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ON THE COVER
This green home in Snowmass, Colorado, fits comfortably into the landscape. Photo by David O. Marlow, page 70

Photo above, J.K. Lawrence; photos near and far right, David O. Marlow

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V I E W

F R O M

T H E

T O P

S T A N D I N G U P,
N O T O U T, I N B O I S E

B Y H E L E N T H O M P S O N

P H O T O G R A P H Y

B Y J . K . L A W R E N C E





Is architecture destiny? Steve Trout and Sally Stevens may have mulled over the question after they met six years ago. Sally, a graphic designer, was living and working in a Victorian house near downtown Boise. On her first date with Steve, an architect, she remarked, "You know, I would really like to buy a skinny little lot up in the foothills." Steve ushered Sally into his car and drove her to the foothills, stopping in front of a skinny little lot he had purchased two years before. "Well," he said, "here's your lot."

The rest, as they say, is history: Sally and Steve are now married and live on the slender lot in a house Steve was designing when the two met. But long before the wedding day, Steve modified the design for the house that would fit on the trapezoidal piece of land. In the husband-and-wife version, there would be a studio where Sally could conduct her design business.

The three-story glass, stucco, rough cedar, and metal dwelling hugs the hillside; a separate office over the garage precedes the main house. From there, a flight of stairs offers options: To its immediate right are a patio and pond that front two guest rooms, and farther up the stairs are the entrance and living areas. On the top floor—accessible via interior stairs—is a master suite with a bird's-eye view southeast to a park, Table

Previous page, each level of the building has access to the outdoors with the smallest deck, more like a widow's walk, located off the top floor master suite. A courtyard garden softens the stucco, glass, and metal residence.

Opposite, homeowners Steve Trout and Sally Stevens enjoy views of the park, the plateaus, and the city from the deck in front of the art studio. The main house rises above the studio built over the garage, above.



Rock and Castle Rock plateaus, the desert beyond, and the city. "It makes us feel like we have so much room to breathe," says Sally.

Four stories tall (counting the garage level), the 2,800-square-foot house rises above it all. "The shape of the house emerged from the site," says Steve. Because the lot is steep (vertical height increases by 45 feet from bottom to top), it had been considered undevelopable, and remained a rare vacant lot in a neighborhood pretty much fully developed in the 1970s.

The sole option was to build upward, which allowed Steve flexibility to experiment. "I wanted to work with spaces and volumes in an economical way," he explains. By stacking each living space on top of another, the architect freed rooms from the necessity for doors and space-wasting halls. But he admits to also indulging a childhood dream: "I always had this fantasy about living above the treetops."

Because the established contemporary house figures so prominently in the neighborhood, Steve sought, and deftly achieved, harmony by topping the structure with a pitched roof, similar to others nearby. Building materials—such as the metal siding that clads one side of the structure, and lots of glass—are a friendly nod to styles popular 30 years ago (the picture windows, for example, that punctuate the facades of most of the subdivision's houses).

"The site made the house a certain shape," explains Steve, "but the view twisted it." As if excising shapes from a box, Steve carved space from each floor to focus on the vistas. "These are like release points that throw open the view," he explains. The effect on Sally was dramatic. "The first night we spent here," she says, "I almost had vertigo. Now, though, I love it."

With the wild blue yonder, mountains, desert, and city on one side of the glass, interiors on the other side are less com-

Furnishings in the dining room, above, were collected over time through the Internet. The pendant lights and shades (minus decorative beads) are off the rack items from local home stores.

Living room furniture, opposite, has to withstand entertaining and grandchildren. The durable coffee table was made from a hunk of red fir mounted on wheels set back from the perimeter for a floating effect.

plex. Sally came to the marriage with a household of furniture, which she gave away. Steve had a few mid-century pieces from his father (also an architect), such as a slate-top chrome side table designed by the elder Trout's high school friend and renowned furniture designer, Hugh Acton. "Our method," says Sally, "is to search on eBay, scrounge around to find a piece, or make it. It's made our house a lot more interesting."

