

tient, I would talk to myself and say, 'is getting done quickly more important than the process and the final result?'"

Thodos kept the footprint of the existing home in tact, but what was once a dark little cottage is now a wood and glass marvel. Fronted by young Japanese Maples, the exterior combines Canadian Red Cedar siding with extensive use of glass; while the home certainly invite looks from the outside, the inside feels cozy and warm—and still very private.

Thodos talks of his materials as if they were alive. The same Italian porcelain tile ("You can beat it to death, unlike granite or marble," he says) that comprises the base of the exterior is used throughout the interior, melding with soft carpeting and gently colored woods. The cabinets, which John designed, are all White Oak, while the doors are all Douglas Fir.

The windows, meanwhile, Thodos describes as "deconstructed."

"Most people would put the glass where the groove is ... and the opening says 'I have nothing to do with the glass,'" Thodos says. "I move the glass past the opening and above the opening and now I've deconstructed the glass.

"To me, it's an intellectual game," he continues. "It plays with the senses. The brain likes to look for patterns and the more you search out the pattern, the happier your brain gets."

The bathrooms—a master and a guest that go along with the home's two bedrooms—have a pristine quality to them, but they're not so monastic as to seem sterile. There are no doors or coverings to the shower, which astonishingly is fronted by exterior glass frosted to match Judy's height.

"I wanted the bathrooms to be like simple little temples and I got as much light in there as I could," John Thodos says. "I don't want to be in a dark room. It's a pleasure cleaning up, a pleasure showering and it should be so without being sterile."

Sterility is a concept that sometimes comes to mind when one thinks of modern structures. Asked if he thought modern structures were appropriate for families with young children, Thodos answers with a thoughtful but resounding "yes."

"The house can't be more precious than the children, and that's what's important or you end up making them paranoid about living in their home," he says. "So I change the materials and

the detailing to accommodate the abuse. You create walls they can draw on, and courtyards to play in that are sheltered from the wind.

"Modernism, if it's done right, tries to think more seriously about how people really live rather than how people are asked to live," he says.

In terms of how the Thodos' live, it's a life rich in art and music, punctuated by serious work, trips abroad and frequent flights to visit Judy's children and grandchildren in Portland, where John was raised and still maintains an office.

And as all Carmel residences are required to have at least a single-car garage, the Thodos' built a glass-fronted garage large enough to accommodate their red Mini-Cooper. But the Cooper stays in the driveway, and the garage instead houses John Thodos' painting studio and a desk for Judy, who works on the computer and keeps John company as he paints his signature geometric forms in bold acrylic colors.

He takes such pleasure in being in the studio that the employees of his architecture firm sometimes worry he's never going to come out of there.

"I hear the birds, I play music quietly and I think," he says. "It's a wonderful space." **ce**

