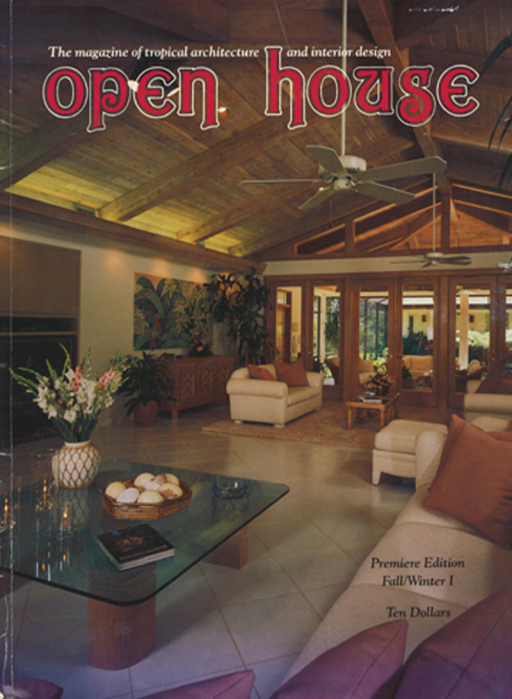


with garten and

The magazine of tropical architecture and interior design

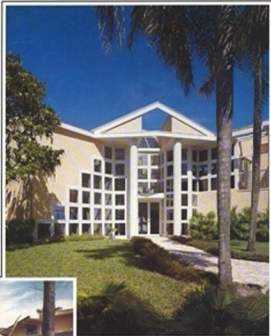
open house



Premiere Edition
Fall/Winter I

Ten Dollars

The Phoenix



Photography by Oscar Thompson



The striking contrast of the home before and after renovation reveals the bold vision held by the designer and the skill with which she so capably rendered the transformation.

Corporate Design & Facilities Planning Bonnie Coyle, A.S.I.D., Designer

*Photography by Oscar Thompson
and Dan Forer*

It is nearly impossible to imagine this home before designer Bonnie Coyle, A.S.I.D., and her professional team of designers and architects laboriously transformed it from an ugly duckling into a beautiful swan. Originally built in 1953, it was a typical 1950's ranch-style house. The inside, frozen in a period from days thankfully past, was typified by the living room's "basement look" of dark brown Bahama shutters covering the windows, dark walnut paneling on the walls, green shag carpet, and yellow swirls of plastic made to resemble glass at the entry. The heav-

iness of black iron and red velvet dominated the interior space. At some point during the years, a two-story addition was constructed at the south end of the property. It bore an unfortunate resemblance to a motel wing and in no way related to the original structure. Years of neglect combined with exposure to salt air and the elements had taken their toll on both structures. A six-foot hedge hid from view what lay beyond the property. It was with bold vision that Bonnie saw beyond this debacle. She saw instead the sparkle of Biscayne Bay beyond that hedge and



Photograph by Dan Feyer



The soaring two-story glass entry with columns, stepped window walls, sculptural plays of glass and island plantation fenestration, hints at the grandeur which unfolds.

realized that the location provides one of the finest perspectives in Miami. Overlooking the ever-changing scenario of the water and beyond to the dramatic backdrop of the city skyline, the property is the setting for a magnificent morning glow. Bonnie envisioned the breathtaking sunsets on the skyline and the special display when the sky, bay, and swimming pool's water all become a unified palette of lapis blue. Sometimes soothing and peaceful, sometimes dramatic, the views are always engaging. Thus it was the water itself which became the central theme of the

new design. Each room was designed with a lucid intent to maximize the bold views of the city skyline and the peaceful environment of the cove and bay. The enormous challenge of this project resulted from necessary retention of two bearing walls: the exterior of the north wall that supported the formal living room fireplace and the north wall of the guest suite. It would have been considerably easier to raze the existing structures and start from scratch but, in doing so, a 17-foot height restriction would have been imposed because of the flood zone status of the

Continued



Photograph by Oscar Thompson

The dark, narrow foyer was replaced with curving glass block walls, French terra-cotta tile, and two-story gallery walls. The spiral staircase leads to the upper-level bridge which connects the various rooms of the master suite.

