

# Texas Architect



# DESIGN AWARDS 2001



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# David/Peese House





**PROJECT** David/Peese House, Austin  
**CLIENT** James David and Gary Peese  
**ARCHITECT** Mell Lawrence Architects  
**CONTRACTOR** Don Crowell  
**CONSULTANTS** James David (landscape); Jeff Smith (structural)  
**PHOTOGRAPHERS** Mell Lawrence, Krista Whitson

JAMES DAVID AND GARY PEESE HAVE BEEN fine-tuning their house in West Austin for two decades, recently working with Mell Lawrence to remodel two levels of living spaces that now focuses views out toward the surrounding gardens. As a registered landscape architect and co-owner (along with Peese) of Gardens, a high-end retail gardening supply shop, David understands how dwellings and landscaping need each other.

"Gardens don't exist without houses. First, someone needs a dwelling and then the garden is a response to the dwelling," David says.

Originally designed for David and Peese by Jim Coote in 1979, the owners hired Paul Lamb a

decade later to design a 600-square-foot addition that provided a new kitchen, a guest room, and a terrace. With the latest project, Lawrence roofed the terrace, remodeled the upstairs bedroom and bathroom, and completely redesigned the downstairs layout, taking the garage into the house. The ground-level space he reconfigured into an axial hallway at center with storeroom and closet on one side and a long room on the other providing a bed for sleeping, a shower and sink for bathing, and a drawing board in between for design work. The room opens to the morning sun and a large garden through a bay of operable steel windows.

As part of the new project, Lawrence devised a cupola with a pattern of clear and red glass panels that funnels light into the upper-level terrace and bedroom. The bedroom, before the remodel, had received abundant light but the terrace's new roof changed that. Besides just adding light, Lawrence says the sun's movement projects a patch of intense red sunlight, from the cupola, across the terrace floor marking the changing time.



The eaves of the terrace roof hang low, partly to keep the space shady but more so to emphasize a northern vista out through the open gable while limiting views of new, neighboring houses to the west. David developed a garden on the north side to serve as an axis, even setting a huge urn to act as a terminus.

"The whole purpose of covering the porch was that we never really used it because it was too sunny. Now the porch is a pleasant place to be. It performs the function of a loggia or a belvedere would in Europe," says David.

The landscaping has been evolving for 20 years, David says, and the latest remodel project responds to his vision of how his residence and gardens can coexist. "The idea was when we did the remodeling we knew we wanted to create an opening and a vista. This is a response to the house, an extension out into the garden."

"The materials," David says, "are not elaborate. Most materials are what were already existing. The exterior is stucco. We replaced some of doors and windows with steel ones and added pine paneling around the house. There's native limestone and marble in the bathroom, teak flooring in the downstairs bathroom, and an antique black marble floor from Indonesia in the bedroom."

