

A photograph of a tropical home with a thatched roof and a large yellow lantern hanging in the entrance, surrounded by lush greenery. The scene is captured from a low angle, looking up at the entrance of the house. The roof is made of dark, textured tiles. The interior is visible through the open archway, showing a large yellow lantern hanging from the ceiling. The house is surrounded by tropical plants and trees, with a stone path leading to the entrance. The overall atmosphere is warm and inviting.

NEW TROPICAL CLASSICS

Hawaiian Homes by Shay Zak

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MALAMA 'AINA: CARE FOR THE LAND

Erika Heet

For architect Shay Zak, “each house is a direct response to two things: the site and the client.”

Faced with the eternal challenge of integrating a home into the landscape, Zak, who consistently extols the virtues of the natural world, uses nature as a divining rod that points to each house’s ideal placement. Complementing that positioning is the influence of the people who will live there. On that theme, Zak often cites his mentor, the Pritzker Prize-winning Spanish architect Rafael Moneo, who once claimed: “Having a good client gives you the feeling that the work is wanted and that ultimately it is going to find shelter and protection in a broad sector of society. The client is, to some extent, the guarantee of the work’s durability, success, and permanency.”*

Zak likens his architectural progression over the last decade to his shifting taste in art, from plein air paintings to the work of abstract artists like Donald Judd and Ellsworth Kelly. Though Zak has made an intriguing evolution from neotraditionalism to a type of deconstructivism, hints of modernism reveal themselves in his more traditional houses, and shades of classical symmetry are



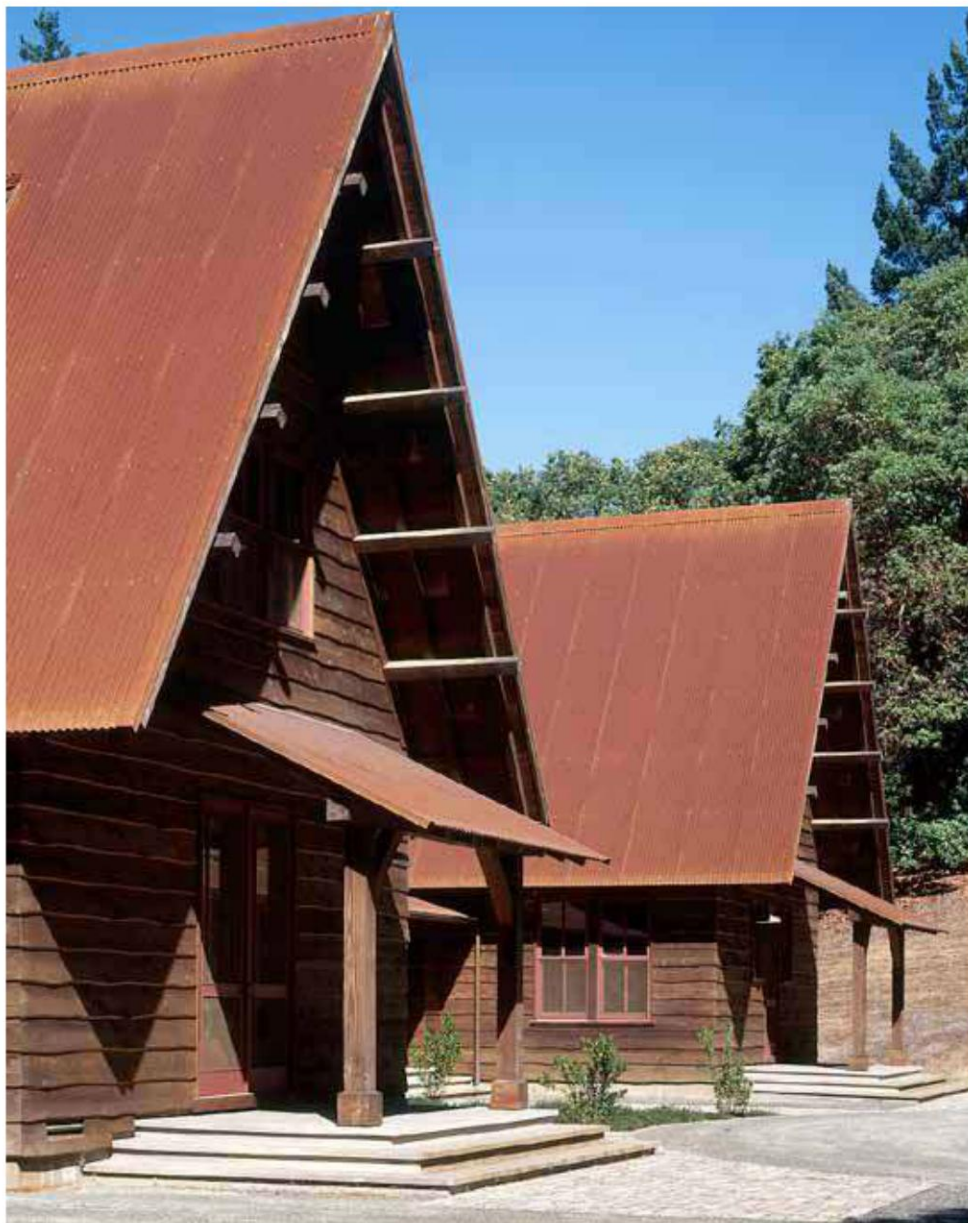
Hillside House
Ross, California 1998



Garden Pavilion
Atherton, California 2004

apparent in his more minimal commissions. He names the 16th-century classicist Palladio as an influence yet is preoccupied with modern concepts such as negative space, indoor-outdoor living, and clean lines. Like most architects, he avoids being pigeonholed into one particular style, but when pressed to define his own refers to it as “modern classicism.”

While this book is focused on Hawaii, Zak has designed several homes in California and elsewhere whose attributes are a coherent prelude to those on the islands. His seemingly contradictory style description—modern classicism—is particularly appropriate for one of the Northern California commissions, Hillside House, situated on an idyllic plot in the woodsy town of Ross. Hillside House rose like a phoenix from the ashes of the previous house, a 1960s teardown the owners donated to the local fire department for a “practice session” because Zak found that it “in no way related to the site.” The new home, modeled after an 1890s barn that still survives on the property, has roots in the past yet a refreshed sense of permanence: It is forward-looking, but with nostalgic ornamentation—



Ranch House
Yorkville, California 2003

shingle cladding, Shaker paneling, wildflowers spilling from window boxes—that suggests an almost fairy-tale character.

Other Zak houses, mainly those in California, have a storybook quality as well, slightly reminiscent of the work of another Bay Area architect, Julia Morgan—only without the Gothic reverie. Architectural levity is found in the gently tapering turrets of Garden Pavilion, the corrugated roof of Ranch House, and the lodge-like brackets of Corner House that recall those in Greene and Greene bungalows. Quite conversely, most of the Hawaii houses are beachy and exhibit a beautiful practicality. Yet these houses are all related, and should

be contemplated as an evolution, from the very well-behaved Hillside House to Hawaii’s Assembly House and its devilish disarray of spaces.

Ludwig Mies van der Rohe is said to have remarked that “God is in the details,” a deliciously arrogant, and inherently architectural, take on an old adage. Zak’s singular designs include the siding on Ranch House, whose edges are finished with a wavy pattern, making the exterior appear, from some distance away, to breathe. Its corrugated metal overhangs, reminiscent of early homesteaded outbuildings of the West, are modernized as they jut out at stark angles. The gate pavilion at Assembly House, in addition to being clad in meticulously hand-set stonework, has a slim, vertical gun-slot detail facing the mountains to balance the huge floor-to-ceiling views to the sea. The hidden gardens of Courtyard House are a triumph. The “woven” stone walls that accent Stone House are an ingenious middle ground between open and closed. They long for secrets to be passed between them; they are a play within a play, a manifestation of the tinker’s open fingers in *A Midsummer Night’s Dream*. The cost and effort required to achieve these effects are not



Corner House
Ross, California 1999

often referenced, though Zak admits that “it takes a lot of work to make them look this simple.”

Every architect has signatures; Zak’s include his Hawaiian roofs, heavily influenced by the Asian pagoda style. He begins each project from above, declaring, “I cannot conceive a floor plan without first thinking about what I’m going to do with the roof.” At Stone House, the roof is topped with Balinese-inspired diamond-cut shingles that read as smooth fish scales, stacked exaggeratedly on the overhangs and poised like perfect rows of teeth. The home’s arched “eyebrow” roof resembles the wings of a great bird, in the process of retracting as it settles back down to the ground. The houses are low-slung, nestled to the point of almost invisibility and seen from the air as a series of rectilinear pods.

Also fundamental to Zak’s designs is the orientation of homes to their views. The California houses are strengthened by vistas of the inland topography—old oaks, Pacific Madrones, brush-covered hills, and verdant woods—but views are especially important at the seaside. With good reason, Zak is reluctant to change from the courtyard-home-lanai-pool-sea formula—one does not buy an ocean-front lot to turn one’s back to it, and the seaside homes’ more memorable features include the views across the great room and lanai to the pool and ocean beyond. In this book, in addition to architectural details, photographer Matthew Millman captures sweeping shots of what one looking out to open land or sea would frame with his hands, well before sinking the first shovel.

Defined by those Pacific views, Zak’s Hawaii houses—under the spell of native customs and begging to be experienced barefoot—possess a sensuality that is wildly conducive to human existence. There is no feeling comparable to walking unshod over the island’s spongy seashore *paspalum* grass, then onto the houses’ varying surfaces of slate, stone, and smooth ipe wood. Trade winds sweep through their well-planned yet unseen axes, upending papers and flipping magazine pages as if by an invisible hand. From their floors to their splayed-radial ceilings, the houses are appointed with the

unfussy, refined finishes for which Zak has scoured the world: teak, Western red cedar, Chinese slate. “Ultimately,” he says, “I always search for creating the most appropriate and moving architecture experience while using the fewest elements possible.”

Most notably in the Hawaii homes, family members and guests are given increasing architectural autonomy. When comparing the plans for the houses, a clear pattern emerges. Beginning with Beach House, one guest pavilion has snuck away from the main house, then Courtyard House is split into several freestanding buildings. Cluster House marks the first time Zak really “pulled everything apart,” he says; followed by the Stone and Assembly houses, which became totally abstracted independent forms. The freestanding guest pavilions of Stone House—complete with private entrances and enclosed courtyards with inviting stone tubs and discreet outdoor showers—are a destination unto themselves, more secluded even than the master suite, which enjoys a place of prominence and shares an ocean view with the other primary spaces of the house. The sense of retreat at Stone House is underscored by the interior spaces, designed by San Francisco firm the Wiseman Group, where exquisite furnishings and soulful local art sing with subtle luxury and meld triumphantly with the architectural shell.