property. With foresight and creativity, Bonnie parlayed the hindrance of retaining the support walls and designed this architectural masterpiece. The first affront to be removed was the hedge. Next the pool area, its Chattahoochee deck cracked and crumbling, was re-done. Re-bar was added to the structure to give proper support. During the year this was in progress, Bonnie studied the site and with the assistance of her staff, created the design. Demolition was enormous but, as with the phoenix, from the ashes this house arose renewed. Out went all

vestiges of confinement and darkness. In came openness and space and light. Where once there was a heavy Mediterranean front door and low, narrow entryway, there now soars a 25-foot atrium foyer. Centered on the distant outside view of the first bridge of the Rickenbacker Causeway, the foyer becomes a window to the water. Ahead is the resplendent, open view to the bay and its distant islands. Unpretentious and inviting, this entryway plays upon the rhythm of the waves of the water with curving walls and curved glass block. Directly above, a

Continued



Dark and confining before its transformation, the den now offers an island plantation feel with unsurpassed views of Biscayne Bay. A step-down



Photograph by Oscar Thompson

loggia wraps around the perimeter to an outside balcony.

Photograph by Don Foster



From the second-level bridge, the whimsical cottage windows open out to the foyer and allow one to gaze beyond to absorbing views of the water.

curving second-level bridge connects various areas of the master suite. It overlooks the foyer and was inspired by the causeway bridge on which the foyer is centered. To the right of the entryway, curving glass blocks were added to the existing wall for drama and interest. Feeling that opposing gallery walls would be too stark, even if adorned with artwork, Bonnie incorporated into the foyer a set of whimsical cottage windows from the upper level master suite to set a relaxing island plantation tone. Windows everywhere become art forms through which to view and enjoy the outdoor wonderment. French terra-cotta, keystone, granite, and pickled red oak millwork provide a casual essence to the interior spaces. Unlike the "motel" addition on the property, the original house did not have a second story — only a parapet — so Bonnie designed a second level which effectively unites both structures. Bonnie and the staff expanded and artfully designed the southeast elevation to give overall strength to the architecture and highlighted the unifying elements with the island plantation-style tin roof and white wood fenestration on the bay side elevations. Dormer windows were

Continued





Photograph by Dan Jaser



Photograph by Don Farrow

The sculptural diamond-shaped window in the master bath is framed with blue marano pearl granite. This special granite is featured also on the floor, the steps leading to the tub, the counter tops, accent walls, and the shower area. Mirrored walls reflect its beauty.

added for architectural interest. From the inside of the upper level, the strength of the architecture and the sculptural elements of the windows do not inhibit, but rather enhance, the powerful and alluring interplay of the outdoors with the indoors. This is perhaps no more evident than in the two-tiered master bedroom suite. The suite includes the bedroom and an open dressing-study area connected to the master bathroom and another dressing area by way of the curving glass block bridge which spans above the foyer. A 23-foot domed ceiling establishes an immediate sense of spacious grandeur in the bedroom. A double-stepped soffit contains special elliptical

halogen lighting which does not weaken as it glows downward, allowing for equal intensity from ceiling to floor. The masterful focal point of this room is the magnificent sculptural window. From the ceiling it descends 14-feet, forming a circular pattern within which angular patterns are defined. Below it and to either side are glass doors which open onto a private balcony. The views from this room are exhilarating. Here, again, the architectural elements enhance the wondrous experience of the views. It is from this bedroom that the cottage windows open out to the upper level of the foyer for another dramatic orientation of the house and



Photograph by Oscar Thompson



The exterior wall was retained, but re-designed with depth and architectural interest. The second level was designed with its roof and fenestration to unite both structures.

water. Located across the bridge, the master bath is dramatic and breathtaking. A diamond-shaped bay window is centered next to the oversized whirlpool tub. The unique blue morano pearl granite used to frame this window was also used for the floor, the counter tops, accent walls, and the shower area. Mirrored walls reflect the sparkling beauty of this granite as well as the continually changing colors of the bay. Throughout the living and dining areas to bedrooms and even bathrooms, the result of the remarkable metamorphosis of this house provokes a response both tranquilizing and exciting. Bonnie Coyle's phoenix now soars.



Photograph by Oscar Thompson

The dynamic architectural strength of the home and the sculptural design of its windows are evident in this awe-inspiring exterior view.