

# INTERIOR DESIGN

OCTOBER  
2005



stairway to heaven







# imagination takes flight

A house by Scott Hughes spreads its wings on Florida's Jupiter Island

*text: saxon henry photography: ken hayden*







#### For travel agents and spiritual

gurus, the phrase “footprints in the sand” is awash in sentimental connotations. But for designers working along the sandy Atlantic coast of Florida, the word *footprint* can mean the difference between building and not building. Such was the case in Jupiter Island when SH Arc was hired to design a beach house on an 80-by-250-foot site where zoning regulations would normally have prohibited new construction.

“Restriction lines from the ocean and the street overlapped, leaving no buildable area,” principal Scott Hughes explains. Fortunately, salvation came from two preexisting elements: a foundation of a 1980’s house that was never fully built and a reinforced-concrete seawall, neither of which would be legal today. After incorporating the seawall and footprint into plans for the new house, reducing the square footage that the clients had initially requested, and ensuring that the first floor was elevated enough to let the water run underneath during the worst storms, SH Arc gained permission to go forward.

The position of the foundation allowed Hughes and managing partner John Umbanhowar to build much closer to the ocean than usual, a definite plus for an interior intended to relate to the beach as completely as possible. Their 3,500-square-foot structure is shaped like an asymmetrical H, with a pair of two-story wings connected by a single-story section. Hughes

thought of the group as “three objects that had washed onto the beach together.”

One side of the H is a glazed cube that contains the double-height living area and an office topped by a loft. “The glass box presented definite hurdles,” Hughes admits. “We had to satisfy hurricane ratings, achieve adequate sun protection, and protect hatching sea turtles, which might confuse interior lighting with moonlit water.” First, he researched tinted glass, but he soon discovered that it would look too “Darth Vader-ish.” Instead, he chose fritted glass; its subtle patterns fulfill the requirements without being too dark.

The middle section, only a single story, contains the open kitchen and dining area. Inside, maple establishes visual unity →

**Previous spread:** An existing footprint let SH Arc build a 3,500-square-foot house on an 80-by-250-foot ocean-front lot in Jupiter Island, Florida. The house’s two wings, one glass and the other stucco, are wrapped by a railing of anodized aluminum.

**Top:** Quartz counters cap the maple cabinetry in the kitchen, part of the house’s middle section. **Center:** The fritted-glass wing is dominated by the double-height living area, where Le Corbusier’s LC2 armchairs in chrome and cotton sit on a custom wool rug. **Bottom:** Architect Scott Hughes put two skylights in the bottom of the 32-foot-long lap pool spanning the roof terrace.

**Opposite:** A 9-foot ceiling delineates the kitchen and the dining area, where chairs by Charles and Ray Eames surround Jean Nouvel’s steel *Less* table. To unify the public spaces, SH Arc installed French limestone floor tile throughout.

