

Finding Their Angle

"Some of the elements they have," confides Tony Sutton, owner and head designer of Est Est, Inc., "are not things they're going to see in someone else's house when they go to a party. That's one of the things they'll have some bragging rights on."

BY ELIZABETH EXLINE PHOTOGRAPHY: TONY HERNANDEZ

THIS IS AS MUCH as Tony Sutton will reveal as we drive to the house in North Scottsdale's Whisper Rock development. Turns out, the house is rather like a good movie—knowing the ending can spoil it. Better instead to walk through the space, drink in the scenery and listen to the home's story from beginning to end.

Three years ago, a couple splitting time between Scottsdale and Jackson Hole, Wyoming, was looking to trade their house at The Boulders for one with a better view, a bigger lot and enough wall space to display their growing contemporary art collection. The couple hired Lash McDaniel of Lash McDaniel Design Studio in Phoenix to create a floor plan for this most uncommon house. "It's not any particular architectural style," the homeowner says.

Maybe not, but that doesn't stop people from trying to cram the house into a proverbial box. "It is an interesting mix," asserts

Joe Conk of Scottsdale-based Conk Architecture, the architect commissioned to breathe life into McDaniel's vision. "[The home is] very Southwest adobe style with some contemporary details."

Entering the foyer, the house unfolds like origami—angular rooms and sloped, pitched ceilings slide into one another in graceful repartee. To the right, in the living room, wedged, pentagon-shaped beams made of treated sheet metal line and define the ceiling and echo the fireplace's copper panels. Walking through

At right: A sweeping window wall draws the eye to the expansive backyard and perfectly frames the rugged desert landscape.



CONCEPTUAL DESIGN ARCHITECT / Lash McDaniel, Lash McDaniel Design Studio

ARCHITECT / Joe Conk, Conk Architecture

BUILDER / Jav Manabip, Manabip Builders

DESIGNERS / Paula McKain, Kim Schapiro, Tony Sutton; Est Est, Inc.
SQUARE FOOTAGE / 6,242 (livable), 8,825 (total under roof)

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INSIDE OUT The home features an extensive patio topped by a unique X-shaped ceiling treatment that visually raises the ceiling.



SEPARATE BUT EQUAL Clusters of furniture define the various niches within the living space, while wedged beams made of treated sheet metal echo the fireplace's copper panels. (OPPOSITE) The home's rounded walls are juxtaposed by the patio's sharp lines.





DINE WITH A VIEW Bright, bold fabrics gather round the table.

more rooms, it becomes clear that these ceiling treatments are the house's leitmotiv, unifying the home's eclectic forms.

The lot was "like a hole in the ground," Conk says. He had to raise the finished

ceiling treatment to visually expand the room.

"I was trying to create an optical illusion of a higher space," Sutton says, pointing out how he varied the thickness in each beam. In the kitchen, two parallel metal beams

Even in this more rustic rendering of contemporary design, natural light performs a dominant role.

grade three to four feet before he began building—a move made problematic by the community's rigid height restrictions. Encountering the master bedroom's low ceilings and asymmetrical pyramid-shaped walls, Sutton devised an unusual X-shaped

run along the ceiling above the island, establishing a clear spine in a room defined by niches and corners.

Ceilings weren't the only aspects of the house in need of Sutton's attention. "You really have to focus on creating a smooth



COOK'S NOOK Horizontal ceiling beams define the kitchen's spine and focus the room on the center island.

transition from one space into the next," he says. The intersection between the office and the master bedroom contains a sofa table and a recessed window framing a vignette of three cacti and a tree. "It creates privacy," Sutton explains. "It also creates a sense that this is the public space, now we're coming into another area."

Even in this more rustic rendering of contemporary design, natural light performs a dominant role. Walls of glass line the back of the house, drawing the eye toward the sweeping backyard. Outside, water splashes over the negative edge of the

elevated pool carved into a curvilinear, moat-like frame. To the side, a well-manicured putting green provides the centerpoint for a swath of green grass. "You just feel like there's this vast, endless space out here," Sutton says.

We pause by two large lounge chairs separated by an end table crafted from an antique Bulgarian sink. The sky's brilliant blue shines above, the magnificent home stretches behind us and the uninterrupted view of fairways and mountains surround us. "Nothing pedestrian here will do," Sutton concludes. **6**