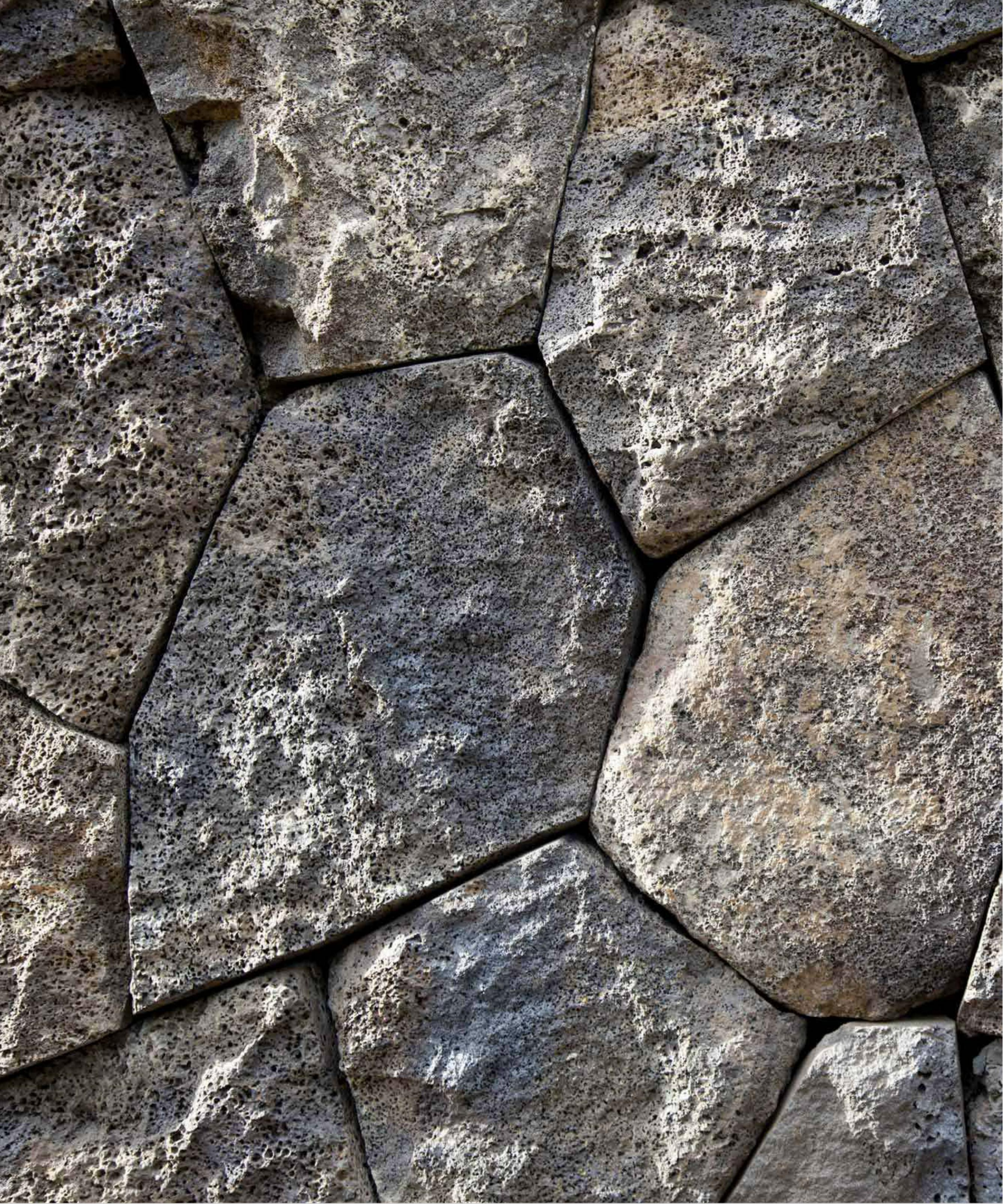
Zak’s Hawaii houses mainly rest in the adjoining Hualalai and Kukio communities, on the temperate Kona-Kohala coast of the Big Island. Because he has designed many homes there, areas exist in which several of his commissions are situated together, giving certain streets more cohesion than others. In the case of the Courtyard and Stone houses, the two make for stunning next-door neighbors that play off one another with understated variations in tone. Subtly attacking the sameness of many of the surrounding buildings, Zak strives for the sublime. Because there is a tension that arises from the undeniable spirit that flows through the Hawaiian islands, and from the fact that the limited open land is sacred to its people, one does not dare go into a building project without first considering what the Hawaiians call *malama ‘aina*, or care for the land. This

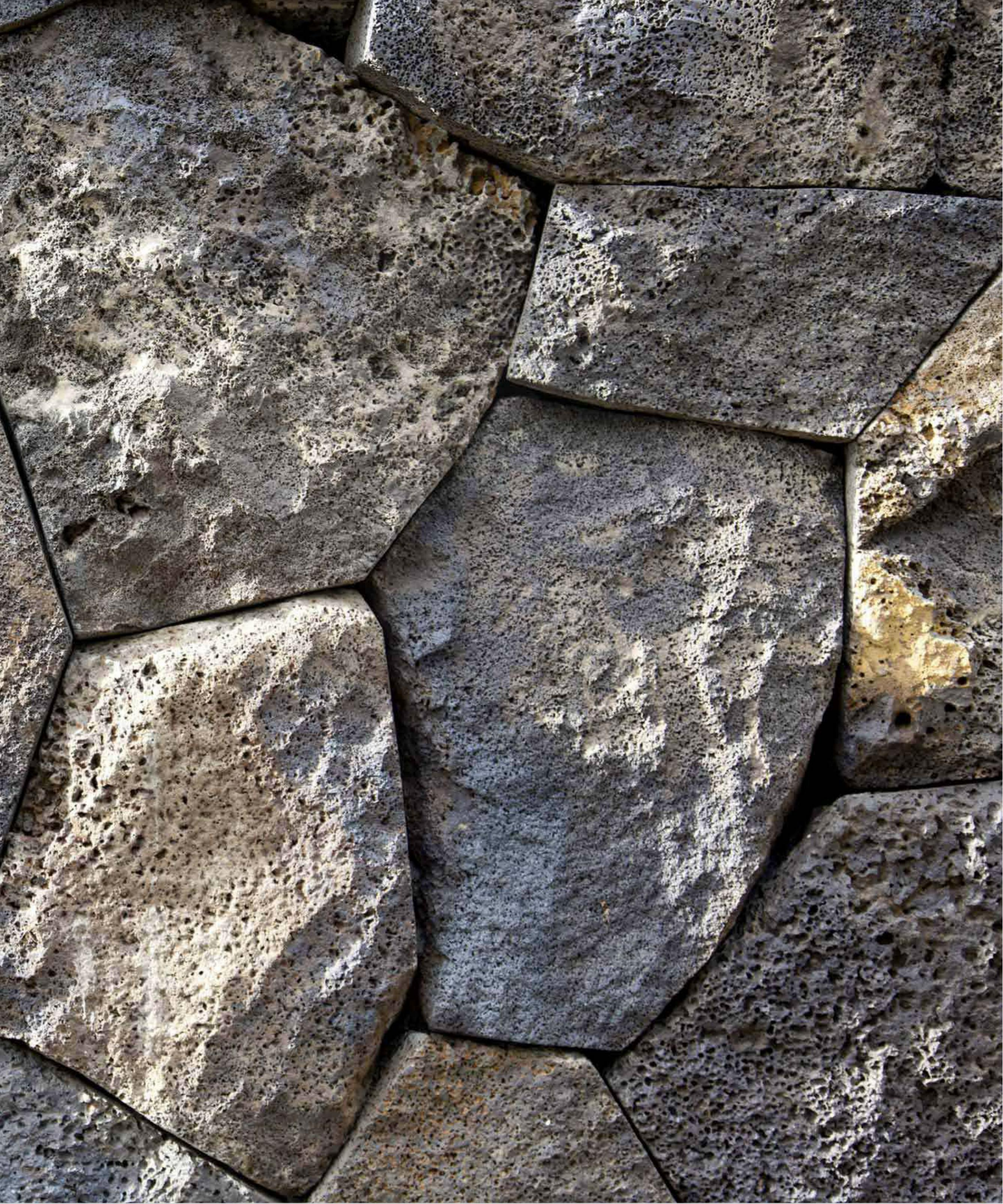
dictum has guided the locals for centuries in their quest to maintain a deep appreciation for living in harmony with nature. Zak's work thrives especially in concert with clients who honor his respect for what and who was here before, and for what and who may exist here later.

Reverence for the land is not limited to Zak's Hawaii houses; it has driven his California commissions as well. He has walked each site with the clients and studied every plane, every view, to find the proper placement. He has eschewed slavish interpretations of local vernacular, yet has paid very close attention to this language, allowing the houses, though unique, to suggest that they and their inhabitants truly belong where they are. They evoke the feeling of having remained in-situ for decades among the historic farms and barns.

More than two thousand miles across the sea, on the shores of Hawaii, the owners are rewarded with the same sense of home. They light their tiki torches when they are, as they say, "in residence." And when they are not, they shut the rows of pocket doors—first the screens, then the slat blinds, then the heavy wood doors—and the houses sleep, and wait for their inhabitants to return and allow them to come alive again.

*Zaera, Alejandro. "Winter 1994." Rafael Moneo 1967-2004: Imperative Anthology. Madrid: El Croquis, 2004. 21.





BUILDING CHARACTER

Paul J. Karlstrom

Paul J. Karlstrom spoke with Shay Zak over the course of a year in San Francisco. Their discussion addressed issues of process, style, influence, and the often-unclear status of architecture as fine art.

PAUL J. KARLSTROM Let's talk about your design process.

SHAY ZAK For me, it's intriguing to start a project with an idea, but not really know where it's going to go. Then when the project is complete, it is something entirely new. It is unique—a poetic and inventive response to a design problem. That is very rewarding.

I just got back from Hawaii, where I spent quite a bit of time at Assembly House. Nothing like it exists anywhere else. It's a small village really, including eighteen independent structures. It is not a house with a garden around it; it is a garden with the house broken up into several smaller pieces and placed "within" the garden. The garden is dominant. This whole concept developed out of what the clients said they liked. So, combining the client's thoughts with opportunities of the site, we came up with a personal solution. Not stylistic but inventive.

PK So, each project is separate and individual and needs to be discovered through the process?

SZ Yes, exactly. The first thing I do with a new project is see how far away from it I can get. Step back to see the big picture before delving into the specifics.

PK You approach a project with certain tools that worked well for you in the past.

SZ We all tend to repeat what works well for us in life, whatever it is. As somebody who is always looking for order, I tend to go in that direction on my projects. And so, what is order? For me, it is simplifying. The simpler the shapes and the fewer the type of shapes, the better. I wouldn't say I try to be a minimalist, just consistent and

rational. One aspect is consistency of character. When people walk through one of our projects, I want them to feel, not just see, that everything ties together. I want them to physically feel a sense of personality or character coming out of the architecture. And I think when we get it right they do.

PK I like that you've introduced the word *character*. And maybe we can think about that as parallel to, but not equivalent to, style. Isn't character more individual than style? You can find pictures of styles in books.

SZ That's a very good distinction. I think we want to get beyond the word *style*—it has so many negative associations. There are so many people in the world, and we are able to distinguish between each and every one. Everybody has a different character, just like they have a different look. You could put a billion people in front of me and I can easily pick you out. Getting back to architecture, it's the same thing. When you think in terms of character while designing, the thinking is deeper and more personal. Every building, despite style, has its own character.

PK "Style" suggests certain major features that are required to make that style. That's not very subtle. Am I right in hearing that you think character consists of more subtle differences? So in your buildings, what would be some of those character traits?

SZ Clarity of structure is probably one of the primary aspects of character. What is structure? With Assembly House, we expressed the structure as separate from the skin of the building. There's an external ring of columns that holds up the roof. And set inside the columns is the wall system, which is not a conventional stud wall, but sliding panels of glass, screen, and louvers. So when you approach a particular building you can read it. You say, "Ah, there is the structure. There is the wall. They have been separated for some reason. I don't know why." As a result your mind is challenged, and

your senses are pleased. You're thinking about it and enjoying the poetic language of the architecture.

