



OPEN HOUSE

WRITTEN BY REED WRIGHT
PHOTOGRAPHY BY MATTHEW MILLMAN

WAI AND CURTIS MO HAD NEVER CONSIDERED LIVING IN A HOME MADE MOSTLY OF CONCRETE WHEN THEY HIRED DESIGNER FU-TUNG CHENG OF BERKELEY, CALIFORNIA-BASED CHENG DESIGN. "They just wanted an open, free-flowing space," Cheng says of the couple, whose original

ARCHITECTURE	Fu-Tung Cheng, Cheng Design
INTERIOR DESIGN	Fu-Tung Cheng, Cheng Design
LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	Ron Emerson, Ron Emerson Garden Design
HOME BUILDER	Dennis Carlson and Chuck Hunt, D Carlson Construction, Inc.
BEDROOMS	4
BATHROOMS	4
SQUARE FEET	4,100





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plan called for an expansion of their San Francisco house, adding an office for Curtis, a study and new bedrooms for their two children. Cheng, however, convinced the couple that a new home would be more beautiful and cost-effective.

Their old wood-frame gabled home was just one story high with no large open area. Its small rooms were laid out within a U-shaped shell around a swimming pool, and any addition would have had to be stacked atop that. Structural underpinnings for those changes would have required tearing into most of the building, and the result "would have been too awkward," Cheng says.

STYLE SELECTION

Designed by the late Pierre Paulin, this chair exemplifies a timeless nature with radiant color and curves. *Pumpkin*, price available upon request; ligne-roset-usa.com



STRIKING INFLUENCE

Available through Limn, the Mira dining chairs in Putty red leather from Montis add a bold statement, while a custom light fixture by Sacramento, California, artist David Ward of Sticks and Stones hangs above.

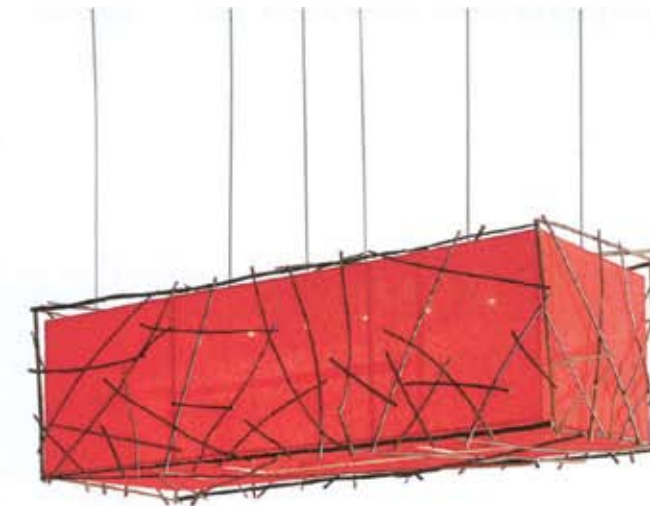


CURVE APPEAL

Naha Whill doors open up to the pool area where a D&B Italia classic awaits. The original house on the property was demolished, and the pool was the only previous element incorporated into the new home design.



POP OF COLOR
An orange Ligne Roset sofa and entry wall made of red Japanese plaster by Thom Bruce complement this open space with bright flattering hues.



STYLE SELECTION

This hand-made, custom designed light fixture by California artist David Ward is made of acacia branches and Japanese paper. Custom Light Fixture, Price available upon request; sticks-n-stones.net

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Instead, he gave them a modern two-story structure where the juxtaposition of light and heavy materials, interspersed with dramatic walls of glass that fold back, vindicates Cheng's notion of a house as airy as a garden pavilion. Its efficient T-shape plan (with the top of the T facing south) creates a sheltered courtyard between the central living space and the children's bedrooms on the north end. Across from the entrance, NanaWall doors open the west wall to the old kidney-shaped swimming pool, which is flanked by new decks. The master suite is on the western tip of the T, far enough for privacy but close enough for the parents to monitor the children's wing. A second-story guest suite and study hover above the children's rooms and the living space, whose south wall opens to the backyard.

The 4,100-square-foot design—nearly a third larger than the old house—is perfectly scaled for the 8,000-square-foot lot. Nonetheless, it was too large and costly to build entirely with concrete; so, less visible or nonstructural interior walls were framed in wood and clad with salvaged redwood. Cheng avoided costly curved forms as well. The 12-inch-thick, 12-foot-high structural walls were poured in straight lines, with foam cores to provide insulation. Because they were formed using 4-foot-high molds, they needed no paint or finish other than the texture of the molds themselves. "I was able to add striations, creating a rammed-earth look in some sections and a very smooth look in others," Cheng notes.

Cheng has designed five other homes that feature concrete; but this one, which he calls "House 6," is the first one so finely made from the ground up. To make the walls less austere, he added low-relief motifs made with rubber



COMFORT LIVING

In the living room, B&B Italia's neutral sofa and red circular chair, and a Vision fireplace by Gavin Scott for European Home, provide a warm, inviting tone. The neutral rug from Fort Street Studio, available through Limn, completes the look.



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molds of antique Chinese carved wood panels. "It is an inexpensive way to get expensive decoration," Cheng notes. Other tricks—such as colored glass, shells and bits of copper embedded in the concrete entryway and custom Geocrete kitchen countertops—are Cheng's homage to his hero, the Venetian architect Carlo Scarpa.

Not all textures are arbitrary. For instance, bits of straw that beautifully fleck yellow plaster canopies in the dining area also absorb sound. Delicate strips of brass embedded in the zinc-clad front door also conceal seams in the sheathing. And a webbed polycarbonate canopy above the entry is threaded with twigs "to cast a subtle shadow over the walkway," Cheng says.

The designer also concentrated on details to unify the house and garden. In the landscaping, done by Ron Emerson of Ron Emerson Garden Design in Boulder Creek, California, Cheng allowed custom Corten steel planters to visually link outdoor areas to similarly decorated spaces within the house. A channel along the edge of the entryway is filled with cool water that circulates from the garden pond. The open west and south walls ensure cross ventilation on hot days, "but most of all," Cheng says, "Wai likes the way the children run in from the sunny backyard, go through the house and run right outside to the pool again." **L**

ARTFUL WAY

A sculptural piece made of purple plum branches by California artist David Ward hangs in the master bedroom. The oil painting above the bed, titled *Tattoo*, is by Kai Bob Cheng, the designer's brother.