



HOUSE 6

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THE SIXTH CUSTOM HOME DESIGNED BY FU TUNG CHENG, HOUSE 6 is a monolith of human proportion and warm, natural materials. The house is a place of refuge and repose, one that warmly envelopes its inhabitants and guests—the home’s 12-inch concrete walls providing a sense of safety and security.

The concept was to create a building that, while minimalist, would convey integral tactile design and craft throughout by “playing” with and controlling the mix design of the concrete walls as they were being poured. The only element remaining from the original house is the kidney-shaped pool, refinished to harmonize with the house.













AT FIRST GLANCE, the two-story house reads as a modern fortress, but upon closer inspection this “fortress” is surrounded by a lush, colorful garden that mounds up to embrace the exterior walls making it seem as if the structure is rising from the earth. Spontaneous color and texture placed by hand within the concrete walls make the home warm and approachable. The entry canopy greets visitors at a height that is almost touchable as the sound of the indoor/outdoor water feature ushers visitors into an intimate foyer area. Human connectivity and scale were key to maintaining the idea of “refuge.” House 6 is not spectacular in size, but a collection of intimate spaces inside and out—even the “grandest” space, the living area, is large without being excessive.



















AT THE ENTRYWAY, a bamboo gutter diverts rainwater to the garden. The outdoor water feature flows into the house, bringing good energy to the home, arriving at a pond that bridges inside and outside. Live, petite pond fish and the presence and sound of water connects nature to the home itself, filled with organic, natural materials. The living room's entire south- and west-facing window walls pleat open to provide a seamless indoor/outdoor experience.

Craftsmanship and artistry is keenly present in every aspect of the floors, walls and ceiling. Concrete and natural materials are layered, thoughtfully hand-placed, colored, and textured in a smooth, ground, and inlaid finish. Concrete floors were raked and ground to provide both decorative and non-slip functions. Walls were “slip-cast” by reusing the same wall forms every 4 feet in order to creatively



control hand-placing and integrally coloring the concrete. The numeric house address “6” was captured in concrete as a graphic element and is a serendipitous nod to the home being the sixth of Fu Tung’s custom home projects. Even more appropriate, the symbol “6” has been long-associated with domestic stability, smoothness and tranquility—ideal sentiments to cast in stone for the house intended for refuge and repose.

The 4,000 s.f. house is a hybrid structure of a monolithic core of concrete and traditional wood framing, traditional rough, board-formed concrete walls and hyper-smooth concrete walls, articulated with bands of exposed aggregate. Family communal life occurs in the concrete structure of the main living core while private life occurs in the wood-framed wings.

THE CONCRETE WALLS WERE POURED USING A FORMWORK-REDUCING slip-cast technique. The 4' x 8' panels comprised of plastic laminate and plywood were ganged together in single-height 4' "lifts." With each lift came the ability to control how the concrete was performing. Reaching into the forms added subtle bands of color and prevented any marring of the glossy smooth forms.

In addition to the slip-cast technique providing aesthetically beautiful finished concrete, there are environmental benefits as well: because the cast walls are finished when the forms are removed, there is no need for additional finish materials; casting in "lifts," one pour on top of another, reuses and thus reduces formwork material itself; concrete remains cool during warm days and releases heat during chilly evenings, eliminating the need for air conditioning. ■

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