PK How does the choice of materials influence a project's character?

SZ Fundamental to our work is the use of natural, durable, and timeless materials. I like to think our work has a kind of lushness to it. You want to touch it and be embraced by it. Stone, wood, copper—in general we like to use materials that get better with age. We are looking for what makes a home; therefore, warmth, solidity, and durability are fundamental when choosing materials.

PK How does light—so important in cathedrals—relate to contemporary domestic architecture?

SZ Light is so important. Light is like breathing. One of the things we're doing in Hawaii—we're doing it elsewhere too, but we're really able to do it in Hawaii due to the climate—is to break down the buildings into smaller pieces. For example, we'll do a bedroom that's a freestanding rectangle. It's a shoebox. And when we do that we can have openings on all four walls, so you're getting great light from all sides of the room. Varying qualities of light enter the room throughout the course of the day and can be modulated with sliding screens or louvers.

PK It seems you've become bolder over time with this concept of breaking down buildings into numerous parts.

SZ I can say that I've probably never been more uncertain about a project's success than I have with Assembly House. I was nervous that it wasn't going to work. There were so many structures—it would be awkward. You have to walk outside to go just about anywhere. I was worried that our kind of structural system, this unique envelope, wasn't going to keep the water out. I was concerned we were trying to do too much. But now that I see the project complete

along with everybody's enthusiastic response, it's really exciting. And it's the old lesson that the more you step outside of the box, the more able you are to create something new and unique and exciting.

PK And of course, the box is now of your own creation. So out of that, I would imagine, comes not a formula—certainly not a style—but a validated sense of creative design that can be carried to the next project.

SZ Absolutely. The best analogy for me is looking back to various artists like Donald Judd or Piet Mondrian. Mondrian's early works, and the same with Judd, are representational paintings of simple landscapes and still lifes—ordinary genre scenes done in their own, straightforward style. It's interesting to see Mondrian's evolution. There's a direct pathway from his early representational work to his classic primary-color and black grid paintings. You can tell that when he finally finds it, he knows it, and his confidence is amazing. And the most important thing is that he invented it. He discovered that language, an entirely new language.

Similarly, I guess I look at my early work as fairly traditional residential projects. They have a very nice feel about them. But they were straightforward, because we're all trying to find our way. But the exciting part in this is a lifelong journey to come up with an individual character that is not repeated, that nobody else has come up with, that's identifiably your own—that's what makes it so exciting.

PK That's how we tend to look at creative endeavor, creative activity—that it's a process of growth. What you are doing isn't just design. It isn't just a series of client assignments.

SZ No, not at all, it is a process of growth, and therefore it is always a search for something that at first is unattainable. For me, though, I find the underlying goal is always the same—I am looking for the work to create an emotional response.

PK This moves into the area of personal expression, as opposed

to commercial goals. After all, architecture—and this is what presumably distinguishes it from our romantic notion of the fine arts—is first and foremost a business enterprise. Architects who have successful practices do very well, more so than almost all visual artists.

SZ In large part I don't think architecture is art. I think it can be inspired by art. It's all semantics, but I think architecture is a big enough word to define, by itself, a big enough thing. What did Philip Johnson say about Frank Gehry's Guggenheim Museum in Bilbao? "When a building is as good as that one, fuck the art." For me, great architecture can be fine just being. I make a lot of references to art, but that's just by way of analogy. It is a profession. Therefore, as architects, we try to look professional—coats, ties, all that. We're punctual. If we're not, we're going to be seen as not being able to finish our drawings or finish the building. So we have to be business-like. We're not bohemians.

PK Artists aren't like that at all.

SZ Typically not. And if they are then you may not want to buy their art. So for me, this—let's call it the art side or the poetic side of architecture—is something we never talk about in client meetings. We don't say, "Let's make this very poetic." We're always talking about the business. What's your program? How big? How much? That's the language we speak. But I think the reason I have repeat clients is that they've been in my buildings, and they felt something, an emotional response, and they liked it.

This creative, spiritual side is something that I never talk about directly with our clients. It happens on the board. It's the drawing of plans over and over again, and the thinking of the space. So, in a sense, it's the art side—kind of the unspoken word.

PK I do think it matters how people think about what they do. If they think of it as having the ingredients of art, it has a real chance

of becoming art.

SZ Making a movie is a good example. Good movies evoke strong emotions—fear, love, sadness, happiness—and better ones evoke them in a stronger, more convincing way. Buildings can have that power. The last one that affected me in that way was the Cathedral of our Lady of the Angels in downtown Los Angeles, by Rafael Moneo, under whom I studied at Harvard University Graduate School of Design. When I went to the cathedral, it moved me. Such clarity, solidity, and depth. When Moneo spoke of Alvaro Siza he said, "Siza seems to want to tell us that he simply wants his work to 'reek' of architecture." I love that. Moneo's L.A. cathedral reeks of architecture.

Some buildings evoke a very strong emotion. Moneo's buildings do that. There's a sense of the building, there's a sense that the building will always be there.

PK Permanence.

SZ Yes. The cathedral is a permanent structure. It could be there for thousands of years. It was technically designed to be there for five hundred years. There's awareness of material about the place. You feel the coolness of the concrete. You can smell the concrete. Put your hand on it and you can feel its strength. It stirs all the emotions and senses. It even has a sound. When you walk in there's a sound of being surrounded by poured-in-place concrete.

Moneo's a modernist. But to me, he's at his best when blending modern and traditional ideas. I think that kind of gets to the heart of it for me. The National Museum of Roman Art in Mérida, Spain, was one of his first well-known buildings. The museum is a series of parallel walls with beautiful traditional brickwork with giant Roman arches. It's the first building I saw that was completely traditional and based on traditional building methodology, but at the same time, based on the way those walls were arranged and the way you move through those walls, it was a fundamentally modern plan. As with

the cathedral in L.A., being in this building is an emotional experience.

PK Do you think part of what you like is the way he penetrates large masses that could be handled in a number of ways?

SZ Yes, I think so, in that building. There are no real windows; there's no traditional language of door and window. He uses very thick walls. He has created his own personal language for allowing light to enter the building.

PK That seems sort of medieval, doesn't it?

SZ It does. The walls seem like they are 12 feet thick, but Moneo does this by folding planes of concrete around a room contained within. The way light enters the building also feels medieval.

PK Who are your other influences?

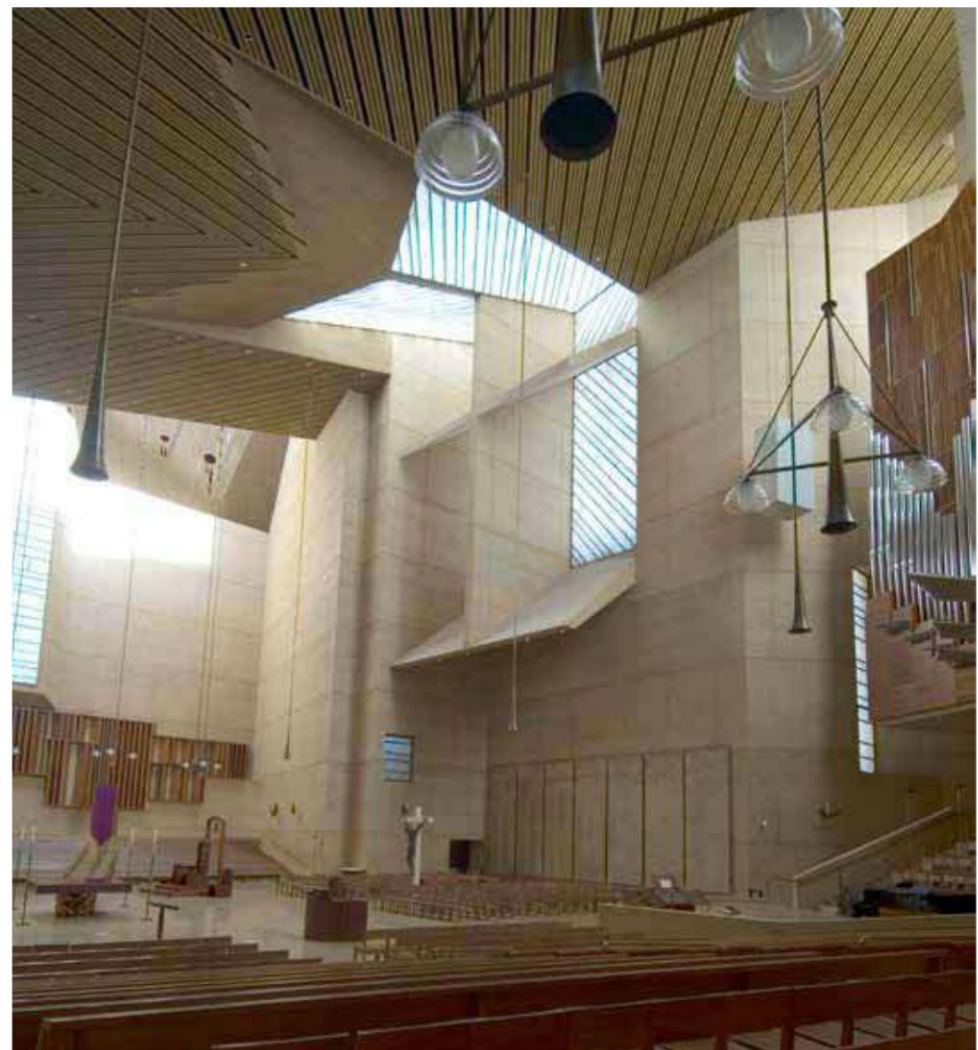
SZ Louis Kahn has been a great influence for me. Kahn, like Moneo, blended two sensibilities together: He is clearly a modernist, but also a classicist. The Exeter Library is a beautiful example of building pure geometric forms in masterfully detailed concrete and brick. Do you know Kahn's famous statement about what a brick wants to be?

PK No.

SZ Kahn famously asked the brick what it wants, and the brick said, "I like an arch." Then he said to the brick, "Arches are expensive. I can use a concrete lentil over you—what do you think of that?" And the brick said, "I like an arch."



