

HOME



The winner of our 2008 **Home of the Year** contest (page 50) is a supremely livable Laurelhurst waterfront home that was opened up and reconfigured by JAS Design-Build and the landscape architects of Allworth Nussbaum. Equally impressive are the other homes featured on these pages: a second elegant remodel in **Laurelhurst** (page 58) and a garden getaway in **Ballard** (page 64). We hope you'll be won over by these spaces too.

home of the year

Design Details
ARCHITECTURE/DESIGN
JAS Design-Build,
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LANDSCAPE DESIGN
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WORKING WITH CLIENTS MATT AND DONNA BELLEW (BELOW), JAS DESIGN-BUILD DESIGNER KIM CLEMENTS TRANSFORMED WHAT WAS ONCE A DINING AREA OFF THE KITCHEN INTO THIS COLORFUL FAMILY ROOM (OPPOSITE). ITS WINDOWS OVERLOOK THE BACKYARD AND LAKE WASHINGTON. BEYOND THE LIVING ROOM (BELOW) IS A DINING AREA WITH DOORS THAT OPEN ONTO A DECK. THE ROOM'S BRIGHT WHITE PALETTE MAKES EVERYTHING STAND OUT.

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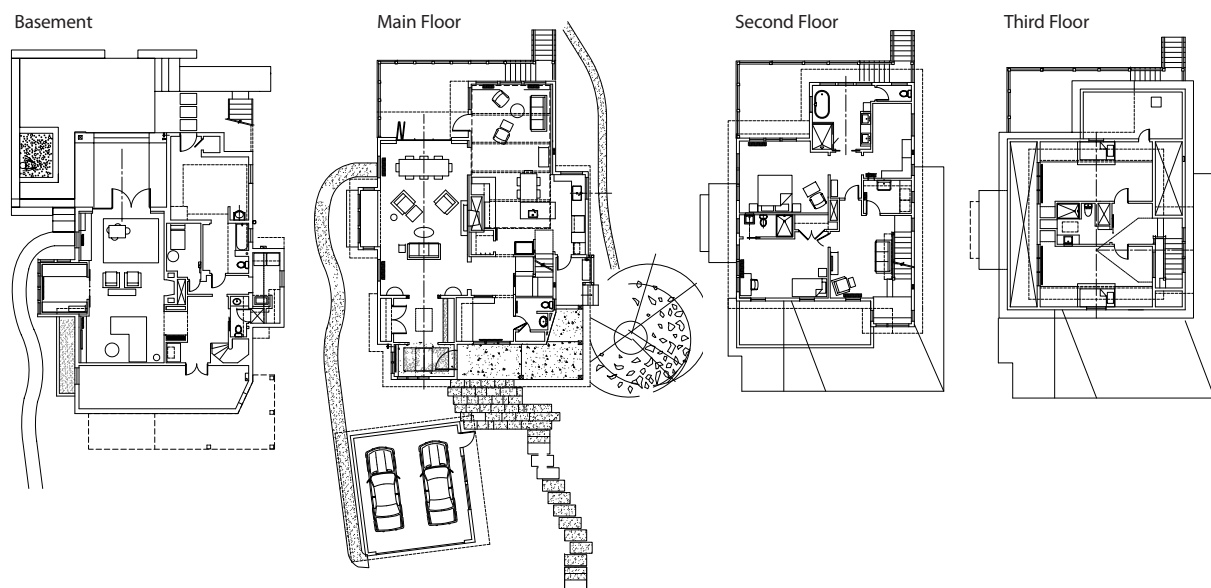


