

Talent Pool

In the **Hamptons**, designer Shamir Shah adapted an innovative new Shigeru Ban house for an owner who needed more walls for his collection of art.

With a pool at its center, this Long Island house by architects Shigeru Ban and Dean Maltz looks much like a David Hockney vision of L.A. A long hallway parallel to the pool connects the living room and master bedroom wings. One side of the corridor is made of glass; the other of oak-plywood cabinets that support the roof. Designer Shamir Shah adds plush wicker chairs by Giovanni Travasa, Chinese ceramic benches from Aero and sleek chaises by Henry Hall for relaxing outdoors.

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apanese architect Shigeru Ban is known for creating supremely elegant structures from everyday components, and this seductive house on Long Island is no exception. Despite its generous proportions, it was built without conventional framing. Instead of using studs and Sheetrock, Ban, who is based in Tokyo, and Dean Maltz, his New York colleague, had more than 100 nine-foot-tall boxes built of plywood and bolted to the floor slab. Then the ceiling joists were laid on top of them. Not only do the boxes help support the roof, but each one functions as a closet, bookshelves or (in the case of the boxes that form an outdoor colonnade) a garden shed.

To the owner, Ban's invention was a dream come true. "I had always wanted to live in a glass house," says the young businessman, an avowed modernist. But he also wondered where he would stow his possessions. This glass house, with its profusion of closets, "was designed so that everything could be put away," he says.

But even a dream purchase can have its drawbacks. The problem in this case, the owner says, is that "I collect art, and it's big art." Ban's house hardly had a single wall that wasn't also a closet door. To solve that problem, the art-loving businessman hired Shamir Shah, a New York interior designer who trained as an architect. Shah removed just enough cabinetry to hang works like a wall piece by Paul Villinski (a series of butterflies made out of recycled bits of aluminum cans). Villinski's butterflies, which are on wires, flutter ever so slightly. The house is no less delicate a feat of engineering.

In the 35-foot-long living room, a curved midcentury sofa by Edward Wormley and a pair of vintage wood-framed chairs from Flessas Design on Madison Avenue surround an Indonesian root table from San Juan Ventures of Chicago. Shah supplied layers of comfort by covering the limestone floor in sisal and adding a group of Moroccan rugs. Art is by Paul Villinski, from his "Beer-can Butterflies" series.

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