

Winning Spaces

BY ELLEN RYAN

They should stand out while fitting in. Get along with the crowd, yet look good from every angle. Teenagers? No, houses. The judges of the annual Washingtonian Residential Design Awards looked for these characteristics in design projects and found them in abundance. * The jury singled out projects that solved problems, like making a home's back as memorable as its front or building anew on an established block. Calling the entries smart, exciting, and fun, judge Dennis Wedlick said, "We'd welcome many of these as our neighbors." * Wedlick heads his own firm in New York City. Other judges were George Acock of Acock Associates Architects in Columbus, Ohio, and Linda A. Banks, founder of Banks Design Associates in Southport, Connecticut, and Portland, Maine. * The competition, which drew 76 entries, is open to registered architects of area homes or second homes owned by local residents. Entrants' names were unknown to the judges until selections were final. The Washingtonian Residential Design Awards are sponsored by the Washington chapter of the American Institute of Architects and *The Washingtonian*.

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In years past, some middle-class DC neighborhoods enclosed a set of small rowhouses along a midblock alley or court. A handful of these survive on Capitol Hill. In this case, when one such house went on the market, a next-door neighbor seized the opportunity.

The client's house took up nearly all of its 14-by-44-foot lot, and the owner wanted a bit of a yard. McInturff Architects gutted the adjoining house, merged the living areas, and replaced the joint rear wall with top-to-bottom glass. Fir louvers provide privacy and shade.

A wooden platform suspended in the new space adds seating adjacent to the existing second-floor living room. Shown at right beneath the platform is a new master bedroom. Beside them, the gutted house becomes a sort of interior courtyard for the joined buildings and allows access from both to the 200-square-foot garden.

"A small project that accomplished big things," the judges called it. "A creative, beautifully detailed way to make a living space both intimate and theatrical."

The contractor was **Renovations Unlimited, Inc.** at 202-387-3550 in Northwest DC. →

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