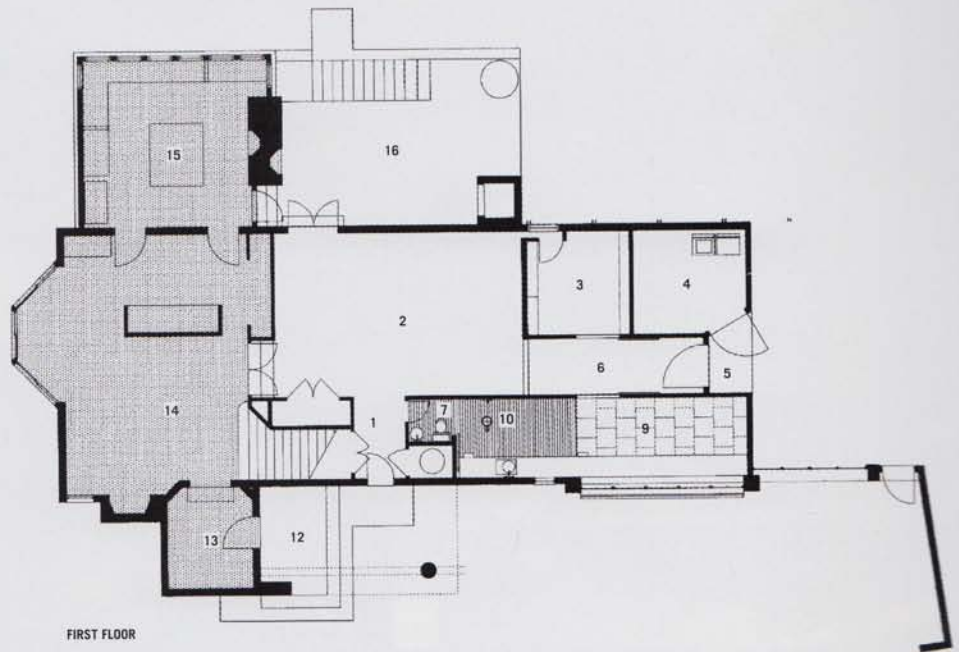
Taking cues from several of Coote's original exterior design elements, Lawrence specified steel which was hot-dipped galvanized (for windows, doors, and roof trusses), concrete which was formed with rough boards (for the long countertop in the downstairs bedroom/bathroom, and for the ground-floor bulkhead that supports the steel windows and holds up the roof), and wood (simple pine boards for the walls and ceilings inside). "We wanted materials that would be elemental and maintenance-free on the exteriors," Lawrence says.

David says he enjoyed the collaboration with Lawrence because the architect understood what the landscape designer was trying to achieve. "I didn't have to say much, and he really got what I wanted. We felt the same way about spaces and materials." The result is akin to how both facets of the David/Peese project, the architecture and the landscape, complement each other. ■

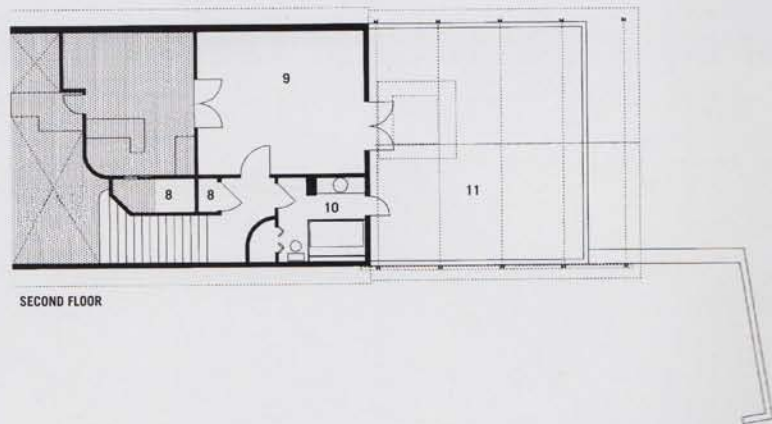
STEPHEN SHARPE

Stephen Sharpe is the editor of *Texas Architect*.

**RESOURCES** STONE: Gardens; RAILINGS AND HANDRAILS: Spillar; METAL TRUSSES: Spillar; LUMBER: Stripling-Blake; PRE-FABRICATED WOOD JOINTS AND TRUSSES: Stripling-Blake; MEMBRANE ROOFING: Firestone EFM; METAL DOORS AND FRAMES: Bliss Noram; METAL WINDOWS: Bliss Noram; GLASS: PPG; DECORATIVE GLAZING: Bendheim Glass; WOOD CEILINGS: Stripling-Blake; PAINTS: Pittsburgh



FIRST FLOOR



SECOND FLOOR

- FLOOR PLAN**
- 1 SIDE FOYER
  - 2 DINING ROOM/LIBRARY
  - 3 CLOSET
  - 4 UTILITY/LAUNDRY
  - 5 ENTRY/FOYER
  - 6 HALL/GALLERY
  - 7 POWDER ROOM
  - 8 CLOSET
  - 9 BEDROOM
  - 10 BATHROOM
  - 11 COVERED TERRACE
  - 12 EXISTING ENTRY PORCH
  - 13 EXISTING ENTRY
  - 14 EXISTING LIVING ROOM
  - 15 EXISTING KITCHEN
  - 16 EXISTING PORCH