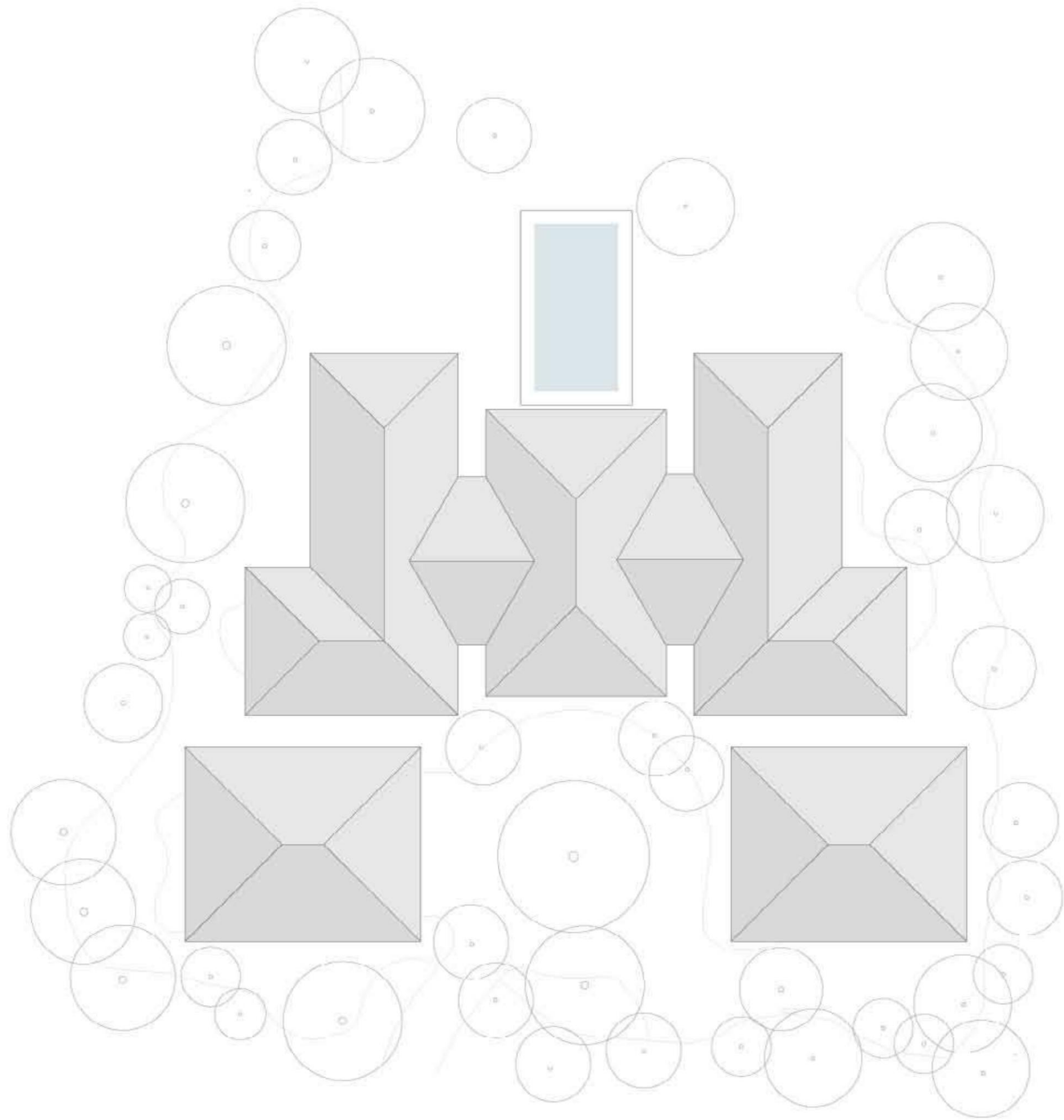
National Museum of Roman Art, Rafael Moneo
Mérida, Spain 1986



Cathedral of Our Lady of the Angels, Rafael Moneo
Los Angeles, California 2002







BEACH HOUSE

Hualalai, Kona Coast, Hawaii

2000

Beach House was designed with simplicity in mind, as straightforward, linear architecture that is in touch with its natural surroundings.

The site is organized around two primary garden spaces: the lush entry courtyard to the south, shaded by a canopy of monkeypod trees, and the contrasting minimalist pool garden to the north, a wide lawn punctuated by tall coconut palms. From the courtyard, visitors pass through the main living quarters and lanai and emerge at the pool, which focuses views out toward the Pacific. The house and pool were built on grade, to emphasize the visual and physical connection to the earth.

The rooms of the house were designed as individual “blocks” that jut into the landscape to create surrounding garden spaces. Each room has windows on at least two sides, maximizing views, airflow, and light, as well as walls that recede into pockets for accessibility to the ocean breeze.

The home design was inspired by both simple Hawaiian huts and local Mission architecture, which was derived from the New England-style frame houses built by missionaries who arrived on the islands in the mid-1800s from the East Coast. At Beach House, the primitive architectural form of floor, open walls, and a roof supported by columns was combined with elements of New England architecture such as double-hung windows, which extend nearly floor-to-ceiling.

In keeping with the theme of simplicity, the materials palette is minimalist: floors are fossil-rich limestone, chosen to match the color of the beach; exterior walls are unpainted stucco and lava; window and door frames are teak; and structural columns are local ohia logs.

The interiors celebrate traditional Hawaiian craftsmanship, with tikis by local carver Tom Pico, ceiling lights that reference the linear patterns of local Kapa cloth, and ceilings made of the woven grass mats known as Lauhala.







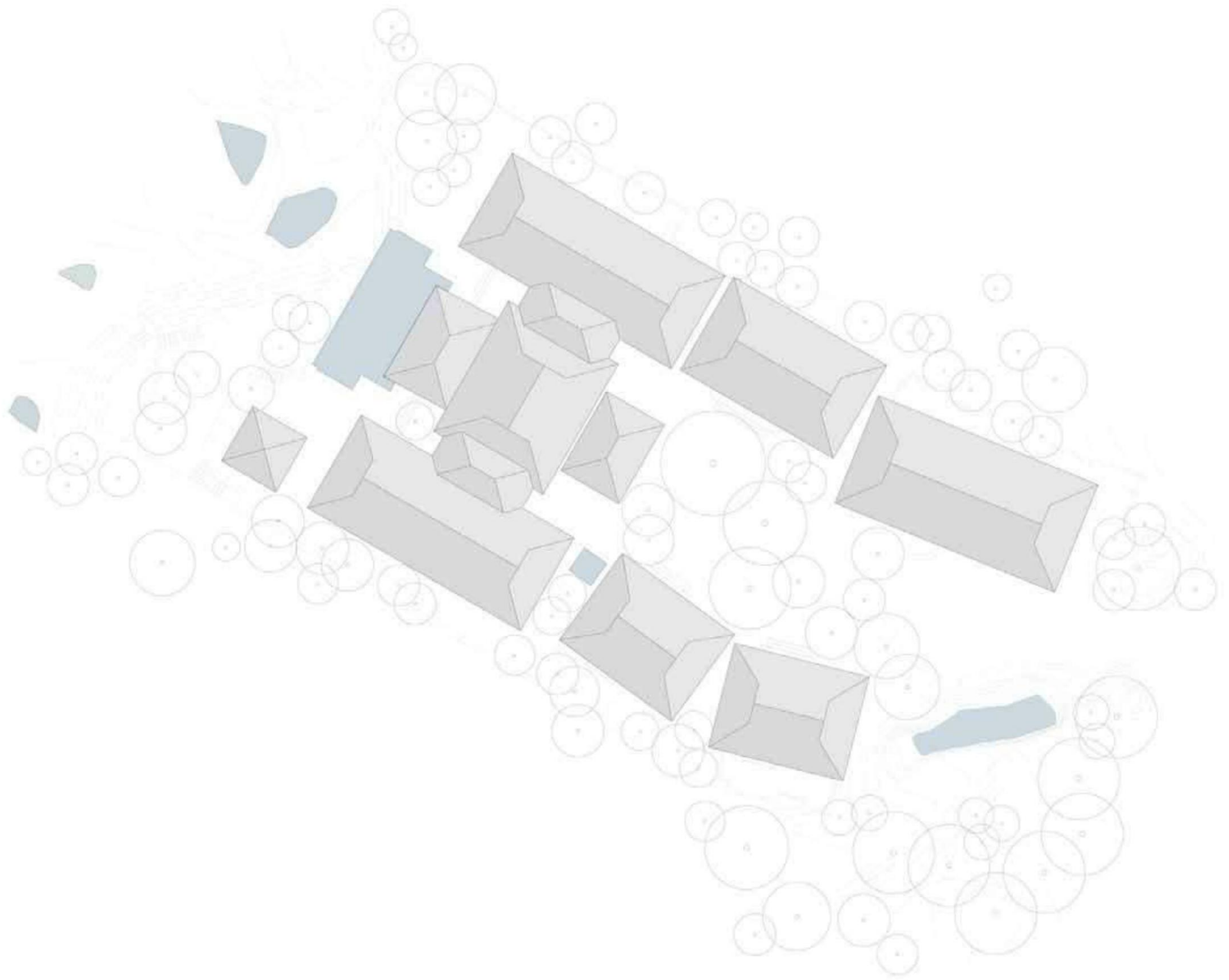












COURTYARD HOUSE

Kukio, Kona Coast, Hawaii

2004

The owners of Courtyard House honeymooned in Bali and are avid collectors of antiques and furniture from the island. Balinese architecture and culture were a main source of inspiration for their home on the Kona coast.

The house is designed as a collection of pavilions arranged around a central garden courtyard. The kitchen, dining room, master bedroom, and living room are one contiguous structure. Accessory areas—guest rooms, media room, and garage—are pulled away from the main house as eight individual structures, enhancing privacy and creating intimate garden spaces.

In keeping with Balinese architecture, all the structures are raised on plinths, constructed from local lava, and have individually articulated floors, walls, and ceilings. Walls are stucco, with openings that can be closed off by glass, wood, or screened panels. Ceilings have exposed cedar framing. The roof forms, clad in copper shingles, incorporate Dutch gables that allow light to enter the interiors from above. Most of the furniture and art is from Bali.

The site plan, which is terraced downhill toward the beach, was designed around naturally occurring anchialine ponds, which are widely found in the region and traditionally used by local fisherman as places to keep their catches. On the beach side of the house, the natural lava outcrop surrounding the ponds blends seamlessly with the lava wall that encases the swimming pool.























