



ABOVE AND RIGHT: Designers Andrew McFarland and Gretchen McFarland, M.Arch., the current owners, worked with architect Eric Hughes of HR Design Dept to create a stunning, light-filled addition. View it on this year's Rice Design Alliance 2019 Houston Architecture Tour.

MEDITERRANEAN OASIS

Cool Blues and Designer Glass Make This Add-On Light and Bright

BY BARBARA CANETTI | PHOTOS BY DIVYA PANDE

The focus this year for the Rice Design Alliance 2019 Houston Architecture Tour is on the theme “Adapt” — how architects and homeowners have modified their living spaces to adapt to changing climate conditions, growing families or the specificities of a neighborhood.

Unlike other architecture tours, this tour — scheduled for April 27 and 28 — is organized around a theme instead of showcasing one neighborhood or recent construction, says Raj Mankad, RDA’s editor.

“Much in contrast with current trends in building unnecessarily large and inefficient homes, the six homes featured this year all reuse existing space and respond to social, economic and environmental changes,” says Mankad. “By adapting their space through renovations, additions, retrofits or elevation, these homes maintain Houston’s residential fabric while avoiding becoming obsolete in an increasingly evolving housing landscape.”

For example, the Mediterranean style house at 1903

Bellmeade, first designed in 1926 by Charles W. Oliver for advertising executive Pierre L. Michael and sensibly rehabilitated in 1987 by William F. Stern, underwent a second major renovation recently by homeowners Andrew and Gretchen McFarland. Working with architect Eric Hughes of HR Design Dept, the couple increased the footprint of their 3,300-square-foot home by constructing a 1,400-square-foot addition plus a 600-square foot garage.

“They were able to adapt their older home for their family but still keep the landscape and scale of the house and preserve the outdoor space,” says Hughes. What they built was a two-story addition — a master suite and a family room upstairs — over a glass-enclosed sitting area that enhanced the pool and courtyard.

Andrew McFarland is an architect and his wife Gretchen is an interior designer, so the trio collaborated on the architectural changes to make the addition look seamless to the original stucco house. And, to make it work, there had to be some sacrifices.







The teal paint is dark and dramatic, though side windows, a glass door and pop-outs help make the intimate bedroom feel airy and bright.

Room sizes were scaled down to match the existing house in the limited area for the addition; challenges also included working around the air conditioning and heating system.

But, Hughes says, the final product turned out to be spectacular. Starting with the compact courtyard and the new pool and spa, Hughes says they adapted them to seamlessly become part of the landscape behind a wall as well as the entry into the house and a glass enclosed room. This new room, a more formal sitting area, has bifold doors on both sides, allowing the area that connects the house and the addition to be a flexible indoor-outdoor space for the family.

The upstairs of the addition is a large family room for relaxing and television watching and nestled behind it is a private office. The remainder of the upstairs is the master suite: a series of rooms that loops around the addition. First visitors enter a private sitting room that leads to a very, very small bedroom — only large enough for a bed and a credenza. The path then leads to a large closet, then the bathroom and another closet, before exiting adjacent to the upstairs office.

Because of the desire to keep the new construction in line with the existing house, the ceiling upstairs gave the architects a chance to be creative. They vaulted the ceiling for more volume and installed skylights to bring natural light into the room, which was painted a dark teal. In addition, the floor beneath the bedside credenza, which overlooks the courtyard with large windows, also has a glass floor that floods the room with sunshine and again marries the inside and outside of the structure. The laminated glass is thick enough that it can be stood upon, although most of it is under furniture.

“The owners opted for a Jeffersonian style bedroom — pared down to the essential needs only for sleeping and some storage. It is compact and cozy, but there is ample space for the closets and bathroom,” Hughes says. “The teal is a dark and dramatic color but, because of the cascading sources of light — the side windows, glass floor and pop-outs — it feels bright. And on a sunny day the reflections off the pool through that glass floor under the credenza cast a hue around the room and give it a good feel.”

Additional natural light comes through the clerestory windows



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and the subdued oak wood floors help to create a soft look to the rooms.

The house is still Mediterranean and covered in white stucco with the clay tile roof, but the floor plan now has been adapted from an early 20th century home to one that meets the needs of a busy 21st century family.

