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LIGHT AND SPACE MOVEMENT

ARCHITECT ANDERS
LASATER creates a light-
filled Kings Road retreat for a
creative couple anticipating
life as empty-nesters

By Kedric Francis

When Laguna Beach architect Anders Lasater was hired to design a home on Kings Road in Newport Beach, he knew that amplifying the spectacular harbor, ocean, and city views from the lot that's perched above PCH would be a primary focus of his creativity.



Overlooking Pacific Coast Highway and Newport Harbor below, this house on Kings Road sits low and sheltered from the street while embracing the views of the bay and Pacific horizon beyond.





PHOTO BY BRETT HILLIARD

He collaborated closely with his clients, a couple nearing the empty nest phase of their lives together, looking to downsize from the large home where they raised their children. With backgrounds in design, building, and hospitality, the couple knew what they wanted and were involved in materials selection and more.

The clients' goal that Anders realized is a quiet, compact, and efficient retreat. It provides privacy and is sheltered from the street, while also offering a light-filled architectural experience that opens onto the world-class view.

The primary living spaces for the couple—the kitchen, dining, and master bedroom—are all located on the main upstairs level, where the two spend most of their time.

“What the clients wanted was a house where, they could be empty-nesters, where they could live on one level, and have everything they needed on the upper floor. The kids can come stay in the rooms downstairs, but mom and dad stay upstairs, live up here, and enjoy the bounty of this beautiful view.”

A generous skylight floods the floor with light, which flows down through the glass-floored entry bridge, filling the lower floor with

light as well. That's where the couple's kids live/stay when they visit: one is a senior in high school, with two older siblings in college.

“The heart of the house—and the sort of primary experience of living in it—is the notion of bringing in light from the skylight down through the glass floor and the stairway of the top level, to flood a central sort of plaza at the base of the house,” Anders says. “We have a relatively compact lot, so not every room can be out on the view.”

The design solution? Both levels include views connecting through adjacent rooms. Rooms on the Kings Road side of the home “borrow” views and light from the harbor side of the home, via openings in the walls.

“On 99 days out of a 100, you've got the view,” Anders explains in the master bedroom that opens onto the main living area. “Then when you've got guests, you simply close this slider for privacy.”

That juxtaposition between sharing space and light in an open floor plan design, while also offering the option to retreat into privacy, is a genius touch in the home's architectural design.

The house of glass, concrete, and wood is both solid and grounded,



The owners loved the idea of essential materials like concrete being integrated and revealed throughout the house. The walls are board formed concrete with an alternating pattern of 12", 8" 6" boards. The floors are polished concrete.





PHOTO BY BRETT HILLIARD



PHOTO BY BRETT HILLIARD



MEMBER FEATURE

while also offering a sense of transparency, lightness, and openness. The innovative spatial relationships between the rooms help to create the rich and varied living experiences that the owners want, lending an air of spaciousness to the otherwise compact design.

Thrilling clients with his design talent, emotional intelligence, and good-natured way of communicating and explaining architectural concepts comes with the territory for Anders Lasater. He has nearly 30 years of experience, including the last 21 with his own practice focused on custom home design.

Anders got his start in Orange County after receiving a Master of Architecture degree from UCLA. He had previously spent two years teaching architectural design on the faculty of Cal Poly Pomona, where he also received his Bachelor of Architecture degree.

But instead of returning to academia, he went to work with renowned OC architect Mark Singer during the prime of Singer's illustrious career.

It was there that Anders learned and further developed one of his core beliefs: the power of the good idea.

"As much as we want to think we're in control as the architect, we have a limited amount of influence over a project," Anders says. "There's an amazing number of things that can affect a project through construction and development. And the architect's one ability is to start with a good idea and let that good idea resonate."

In 2005, after nearly 10 years as the managing associate for Mark Singer Architects in Laguna Beach, Anders founded his own firm, and has won numerous awards for his designs since. Part of his expertise is designing homes that are well-suited for clients and that fit the nature of their neighborhoods, something very important to the Kings Road clients.

Residents of the Cliffhaven and Newport Heights neighborhoods of Newport Beach have the best of many worlds. The area offers a walkable lifestyle with easy access to

Above: Anders Lasater the Kings Road home he designed.

From left: The LEICHT kitchen is a centerpiece of the home; the materials and finishes lend themselves to an authentic architectural experience; at once both solid and transparent, the home is outwardly quiet, while offering innovative spatial relationships that create rich and varied living experiences inside..





The primary living spaces: the kitchen, dining, and master bedroom, are all located upstairs where the owners most of their time. ary living spaces: the kitchen, dining, and master bedroom, are all located upstairs where the owners most of their time.





THE LEICHT SHOW

“The owners of the Kings Road home understood how important the kitchen was going to be to the success of the project. Strategically located to enjoy the best views and have the best access to the outside through the expansive pocketing doors that open onto the upper terrace, it was going to be a central location for their everyday lives. It’s the place where family and friends gather, it’s the center of domestic activity, and the center of domestic business—as much a home office for him as a cooking center for her. After exploring a variety of other European kitchen options they settled on Leicht. The owners were really enthusiastic about what it offered in terms of configuration options, cabinet materials, fit and finish, and their commitment to service. We enjoyed working with Leicht because Oranit and Tanya really understood how to balance the owner’s needs with the architectural realities of the home to create a kitchen that supported the concept of a central gathering and working space that was comfortable, efficient, and sexy. We all are very pleased with the results.” -architect Anders Lasater

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parks, beaches, and schools, while also offering the excitement and activity of a more urbane environment. That’s thanks to the resorts, restaurants, and retail destinations of Mariners Mile, Westcliff, and 17th Street, along with nearby Lido Village and the Peninsula. With all that, the blocks in the area are much more sedate and serene than certain Newport Beach neighborhoods.

Plus, add in the spectacular views of Newport Harbor, with its islands, sailboats, and (at this time of the season) beautiful homes decorated with festive holiday lights. From the home Anders designed, the ocean, Catalina, and coastline are also part of the expansive view, which on clear days extends down the OC coast to the Dana Point Headlands.

Respecting and protecting the views of nearby neighbors would be just as crucial to the success of Anders’ plan for the new house. That was especially true when it came to satisfying the wishes of the owners of the house directly across the street.

“We were very clear about how high this house could go and still protect the view for the home across the street,” Lasater says, noting that there was even a deed restriction on the property protecting that home’s view.

Why were his clients so respectful of the view corridor from the house across the street when designing the new house? Good neighbors do that, of course, and city planners have a say. But protecting the view was not open to negotiation in this situation: the couple owns both homes, and their downsizing, empty-nest move was only across Kings Road, where they now have a front-row seat to one of the best views in Orange County—and the world.

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Opposite: An undulating roof above the living spaces of the great room makes the most of the allowable heights above grade.

Left: Oranit Garibi, LEICHT Kitchen Showroom owner, and Tanya Anderson, LEICHT designer, in the Kings Road kitchen.