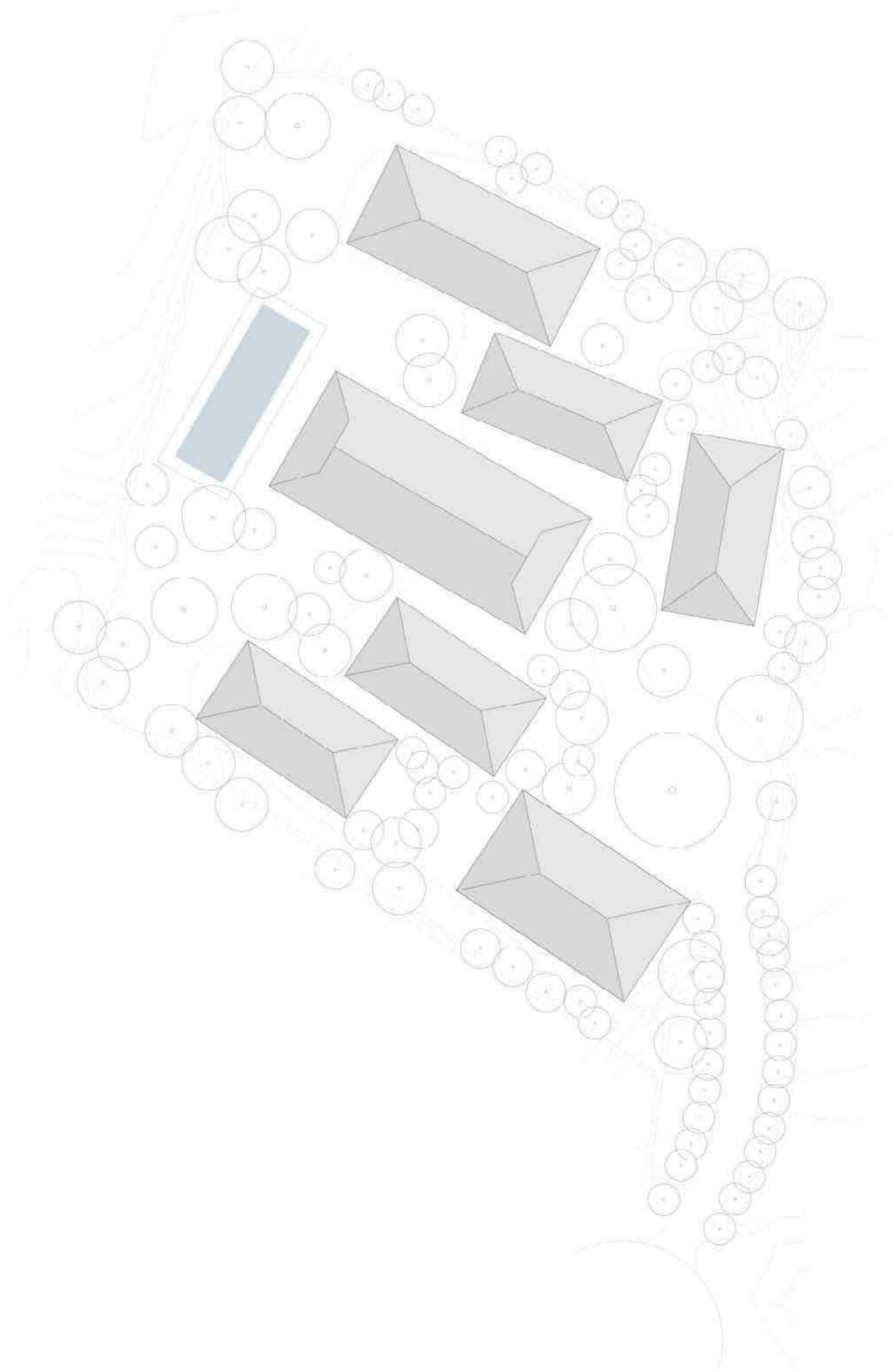












CLUSTER HOUSE

Hualalai, Kona Coast, Hawaii

2005

Cluster House is a response to the client's wish for a residential "village," in which all components are broken apart and distinct. The plan is simple: seven scattered rectangles, reminiscent of a school of fish.

With the exception of one guest pavilion that faces the lush entry courtyard to "greet" visitors, the pavilions are oriented to the northwest, allowing for ocean views. All have westerly-facing lanais, which keep direct sunlight out of the interior living spaces.

The primary structure houses the kitchen, living and dining areas, and the main lanai overlooking the Heath-tiled swimming pool. Here, the stone exterior and cedar trusswork ceiling reference early Hawaiian Mission-style churches. The other pavilions are smaller, simple stucco structures that are "subservient" to the main building. Floors throughout are Chinese slate.

The lack of hallways creates a constant interaction with the outdoors as one moves about the house. Further enhancing this quality are the public outdoor gardens and private shower gardens at each pavilion.

In the master pavilion, the full volume of the roof is expressed, lined inside with bamboo matting. The room's core—vanity, closet, toilet—float within the space. A sculptural bathtub was carved in China from a solid piece of granite.



















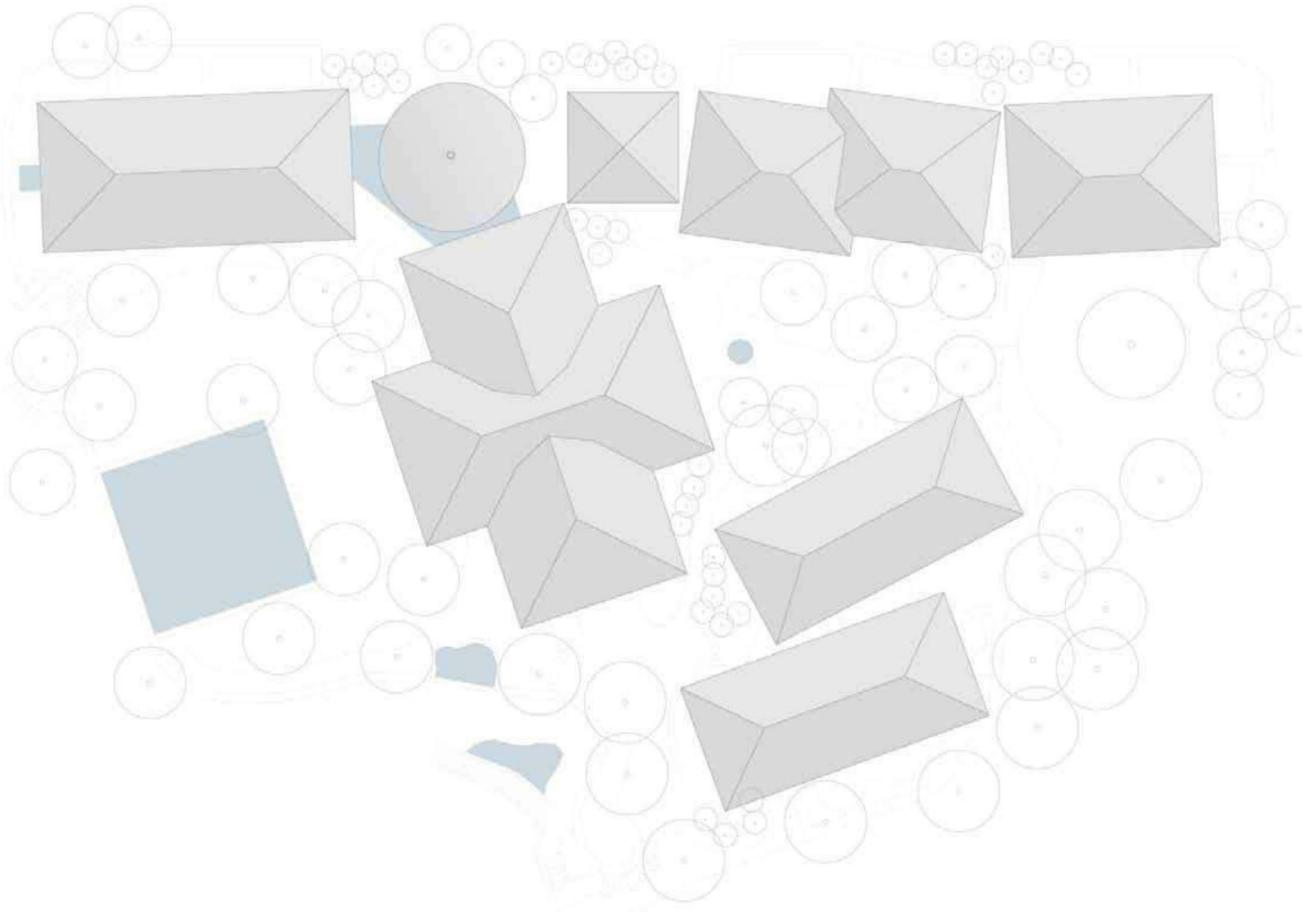












STONE HOUSE

Kukio, Kona Coast, Hawaii

2006

Intricately hand-carved surfaces are the defining features of Stone House.

The complex consists of seven sandstone boxes around a central, cruciform-shaped living structure; most of the buildings are arranged around the site's perimeter, creating a courtyard at the center and enhancing the garden experience.

The site is entered from the east, where a garage and pavilions housing four guest quarters flank the central courtyard garden. This leads to the main structure, in which the kitchen and living and dining rooms share one open space, divided by low partitions. Continuing through that structure, one arrives at the main lanai, which overlooks a swimming pool that is the same size and shape as the cruciform's square center. The north side of the cruciform connects to a circular office space that acts as a "hinge" leading to the master suite.

The walls are Chinese sandstone, assembled in the dry-stack method—without mortar—for a strong sense of permanence. Throughout the house, walls and other stone surfaces were hand-chiseled to create stippled, woven, or other effects. The textural motif continues on the roofs, for which a new technique was developed to lay teak in a diamond pattern—mimicking thatch but with extreme durability. The color of the teak is reminiscent of coconut palm trunks, and the roof edges resemble overlapping palm fronds.

Symmetry is expressed through two curved eyebrow dormers on the main axis of the house, at the entry and main lanais.

In all pavilions, movable walls retract into pockets, enhancing movement and airflow and fostering a strong indoor/outdoor interaction.





















