



M

aterial

Connection

A renowned architect transforms a 1920s home, drawing upon a palette of plywood and glass for dramatic effect.

Text by Elaine Louie
Photos by John Horner

By reimagining a 1920s-style home in the heart of Los Angeles, architect John Horner has created a modern living space that is both functional and visually striking. The home features a complex, geometric wooden slat structure that covers the ceiling and walls, creating a dramatic and dynamic atmosphere. The use of plywood and glass adds to the modern aesthetic, while the overall design remains rooted in the architectural traditions of the 1920s.

The result is a home that is both modern and timeless, a perfect blend of old and new. The dramatic lighting and the use of natural materials create a warm and inviting atmosphere, making this home a true masterpiece of modern architecture.

At first appearance, with its modest windows and great expanse of brick, it resembles four-story homes dating to the 1920s in the Rock Creek neighborhood of Washington, D.C., both conservative and polite, like the houses nearby. It does not scream. But in the next, the house opens up. The southern facade is lined with windows, considered from passivity and modesty, and the southeast corner is a series of glass boxes that jut out a few inches from the main house. From the top floor, there is a view of the Washington Monument and the great north of the Mall. The house in the distance is discreet, the rest is not. It is nearly transparent.

"The house is hybridized," says architect Rick Cook. "I'm a fan of the renovation. Principal of the Boston and New York-based firm FUGROA, Taheri is also dean of the Cooper Union School of Architecture in New York City. "There are cellular rooms on the north side, which is private," he says. "The windows are carefully engaged. On the southern side, there's a new regime—each window establishes a direct relationship with a room."

The architect's renovation also bravely demonstrates, with signs, the distinction between traditional load-bearing wall construction—expressed on the street-facing facade—and modern curtain-wall, open-plan construction. As expressed on the home's rear expansion of glass, "the house demonstrates both traits," he says.

The house out only has about

12,000 sq ft. It also has twice as much living space as it did prior to the renovation. On roughly comparable lots, along separate lots, it was quite common for the work was completed last year.

The owners of the house, a homebuilder, his wife, and their three children, added Taheri, a family friend, to update and enlarge the house. They wanted to expand their family, have live-in help, and entertain in a more comfortable way.

Doubling the size of the house was a challenge, the architect says. "This was done so the business being on the garden level, with excellent light and exposure level, and the art space being already available." The top and bottom floors could then be enlarged without expanding the footprint.

To open up the facade of the house and make it more transparent, Taheri removed bricks to allow for larger windows. He then used the same bricks to fill in some of expansion on the also-level walls.

Inside, the architect worked extensively with plywood, to sculptural, sculptural effect, so that the wood serves just slightly varied, from the stair railing to the panels that accent and line the walls. "I like plywood because it is a nice part of industrial manufacturing," the architect says. "It's generic, and standard. We reveal its edges, we take the dimensional and try to extend from things in it." The only curvilinear wood "is not here," he



A double bed with a large headboard. The house is a mix of brick and wood, with a modern interior. The house is a mix of brick and wood, with a modern interior. The house is a mix of brick and wood, with a modern interior.

The north facade is composed of brick and wood, with a modern interior. The house is a mix of brick and wood, with a modern interior. The house is a mix of brick and wood, with a modern interior.

On the first floor, the staircase is glimpsed through a long, curvy, somewhat oval-shaped cutout. Taheri describes the effect as akin to peeking through an opening into a cave.



Taheri designed the interior, the exterior, and the exterior with Taheri and C. W. Kuchar Associates. From the top left, the house features a large, curved cutout, a set of stairs, and a large, curved cutout. The house is a mix of brick and wood, with a modern interior. The house is a mix of brick and wood, with a modern interior.

The house is a mix of brick and wood, with a modern interior. The house is a mix of brick and wood, with a modern interior. The house is a mix of brick and wood, with a modern interior.



The staircase makes sense as a sculptural element, one that is part of the overall design and not just a functional element. The curved wall of slats is a key feature of the space, and the staircase is a natural extension of this design. The slats are made of wood and are spaced evenly, creating a rhythmic pattern. The staircase is made of wood and has a simple, clean design. The overall effect is one of elegance and modernity.



ness. "It is tested to produce slightly atmospheric light."

