

# Collectors' Edition



Imagine pulling your car into the garage after a long day at work. As the door lifts, three 6-foot-by-6-foot photographs greet you, instead of the usual tangle of trimmers, hoses, and rakes, reminders of tasks undone. Ah, home sweet art gallery. Even the garage of this peaceful Oklahoma house is devoted to art. ■ It's not easy to balance residential architecture and large pieces of museum-

**By Cheryl Weber, LEED AP**

quality art. But Rand Elliott, of Oklahoma City-based Elliott + Associates Architects, turned this house into a retreat that joyfully and quietly blends them together. He also established a dialogue between architecture and nature that makes this a true indoor-outdoor home. ■ To

relate the art and building to each other, Elliott designed a simple, low-slung house—a crystalline box—with indentations that create movement in the floor plan and niches for the art. Surprises ensue, capturing shifts in time and nature. At the entrance, a freestanding concrete wall holds movable, colored acrylic rods in horizontal slots that throw playful shadows. Inside, the notched entry hall is a glass connector between public and private spaces, while providing a covered alcove for an outdoor flame sculpture



Throughout the house, art is cleverly positioned in alcoves and recesses that dissolve the boundaries between inside and out. On the dining terrace, welded steel tubing is a vivid frame for the ever-changing eastern red cedars.

## The Art of Making Art Houses **Collectors' Edition**



A flame sculpture anchors a covered indentation in the entry hall. Opposite, clockwise from left: Reddish gravel mirrors the house's roof overhang; a recycled-glass pocket garden invites raking and rearranging; above the linoleum kitchen counter, colored light can be changed seasonally and on a whim; and movable acrylic rods offer an interactive arrival point at the front door.

on axis with the front door. Nature's own artistic perspective is invited in, too. A floating steel frame outside the dining room brings into focus the land's indigenous eastern red cedar trees. And "au naturel" takes on new meaning in the shower, where a thin glass wall is all that separates the bather from the woods. ■ Just as the design creates a series of moments when you encounter art or nature, seeing something you might not have noticed before, the house also is a discovery—at the end of a long gravel drive. The rectangular structure has a mild steel exterior, flat steel roof, and reddish granite gravel beneath the 8-foot overhangs, suggesting that it might have pushed up, wholly formed, from the earth. Inside, unsealed concrete floors are made from the same color aggregate as the gravel outside, creating the illusion that the floor goes right through the wall. "The outdoor art expands your vision of the space, especially when it's lit at night," Elliott says. "It's as if the glass wasn't there." ■ Stan Lingo, owner of Lingo Construction, explains that "common construction materials were used to make clean, unique pieces of art." PVC sleeves hold the entry wall's acrylic rods, and the eastern red cedars are framed with steel tubing, welded and ground clean, and painted yellow. Avoiding the clutter of gutters and downspouts, the roof perimeter is leveled so that

water flows off evenly, except where it's shaped to spill rain from a downpour into the lap pool, creating a 20-foot-wide waterfall the owners can walk behind. ■ Elliott notes that, while stitching together inside and outside, the spaces for art also make the house feel more intimate. "We are living in a time when scale has been forgotten; [it's] virtually invisible in today's American homes, with their voluminous entries and great rooms," he says. "Here, you feel comforted and connected to nature. You can literally sit in your living room and watch the foliage turn color, fall, and the trees become skeletons. It's almost like your own movie, except better." ■

**Project Credits:** Architect: Elliott + Associates Architects, Oklahoma City; Builder: Lingo Construction Services, Yukon, Okla.; Living space (including garage): 4,308 square feet; Photographer: Robert Shimer/Hedrich Blessing. / Resources: Bathroom fixtures/hardware: Kroin, Waterworks; Countertops: Forbo; Kitchen fixtures/hardware: Hastings; Paint: Sherwin-Williams; Tile: American Olean; Windows/glass: Kawneer.