stone mass of the garage, at left, helps define an informal entry court. As throughout the house, the den makes generous accommodation for art.*

Left *Beginning with the living room at left, all the main spaces are open to the central rear courtyard.*

Facing page *Courtyard photo and section rendering show the “legs” of the U-shaped plan — the second-level studio above the bedroom at right, and the extra-height entry and living room at left. The generous use of clerestory windows extends to the stair that leads to the studio.*

“So I think of it as pushing together.” And the whole process was smoother than it might have been because the basic contours of the program were clear from the very beginning. Dot was a single, socially active, and sophisticated woman with three grown sons who was now living alone with her two dogs — a Rottweiler and a Great Dane. She no longer needed the 10,000-sf house where she had reared her boys, so she had acquired a nearby lot for a new home that would be tailored to support her life as an artist, as a frequent host to large gatherings of family and friends, and as an owner of very energetic large dogs.

Programmatically, Dot’s requirements translated into several types of space for well-defined functions:

- She would need a large studio space to facilitate a very active artistic life, including painting, weaving, photography, jewelry-making, and sculpture. “And I like room to squint at my work-in-progress from a distance,” Dot says.
- She would need kitchen and dining accommodations to facilitate large or small gatherings ranging from casual to more formal. “We all know that guests usually congregate in the kitchen,” Michael says. “So we embraced that reality by conceiving of a generous kitchen and bar as the heart of the house.”
- In addition to her own bedroom — and in defiance of local real estate protocol — Dot would require only one guest bedroom. “I just didn’t need all that extra space,” she says. “If there’s an overflow of guests, there’s a hotel just down the road. And that works real well.” (She is also quick to point out that a new owner could easily find spaces to convert into bedrooms if desired.)

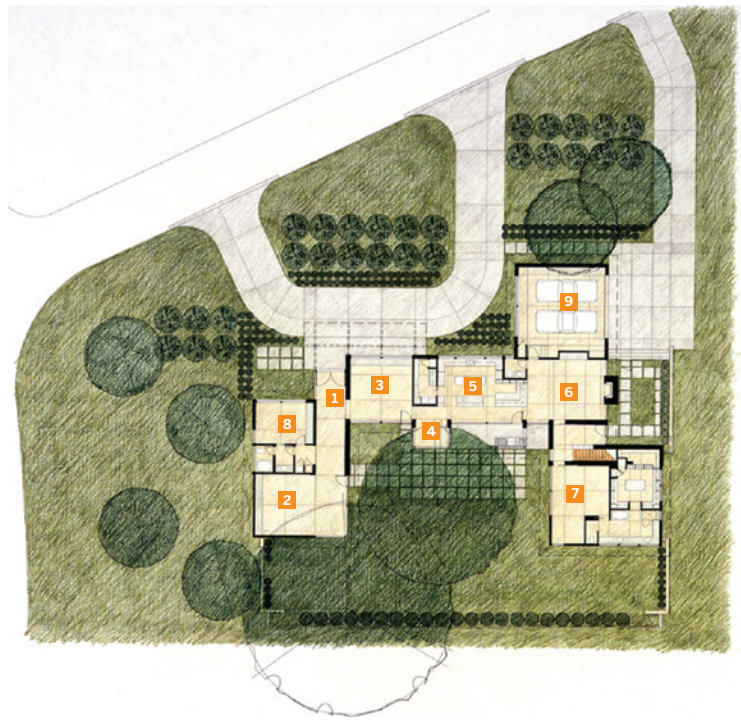
Approaching the house from the street, the entry is clearly discernable as a glass-box foyer that protrudes — lantern-like at night — above the typical roof height.

- Finally, in addition to a generous enclosed garage, Dot wanted a separate living room scaled to accommodate a piano and an existing arrangement of prized furniture. But beyond their list of spaces and functions, Dot and Michael could also envision an overarching aesthetic that seemed right: clean and contemporary forms; light-filled spaces with lots of glass; generous, gallery-like and carefully lit wall space and neutral finishes for the display of Dot’s art; and utilitarian materials that could endure the high levels of vulnerability posed by large dogs who would have the run of the house (along with two exotic Bengal cats).

Given the specifics of Dot’s corner lot, whose original structure had been demolished, the desired plan shape for the house revealed itself clearly. Because of the location of highly valued mature oak trees on the property and the desire to respect their broad canopies, “we saw a U-shaped plan from the get-go,” Dot recalls. So it was that the central house with its two wings formed a courtyard around the primary magnificent oak and, accordingly, the private side of the house became a series of glass window walls (constructed of mill-finish aluminum storefront) to celebrate the outward views and to bring the outside in. This format was conceived in stark



SECTION LOOKING EAST



- FIRST FLOOR AND
SITE PLAN**
- 1 ENTRY
 - 2 LIVING
 - 3 DINING
 - 4 BREAKFAST
 - 5 KITCHEN
 - 6 DEN
 - 7 MASTER SUITE
 - 8 BEDROOM
 - 9 GARAGE

Right *The formal dining room — between the foyer and the kitchen area — seats 16 guests at two tables of eight.*

Facing page *Recognizing the reality that guests tend to congregate in the kitchen, a continuous perimeter counter provides a hospitality zone while meals are being prepared. A ribbon window facing the driveway allows Dot to monitor arrivals.*



contrast to the street side of the house, which is mostly solid mass punctuated by clerestory windows for security and privacy.