The designed a neutral neutral color of stained wood panels that create the upper floor floor. The top of the panels from the ceiling, which comes slightly. To walk from the front door to the garden deck, which leads directly to the swimming pool and garden. He inserted a vertical staircase that is flanked by a series of undulating wood panels that increase gradually to sink into the floor. The staircase is flanked through a thin curve, somewhat over-shaped corner. Tehrani describes the effect as akin to parking through an opening into a cone.

Used around a fourth-story side, it's a house in which you can get lost. The fading light from the exposed south-side side of the house is the most, and, not even changing much. When the residence is lit from within, the transparent wood panels remain the function of every room, each of which has to be single or double aperture. In Tehrani's ecological design, shutters and doors function as accessories about. "We allow the hardware into the architecture," he says. "The doors have minimal indications for opening and closing. When hardware does not provide the architecture is slightly unbalanced."

The main entrance area sits on the ground floor. The husband's office is tucked into the rear-facing corner, with windows looking out on the garden and the pool. Next to his office is a seasonal living room, used to entertain when the family can enjoy the fireplace. A summer living room is down stairs. "The single-dimensional line runs through the design process," says Tehrani. "The idea to have two living spaces was not a negotiation but a discovery of the difference between visitor and visitor."

"I like plywood because it is a raw part of industrial manufacturing today. It's generic, and standard. We reveal its edges; we take the conventional and try to do extraordinary things to it."

—Nader Tehrani, architect

action—around the pool versus around the fireplace."

On the western side of the floor there is a white kitchen used to a small dining area, and the family room, which is also informal. Much of the furniture throughout the house is in neutral colors, including pieces by Hans J. Wegner and Alvaro Siza. There are also tables designed by Antonio Citterio, Rodolfo Dordoni, and Piero Lissoni.

The central staircase, 30 feet in height, descends to the second floor, where the master suite is on the eastern side and the children's rooms are on the western, western, and southern sides.

"The parents' idea was anything appropriate," says Tehrani. "They said, 'We are not ready to go.'" On the east landing of that floor is a pergola-shaped cubic, called the Perceps, which the architect designed so that there is no side for each member of the same kind family. "They're together, but they're not together."

On the eastern side, the wife has an office in the southeast corner, adjacent to the master living room, with its access to the pool and garden. A garage table for 12 and a corner kitchen with warming drawers, a dishwasher, an ice maker, and even storage are nearby. What dominates the garage level, however, is a parking garage—the one it is. A new creation by legendary Danish designer Poul Henningsen—featuring a metal railing orbited by lighting that appears not unlike a water balloon or perhaps the tail of a fan. "When someone drives the plane, the motion of the 100 ballroom is visible. You feel the rain, and you see it being made from the program in the ballroom. Like the house itself, and the lighting of the program thought, the plane is a longer not ordinary."



Black Creek Residence Plan

- | | |
|--------------------|-----------------|
| 1. Living Room | 11. Study Room |
| 2. Kitchen | 12. Bedroom |
| 3. Laundry Room | 13. Family Room |
| 4. Bathroom | 14. Living Room |
| 5. Garage | 15. Office |
| 6. Bedroom | 16. Terrace |
| 7. Bedroom | 17. Dining Room |
| 8. Dining Room | 18. Garage |
| 9. Master Bedroom | 19. Bath |
| 10. Master Bedroom | 20. Terrace |

Third Floor



Second Floor



First Floor



Garage Floor



The husband's office is tucked into a rear-facing corner, with windows looking out on the garden and the pool. Next to his office is a seasonal living room, used to entertain when the family can enjoy the fireplace. A summer living room is down stairs. "The single-dimensional line runs through the design process," says Tehrani. "The idea to have two living spaces was not a negotiation but a discovery of the difference between visitor and visitor."

of wood that being completed in 2016. An engineer of wood, along with a landscape architect, a large-scale design firm, and a general contractor, the project was completed in 2016. The project was completed in 2016. The project was completed in 2016.



Tehrani is architect of the living space from 2012 to 2016. He is a member of the American Institute of Architects. He is a member of the American Institute of Architects. He is a member of the American Institute of Architects.

