



NO TRIVIAL

by REBECCA TEAGARDEN | photographed BY BENJAMIN BENSCHNEIDER

"We shape our buildings; thereafter they shape us."— WINSTON CHURCHILL

THERE ARE THOSE who are concerned with matters of design. But for others, design matters.

Really matters.

"This house is part Schindler, part Scarpa, a little bit Frank Lloyd Wright, part minka," says Vicki, setting out two steaming cups of tea in

the library. And by that she means architects Rudolph Schindler, Carlo Scarpa, Wright, and the style of her home, minka, a private residence built in a traditional Japanese style.

You've got to study up and stay alert for a conversation with Vicki. I down the tea.

"I love that old Winston Churchill quote: We

form our buildings and they form us; something like that," she says, pulling architecture books from towering shelves.

"I'm a great believer in the significance of design. Design causes you to wake up a little bit, and that's a better world. But it's not a trivial endeavor. It's expensive, time-consuming,

Continued on page 12 >

ENDEAVOR

Homeowner Vicki credits the home's peaceful feeling to her architect.

"One of the great challenges of architecture is not just creating a spatial enclosure, but creating feeling," architect Stephen Sullivan says.

"That's as much a credit to Vicki and an alignment of aesthetics and a way of thinking about architecture. We had some very interesting conversations about architecture over the years."

Japanese-inspired home serene and simply elegant



The structure of the building is hemlock, the floors white oak. "The essential language of the Japanese space is what we were trying to evoke; the sliding glass doors like shojis," Sullivan says. "The timber-framed ceiling is evocative of how Japanese shrines are constructed."

< NO TRIVIAL ENDEAVOR

Continued from page 10

exciting. And it's also frustrating.

"But if you ask for it you can have it. And you can have it on any scale that's appropriate for you."

Vicki is her own woman. No nonsense. Passionate about home; the place that nurtures, protects, entertains and restores us. When her subscription to design magazine *Arcade* abruptly stopped in the early 1990s, she called to ask why. Shortly thereafter Vicki took charge to get the publication back in mailboxes.

Just for fun she is sitting in on a postmodern architecture seminar at the University of Washington. She has lived in a Roland Terry house. Raised her family in Medina in a 1929 Arthur Loveless house, a home now inhabited by her son and his family.

So when it came time for a home for the rest of their lives, Vicki and her husband were prepared.

"I knew I wanted a modernist house. I wanted beams. I wanted openness. It was important to us that it was out of wood. I wanted to get out of Medina. I wanted to get out of traditional. The only thing I can think to tell you is that I wanted a Japanese house."

For their home on the Seattle side of Lake Washington, Vicki chose architect Stephen Sullivan of Sullivan Conard Architects to design it, Krekow Jennings to build it, Bruce

Continued on page 14 >



◀ NO TRIVIAL ENDEAVOR

The stairs are blackened steel, by Metalistics, with white-oak treads.

Sullivan calls this the light core. "Her cast to me was to work with light. It is a grand entrance hall aligned with the clerestory, and it's filled with books (at the far end)," Sullivan says. "This connects the whole house."



Continued from page 12

Hinckley of Alchemie and Terry Welch for landscape architecture, and Doug Rasar for the interiors.


The home they moved into in September 2009 is serene and simply elegant. It sits at the end of a generous circular drive embedded with Japanese millstones. Hemlock meeting blackened steel, concrete, antique touches here and there among the home's 10,000 square feet for a family in the wood-products business. Light filters through the waterfront home, adding pattern, warmth.

"Architects these days say here's a wall for art. I don't have art, but I do have books," says Vicki, still seated among her fiber-and-ink friends. She cranes her neck to consider them all.

"You can imagine how anachronistic this will all be in 20 years. But I love books, even the smell of them."

Vicki is a fan of everyone who had a hand in crafting her home. She stops at a tall bronze wall plate engraved with the signature of everyone who worked on the house.

"The architect always stands on the backs of the people who stayed to make it right," she says, running her hand down the piece crafted by Gulassa & Co. "We had a wonderful combination of people. Their karma is still in here.

"So, this is a signed edition." 

Rebecca Teagarden is assistant editor of Pacific Northwest magazine. Benjamin Benschneider is a magazine staff photographer.