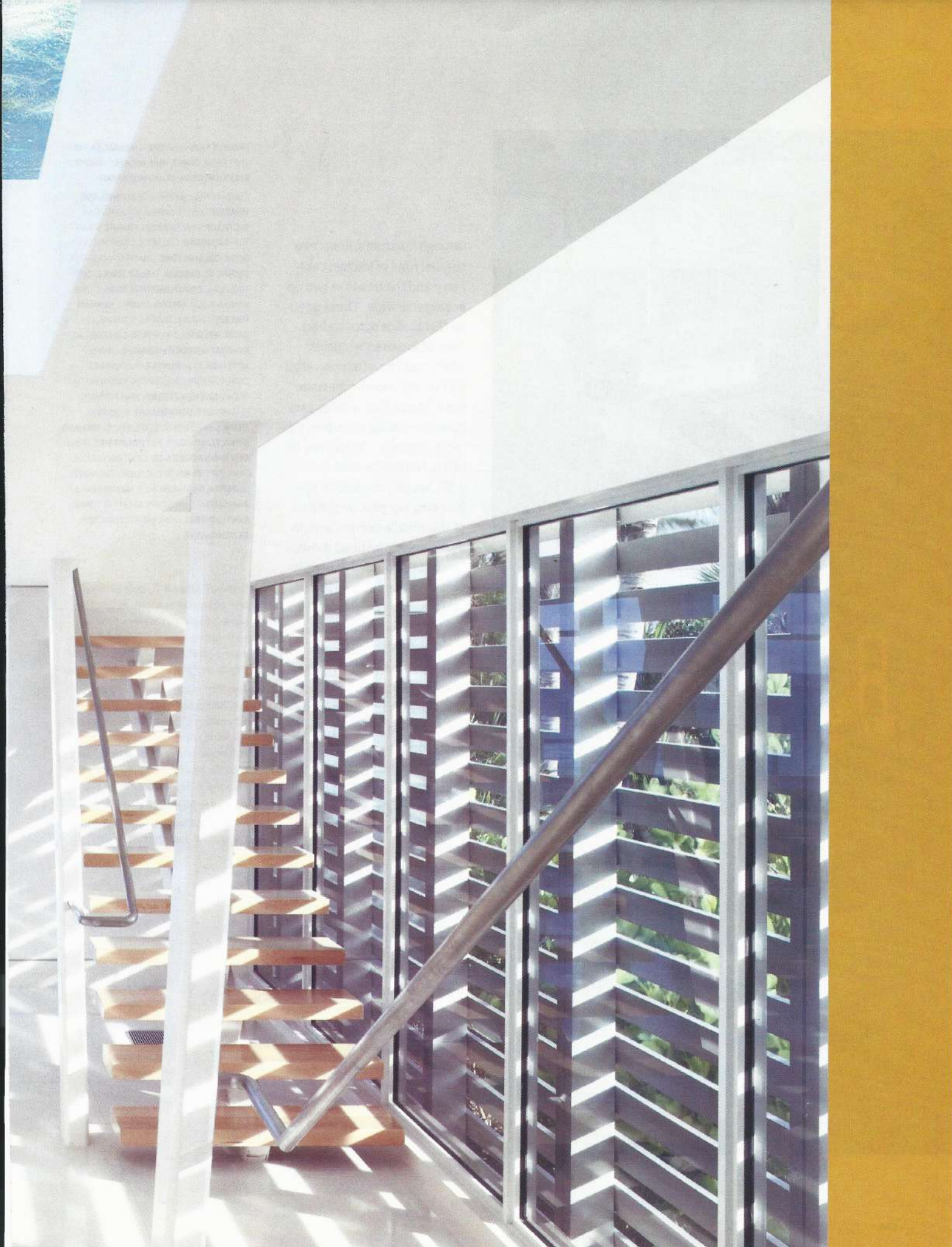
















through horizontal lines: two parallel runs of kitchen cabinetry and the treads of two opposing stairways. These angular flights slice across a backdrop of louvered windows, which cast late-afternoon shadows on the French limestone floor. Mechanical shades can cover the sliding glass doors directly opposite. Open, they let in the Atlantic breezes.

SH Arc cleverly built a 32-foot-long lap pool on the roof of this middle section and, in a particularly inspired move, brought the reflective undulations of water indoors by putting a pair of skylights between the kitchen and staircases, right in the path of swimmers. "The skylights create dynamic sun effects," Umbanhowar says. "Plus, there's the surprise factor. In Florida, no one expects a pool on top of a house."

A commanding two-story stucco cube, almost twice as large as the glass box, forms the other side of the H. This is the sleeping wing, with two guest rooms and baths upstairs and the master suite on the first floor. In a corner of the bedroom, in front of the huge windows, a lounge chair's blue fabric echoes twilight gradations of sky and water. And the immense horizon line renders the room raftlike, like it's adrift on open water. With luck, that will remain just an illusion. 🌊

PROJECT MANAGER: DAVID MONTALBA. PROJECT TEAM: DANIEL HUH; MICHAEL KNOPOFF; STEVE KNUDSEN; AYAKO MIZUSHIRO.

CURTAIN WALL (EXTERIOR): ALUMIGLASS; VIRACON (GLASS). CABINETRY (KITCHEN): BULTHAUP. SINK FITTINGS: FRANKE. STOVE-TOP: GAGGENAU. COUNTER STONE (KITCHEN, BATH): CAESARSTONE. CHAIRS (LIVING AREA, BEDROOM): CASSINA. TABLES: KNOLL. CUSTOM RUGS: CROWN ORIENTAL RUGS. TABLE (DINING AREA): UNIFOR. CHAIRS: HERMAN MILLER. CUSTOM LOUVERS (STAIRWELL): GATOR WELDING. CHAIR FABRIC (BEDROOM): KVADRAT THROUGH MAHARAM. LAMPS: ARTEMIDE. FAN: HUNTER. CUSTOM BED, BUREAU (BEDROOM), CUSTOM VANITY (BATHROOM): KITCHEN STRAND. SINK FITTINGS (BATHROOM): DORNBRACHT. FLOORING: HAIFA. CHAISE LONGUES (TERRACE): RICHARD SCHULTZ. WINDOWS: POT INDUSTRIES. PAINT: BENJAMIN MOORE & CO. LIGHTING CONSULTANT: ISP DESIGN. STRUCTURAL ENGINEER: ALBERTA. GARGUILIO. MEP: WOJCIESZAK & ASSOCIATES. LANDSCAPE ARCHITECT: INNOCENTI & WEBEL. GENERAL CONTRACTOR: BENCHMARK III.

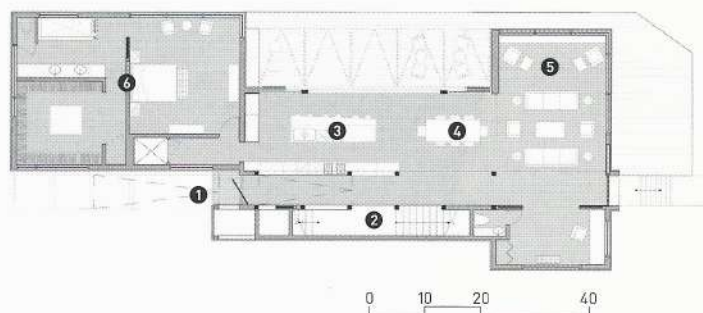
**Previous spread:** To help diminish late-afternoon sunlight, Hughes designed aluminum louvers for the west-facing windows behind the opposing staircases, which have maple treads and stainless-steel handrails.

**Top:** The master bedroom's oak bed and bureau and wool rug are all custom. Toshiyuki Kita designed the Wink chair. **Center:** The rear entry is framed in stucco. **Bottom:** Quartz tops the master bath's custom vanity. Flooring is French limestone tile.

**Opposite:** Richard Schultz's 1966 Collection chaise longues appoint the ground-level terrace.



*Scott Hughes thought of the glass wing, the stucco wing, and the middle section as "three objects that had washed onto the beach together"*



- 1 ENTRY
- 2 STAIRWAYS
- 3 KITCHEN
- 4 DINING AREA
- 5 LIVING AREA
- 6 MASTER SUITE