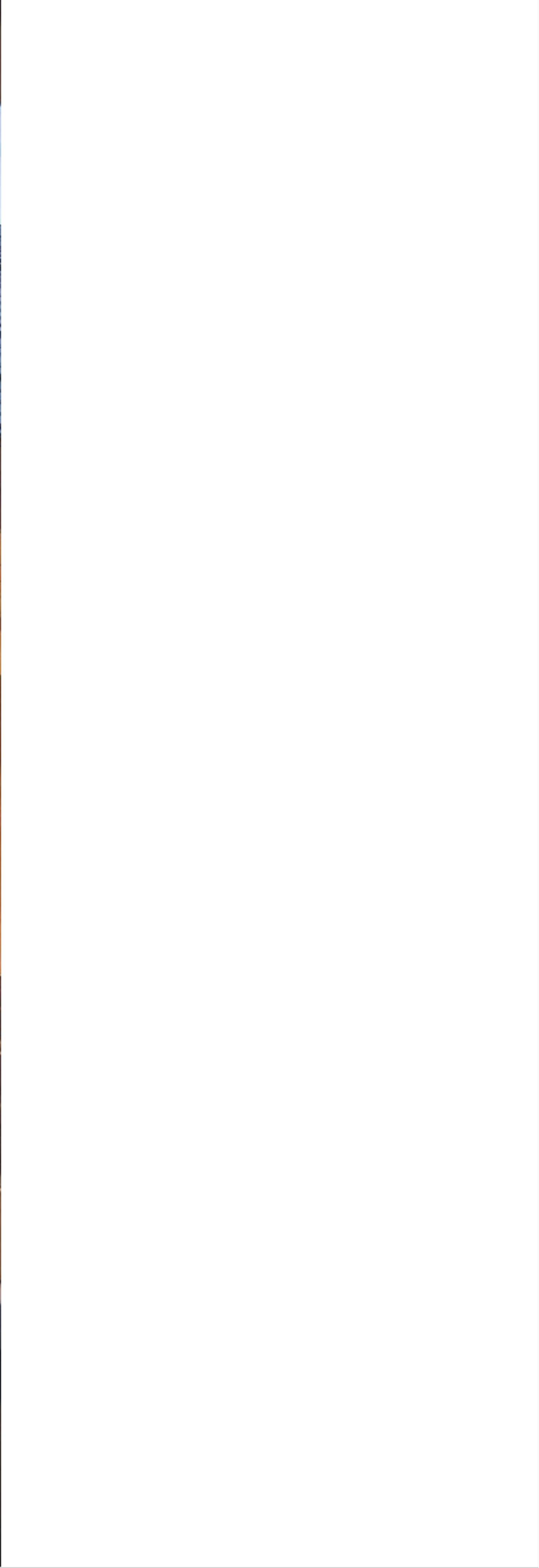


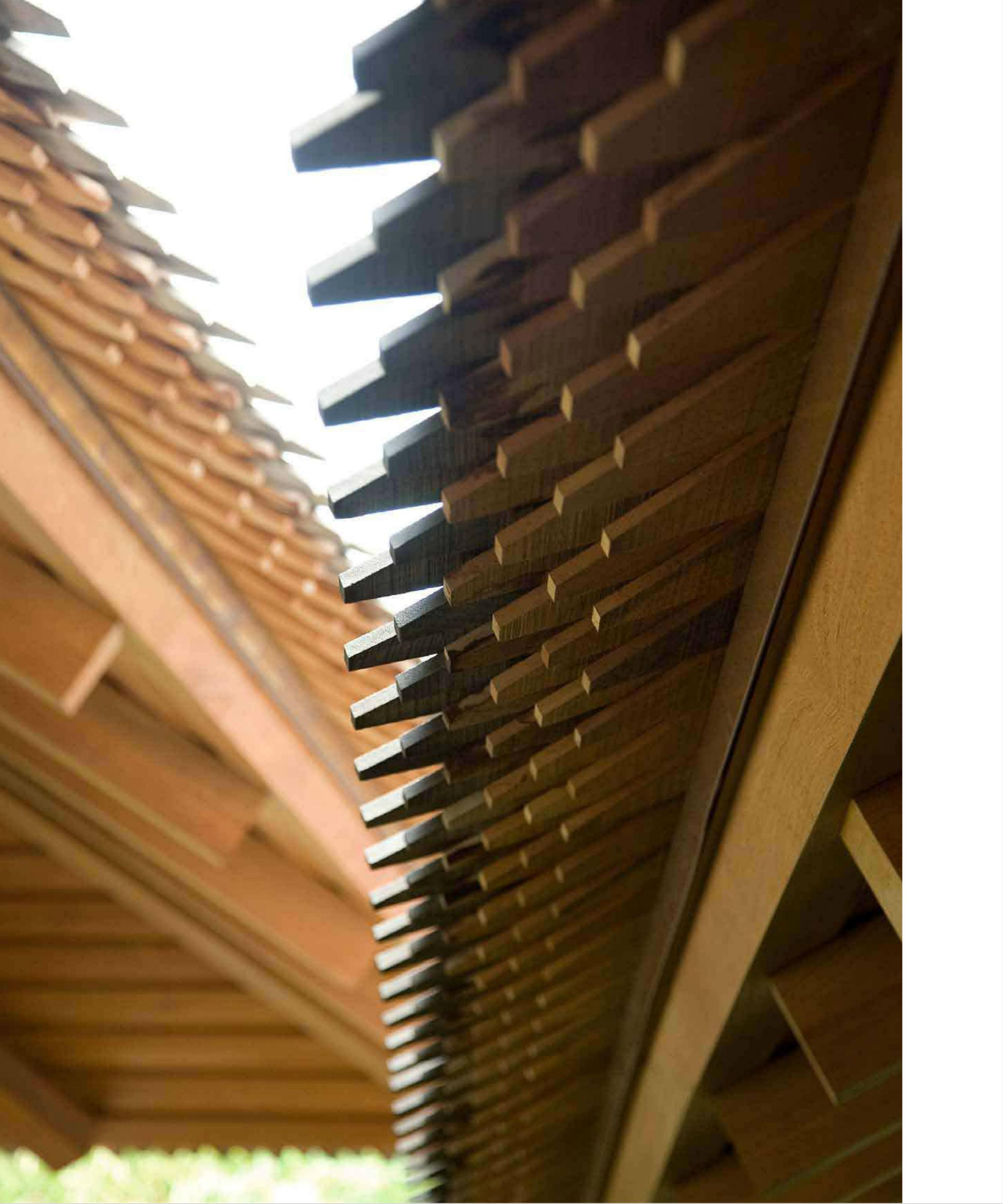
























ASSEMBLY HOUSE

Kukio, Kona Coast, Hawaii

2007

Assembly House was designed for London-based clients who spend some of their free time in Hawaii and receive numerous visitors. More of a residential campus than a house, the 4.5-acre complex consists of eighteen pavilions set around a formal family quadrangle and loosely defined guest courtyard.

The site is organized around a central axis that starts at the 10-foot-square stone entry lanai; carries through the central garden and a cruciform-shaped structure containing the kitchen and living, dining, and family rooms; and ends with the main swimming pool, a rectangle more than 100 feet long that extends views out toward the ocean. This central axis aligns with the 8,200-foot-tall Hualalai volcano some ten miles away to the southeast.

Entering the property, the family quarters—consisting of master and childrens' pavilions, two offices, and the tennis pavilion—are to the left of the main axis, while guest quarters—bedroom pavilions, a guest living/dining/kitchen structure, and a freeform pool and courtyard—are at right.

The pavilions are open on all sides. In some areas, freestanding wood columns frame non-structural wood partition walls that float within. These are combined with structural walls of quartzite stone, set horizontally to resemble rock strata—a special request of one of the owners, a geologist. Additional retractable walls throughout the complex are composed of three layers—glass, bronze insect screens, and operable louvers for privacy—that can be closed independently or in combination. Ceilings are of larch wood, set in radial patterns inspired by the architecture of Bali.

The serpentine perimeter wall is built of local lava stone, emphasizing the house's strong connection with its natural surroundings.































