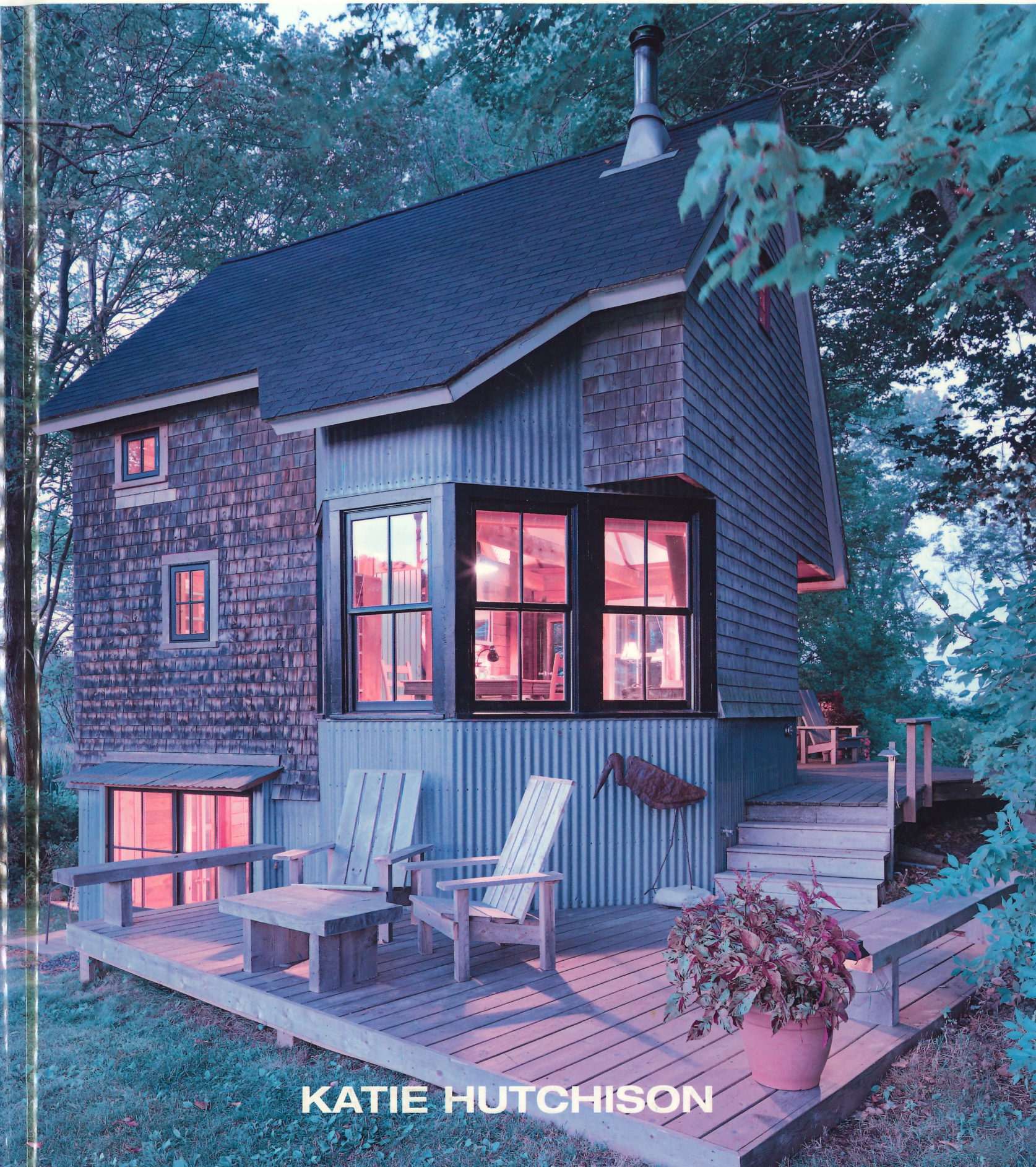


the new small house



KATIE HUTCHISON

RESIDENT GUESTHOUSE

-  SITE
-  3D
-  DAYLIGHT
-  BIG/
SMALL
-  MULTI-
PURPOSE
-  IN/OUT
-  FINISH
PALETTE
-  QUALITY
MATERIALS
-  DETAILS

SOMETIMES FOLKS SAVE the best towels and sheets for their guests or maybe the best seats at the table. Sometimes guests even get the best accommodations, the fun digs in the attic or out back in a separate retreat. And sometimes switching places with a guest may look like a desirable alternative. Architect John Carney and his wife, Elaine, decided to step into their guests' shoes—their future guests' shoes. They designed a guest house for themselves on 5 acres of woodlands in Wilson, Wyo., while plans and funding for their future main house there were brewing. Local zoning requires that guest houses be no larger than 1,000 sq. ft.

