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APRIL 2019

A LAKE HOUSE BUILT BY HEART

This Poland Springs
getaway is all
about family

JOE RICCHIO

dines at 18 Central

ARCHITECT LAUREN REITER'S

Portland home works for
her family and the planet

plus essay by
SUSAN CONLEY

High Performance

Architect Lauren Reiter gets her Portland home to work—for her family and for the planet

WORDS: BRIAN SHUFF PHOTOS: MICHAEL D. WILSON

"In material terms, green design means much lower utility bills—keeping the space comfortable without breaking the bank. There are very real financial benefits."

ARCHITECT
Reiter Architecture & Design

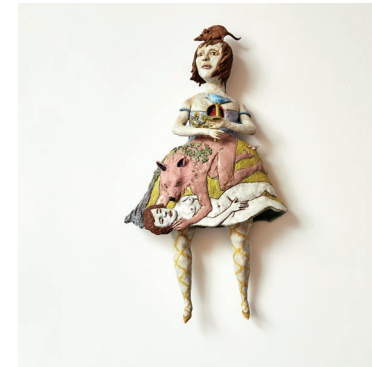
BUILDER
M.R. Brewer

INTERIOR DESIGNER
Reiter Architecture & Design

STRUCTURAL ENGINEER
Becker Structural Engineers

TILE
Capozza Tile





a lot of artwork," she says, "maybe too much. It's very personal to us."

Design considerations also included how best to light the pieces. Light plays a fundamental role in all of Lauren's work, and she frequently tells clients that if they have 10 dollars to spend they should put 9 into lighting and 1 into paint. That goes for natural light as well—it is no accident that a glass door at the end of one hallway is the precise width and height of the hall itself, creating the sensation that "you are always walking towards light." The existing space was on the scant side lighting-wise, so her design involved more installation than renovation, a blank slate.

opposite page General contractor M.R. Brewer of Portland rendered all of the home's cabinetry, while Atlantic Flooring handled the additional hardwood floors.

"We're very happy here," Lauren says of the home. "The space really works for us now," including the highly functional kitchen at its heart, which husband Neil exploits to great effect. "It's a great location, right downtown but very quiet. The pleasure we get from walking everywhere—it's like the old days when we lived in New York."

above No space wasted. Wall real estate is at a premium.

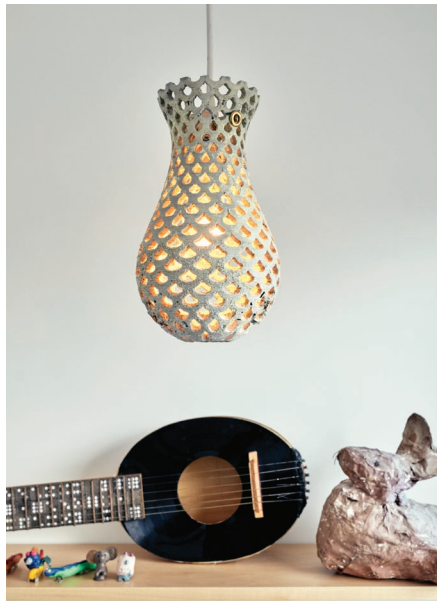
certification is the most widely used measuring system to classify buildings to various levels of environmental performance.

"We've made every effort to maintain that standard of high performance," Lauren says. This means: high-efficiency insulation, triple-glazed windows, under-floor heating, those LED lights, and myriad other green considerations. "'High performance' is a good term because it encompasses many issues besides energy," Lauren explains. "It's about water usage. It's about reusing existing materials. It's about specifying materials that are low in toxicity. It includes building and construction practices. It's the process itself."

To this imperative Lauren Reiter is deeply committed. In conversation, her passion reads as genuine and righteous. "Any architect that does not consider the earth shouldn't be practicing," she says. "Technology and understanding evolve. Buildings are a big part of what creates climate change. We have a responsibility as architects to do green construction, to make sustainable design intrinsic to our practice." Not even antiquity is spared (nor should it be). "I would add to Vitruvius," says Lauren. "I would say architecture should provide firmness, commodity, delight, and sustainability." ■



below All of the living spaces are completely open and—like various aspects of the Reiters’ lives—flow into one another. A living room furnished with signature pieces is just off both Lauren’s and Neil’s offices, also the kitchen, and a dining room table at which they both hold meetings. The space is a domestic and professional nerve center.



top Pieces throughout the home span various media and represent a collection that has evolved and developed across decades.

above The Reiters’ daughter, also a design professional, produced the bedroom’s concrete light fixtures as part of her college thesis.



left M.R. Brewer constructed the custom, maple-stained staircases.



left An osprey eating a fish perches on a non-functional chimney. Lauren’s father did the sculpture.

above, right Fun, eclectic, and surprising, the Reiter home never falls into self-seriousness.





left Much like the kitchen, large geometric blocks shape the master bath.

below Museum-like serenity abounds.



Lauren was out of town for the month, so we spoke only by phone, but I'm glad she convinced me to drive over and see the place at night. The rusted façade is made for shadows and is lit to perfection with fine vertical streams of white light.

Brian Shuff is a writer from Los Angeles, California. His first book, About Grief, was published in 2010. He holds an MFA from the University of Southern Maine, and has been a Maine resident since 2015.