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Romantic nature

This expansive Arts and Crafts-style residence is intertwined with its charming peninsula setting – Harrison Design Associates created the vision



Preceding pages: This expansive 9000 ft² residence by Harrison Design Associates is a series of pavilions that downplay its size. Built in the Arts and Crafts-style, the house has a wealth of natural finishes. Stone and stucco walls, mahogany sidings and a slate roof all connect with the landscape. The house was strategically planned to skirt the 200-year-old oaks and inlets on the secluded peninsula.

An architecturally superior residence is about much more than the walls, windows and roof. Between architect, interior designer and builder, something magical has to rise from the practical.

The client for this project asked architect William Harrison, principal of Harrison Design Associates, and design team Steven Markey and Chad Goehring, to create a romantic house that would weave through the ancient oaks and inlets of its idyllic peninsular setting. An Arts and Crafts-style was chosen as it sits lightly on the land and emphasizes natural materials that connect to the environment, says Harrison.

"This residence is a place to entertain but it also offers the pleasure of wandering away from the public arena to a remote corner," says Harrison. "Large hurricane-strength windows – the largest the manufacturer had installed at this grade – bring the feeling that you are at one with the woods and immediate water views."

The house is designed in three main forms, connected by glass corridors or galleries. From the front it has a symmetrical appeal, leading the eye naturally to its entry. Inside the solid-wood entry doors, the home opens into the 'Marsh Room,' a soaring, dramatic entertainment



space that offers panoramic vistas from three enormous segmental arches. From here, the dining room and breakfast sitting room provide an attractive transition to the more functional spaces, including the kitchen, laundry and three-car garage. A screened porch off the kitchen offers a family retreat, complete with access to a secluded lap pool. To the right of the Marsh Room, the open stair tower, anchored by a curving bar, is the central feature. Upstairs there are three guest suites with access to covered and uncovered porches and a private sitting room.

From this building, a glazed corridor leads to

the second pavilion, a semi-private volume with a library and offices. Then a second corridor leads further back to the master suite and studio.

"Being given an almost fairy-tale setting and the freedom to create a grand yet understated house that responds to that environment offered true emotional satisfaction," says Harrison.

Harrison Design Associates specialises in architecture for high-end, custom residences.

For more details, contact Harrison Design Associates, 3198 Cains Hill Place NW, Atlanta, GA 30305, phone (404) 365 7760. Or visit the website: www.harrisondesignassociates.com

These pages: Overhanging eaves, a classic Arts and Crafts feature, provides protection from poor weather and control over solar penetration. While areas of the house spread out behind, the front of the house has a sweeping approach and a strong sense of symmetry. Windows, doors, archways and corridors are all positioned to optimize individual views to the trees and water.



Above: A gallery between the main pavilion and the study affords a view across the rear of the home. The high level of detailing is seen here in the walnut boards which were cut with individual tapers to create perfect radius curves.

Facing page: The stair tower is a complex grid of steel encased in wood. The freestanding, plaster stair has a custom iron and walnut railing while the ceiling features multiple mahogany beams in a spoke pattern.

From a builder's perspective, this residence was an exercise in precision construction.

Rob Marett Custom Homes worked closely with the architect to create a house that reflects grace, craftsmanship and understated detailing.

The exterior has a strong, simple look, but this belies the extensive structural planning and painstaking construction required, says Marett.

"For example, the entire curving roof is in standing seam copper with tapered panels in the classic style," he says. "Setting and waterproofing the expanses of hurricane-impact glass was another consuming part of the project.

"Precision measuring was required throughout the project – for example the radius hallways that connect the main living areas. These glass-walled spaces are cantilevered so they appear to be floating and are visually connected to the surroundings."

Rob Marett specialises in upmarket, architecturally dynamic custom projects and often works with Harrison Design Associates.

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Above: Blue-gray-green walls in the dining room are intended to evoke the tones of a sunset. The feature vaulted ceiling is finished in metallic gold, while wide-plank flooring leads the eye to the 'Marsh Room' – complete with grand piano. A central staircase features a comprehensive bar area at its base with seating for up to ten people, and a wine room beneath. Antiques and rich artworks enhance the exotic feel of these rooms. Some existing furniture was reupholstered for the new residence.

With such an open feel between the inside and out of this residence, the interiors naturally had to connect to the surroundings in terms of furniture placement and wall tones. However, at the same time they also had to be exciting living spaces in their own right.

Interior designer Lisa Torbett was involved in the project from the outset. A series of design phases, drawings and consultations resulted in a grand interior that directly reflected the clients' requirements, she says.

"The home's interiors have a slightly eclectic feel with strong color accents favoured by the

client," says Torbett. "The central staircase and 10-seat bar are part of the sense of refinement."

If the exterior, spied through the trees, has a romantic appeal, then the high-style interiors also have a sentimental, even exotic, presence.

"The floors are wide-plank walnut and some walls have a Venetian finish to bring a sense of depth to the spaces. In addition, the home's settings are uncluttered, accentuating the volume of the residence. Rich silk drapes fall to crumpled puddles on the floor, an antique chandelier sparkles over the dining table and the living room sofa is in a fine, sensuous velvet."



This romantic feel is continued in other areas of the home. The kitchen features fine gold detail on the paneling of the island and some walls are marble. In the Marsh Room vibrant custom murals by respected artist Steve Penley have personal relevance to the owners.

"A close collaboration between the clients, architect, builder and myself resulted in a house that responds perfectly to the couple's needs."

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Top: The kitchen has Chateau stone floors and Calacatta Gold on the countertops and walls. A rangehood provides a sculptural centerpiece.

Above: The screen porch provides an immediate connection to the scenery and so features all-weather furnishings.

Left: A quiet reading space in the master suite is flanked by large windows that capture the scenery like a frame on a landscape painting.



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