CLEAR WINNER

A LAURELHURST LAKE HOUSE IS *SEATTLE HOMES & LIFESTYLES'*
2008 HOME OF THE YEAR

WRITTEN BY JUSTIN HENDERSON PHOTOGRAPHS BY ALEX HAYDEN STYLING BY MICHELLE CRISTALLI

PLANS (BELOW) SHOW THE HOME'S FOUR LEVELS FROM BOTTOM (FAR LEFT) TO TOP (RIGHT). THE FAMILY OF FIVE USES EVERY SQUARE FOOT OF THE COMPLETELY REMODELED HOUSE AND LANDSCAPE. OPPOSITE, CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: WITH AN "OUTDOOR ROOM" FOR A FRONT YARD, THE HOUSE HAS A COMFORTABLE, INVITING STREET PRESENCE; THE DESIGN OFFERS A WONDERFUL MIX OF OLD AND NEW—INCLUDING A COOL CONTEMPORARY BOOKSHELF TOPPED BY ANTIQUE PITCHFORKS; A NEW FIREPLACE WARMS THE LIVING ROOM. INTERIOR AND EXTERIOR WALLS ARE FINISHED WITH HORIZONTAL SIDING, ENHANCING THE INSIDE/OUTSIDE LINK.



“Limitations open up explorations,” says designer Kim Clements of JAS Design-Build, summing up the project that won *Seattle Homes & Lifestyles* 2008 **Home of the Year** award. Clements led the design team that (re)created this Laurelhurst lakefront house, with its pared-down color and materials palette.

Homeowners Matt and Donna Bellew have a long history collaborating with the firm that Clements founded with her husband, Joe Schneider, 17 years ago. “We’ve done houses with them before—and because we mutually like and respect each other, it was really fun working together, from designing the house to picking the tables and chairs,” Clements says.

The existing four-story house (including basement and attic) on a long lot that sloped from the street down to Lake Washington was last remodeled in the 1980s. Pink on the outside and “flesh-colored,” as Clements describes it, on the inside, the home was buried in bushes and trees when the Bellews purchased it in 2005. The overgrown landscaping and the murky interior color made it “dark and frightening,” according to Matt. “We wanted to make this dark house light,” he says. “And the views, as obvious as they seem now, were not evident.”

Another goal was to make “a really good lake house,” Clements

notes: “clean, fresh and sophisticated.” But because the Bellews have three kids and a very busy family life, the house also had to be functional. “We recognized that everyone needed to live in every part of the house,” she says. “And yet it couldn’t get bigger because it’s not a wide lot.”

After contemplating a complete teardown, the owners and the JAS design team decided a complete renovation and remodel would suffice. This entailed major structural and functional alterations. Removing an upper-level deck off the master bedroom opened views from the living and dining room below, and replacing a turret with a gable expanded the second story. More fundamental was the new main-floor plan, which transformed a dining area adjacent to the kitchen into a den, reorganized the kitchen, added a new front entry and a covered porch, and reconfigured a cramped attic into a pair of sunny bedrooms. These changes opened up the house to the light and views, while adding minimal square footage and making better use of existing space.

At the same time, landscape architect Randy Allworth and project manager Nanda Patel of Allworth Nussbaum devised a new landscape plan. “We started when the architects started, so the integration of building and landscape really works,” Allworth explains. The firm’s construction crew, under the direction of Dale Nussbaum, began with a nearly blank slate, removing all the plantings on the lot except for a few

THE HOUSE FEATURES TWO NEW DINING AREAS. AN INFORMAL KITCHEN TABLE EXTENDS FROM AN ISLAND PLACED IN THE CENTER OF THE RENOVATED KITCHEN (*BELOW*). CARRARA MARBLE COUNTER TOPS ADD A RICH YET FUNCTIONAL ELEMENT, WHILE THE WOODEN TABLE AND FLOORS MAINTAIN THE PREVAILING CASUAL ATMOSPHERE. THE DUTCH DOOR AT REAR OPENS ONTO THE FRONT PORCH, WHICH WRAPS AROUND THE SIDE OF THE HOUSE. THE OLD-FASHIONED WOOD TABLE IN THE (SLIGHTLY) MORE FORMAL DINING AREA (*OPPOSITE*) IS SURROUNDED BY ULTRA-CONTEMPORARY CHAIRS, EXEMPLIFYING THE HOME'S FEARLESSLY ECLECTIC MIX OF OLD AND NEW.



mature trees saved for beauty, privacy and shade.