Following her own advice, the homeowner bought high-quality muslin, which she sewed into diaphanous curtains for the large window walls in the house and in her office. Her efforts weren't confined to delicate fabrics, though. After acquiring the end piece of a red fir pier, Sally planed and sanded the massive chunk, gouging out the surface with a woodworking tool before sealing it with urethane. "We needed a coffee table," she said, "but it had to be used as seating, and be a surface our grandkids could jump on."

From coffee table to stairwell placement to roof pitch, much thought and plain old elbow grease has gone into the Trout-Stevens residence. "Every time we met a design problem, we came up with good solutions," recalls Sally. "We had a ball building this house."

Helen Thompson writes for Metropolitan Home, Elle Décor, and Architectural Digest. She is the author of seven books; her latest is Dream Kitchens.

Architect and Builder Trout Architects/Chartered

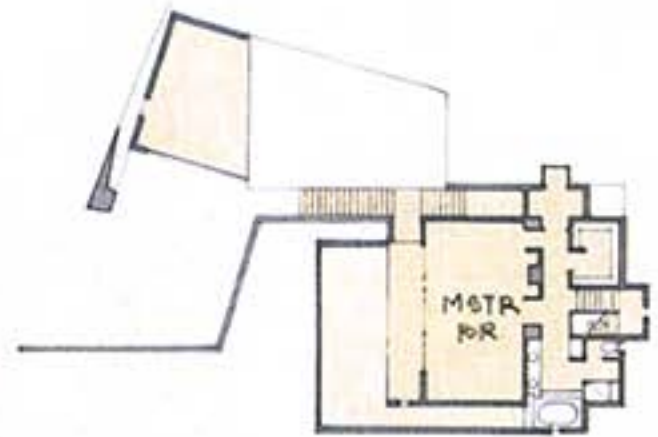
A M P L E R O O M T O B R E A T H E





For the metallic-looking accent wall in the kitchen, the owner sprayed Japanese newspapers with gold and silver paint, applied the sheets with wall-paper paste, and sealed them with a water-soluble urethane matte finish.

Upper Level



Main Level



Ground Level



Garage/Studio



“I H A D
T H I S
F A N T A S Y
A B O U T
L I V I N G
A B O V E
T H E
T R E E
T O P S.”

Occupying the entire top level of the house, the sumptuous master suite is a multifunctional space. One section of the bedroom is reserved for reading, lounging, and soaking up city vistas.



The master bath includes his and hers vanities, and a bathing area set off by a step up. The floors and cabinets are maple, and the pattern of unglazed porcelain tiles makes a whimsical design statement.

Sources.

VIEW FROM THE TOP

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Location Boise, ID

Gross square footage 2,718 sf

Architect Steve Trout, Trout Architects/Chartered, Boise, ID, 208-344-8646,

www.troutarchitects.com

Interior design By owners

Builder Trout Architects/Chartered, Boise, ID, 208-344-8646, www.troutarchitects.com

Structural engineer John Mortin, Briggs Engineering, Boise, ID, 208-344-9700,

www.briggs-engineering.com

Civil/geotechnical engineer

Dean Briggs, Briggs Engineering, Boise, ID, 208-344-9700, www.briggs-engineering.com

Landscape design By owners

Lighting Steve Trout with Ken Butler, Idaho Electric Sales, Garden City, ID, 208-336-3074