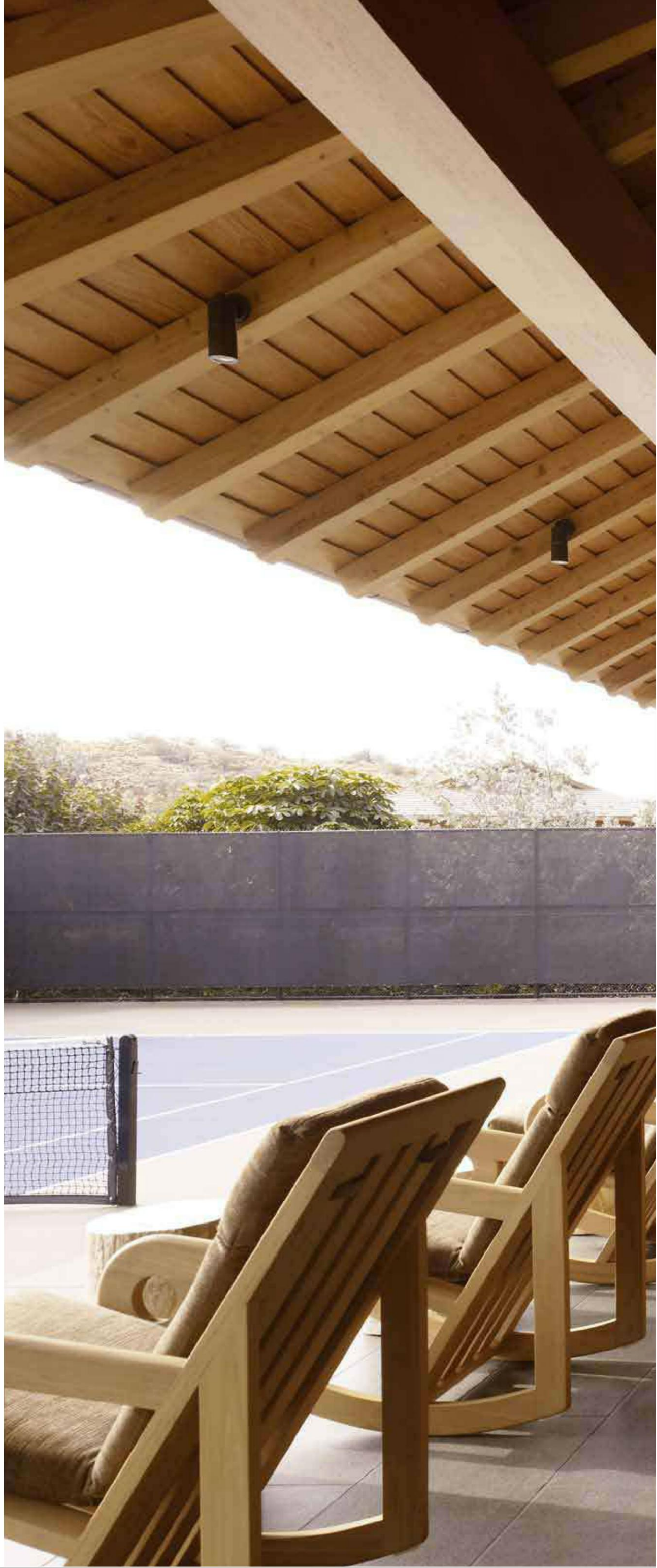














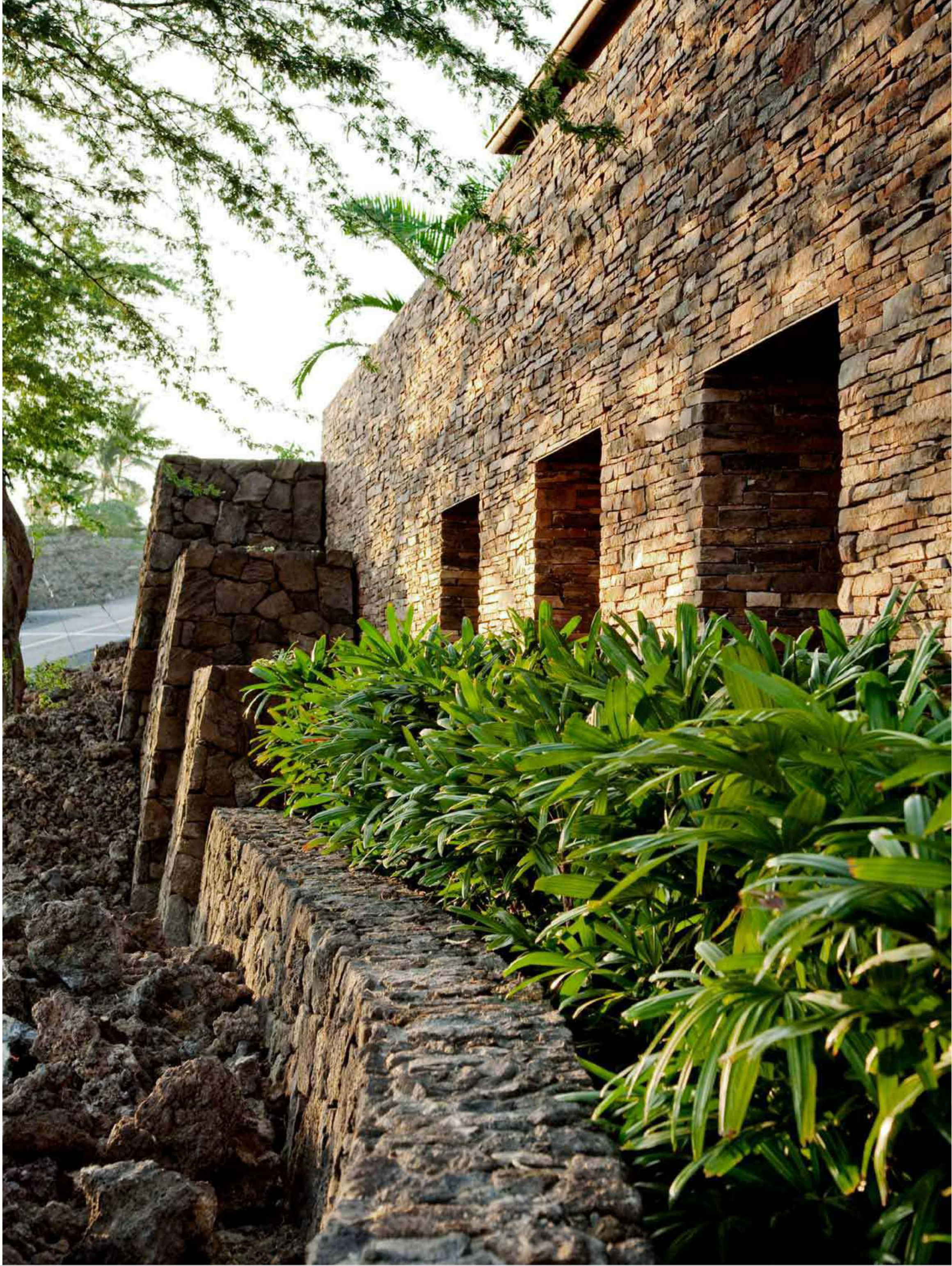






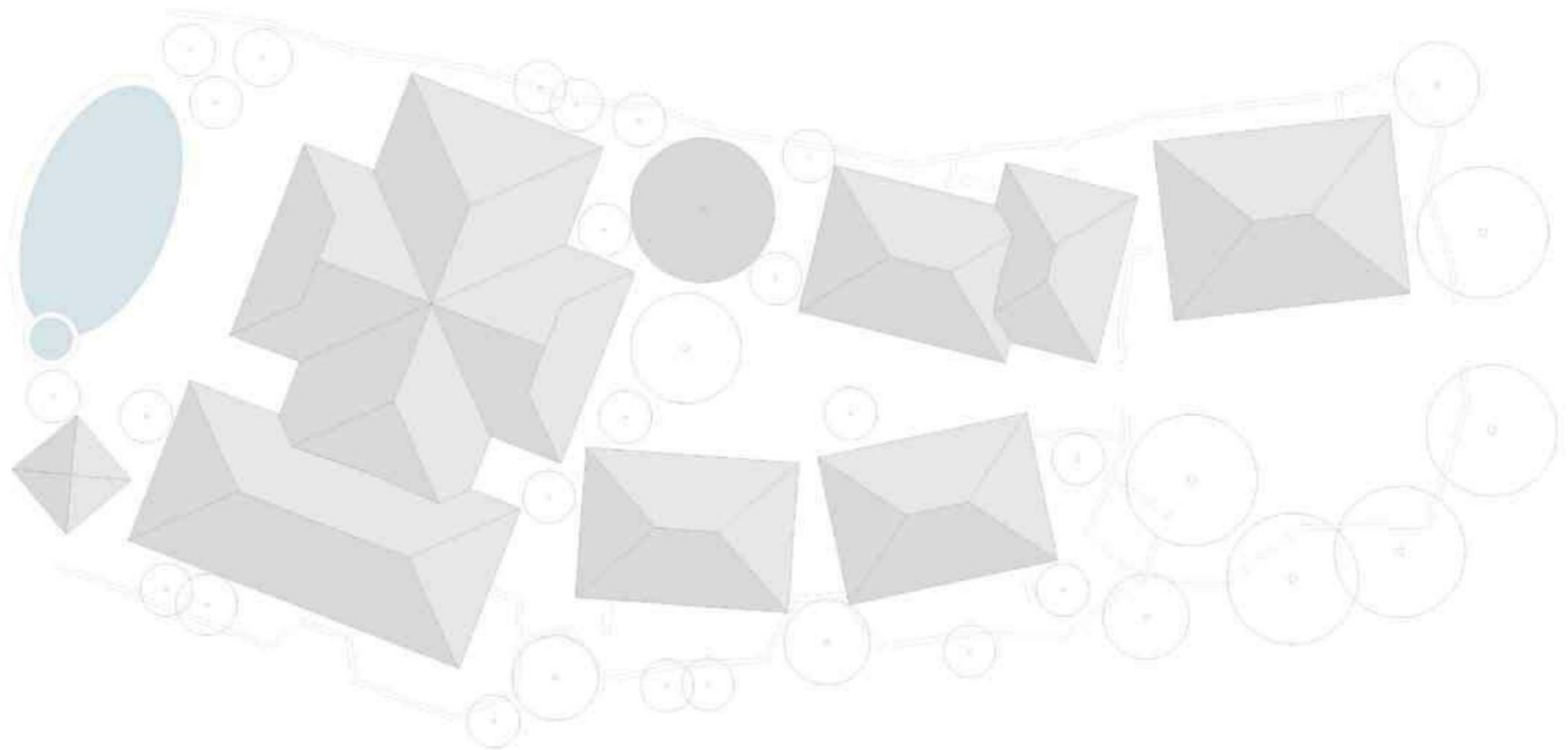












DOGLEG HOUSE

Kukio, Kona Coast, Hawaii

2008

Seven structures form the house on this long, narrow site shaped like a dog's leg.

The property is entered from the east through the auto courtyard. From there, visitors walk across the central garden, which is formed from four surrounding guest pavilions; into the cruciform-shaped main living pavilion, which has the kitchen, living room, and dining room; and through to a wide lawn with elliptical swimming pool, thatched-roof pool pavilion, and views to the ocean beyond.

The living and sleeping quarters are open on all sides, with retractable walls that incorporate layers of glass, insect screen, and louvers. Floors are of black Chinese slate, door and window frames are teak, and ceilings are Western red cedar. Exterior walls are integral-colored, steel-troweled stucco.

The main living pavilion has a strong outdoor connection via 28-foot-wide doors that open on either side to both the central garden and the swimming pool. The entire volume of the roof is expressed in the interior as a delicately detailed shell of cedar. The open kitchen and public living areas are illuminated by prominent hand-blown glass light fixtures.































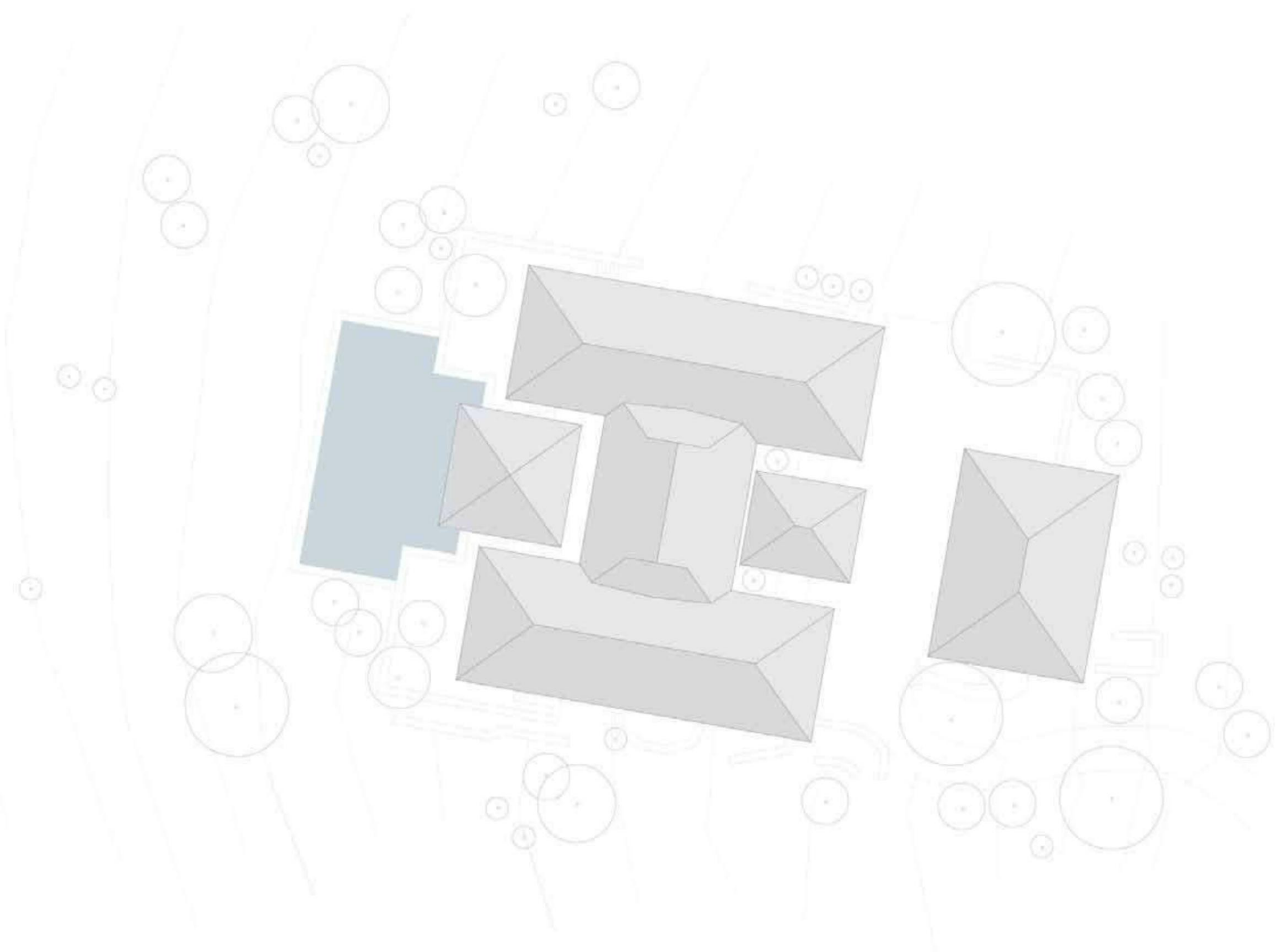












DESCEND HOUSE

Manele Bay, Lanai

2009

Perched on a cliff over Manele Bay on the southern coast of Lanai, once home to the Dole pineapple plantation, Descend House is named for its downward sloping site. The owners—who fell in love with the place for its natural beauty and remote location, accessed by ferry from Maui—requested a home with a large, casual central living space and bedrooms for visiting friends and family.

From the entry, one passes a two-story garage/guesthouse, where a series of stairs descends first to the entry lanai, great room, and main living pavilion, then down further to the pool level. The site ends at a cliff that drops down to the water. The 12% grade allows for magnificent views of the ocean and remote Sweetheart Rock from most of the complex.

The central axis—which passes through the garage and two lanais to the main house, with its symmetrical, H-shaped plan—emphasizes the linear downward progression.

The pavilions, with their four bedrooms, have retractable walls for maximum ventilation, and columns made from ohia tree trunks. Decorative railings are also ohia. Roofs are of slate tile, chosen for its resemblance to lava stone.



