In keeping with the crisp, minimalist forms and flat roofs of the design that was emerging, Michael initially saw the house being constructed of concrete block — smooth, tautly modular, utilitarian, and suitably nontraditional for the dwelling place of an artist. But the use of limestone instead was promoted by one of Dot's acquaintances in the stone business, and that became the material of choice. The result is a pleasing juxtaposition of rough natural stone surfaces in a crisp context of white sheetrock, pet-friendly concrete floors, broad expanses of glass, and exterior painted steel panels. Michael did insist, however, that the limestone be kept vertically

As heart of the house, an expansive kitchen area is bounded by a counter at which 10 guests can sit comfortably with cocktails while food preparation is under way.

modular by cutting each variable-length stone a consistent eight inches high.

The experience of moving through the spaces defined by the U-shaped plan is a pleasant process of discovery. Approaching the house from the street, the entry is clearly discernable as a glass-box foyer that protrudes — lantern-like at night — above the typical roof height. Passing the guestroom discretely tucked away to the right, one proceeds through the

foyer-as-gallery space to the high-ceilinged living room, with its grand piano and large-scale art on generous walls.

Turning left from the entry, moving through the base of the U, the progression is through a formal dining room (with the less formal touch of two tables instead of one) and on into the kitchen as heart of the house. Here, Dot insisted on replicating a configuration from her ranch in Montana that provides an expansive kitchen area bounded by a counter at which 10 guests can sit comfortably with cocktails while food preparation is under way. Connected to the kitchen, and separated only by the bar, is the den with its fireplace and entertainment center.

The last leg of the U surrounding the courtyard is formed by the master suite with its studio above, the only upper-level room of the house. The bedroom area is suitably scaled for one person, although it is big enough to provide a zone for sleeping and one for sitting to enjoy views of the courtyard. Also included in the suite is a large bath with dressing area and two seasonal closets.

The second level-studio above, accessed by its own private foyer and stair, marks the point on the tour when Dot becomes most animated, for it is here that her calling as an artist is answered day by day. With continuous windows running around the perimeter on four sides, the room has the feel of a large tree house with views of leaves and dappled light. Scattered all around are Dot's projects in progress — a large easel with partially completed canvas, a set-up for scanning painted images on aluminum, a pile of stones to be crafted into jewelry. French doors open to access a large



terrace overlooking the courtyard below that is seemingly a superior venue for a cocktail or fine glass of red. (The new focal point of the courtyard is a pool and sculptural fountain installed to replace the iconic red oak that was lost to recent summer heat).

Dot loves essentially everything about the house that she and Michael created in sweet collaboration. “We took a lot of measurements, so we knew the sizes of the furniture and things we were dealing with, and we scaled the house accordingly,” she says. “And I love bringing the stone inside, and the easy concrete floors. I love the textures and all the glass. And it’s so utterly satisfying to have something that is so right for your life ... that fits you like a glove ... and to see how simple it is to go do this or go do that ... and it flows so nicely because everything is where it needs to be and people can overflow to the outside. It works like it was supposed to.”

Michael recently told Dot something about her house that she had never known before: the dimensions of the living room make it a perfect golden section, meaning the rectangle of the footprint and the vertical cross-section of the room are identical. Dot immediately agreed that those kinds of compositional things matter and she can sense the fact that everything about her house is so carefully proportioned. But ask her what matters most about the house — ask her why she loves it so much — and she won’t lead with proportions or materials or artful design. “This house is me,” she will say. “It’s me.”

Larry Paul Fuller is a recent guest editor of *Texas Architect* and a principal of fd2s inc., a wayfinding consultancy in Austin.



Contractor FBE Construction

Consultants **STRUCTURAL:** Stenstrom Schneider

Resources **CONCRETE MATERIALS:** Ramer Concrete; **CONCRETE INTERIOR FLOORS:** North Texas Bomanite dba Texas Bomanite; **LIMESTONE:** Contractor’s Stone Supply; **SLATE:** National Stone; **FIRE-PLACES:** Isokern of Texas; **STRUCTURAL STEEL:** Metroplex Fabrication & Erection; **METAL WALL/FASCIA PANELS:** Hipwell Sheetmetal; **PREFABRICATED WOOD TRUSSES:** Associated Truss & Lumber; **ARCHITECTURAL WOODWORK/WOOD DOORS:** SAW Custom Millwork; **MEMBRANE ROOFING:** Heritage One Roofing; **ENTRANCES/GLAZE CURTAINWALL/TUB AND SHOWER ENCLOSURES:** Texas Glass Contracting; **WINDOW TREATMENTS:** Mechoshade; **DESIGN SOFTWARE:** DC CADD