

DREAM HOMES

METRO NEW YORK



AN EXCLUSIVE SHOWCASE OF NEW YORK'S FINEST ARCHITECTS, DESIGNERS AND BUILDERS



JAMES MERRELL

James Merrell Architects

When James Merrell talks about his work, a theme quickly emerges. After only a few minutes with him, it becomes clear that the Sag Harbor architect, who has been designing award-winning residences and commercial buildings since 1988, values authenticity above all else.

His design philosophy — deliberate use of materials, structures that resonate with their settings, and a contemplative approach to every detail — bears the influence not only of his studies at Yale and Harvard and his time at New York City and East End architecture firms, but also of internships with environmental sculptors James Turrell and Eric Orr and in theater set design and construction at the Julliard School. Today, he spends most of his time working on projects in the Hamptons, striving to create houses that are true expressions of the people who live in them and that remain reflective of their historic landscapes.



ABOVE: Planes of glass, concrete, ebonized white oak and daylight wrap the views in this corridor.
Photograph by Carol Bates

LEFT: The Golub House is a garden-immersion experience.
Photograph by Carol Bates



"I always ask, right off the bat, 'What materials are you drawn to? What sorts of spaces relax you?' Custom design, and second homes in particular, offer an open-ended opportunity for expression, yet people rarely let themselves think beyond the architectural clichés. It is my job to bring imagination back into the process," he says. To accomplish this, James puts pen and paper front and center. Real design exploration, he emphasizes, comes from drawing ideas, not from copying stylebooks.

The firm's projects all aim for an understated elegance. James' designs also exude a material richness. They are pared down yet not spare; striking without being flashy. "Such things don't happen by accident," he says. There is deliberate thought behind every element. "I sketch out and discard all the obvious solutions in order to find the exact right one. There is nothing I enjoy more: It is a labor of love."



ABOVE: The master bath is like a private cabana opening onto the garden.
 Photograph by Carol Bates



TOP RIGHT: Living room and pool-scape merge on a sunny morning. (Interiors by Tori Golub)
 Photograph by Carol Bates



BOTTOM RIGHT: The master bedroom sits in a landscape which seems to flow through it.
 Photograph by Carol Bates

FACING PAGE: Horizontal glazing and stone walls seem to intersect in this living room view. (Interiors by Tori Golub)
 Photograph by Carol Bates



more about james... Q&A

What is the highest compliment he's received professionally?

People often ask if his houses are renovations. Even during construction they have an authentic feel.

What book is he reading right now?

The House of Mirth, by Edith Wharton.

What is the most expensive/difficult technique he's used in one of his projects?

Authentic wood finishes often appear in the residences James designs. "They are expensive because they depend on love and elbow grease," he says.

Awards and recognition:

Several of his projects have received Archi design awards and commendations from the American Institute of Architects, Long Island Chapter. His work has been photographed for *Metropolitan Home*, *House & Garden*, *Country Living*, *Hamptons Country*, *Architektur & Wohnen*, *The New York Times*, *The Southampton Press*, and *The East Hampton Star*.



ABOVE: Interior woods are bleached twice, then waxed and buffed like furniture.

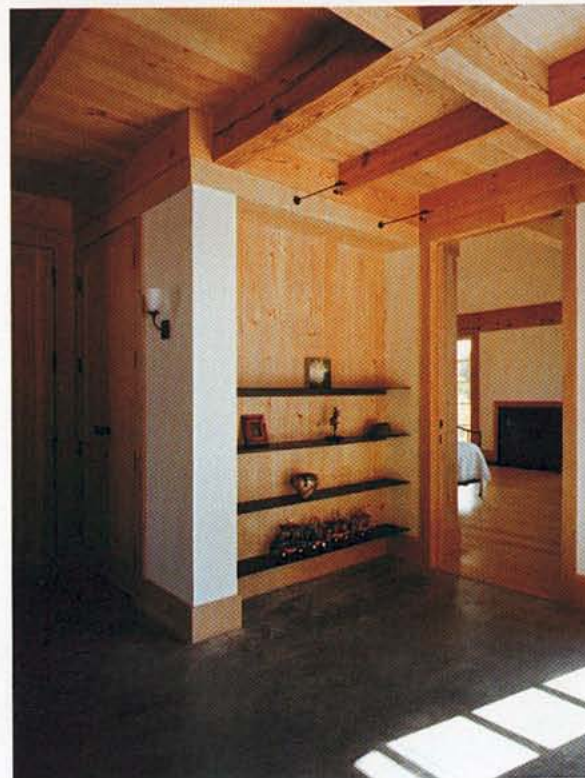
Photograph by Jeff Heatley

RIGHT: Architectural finishes and natural light decorate this house, creating a rich but restful experience.

Photograph by Jeff Heatley

FACING PAGE: The Sagaponack House is a meadow-immersion experience. Materials include natural concrete, weathered cedar and a stucco the color of river stones.

Photograph by Jeff Heatley



James Merrell Architects, PC

James Merrell, AIA

66 Main Street

PO Box 210

Sag Harbor, NY 11963

631.725.9842

Fax 631.725.5292

www.jamesmerrellarchitects.com