 When approached from the south, the garage and house frame an entry deck area among boulders found on site and a few of the trees that appear in abundance in the surrounding Wyoming woods.



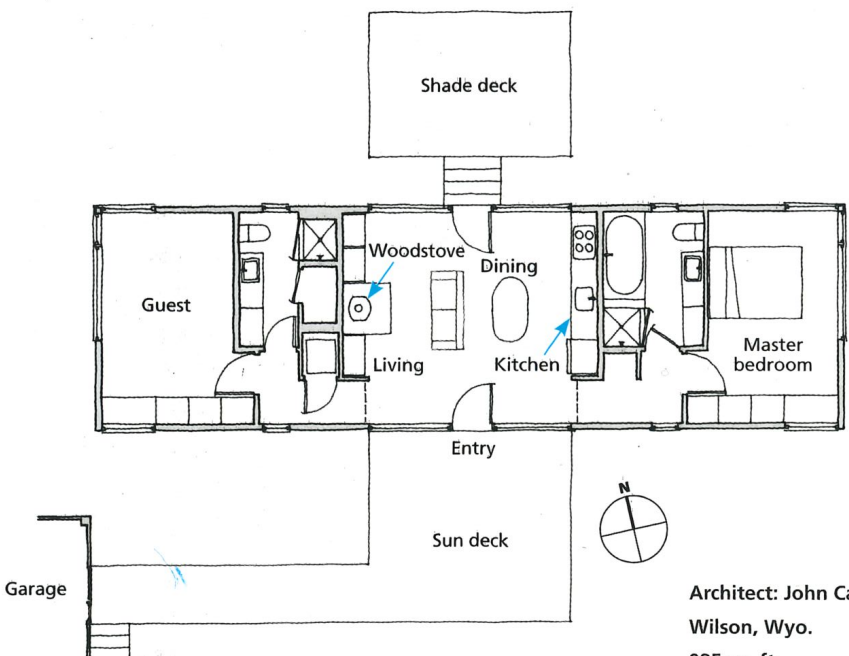
You almost
feel like you're
camping out.



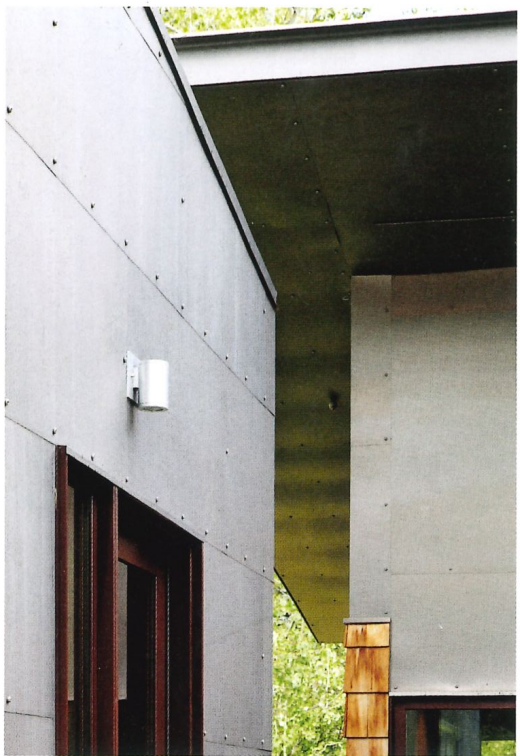
  From the southern sunny deck you can see clear through the open kitchen/dining/living space to the northern deck and vice versa, extending living space into the site in both directions.

 The garage and small house are placed in close proximity because of Wyoming's often inclement weather. John chose to clad the entire garage in bonderized steel panels—oriented horizontally to differentiate it from the vertical treatment on the house—and eliminate the roof overhang there so as not to compete with the house. The two shed forms are in harmonious, simpatico dialogue.



Architect: John Carney of Carney Logan Burke Architects
Wilson, Wyo.
985 sq. ft.





 When seated on the couch facing the TV, bookshelves, and the Rais woodstove, you can glance left or right to enjoy broad views across the property into the woods.

