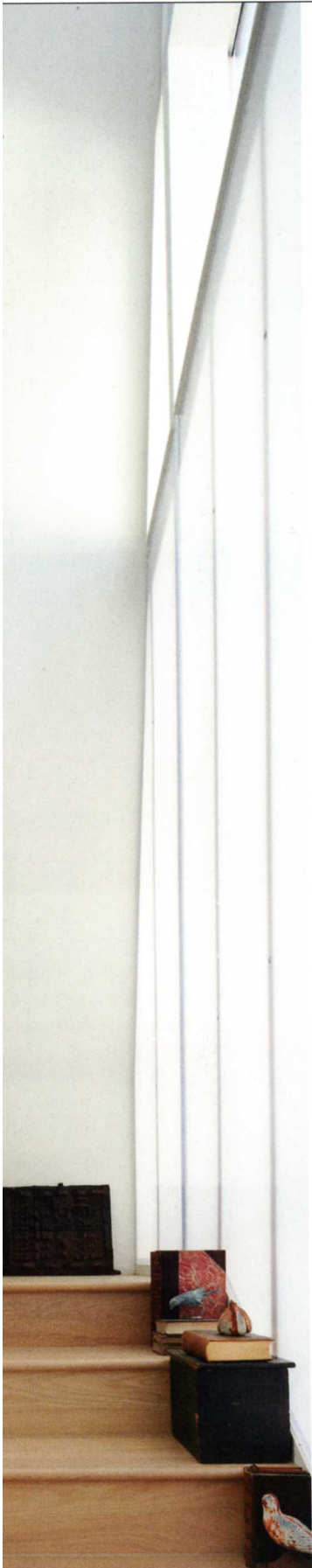


# A Work of Art





**THIS SCULPTURAL  
ADDITION BY  
A.GRUPPO  
ARCHITECTS SUITS  
ITS CREATIVE  
OWNERS**

# A

**As Texas State University professors for nearly four decades, Jene and Jean Laman both had illustrious careers in the arts. The instructors taught in the interior design and fiber arts programs, respectively, but retirement didn't mean slowing down their craft. Instead, it meant a new wave of inspiration.**

The Lamans hired Andrew Nance and Thad Reeves of A.Grupo Architects to sculpt an addition onto their 1980s-built home, which would house a gallery, library, studio space, and new primary suite. For the architects, the original dwelling—an 1,800-square-foot stucco-and-glass structure in San Marcos—was already the picture of perfection. “They had developed a series of outdoor sculpture gardens, the landscaping was manicured and well-maintained, and the house was curated with art and sculpture all over the place,” Nance says. How could they add on while





respecting the original design? The goal was to depict a new facade, one that would double the size of the house and be as unobtrusive as possible.

The couple had already envisioned what this addition could look like and drew inspiration from their years of travel. “They gave us a booklet of places they’ve been—photography and drawings they had collected over the last 25 years,” Nance says. It included everything from a French castle to a photo of ancient stone in Europe. “The pictures we had collected over many years reflected and represented ideas that we particularly liked from different viewpoints: material preferences, special features, textures, and color,” Jene says.

The design process, which ended up being highly collaborative, was accomplished through seamlessly blending the old and new via a series of repetitive forms. Jean, in particular, was adamant that the new addition be sculptural.

“Over a year of meetings, the plan developed as a series of long linear bars of the footprint splaying out amid the amazing old Cedar Elms on the site,” Nance says. In order to keep the addition budget-conscious, the architects went with structurally insulated panels, two sheets of plywood sandwiched over insulation and reinforced, from a company out in Kerrville, Texas. “It allowed us to work together and use digital models,” he says.

Opposite page: The living room is home to many pieces collected in the owners’ travels abroad. This page: The north face of each tower uses opalescent walls to transmit even natural lighting throughout the day.



The agricultural vernacular of the two siloed buildings pairs well against the existing home's 1980s-modern shed roof, while the palette keeps everything homogeneous. There's a gallery on the left and painting studio to the right with library space above, while skylights and 23-foot-tall ceilings bring in plenty of light throughout the day.

While the forms of the new addition were at first difficult to pin down, it was the primary suite that was by far the most challenging part of the design, as the original suite had to be shifted over and a hallway was formed to connect it to the rest of the new area. But it has now become one of the homeowners' favorite spots due to its large walk-in closet and Zen garden. The closet doors, which are vintage, have a *Chronicles of Narnia* feel, plus there is a large-scale painting with colors that blend into the African objects on the shelf below.

In the studio space, the entire end wall features one of Jean's handmade paper works, which took months to make. She also painted the canvas upholstery on the Louis XV settee in the gallery. "The upholsterer cut the canvas pieces to fit the settee," Jene says. Just as they envisioned, the entire addition is not only creatively inspiring but visually stunning. "They wanted this house to be high art and not just a container they put their work into," Nance says. ▲

This page, from top: The primary bedroom has a view of the private courtyard; this well-lit hallway connects the original home with the addition. Opposite page: A loft-like office/sitting room overlooks the studio space.



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