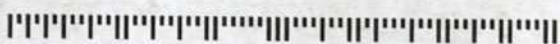


LUXURY HOME

quarterly



DIANE PURCELL
THROUGH THE LENS MGT., INC.
PO BOX 2134
WIMBERLEY, TX 78676-7034

AUSTIN, TEXAS *Modernizing traditional Texas design in preparation for a housing-market boom* p.66

1706 RITTENHOUSE SQUARE STREET *Philadelphia's newest condos raise the bar with luxury design and amenities* p.61



Juaregui, whose ultra-luxury homes start at \$2 million and are at the very top of the Austin custom-home market, says the architecture and interior-design markets are also looking for something more contemporary, but in Austin, that means different things to different people.

“The range of modern in this market can go from austere, cold, and museum-like to a more evolution of a house that has clean lines,” he says. “There’s still a connection to regionalism, too—that Hill Country, Texas Tuscan style, but with cleaner lines.”

Greening with pre-fabricated homes

There’s no question that custom homes in Austin go beyond the traditional. It is still Austin, after all—the home of a beloved transvestite named Leslie who once ran for mayor, and to a community that’s fiercely passionate about live music, politics, salamanders, technology, and the environment.

Michael Winningham, principal of RubyAnne Designs, LLC, embodies that style, building pre-fabri-

cated custom homes from a structurally insulated-panel (SIP) wall system that is sustainable and uses a much more efficient construction process than traditional home builds.

“Our mantra is affordable sustainability for all,” Winningham says. “We want people to have a well-designed home that looks great, meets our high standards of sustainability, and is affordable.”

RubyAnne Designs’ homes’ structural elements are pre-fabricated before arrival at the job site, dramatically reducing construction waste that would otherwise end up in a landfill. And despite the stereotype of plain-looking, standardized homes that’s often associated with pre-fabricated homes, Winningham enjoys creating a custom design that fits a client’s needs and budget—each home costs about \$199 per square foot.

“I want each of these homes to be unique, and we appreciate the challenge of designing one pre-fab house at a time,” Winningham says. “Aesthetically, people are reacting well to it, and it’s affordable.”

SOARING WINGS

Architect: Winn Wittman, AIA, Winn Wittman Architecture
 Builder: Gary Robinson, Home As Art

Soaring Wings is typical of the expressive, sculptural, post-contemporary work of Winn Wittman, an architect from Austin, Texas.

The name Soaring Wings refers to the two large, asymmetrical wing forms that project from the roof lines of the two living volumes, created to shield the living spaces from the brutal Texas sun.

There are more than 146 windows in the home—the most impressive array of which is the curved, faceted window wall with floor-to-ceiling glass that spans 40 x 10’, located in the second-floor gallery (above). Wired for motorized roll shades, this glass-wall feature is made possible by the home’s heavy, red-iron frame. Photos: © Thomas McConnell.



SECOND FLOOR

- 1 Gallery
- 2 Bedroom
- 3 Open To Below
- 4 Elevator
- 5 Second-Level Bridge
- 6 Bedroom
- 7 Bedroom
- 8 Pool



See page 22 for more info on the innovative stair tower.



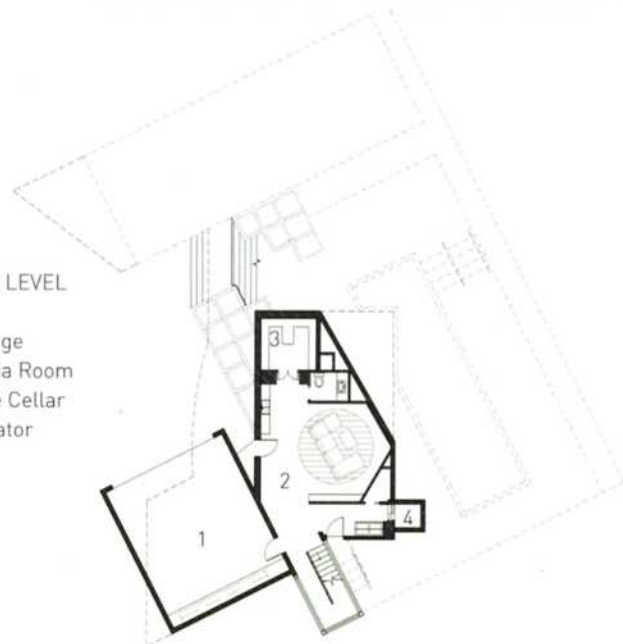
FIRST FLOOR

- 1 Entrance
- 2 Living Room
- 3 Kitchen
- 4 Elevator
- 5 First-Level Bridge
- 6 Master Bedroom
- 7 Master Bathroom
- 8 Pool



LOWER LEVEL

- 1 Garage
- 2 Media Room
- 3 Wine Cellar
- 4 Elevator



DISTINCTIVE WALLS

The wall panels of Soaring Wings are made of 7.5 inches of polystyrene insulation, including two layers of plywood sheathing, ice and water shield, and two inches of dimensional shell stone or copper. Photo: © Casey Dunn.



