



FEATURING JAMES LARUE

James LaRue AIA LaRue Architects By Capan Yetmen Not many things in the vibrant incarnation of Austin in 2019 can claim a 30-year anniversary. But LaRue Architects, an award-winning boutique residential design firm with a national reputation is doing just that. Amidst Austin's breakneck pace of construction (and accompanying demolition) the seasoned firm has consistently created inspiring and design-driven homes, unique to and fully of the Austin we know and love.





One thing has remained constant about the Texas capital – it draws people in. They visit, and they want to stay. Chalk it up to the rolling Hill Country landscape, the climate, the easy lifestyle (and yes, the tacos and BBQ, too). People love Austin and want their homes to reflect its cool style and particular spirit. Since 1989, architect Jim LaRue and his team have worked all over the city with a variety of sites and clients, creating a Hill Country contemporary style - modernist fundamentals enriched with local materials and easy connections to both land and sky - that is instantly recognizable to Austinites.



LaRue says variety and reinvention are also favorites of Austin clients. He notes that Austin's elevation in status as a destination – thanks, SXSW and F-1, among others – has expanded the architectural landscape. "The bar is high in Austin," he says. "The projects have to be excellent. It's driving everyone to do better work and from a design standpoint, Austin is opening a lot of eyes across the country."

LaRue should know. From waterfront properties on the expanding west side of town, to close-in established neighborhood and suburban contexts, his

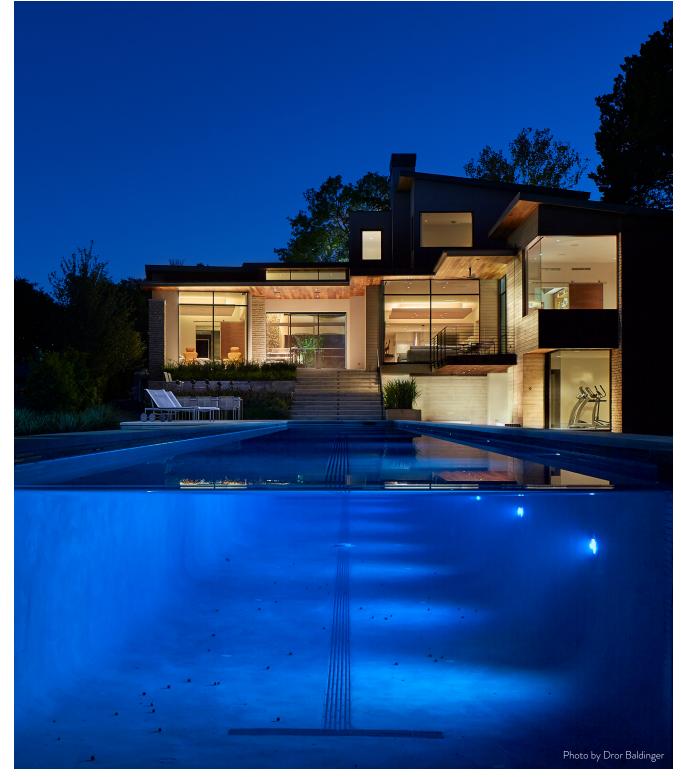
work reflects the variety of Austin lifestyles. He enjoys working the city's different microcosms, finding solutions to each site's unique set of problems, whether that's how to best capture an expansive view, preserve existing trees, or site a house to protect residents' privacy.

The firm's tightly knit team is flexible and agile enough to respond thoughtfully to each challenge. Researching, exploring and discussing ideas are the engine that drives the work and a thoughtful collaboration with the entire team – client included – is the norm.

Whether working on a Hill Country site or a Clarksville lot, it's time-tested methods and materials used in new ways that define the refreshing evolution LaRue brings to modern architectural forms. This means every project begins with the site and the importance of designing to capture breezes and protect from the intense sun and using existing trees and topography as an asset to the finished project. Steel, glass, concrete, and stone comprise the elemental palette LaRue turns to as the expression of being rooted in this time and place. The work draws in all kinds of clients, too, from empty nesters to firsttime home builders envisioning a beautiful place to put down roots.

Although the firm's work is focused predominantlyinAustinandtheHillCountry region, LaRue is exporting his Austin style farther afield at clients' requests. He works in Dallas and Houston and beyond, with projects in South Carolina, Tennessee and even Massachusetts, where he adapted the design to address drastically different climate and topography challenges and use local materials while still delivering the specific Texas flavor the client wanted.

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LaRue says the team takes on projects that are meaningful to both the firm and the client, and that carry with them a connection to both history and place. As an integral and influential part of the city's design community for three decades, LaRue has left a beautiful legacy on the city. It's a milestone to be celebrated - perhaps on a shady porch or a deck with a view to hills and sky, and a toast to the spirit of Austin. Q

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