At 985 sq. ft. John and Elaine's guest house, temporarily turned small primary residence, is a study in contemporary sophisticated simplicity in siting, plan, form, and material.

Sited on an east-west axis roughly parallel to a creek on the north side, the narrow house spans across the contours of the wooded property, with the east end facing downhill and the west end looking uphill at the site of the future main house. Sensitive to the site, John and Elaine wanted to take full advantage of the property's natural features and the sun's daily path. "The whole idea is a very transparent middle of the building, which is about 20 ft. of the full 58-ft. length, and that is glass on both sides," says John. From the multipurpose open kitchen/dining/living space you can look out the large

expanse of glass on the sunny side at arriving guests or turn toward matching windows on the shady side to savor the view of the creek, bringing the outdoors in; better yet, in just a few steps, you can dine or lounge on the sunny or shady deck, bringing the indoors out.

The east and west ends of the house, which each contain a bedroom, feature sizable corner windows by Loewen® that extend all the way to the floor. Because the corner windows admit daylight and view from two directions simultaneously, they feel more expansive than separate windows placed within the same walls would. "You almost feel like you're camping out, that you're in the woods because the room is small and your toes are almost outside," notes John. Yet the Carneys are



  The kitchen edges one wall of the open space and accommodates all of the appliances, storage, and work space within its 12-ft. length. The Heath Ceramics subway tile backsplash runs vertically, a subtle echo of the bonderized steel and shingle pattern on the exterior.



Corner windows that extend to the floor minimize the barrier between inside and out, making each feel like part of the other. Fortunately, the glass does keep the bears and moose at bay.

happy the glass prevents the outdoors from literally coming in: They once spotted a black bear outside their bedroom window gnawing on the glass.

John and Elaine selected the eastern room as the master bedroom because they love the morning light. The western bedroom is a mirror image in plan, but they've furnished it as a study with John's desk and a day bed. One of the perks of the mostly symmetrical plan is that the room use/designation is flexible because there are two spaces of the same mirrored size and configuration. Both bedrooms contain built-in millwork closets and a built-in bureau with a window above rather than closets framed with space-consuming studs and a freestanding bureau that takes up floor area.

A simple shed-roofed form seemed a natural choice for the house and nearby garage. John toyed with a gable roof early in the design process, but the shed won out, in part,

because of its practicality. He chose significant overhangs to shelter the house from harsh sun and weather. The upper eaves extend 5½ ft.; the lower eaves extend just over 4 ft., and the rakes extend 4 ft. John worked with his engineer to design a steel T-section, which they call a structural fascia, to support the shallow framing across the significant overhangs. The resulting prominent roof resembles the mortarboard of a tipped graduation cap and makes a big statement on their small house. Inside, you experience the gentle sloping shed roof in the cathedral ceiling of all the spaces except the bathrooms.

Also notable on John and Elaine's house is the unique and limited palette of materials and color. John selected bonderized steel panels as an accent on the house and for the complete exterior of the garage, in part because it isn't flammable, and their property is in a fire-hazard zone. The majority of



The corner windows in the western bedroom welcome afternoon light into the room that John and Elaine have furnished as a quiet study and sitting area.



From slightly up hill to the west, you can see the shady deck and the matching slopes of the shed roofs—angled at the house to capture southern sun and drain toward the creek. The large corner windows and overhangs make a big statement on the end elevation of the small house.

the siding is treated noncombustible shingles, which complement the wooded site. On the house, the bonderized steel steps down to meet the heads of the windows and doors, while the shingles project past the heads of the windows and doors; the materials visually engage or lock together and create a distinctive detail of woven vertical elements. The roofs on both the house and the garage are corrugated bonderized steel. Inside the open multipurpose space, white-washed white oak floors and cabinets team with an all-white paint palette on the walls and ceilings to streamline the look. With an eye toward a succinct finish palette, John notes, “If I can do a house with two or three materials that to me is Nirvana.”

Indeed, it’s quite possible John has achieved a small slice of Nirvana in the woods of Wyoming. Soon he and Elaine will move up to the main house, leaving the guest house for visitors. So now I’m wondering how I can get on the guest list.



John introduced vertical bonderized steel panels to break up the scale of the house. The panels extend down to the window head, while the shingles extend past, creating vertical panels of shingles as well. “We like the interweaving of the two materials,” notes John.