RESOURCES

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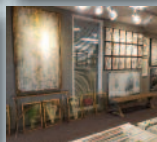
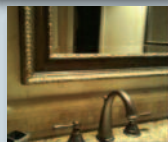
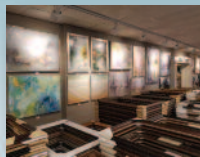
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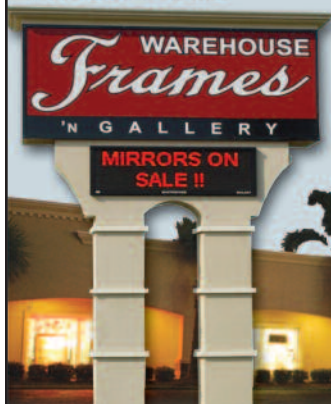
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ONWARD AND UPWARD

“ADAPT” – Rice Design Alliance 2019 Houston Architecture Tour

BY SUSIE TOMMANEY

The six properties featured on this year’s Rice Design Alliance 2019 Houston Architecture Tour all have one foot in the past, but are now realizing new purpose under the umbrella theme of “Adapt.”

Renew. One homeowner purchased his childhood home on Calico Lane and called on former elementary school classmates, architect Bob Robinowitz and contractor Tom Forney, to edit the midcentury ranch-style home. Without adding additional space, the architects from McIntyre + Robinowitz united the living, dining and family rooms, converted the garage into a library, and tore out flat ceilings to add volume. New window and door openings, plus salvaged wood floors and a rustic timber framing, all work together to make an updated home that is light and bright.

Power. Way ahead of its time, Virginia Point was Houston’s first LEED Platinum house. Designed by Adams Architects in 2007, with the goal of minimizing the home’s impact on Houston’s energy and drainage infrastructure, the property features a 140-panel solar array, geothermal air-conditioning, and an underground cistern that collects and stores rainwater. Sustainable materials including bamboo and paper composite were used for the floors, cabinets and countertops, while interiors maximize natural daylighting from the north and a southerly breeze flow.

Context. A tragic fire forced the homeowner to start anew at 1648 Vassar. Architects Scott Strasser and David Guthrie collaborated to double the square



“Renew,” Piney Point Manor at 11402 Calico Lane.
Photo by Benjamin Hill Photography



ABOVE:
“Power,”
Virginia Point at
3319 Virginia.
Photo by Gary
Zvonkovic

RIGHT:
“Context,”
1648 Vassar.
Photo by Jack
Thompson



footage of the new home by stacking living spaces vertically: a loft-like ground floor, second story bedrooms and bath, and a third floor roof terrace. Windows were positioned for sweeping views of the Houston landscape while also ensuring privacy, and a circular stair leading to the terrace was constructed by George Sacaris.

Elevate. Plans to remodel a flood-damaged ranch-style home in Meyerland morphed into the need for new construction, a decision aided in part by the Memorial Day flood in 2015, the Tax Day flood in 2016 and Tropical Storm Harvey in 2017. Janusz Design's concept for the new L-shaped home uses a concrete slab on steel deck floor, supported by pier-and-beam foundation, and elevated an average of four feet above grade. Design elements, including a deep blue front door, preserve the midcentury contemporary heritage of the neighborhood.

Preserve. Architect W. W. Crochet designed this house in Meyerland as his own family home in 1959. After flooding for the third time, current homeowners called on Arkitektura Development (Kemah) to preserve, raise and rehabilitate the property. The contemporary ranch was raised six feet above grade, creating a new and welcome perspective on the homesite, while Schultz Construction rehabilitated the home's interior.

Add. Designers Andrew McFarland and Gretchen McFarland, M.Arch., the current owners, worked with architect Eric Hughes of HR Design Dept to add space to this stunning Spanish/Mediterranean style home at 1903 Bellmeade. A new master bedroom wing and glazed bridge overlook a walled patio; while window wall panes, ingenious skylights and saturated colors infuse the interiors with a shimmering light.

"ADAPT" – Rice Design Alliance 2019 Houston Architecture Tour is scheduled for April 27-28, 1 to 6 p.m. Tickets, which provide access to all six locations, are \$35 for non-members, \$25 for RDA members, \$15 for students, and free for children age 12 and under. For information call 713-348-4876 or visit signup.rice.edu/2019RDATOUR.



"Elevate," 4911 Dumfries. Photo by Hannah Key



"Preserve," 9707 Runnymede. Photo courtesy of Ed Wolff



"Add," 1903 Bellmeade. Photo by Divya Pande