This integration is evident from the street. Located on a sweeping bend in the road, the house was hard to find behind its overgrown landscape. Now the house number on a low stone marker wall can be easily read from the street, and the house itself—pure white with green trim—is visibly connected to the street and neighborhood.

Granite steps gently ease down to the front yard, where a level rectangular lawn ringed with grasses and shrubs creates an “outdoor room.” Large bluestone pavers cross the grass in a loose diagonal, then give way to the similarly toned and textured concrete of the covered porch, where an old bench and a swing furnish a relaxed hangout that Allworth describes as having a “quiet, rural farmhouse feel.”

The glass and wood front door opens into the enclosed entry, from where the lake is visible across the living room. A beadboard ceiling extends into the new entry from the covered porch, enhancing the inside-outside connections and demonstrating Clements’ belief—learned in art school and applied here to colors as well as materials—

that “you find your palette and keep using it.” With its built-in shelves, drawers, coat racks and cubbyholes, the entry end of the living room also establishes the informal ambience: Kids belong in this house.

The living room and dining area open onto a large main-floor deck, also accessible from the den and kitchen. The spacious new kitchen features marble-topped counters, a central island and plentiful cabinet and shelf space. In keeping with Clements’ design philosophy, all of the interior walls are white; the same hardware is used throughout, with some variation; and certain light fixtures are used both inside and outside.

Donna refers to her small office near the kitchen as the “life pantry, where it all happens.” This is where she works, the kids do homework, pictures get posted and growing children get measured with marks on doorframes. A large window looks out onto the front porch, enhancing the inside-outside link and allowing Donna to watch the kids play in the front yard.

The new second-floor landing, furnished with a television, sofa and daybed, provides access to one child’s bedroom, a laundry room and the





OPPOSITE, CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: THE RENOVATION ADDED TWO NEW GIRLS' BEDROOMS IN WHAT WAS ONCE THE ATTIC; IN THE MASTER BATH, A DEEP TUB RESTS ON A PAIR OF RAILS MADE FROM SALVAGED HEART PINE; A PLANTER ON ROLLERS SITS BY A WINDOW ON THE WRAPAROUND PORCH; THE GREEN WOOD AND GLASS FRONT DOOR LINKS THE PORCH TO THE ENTRY, WHERE EXPOSED BUILT-IN STORAGE AREAS ESTABLISH THE CASUAL, FAMILY ATMOSPHERE. BELOW: THE SWING CHAIR ON THE PORCH IS A FARMHOUSE CLASSIC.

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master suite. This suite is an exercise in subdued luxury—the most notable feature of the small bedroom is its fantastic views, and the most extravagant accessory in the generously proportioned bathroom is a deep soaking tub. The tub rests on a pair of rails made from salvaged heart pine, a wood also used in the vanity. Another flight of stairs leads to the former attic, where a pair of girls' bedrooms now nestle high next to the tree canopies.

A winding staircase off the kitchen—one of the only pieces of the original main floor to survive the remodel—leads to the garden level, which includes a large-screen-TV-watching area, a home office for Matt, a guest suite and an informal art and craft space for the kids. Glass doors open onto a patio (sheltered by the waterproof deck) that provides access to the backyard. A neat row of built-in storage cabinets is tucked along one side of the patio.

The yard gently slopes—with a few steeper bits managed with stone steps—down to the lake. Swatches of lawn and grasses, native shrubs and trees, a boathouse (soon to be renovated), a basketball hoop, artfully placed boulders, sculpture and a small seating area are composed in comfortable, usable outdoor spaces that are easy to maintain, surprisingly private and harmoniously planted from the lake up to the house.

Inspired by its lakeshore site and responsive to the needs of the family, the house quietly and honestly reflects the hard work and evident pleasure the designers and their clients put into creating it.

"There was something about the house that was really creative," noted one of the *SH&L* judges. "It wasn't the typical architecture [but was] an intimate, bright, family-oriented house. All the pieces melded together really nicely." ■

Justin Henderson is a freelance magazine journalist, travel writer and novelist living in Seattle.