

WOOD RESIDENCE

Hudson Valley Country House

Uli and Associates

Client | Ulises Liceaga's Family Location | Cold Spring, New York, USA Area | 650 m² Photography | Eric Laignel and Jacob Sadrak

This weekend getaway in upstate New York is no arthritic farmhouse or creaking saltbox. It was recently born, rather, almost as a kit, brought to this rocky, wooded plot in custom designed prefabricated parts, bolted together and, once finally assembled, clad in an envelope of soft wood panels so that modern and rustic were at one.

The daring double-footprint project consists of a garage connected by a sculptural bridge to the main, three-level structure built to accommodate a large, boisterous family. As well as utility rooms, the basement includes an art studio and children's playroom. A mostly open-plan ground floor offers a kitchen, dining and living area and an office. A wall of folding doors can be opened entirely onto the tantalizing indoor pool with woodland views to create a single merged space as inviting in winter as it is in summer.

Upstairs in a building suffused with natural light thanks to oversized windows, there are three bedrooms and three bathrooms as well as a study and a sweeping terrace with mountain views. The two-car garage also offers a top floor which is a studio for meditation, yoga and is complemented by a terrace. With ecological responsibility in mind, the pool eschews chlorine and other chemical cleansers in favor of an ozone filtration system.

Linking the terraces of each of the two structures is the bridge, which commands attention all of its own. Consisting of a single tilted stanchion and cables that suspend the walkway, it takes its inspiration from the angles, orientation and axis of the main building to which it leads.

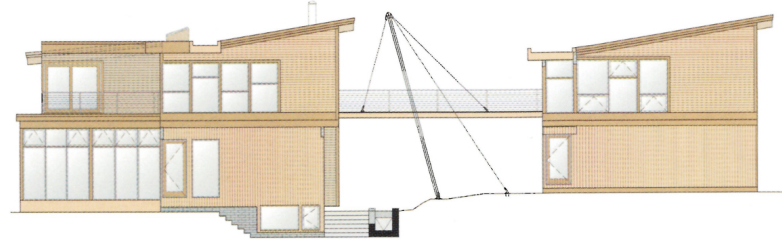
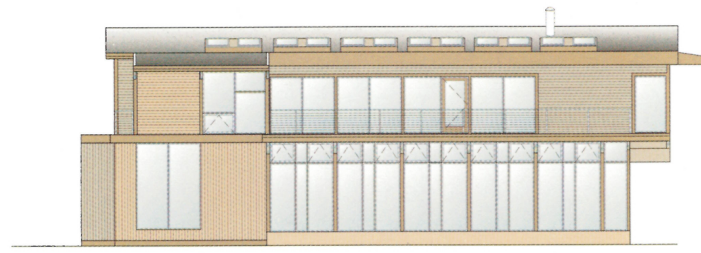
This house is the response to an extensive and dynamic program. The original design called for a prefabricated building system that would have been delivered to the site and put together by a local builder. The burst of the housing bubble and the economic downturn in 2008 pushed the company in charge of fabricating the modules into bankruptcy. This unfortunate circumstance forced the architect to look for creative solutions to take the project to completion.

Among the strategies proposed to economize without compromise, the architect used "reclaimed" materials where ever possible, for example, all the closets were built from retail display furniture bought as scrap from the dismantled Virgin Records store in Union Square. Salvaged theater light fixtures were refurbished and incorporated into a custom lighting system for the entire house. The original design for the kitchen was replaced by a discarded floor-sample kitchen found in the basement of one Soho's kitchen retailers.

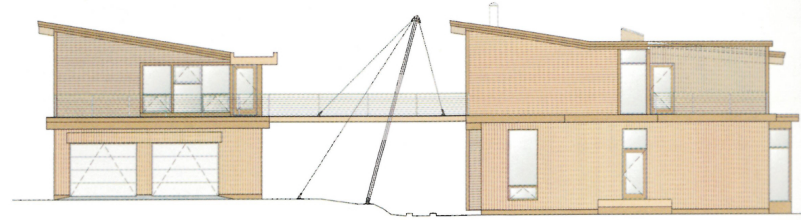
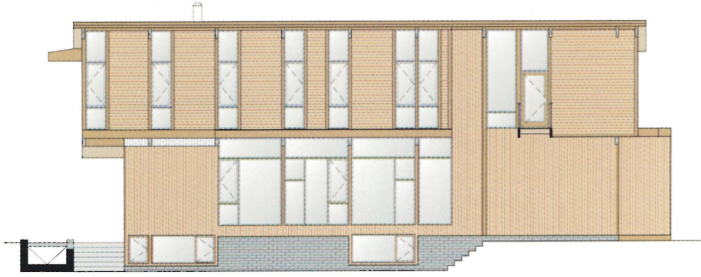
Continuing in the same fashion, most of the furniture for the house came from refurbished old family heirlooms. Century old chairs were tactfully refinished and reupholstered to respectfully dialog with the "country- modern" typology of this Hudson Valley dwelling.

Much of the concept was conceived with three strong directives: the ability to use the swimming pool while a winter blizzard is happening, wide mountain views, and an open plan with generous spaces.





South Elevation



North Elevation