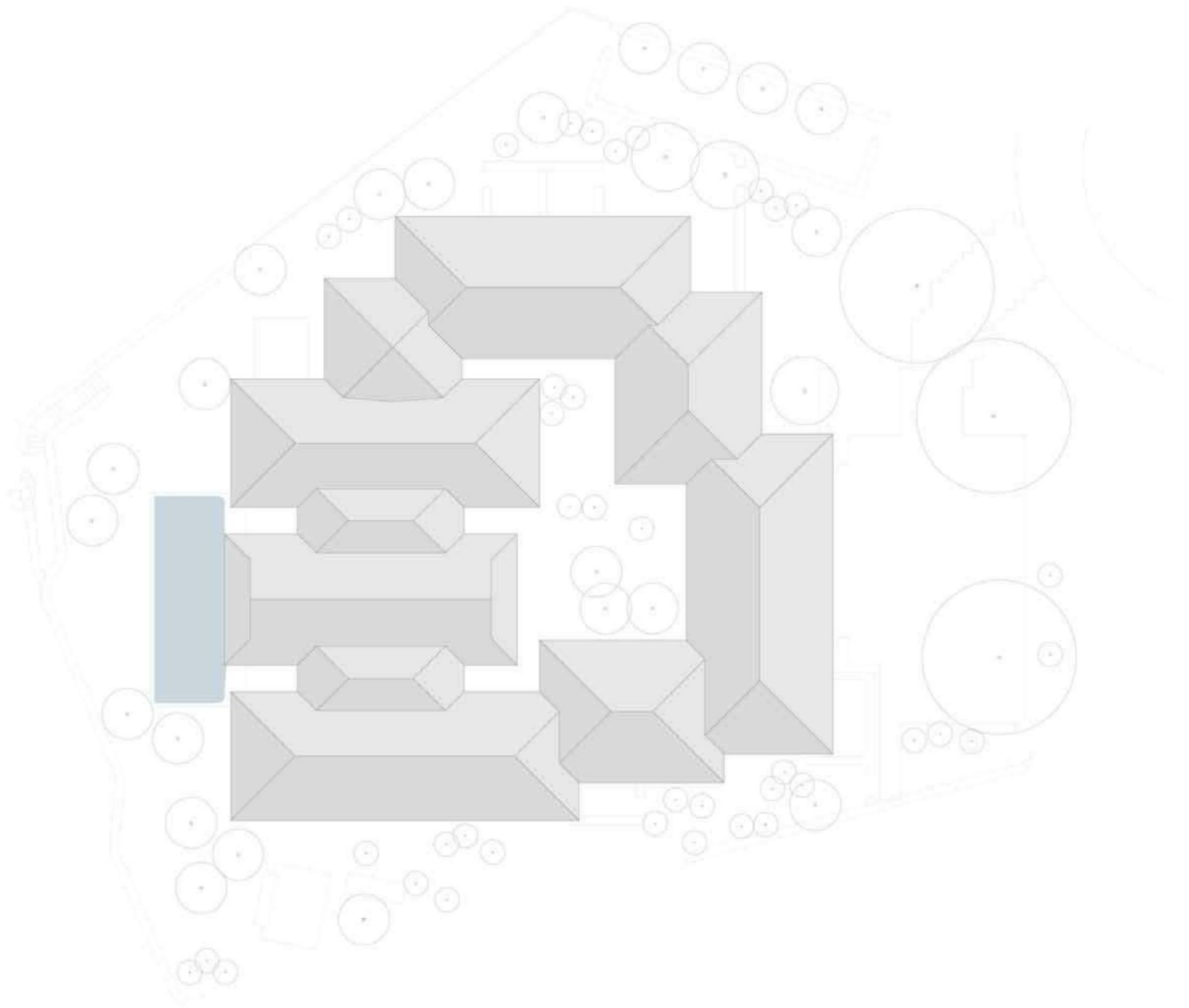












CLOISTER HOUSE

Kukio, Kona Coast, Hawaii

2010

Cloister House consists of a series of connected spaces, articulated by individual roofs, surrounding a central garden. It is the second Hawaii house designed by Shay Zak for these clients, who moved from nearby Hualalai after acquiring the rarely available ocean-side site with its wonderful views of Kukio Point.

Cloister House adheres to concepts of feng shui and is of a typical Chinese typology, in which four or more buildings surround an enclosed courtyard. The main axis begins at the gatehouse on the east side of the property. Passing through the center of this structure, one crosses the main lawn to the entry lanai and living room and ends at the poolside living lanai. From here, views extend beyond natural anchialine fishponds to the beach.

The kitchen and dining areas are to the south of the living room, while bedrooms, media room, and family room comprise the northern part of the cloister. The spaces are connected by roofed, open-sided passages, inspired by the "dog trot" typology of vernacular southern American homes, for maximum cross-ventilation.

The interiors have crisp, minimalist detailing and white painted walls. Floors are of ipe wood or brushed basalt; ceilings are Western red cedar or painted plaster. The entry gate, window frames, and doors are teak.





















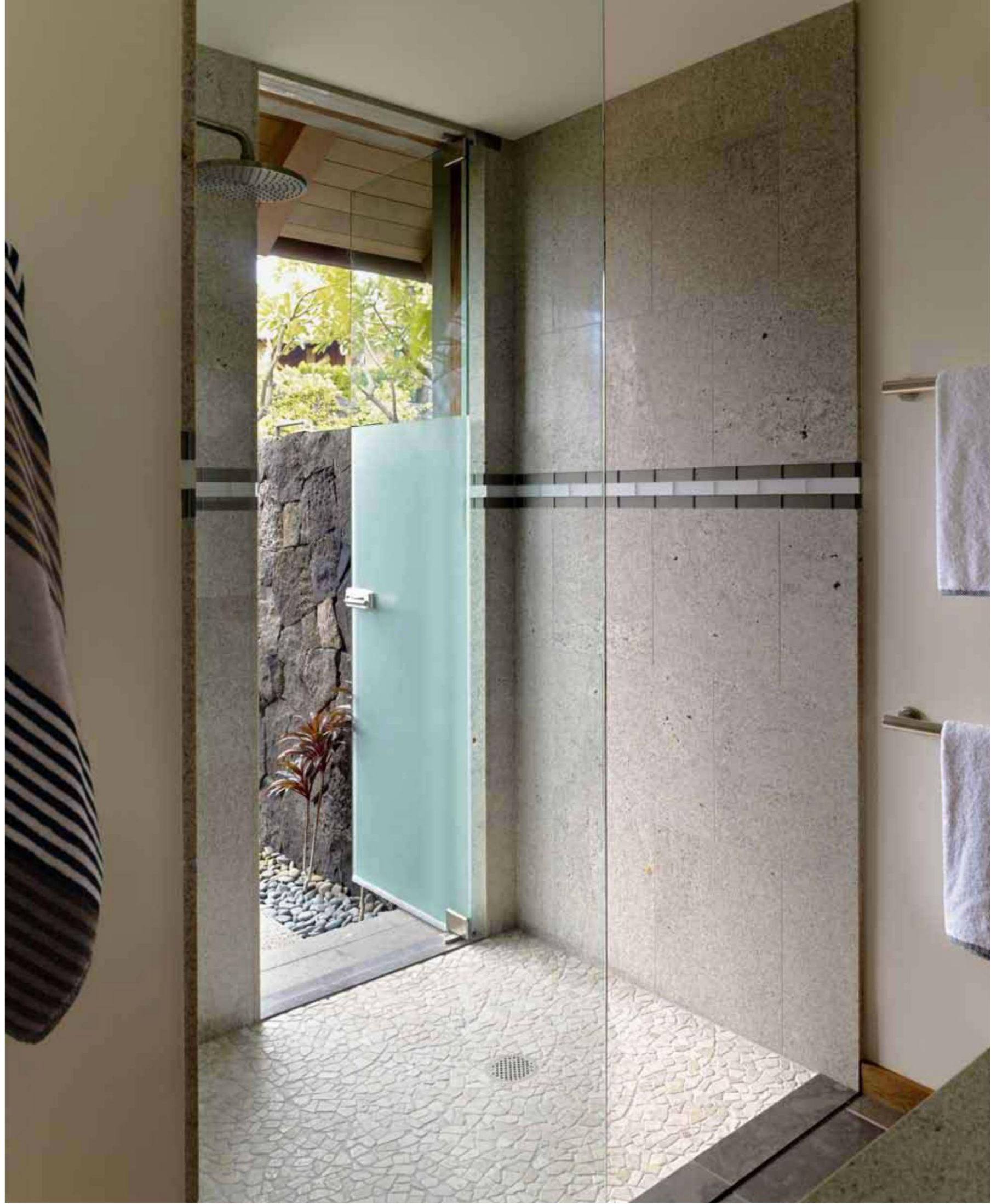
























PHOTOGRAPHY

Matthew Millman Photography

ASSEMBLY HOUSE

Kukio, Kona Coast, Hawaii

2007

Project Team: Shay Zak, Gary Head, Lori Perlman, Mark Myers

Structural Engineer: Hayes Structural Design

Mechanical Engineer: Morrison Mechanical Engineers

General Contractor: Metzler Contracting Co.

Landscape Architect: Suzman & Cole Design Associates

Interior Design: Philpotts & Associates

Lighting Design: Truax Lighting Design

BEACH HOUSE

Hualalai, Kona Coast, Hawaii

2000

Project Team: Shay Zak, Eric Knutson

Structural Engineer: Sawar Structural Engineer

Mechanical Engineer: Harai Associates

General Contractor: Metzler Contracting Co.

Landscape Architect: David Y. Tamura Associates

Interior Design: Philpotts & Associates

Lighting Design: Artistic Lighting

CLOISTER HOUSE

Kukio, Kona Coast, Hawaii

2010

Project Team: Shay Zak, Gary Head, Josh Snyder

Structural Engineer: Hayes Structural Design

Mechanical Engineer: Morrison Mechanical Engineers

Electrical Engineer: Susanna Van Leuven

General Contractor: DSEA Kukio Investments, LLC

Landscape Architect: Andrea Cochran Landscape Architecture

Interior Design: Dara Rosenfeld Design

CLUSTER HOUSE

Hualalai, Kona Coast, Hawaii

2005

Project Team: Shay Zak, Gary Head, Dan Chin

Structural Engineer: Allison-Ide Structural Engineers

Mechanical Engineer: Morrison Mechanical Engineers

General Contractor: Metzler Contracting Co.

Landscape Architect: David Y. Tamura Associates

Interior Design: John Cottrell

COURTYARD HOUSE

Kukio, Kona Coast, Hawaii

2004

Project Team: Shay Zak, Gary Head, Dan Chin

Structural Engineer: Allison-Ide Structural Engineers

Mechanical Engineer: Morrison Mechanical Engineers

General Contractor: Metzler Contracting Co.

Landscape Architect: David Y. Tamura Associates

Interior Design: Douglas Durkin Design

DESCEND HOUSE

Manele Bay, Lanai

2009

Project Team: Shay Zak, Eric Knutson, Lori Perlman

Structural Engineer: Allison-Ide Structural Engineers

Mechanical Engineer: Morrison Mechanical Engineers

General Contractor: Scarborough Construction Company

Landscape Architect: Loriann Gordon

Interior Design: Philpotts & Associates

DOGLEG HOUSE

Kukio, Kona Coast, Hawaii

2008

Project Team: Shay Zak, Josh Snyder, Eric Knutson

Structural Engineer: Allison-Ide Structural Engineers

Mechanical Engineer: Morrison Mechanical Engineers

General Contractor: Metzler Contracting Co.

Landscape Architect: David Y. Tamura Associates

Interior Design: Dara Rosenfeld Design

STONE HOUSE

Kukio, Kona Coast, Hawaii

2006

Project Team: Shay Zak, Gary Head, Mark Myers

Structural Engineer: Allison-Ide Structural Engineers

Mechanical Engineer: Morrison Mechanical Engineers

General Contractor: Metzler Contracting Co.

Landscape Architect: Vita Planning & Landscape Architecture

Electrical Engineer: P.A. Harris Electric

Interior Design: The Wiseman Group

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The design process cannot begin without the intent to build. These projects all started because a property owner asked me to design a house. Building a home always involves a dream, and each owner brings to the project very personal requirements and views. Each of the houses in this book was designed as an expression of the individuality of my clients. I dedicate this book to them.

For their outstanding work, I thank my staff, which has included Lawrence Axelrod, Lina Bondarenko, Daniel Chin, Ben Dennis, Stephanie Frank, Daniel Jackson, Eric Knuston, Joanna Lo, Mark Myers, Molly Nolan, Lori Perlman, Sebastian Quinn, Jade Robino, Desiree Sokach, Joshua Snyder, Le Vu, and Spencer Zak. Special thanks go to Gary Head, who added significantly to these homes.

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I especially would like to thank the makers of this book, Anthony Iannacci and Carolyn Horwitz of Architecture/Interiors Press. Thanks to Carolyn for her editorial work and text on these eight houses and to Anthony for his patience and clear perspective during the design process.

—Shay Zak

