



# Corporate style

Underlining their preference for a commercial style of architecture, the owners of this home requested that the interior be finished using little or no wood

When the owners of this home were asked what inspired them in terms of design, their response was far from typical.

Instead of houses, they pointed out a large office building with a style they liked, says interior designer Steven Hensel and architect Roger Newell.

Both cite this preference for commercial architecture as the driving force behind

the design of the home. Its modernist box-like structure gives way to an open-plan living space that is not unlike an office lobby in appearance, they say.

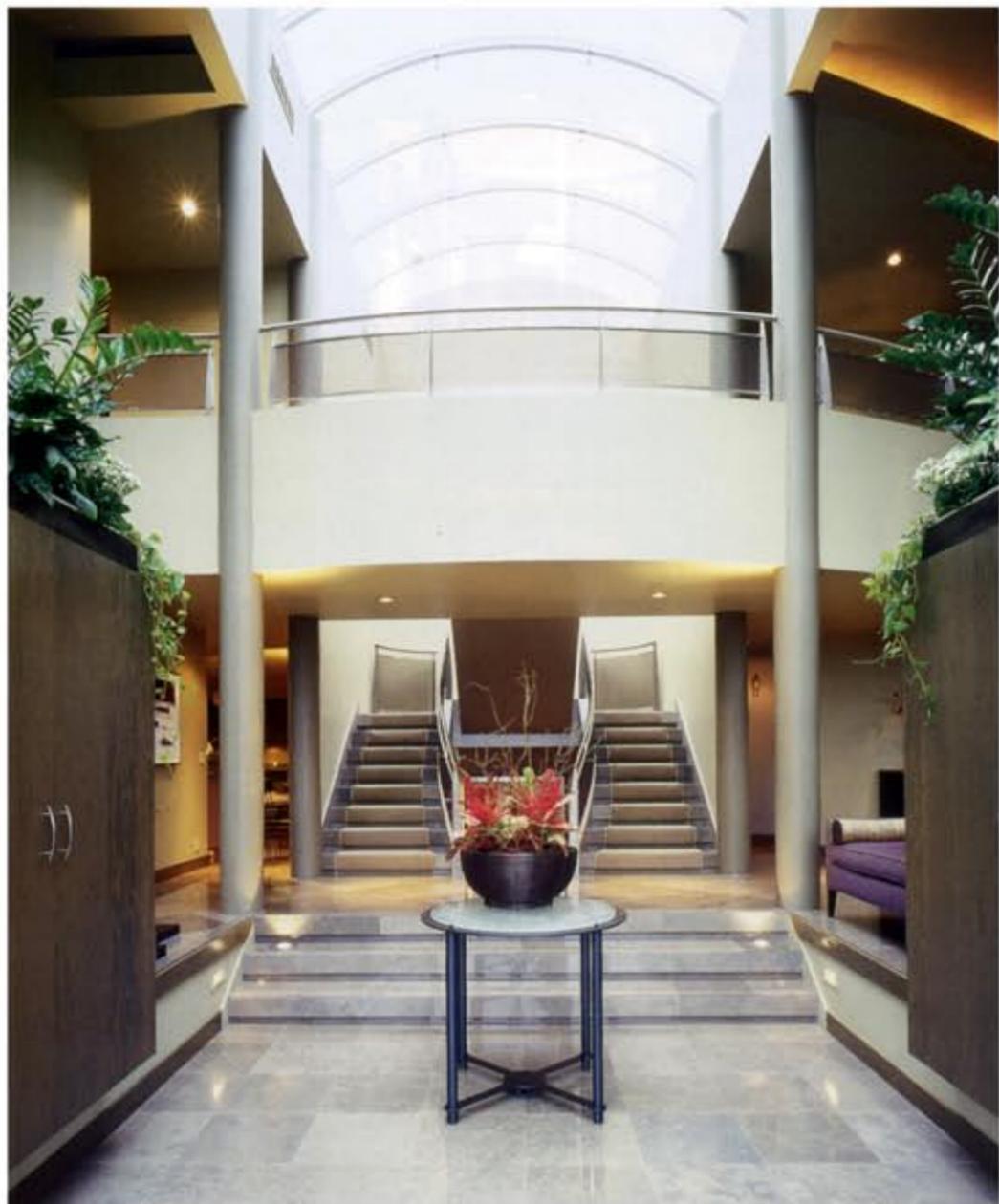
A vaulted glass ceiling forms a double-height atrium in the entry foyer, its structural steel ribs inset with halogen lights. The atrium opens onto the dining room on one side and the living

room on the other, allowing the owners to entertain up to 100 people at one time. To define a point of entry without disrupting the flow of the spaces, Hensel used two free-standing closets with doors made of rift-cut oak, topped with stainless steel planters. Wood is a material that's been used very sparingly throughout the house, he says.

