



The home was built on a clearly defined and limited budget, with a compact footprint of 16 by 40 feet for the main body of the house. It was designed to take maximum advantage of views and sunlight and has a Five Star Plus rating from Efficiency Vermont.

GREAT HOUSES

Photos by Susan Teare



The wood in the main-floor living space is locally sourced and finished with Vermont-made tung oil, which is sustainable, easy to maintain and soft to the touch.

Writing Retreat



Stowe architectural designer Milford Cushman had some interesting things to consider in designing a Vermont vacation home for Demaris Wehr and David Hart. For starters, the couple—both academics and writers who live on Martha’s Vineyard—had a limited and clearly defined budget. Second, the building site was

tricky: a steep hill on a parcel of land in Calais. Third, the site faces north, but Cushman wanted to maximize sun and light from the south. And although David is in his 80s, the owners were adamantly opposed to placing the master bedroom on the main floor. “They wanted the journey of going upstairs,” Cushman says.

When the plans were complete, Cushman had designed a contemporary home on three levels, with a compact footprint that measures 16 by 40 feet for the main body of the house—a modest 640 square feet—plus a 13 by 14 mudroom and porch, a screened porch and a deck. The ground floor has two guest bed-



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ANNOUNCING... Cynthia Knauf Landscape Design has moved to a new space, located at Suite 24 of the Champlain Mill in Winooski Vermont.

LEWALLEN

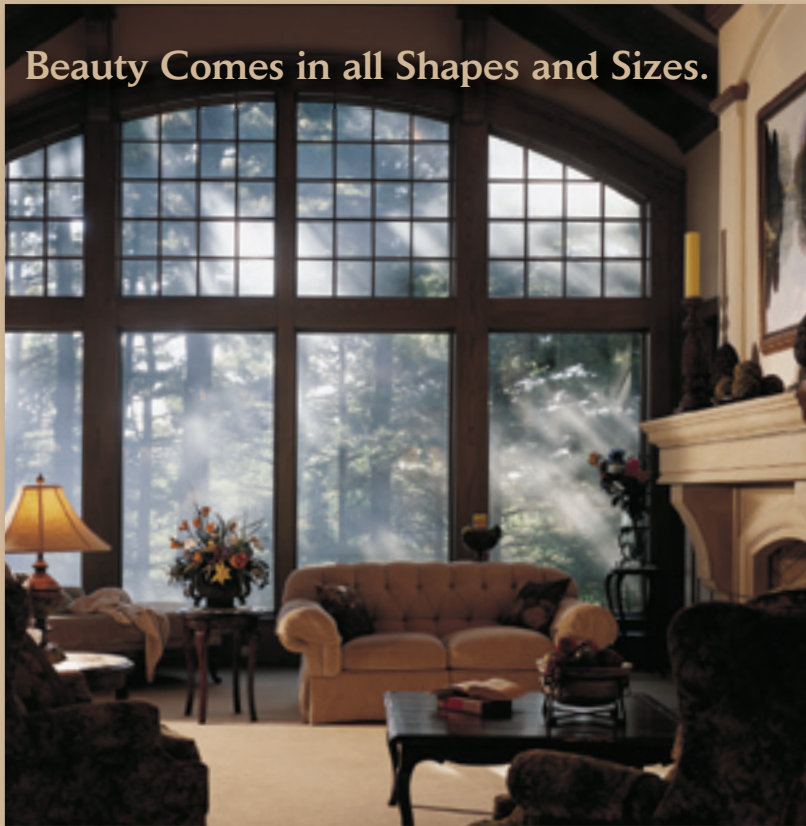
BUILDERS

It is easy to have confidence in Michael's work & professionalism. As an old house (1830's) owner, I appreciate his thorough knowledge & especially his flexible, apt problem-solving skills for a full range of projects. I value his interest in working with the house's historical requirements (and my preferences) in creating millwork and trim. He demands that he get it right, both in build quality and in visual appeal. As I demand the same, I will call on Michael again any time I need work done on this or a future home.

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This photo: The home has two shed roofs; one over the main-floor entry (seen here) and another over the living room (previous page). Below: A guest sits at the dining table. The overhead cabinets are glass on both sides to allow light to pass through. Stairs lead to a master suite on the upper level.

rooms, a small office nook for David, a full bath and the utility room. The top floor contains the master suite.

You enter the house on the main floor, through an entry porch covered by a shed roof. This central level comprises the mudroom, a half-bath and the open kitchen, dining and living spaces. The latter three rooms are the heart of the house and share expansive views of the surrounding landscape. In these rooms and throughout the house, the building materials were carefully chosen, with an emphasis on sustainability. The floors, ceilings, cabinets and trim are Eastern white pine; the countertops and vanities are heart pine; the timbers used to construct the screened porch are hemlock; the deck is local tamarack and the exterior is made of white pine and white cedar shingles from the Northeast King-





Photo: Susan Teare © 2009.

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Top photo: Looking back at the kitchen from the dining area, with a screened porch and deck to the right. Above: The home sits atop a steep hillside on six acres in the town of Calais; it is used as a vacation and writing retreat.



dom. The interior wood surfaces are finished with polymerized tung oil from Sutherland Welles Ltd. in North Hyde Park; this product is smooth to the touch and environmentally friendly. The building is warmed by hot-water baseboards, radiant heat and a super-efficient woodstove.

The kitchen island has a curved seating bar that leads the eye toward the small dining area. The overhead cabinets are narrow, with glass doors on both sides, which allows light to pass through and has a more spacious feel than traditional solid-wood cabinetry.

“David and Demaris love being here,” says Cushman. “And that was our goal: to create a sacred place for creativity, away from a lot of the hustle-bustle of their lives. We hoped to create a little jewel.” 🌿

Architect: Cushman Design Group, 100 Mountain Road, Stowe; (802) 253-2169, cushmandesign.com. General contractor: Montpelier Construction, 164 Plainfield Brook Road, Barre; (802) 479-5882, montpelierconstruction.com.

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