

Seattle's Suyama Peterson Deguchi takes Midcentury to next century

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NOTHING LIKE A little dry rot to get the party started.

"There was a ton of it up there," says Bob, blending breakfast. Berries, yogurt, flaxseed.

He snagged this jazzy lake's-edge Seattle Midcentury from the trailings of the dot-com bust in 2002. Parts of the house original, others groomed by Suyama Peterson Deguchi in the 1990s.

"Half of my friends are architects, and I thought, let's use them. They're cheap."

But Barbara, Bob's wife, thought better of it. She suggested they discuss it with Suyama Peterson Deguchi first.

"You know how it is there," Bob says. "They're super nice people who are artists. You can just tell you're in the presence of greatness.

"I said to them, 'It's just a Suyama light, you know? And Jay [Deguchi] said, 'It's the *right* size. Our challenge is to get clients to build smaller.'"

Sorry, architect friends. Now there are a whole bunch of new friends. This morning Bob looks more like one of the builders of his newly remade smooth-as-silk 2,866-square-foot house. Maybe it's the Flip baseball cap.

"Coolest story of the whole house is how good of friends everybody's become," he hollers over the mixer. Right then Warren Cooper, from contractor Flip Builders (now ESMB), comes by to drop off keys. "Hey dudes" are exchanged.

So let's get this straight right up front: Trips have been taken, parties thrown, gifts exchanged, things borrowed, meals shared and toasts made among builders, designers, architects, homeowners. A group even went



Sarah MacDonald of Suyama Peterson Deguchi was involved in the interiors, along with Jay Deguchi and interior designer Rocky Rochon. The piece on the table is by Anne Siems. The loft, to the right, is Barbara's office and doubles as the guest room.



The fireplaces in the master bedroom and in the living room have blackened-steel surrounds. The bench seat is covered with a faux fur that Barbara couldn't get enough of. The home is 2,866 square feet; two bedrooms, three baths. The ceiling here was raised; the fireplace and windows are new.

to Biloxi, Miss., to repair Katrina-damaged homes.

But, this has *not* been one big party. It's been about life and death and relationships. Cemented, over several years, in wood and steel and glass.

"Right about the time we started this project my mother was dying," says Barbara. "I would have to walk out of meetings, and they were so understanding. The day we buried my mother we had an appointment with our designer, Rocky Rochon. I told him, 'I can't deal with this for a while."

"Then I had emergency surgery. And six months after my mother died, my sister died unexpectedly."

And then, although far less upsetting, was the Case of the Missing 15th Century Verona Marble Sink.

"We found it at the street market in Lucca," Barbara says, petting the ancient vessel. "They shipped it, but it didn't come and it didn't come. Finally, Bobby hired a private investigator. And, two years later, it's here!"

And here *we* are. The dry rot spurred scope creep of the most excellent kind. Under the guidance of Deguchi and project architect Sean Kakigi, the new master suite was only the beginning. There is also a new powder and family room (Really, Bob's man cave, Barbara says), Suyama-trademark entry courtyard of peaceful pond, gentle waterfall, ipe decking and fencing, steel gates to keep private very private. The old garage is now office, studio and laundry room. The living room has been redressed with paint, steel shelves and a custom plaster wall by Cathy Conner of Studio C.

Not bad, considering Barbara's only request was for a garbage disposal.

"What level did I want the lights? I didn't know, I never had a house. So I'd call my friend Lori," she says. "I've had roommates and apartments. I grew up in a Capitol Hill Craftsman, and our family had seven kids and



The stairs, stepping down toward the water, are blackened steel with oak handrails and treads. Rocky Rochon placed the French living-room chairs, carpet and living-room couches in the home. The bent-steel tables are by Suyama Peterson Deguchi. On either side of the chairs are small tansus.



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The dining room, which reaches to the water, is original. The fireplace was painted, but the concrete floors are as they were.

1 ½ baths. We shared rooms. Now we have three bathrooms for two people!

"When I come home I think, 'Oh, thank God, I get to relax.' This is a house *and* a home. There's a difference. You know?"



The table base is an old English wash basin with a galvanized-steel top. On it sits a blackened-steel tray from 3 x10, Suyama Peterson Deguchi's retail component. Herb Cole of Flip Builders (now Cole Building Co.) was the contractor. Warren Cooper was the project superintendent.



The bathtub shares a window with the bedroom, off to the right. When opened, bathers also have a view of Lake Union.



The fireplace in the upper office features new blackened-steel bookshelves, over newly painted bricks.



"We didn't do much to this elevation but replace the doors with aluminum," says architect Jay Deguchi. "Other than that we just painted it. The upper area was reclad in concrete panels."



At street level, past the river-rock pond and fountain, is Bob's office. A sliding screen offers privacy when he wants it. The walkway is ipe and leads from the carport. Randy Allworth of Allworth Design did the landscape design, and Dale Nussbaum of Nussbaum Group did the landscape installation.