"Preferring the look of

**Above:** Strongly influenced by commercial architecture, this home is tailor-made for entertaining large groups of people. Formal living and dining spaces spill into each other, their strong, sculptural look accentuated by an expansive use of glazing.

**Previous pages:** A sculpture by William Robinson gives prominence to the front of the house.



**Above:** Perforated bronze and stainless steel balustrades provide both practical and decorative detailing on the mezzanine. This upper floor is accessed via a gently curved double staircase.

**Facing page:** Plants flourish on top of freestanding cabinetry, which has been designed to create a point of entry without compromising the openness of the space.

more hard-edged and metallic surfaces, the clients wanted little or no wood. However, the rift-cut oak is a concession to this because of its streamlined, architectural look."

Limestone floors, pewter finishes on selected surfaces and perforated bronze and stainless steel balustrades on the mezzanine all help to create a polished, commercial look. The gentle curves of the

mezzanine floor and various niche walls give the living spaces a sculptural feel. A mix of lighting accentuate these and a number of other architectural details. For example, a cluster of pendant lights strategically suspended over the dining table echoes the home's grid layout while uplights embedded in the floor highlight the slender columns supporting the atrium ceiling.





Above and facing page: Geometric patterns define the various rugs that layer the limestone floors with warmth. Thomas Anderson's mixed media pieces punctuate the mezzanine wall while a bronze sculpture by Gerard Tsutakawa stands out in one corner of the living room. The glass sculpture in the dining room, by Anna Skibska, adds dramatic scale.



Right: Height-adjustable Bombo stools have been teamed with a curved breakfast bar.





**Interior designer:** Steven Hensel, Hensel Design Studios (Seattle)  
**Architect:** Roger H Newell AIA, Roger Newell Architects  
**Builder:** Paul Poehliman  
**Structural engineering:** GT Engineering  
**Siding:** Stucco from Tobin Plastering  
**Window/door joinery:** Natural aluminum from Milgard  
**Flooring:** Limestone from CR Quality Marble  
**Paints:** Benjamin Moore  
**Lighting:** Juno and Lightolier  
**Heating:** Payne  
**Kitchen and bathroom cabinets:** Highland Cabinets  
**Kitchen countertops and backsplash:** Granite slab from Marble & Tilecraft  
**Oven and cooktop:** Dacor  
**Microwave:** Sharp  
**Refrigerator:** Sub-Zero  
**Dishwasher:** Miele  
**Powder room basin:** Cherry Creek  
**Faucets:** Grohe  
**Living room furniture:** Sofa by Michael Berman with Nancy Corzine mohair; side chair by Barbara Barry; armless loveseat covered by Bright  
**Pillows and custom sewing:** SMJ Studios  
**Fabrics:** Rodolf, Jack Lenor Larsen, Gretchen Bellinger and others  
**Dining chairs:** Barbara Barry

*Photography by Steve Keating*

**Above:** The slender branches of trees were used to create an unusual backdrop in the master bedroom. Backlighting adds dramatic effect to the wood at night. The painting on the adjacent wall is by Kenneth Callahan.

Carefully chosen fabrics, furnishings, sculpture and art add color and texture, softening the hard-edged style. Tan mohair has been used to upholster the sofa. Its luxurious look and feel is similar to a velvet that doesn't crush, says Hensel.

"I have subtly introduced color via cushions covered in exotic silks in eggplant, sandalwood and copper tones. Rather than use floral prints or

patterned fabrics to add color, I opted for rich texture."

To create contrast, Hensel teamed the sofa with an olive leather armless loveseat, and a copper-colored side chair.

Forming the backdrop to the dining room is a massive glass sculpture that sits against one of the curved niche walls. Offset by a scroll of filigree mesh, the sculpture has a delicate, sparkling presence, and is

one of several pieces specially commissioned as the design of the home evolved.

"The owners were very excited when it came to commissioning the various art works. They wanted each to have lots of impact, lots of punch," says Hensel.

To that end, a series of mixed media works on the mezzanine has been specially placed to create an impression when

viewed from the ground floor.

As the owners frequently entertain large groups of people at one time, it was important that the home also contain private spaces for the family. The kitchen opens out onto a terrace and forms the heart of a spacious and versatile family room. The space, which includes comfortable sofas, a breakfast bar and a dining suite, is used for

a number of activities from doing homework to eating casual meals.

In the master bedroom, twigs of wood trimmed and set in a trough above the bed subtly introduce an element of nature, says Hensel. The bed displays a lavish use of lightly-colored, sumptuous silks, while built-in cabinetry made of rift-cut oak completes the space's streamlined look.



**Left:** Metallic copper walls, a freestanding wall of backlit, glass tiles and a glass sink mounted on a bronze stand make a lasting impression on guests visiting the powder room.