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STUART SILK

Stuart Silk Architects

Extensive travel throughout the United States and abroad in his youth proved a seminal experience for Stuart Silk, AIA. An art history enthusiast, his mother exposed Stuart to indigenous art and architecture, shaping his sensibility and inadvertently revealing his vocation. Galvanizing his artistic penchant at the Yale School of Architecture, Stuart founded Stuart Silk Architects in 1981 and has since devoted his professional life to creating for clients and their communities the structural beauty that so profoundly affected his own life.

The firm, now 17-strong and more than 25 years old, has designed new residences, historical renovations and extensive remodels in a wide range of aesthetics. Stuart credits his expansive architectural vocabulary both to his early travels and to his education, which provided a broad view of the architectural world and imbued him with an insatiable intellectual curiosity. As fascinated



Above: Identical two-story natural stone fireplaces embrace the great room, as clerestory windows draw in daylight. The dramatic ceiling is detailed with clear fir trusses and a crossed pattern of purlins. Located on 10 acres with a beach, the residence has sweeping views of Puget Sound and the mountains.
Photograph by Ben Benschneider

Facing Page: Carefully proportioned, double-hung eight-foot windows flank the entry to this Whidbey Island beach house, allowing views through the home to the water. Regionally quarried stone complements other natural materials, such as weathered shingles and cedar beams and columns.
Photograph by Ben Benschneider



with European architecture as with American, both historical and contemporary, Stuart is continually building his repertoire through travel and observation and applying his knowledge of diverse influences from different regions to create globally inspired yet regionally appropriate forms. The firm's portfolio reflects the fluidity with which it can move from traditional to modern.

Fundamental to the firm's philosophy is collaboration. The project team works very closely with clients to understand their modes of perception and aesthetic preferences in order to successfully translate them into memorable built forms. This process of discovery ensures that Stuart and the team refrain from imposing their ideas on clients but instead produce fresh and innovative interpretations of their visions into the physical realm. The team is guided by the character and unique texture of each site as well as the surrounding context.

*Left: The und cluttered entry to this home—a dramatic 18-foot, glass-covered concrete drum—is located at the axis of two stone, gabled buildings and fills the home with natural light.
Photograph by Steve Keating*

*Above: Stone walls shield the pool and cabana from prevailing summer winds, while wood shutters open to views of the rural landscape and mountains.
Photograph by Stuart Sirk*

*Facing Page: At the rear of the home, a trellised courtyard off the living and family rooms overlooks concrete terraces leading down to the sheltered pool area. The home's simple, contemporary forms were inspired by the agrarian land near Selah, Washington.
Photograph by Stuart Sirk*





The firm's emphasis on the importance of site characteristics underlies its Green design efforts. Taught the importance of energy conservation early on, Stuart carries that responsibility to each project, carefully studying each site and informing clients of environmentally conscious design and building techniques, encouraging their use. The architects purposefully orient their homes to promote passive solar energy and preserve native vegetation. They choose durable materials, employ energy-efficient appliances and use such heating and cooling methods as solar panels and geothermal loop systems.

So committed is the firm to Green principles that it created the "Stuart Silk Green Guide," a tool used to measure projects according to proper siting, water and energy conservation, ample ventilation and the extent to which homeowners are educated about environmentally friendly living. A member of King County's Built Green program—one of the firm's architects sits on its executive committee—the firm works to integrate as many Green components as possible in every project.

In addition to receiving numerous awards, Stuart Silk Architects has been recognized for its diverse and innovative designs in such notable publications as *Architectural Digest*, *Traditional Home*, *Metropolitan Home*, *House & Garden* and *Seattle Homes & Lifestyles*. Moreover, the firm recently was chosen along with seven other U.S. architects to design nine villas, each of which had to be unique, for an upscale, gated community in Shanghai. Stuart and his team were honored to have been so distinguished and consider the opportunity among their most remarkable to date.

Yet what Stuart most loves about his work is that each project is a new and extraordinary experience. Driven by the need to feel invigorated and challenged every day, Stuart constantly pushes his team and himself to improve upon and expand their capabilities and arrive at increasingly more creative and exciting projects. While persistently laboring to develop his designs, Stuart staunchly adheres to an unchanging goal: to create for each client a memorable home.

Right: Stuart Silk Architects celebrated the clean, structural aspects of the stairway by exposing the steel framing. Carefully selected wood panels provide a warm backdrop. "The tower created a new identity for the home," says Silk, "and projects light throughout the loftlike interiors." Photograph by Ben Benachneider

Facing Page: In this Seattle residence overlooking bustling Lake Union, the swoosh curves of an aluminum-clad roof inspire a feeling of soaring over the trees. Photograph by Steve Keating