GENERAL SPECIFICATIONS

Metal/glass curtainwall

Aluma-Glass Industries, Nampa, ID, 208-467-4491

Concrete Quality Concrete, Boise, ID, 208-343-1934

Stucco manufacturer

LaHabre Stucco, Anaheim, CA,

714-778-2266,

www.lahabrastucco.com

Stucco contractor

McFall Plastering, Boise, ID, 208-362-9063

Metal siding

AEP Span, Tacoma,

WA, 800-733-4955,

www.aepspan.com

Siding installation

Upson Roofing,

Caldwell, ID, 208-459-6978

Metal roofing

AEP Span, Tacoma,

WA, 800-733-4955,

www.aepspan.com

Roofing contractor

Upson Roofing, Caldwell, ID, 208-459-6978

Aluminum windows

Aluma-Glass Industries, Nampa, ID,

208-467-4491

Metal doors

Aluma-Glass Industries, Nampa, ID,

208-467-4491



Etched glass panels

Custom, Classic Sign Studio, Boise, ID,

208-336-2769,

www.classicdesignstudios.com

Sliding doors

Kawneer Company,

Norcross, GA, 770-449-5555,

www.kawneer.com

Hardware

Emtek Products,

www.emtekproducts.com

Balcony railings

Pacific Steel Fabricators, Boise, ID,

208-362-0098,

www.pacificsteelfab.com

Balcony flooring

Milliken,

www.milliken.com

Flooring installation

Designer Floors, Boise, ID, 208-342-4271,

www.dfloors.com

Fountain

Design and installation by

Sally Stevens and Liz Hilton

Cabinets

Advanced Wood Design,

Meridian, ID, 208-283-8808

Custom woodwork

Advanced Wood Design, Meridian, ID,

208-283-8808

Paints

Kelly-Moore Paints,

www.kellymoore.com

Wallcoverings

Designed and installed by owner

Lighting systems

Bruck Lighting Systems, Costa Mesa, CA,

714-424-0500,

www.brucklighting.com



KITCHEN

Refrigerator GE Monogram, www.monogram.com, from Jim's Appliance, Boise, ID, 208-345-7711, www.jimsappliance.com
Stove Viking, www.vikingrange.com, from Jim's Appliance, Boise, ID, 208-345-7711, www.jimsappliance.com
Dishwasher Bosch, www.boschappliances.com, from Jim's Appliance, Boise, ID, 208-345-7711, www.jimsappliance.com
Sink Kohler, www.kohler.com, from Ferguson Enterprises, Boise, ID, 208-375-0562, www.ferguson.com
Faucet Grohe, www.grohe.com, from Ferguson Enterprises, Boise, ID, 208-375-0562, www.ferguson.com
Cabinets Advanced Wood Design, Meridian, ID, 208-283-8808
Countertop Custom concrete by owners and Rob Powell
Backsplash Custom concrete by owners and Rob Powell
Bar Custom fabrication by Pacific Steel Fabricators, Boise, ID, 208-362-0098, www.pacificsteelfab.com
Lighting Bruck Lighting Systems, Costa Mesa, CA, 714-424-0500, www.brucklighting.com



End table Designed by Hugh Acton, family heirloom

Coffee table By owners

Fireplace FMI by Desa International, Bowling Green, KY, 866-672-6040, www.fmifireplace.com

Shelf above fireplace By owners
Cabinets Advanced Wood Design, Meridian, ID, 208-283-8808

Concrete countertops By owners and Rob Powell

Flooring Milliken, www.milliken.com

Paints Kelly-Moore Paints, www.kellymoore.com

Stairway TrusJoist, Boise, ID, 866-859-6757, www.trusjoist.com

Stairway railing Pacific Steel Fabricators, Boise, ID, 208-362-0098, www.pacificsteelfab.com
Handrail wall brackets Julius Blum and Company, Callstadt, NJ, 800-526-6293, www.juliusblum.com

Artwork above fireplace By Sally Stevens

Lighting Bruck Lighting Systems, Costa Mesa, CA, 714-424-0500, www.brucklighting.com



DINING ROOM

Chairs Eames Shell Chairs, from Herman Miller, www.hermanmiller.com

Corner table Designed by Hugh Acton, family heirloom

Flooring Milliken, www.milliken.com

Paints Kelly-Moore Paints, www.kellymoore.com

Lighting above table Track from Home Depot, www.homedepot.com

MASTER BEDROOM SITTING AREA

End table Isamu Noguchi table, from Herman Miller, www.hermanmiller.com

Pillows Linens 'n Things, www.lnt.com



LIVING ROOM

Blue chair Form + Function, Salt Lake City, UT, 801-467-3131, www.formfunction.net

Sofa and loveseat Design Centro Italia, Emeryville, CA, 510-420-0383, www.italydesign.com