Breaking the traditional mold

Custom building in Austin isn't just limited to single-family homes. Marshall Durrett, partner of Durrett Interests, LLC, not only creates purely custom single-family homes that range from 2,000 to 5,000 square feet, he's also building custom multifamily urban in-fill projects in central Austin.

Durrett's Tarrytown project has four units ranging from 2,000 to 2,600 square feet that are priced between \$700,000 and \$800,000. Modern in design with lots of glass, stucco, luxury finishes, and appliances, the units also earned a Gold rating from the National Association of Home Builders' green-design program.

Pfeiffer completed another notable multifamily project near the Rosedale neighborhood in central Austin. The project has 16 units on three floors, ranging from

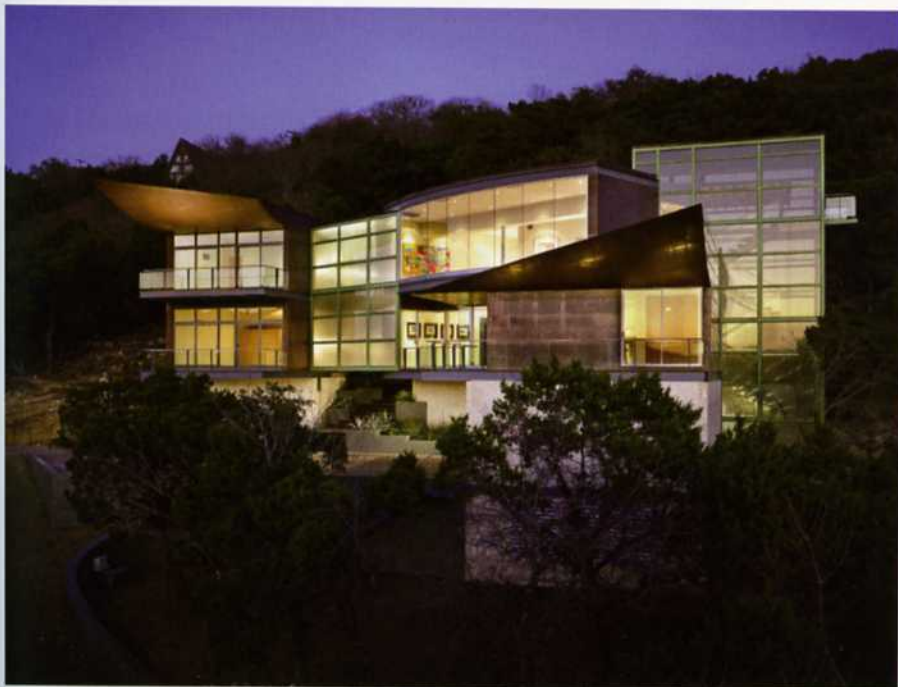
1,850 to 3,300 square feet and priced from \$500,000 to \$900,000.

"It's not as profitable as it used to be to build a spec home in those areas, and more living units in the same space is a greener alternative," Pfeiffer says. "This is everything you'd need in a single-family home; they just happen to be connected to other units."

With a range of prices, neighborhoods, builders, architects, designers, and styles, there are plenty of options for Austin's custom-home buyers. "A custom home is an opportunity to stamp your own image of who you are instead of adopting the footprint of a neighborhood," Henley says. "It's a personality thing—who you are and what you want to say. People want to build a house that fits the property, not the other way around." ■

POOL VIEW

Soaring Wings' heated swimming pool serves as the focal point of the private outdoor courtyard, and as a calming background from inside the home (above left). The pool features a purification system, as well as three powerful pumps that move 500 gallons of water per minute over its waterfall edge. Photo: © Thomas McConnell.



TWO FUNCTIONS, ONE HOME

Named for the two large, asymmetrical wing forms that project from the roof lines, Soaring Wings is delineated into two forms (representing the public and private functions), which are united by a bridge made of steel and glass. This innovative separation of functions allows privacy in an open-plan design.

The wings came about from a desire to shield the living spaces from the brutal Texas sun. They are clad in copper and a fossilized local stone similar to travertine. Photos: © Thomas McConnell (above), © Casey Dunn (left).