

# YORKVILLE RELEASE 3.0



**A SINGLE-FAMILY RESIDENCE LEADS IN THE CONTINUAL EVOLUTION OF A CENTRAL TORONTO NEIGHBOURHOOD, REPRESENTING THE THIRD LIFE AND SECOND ADAPTIVE REUSE OF AN INDUSTRIAL BUILDING.**

**PROJECT** BISHOP STREET RESIDENCE, TORONTO, ONTARIO  
**ARCHITECT** TAYLOR SMYTH ARCHITECTS  
**TEXT** LESLIE JEN  
**PHOTOS** BEN RAHN/A-FRAME

This residence on Bishop Street represents the third iteration of a two-storey block in Toronto's Yorkville neighbourhood, whose life began as an industrial building originally constructed in the 1940s. Prior to his escape to California in 1985, Barton Myers converted the structure into the graphic design headquarters of Gottschalk + Ash International, located, interestingly enough, just one short block north of Myers' own famed former residence located at 19 Berryman Street. And in 2005, former Myers employee Michael Taylor transformed the building into a luxe 3,400-square-foot residence for dream client Ken Zuckerman, a developer and contractor.

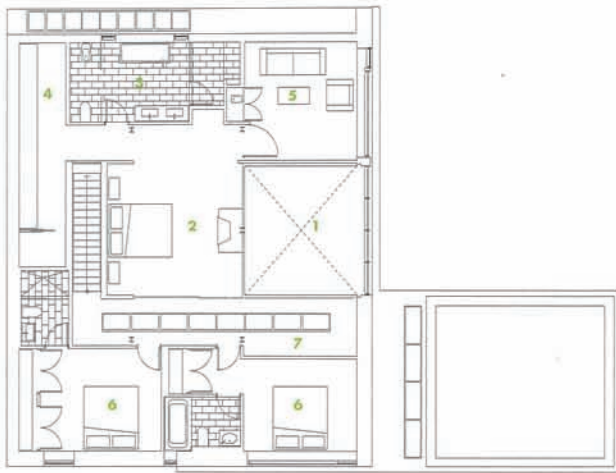
Though immediately surrounded by modestly scaled Victorian row-house cottages in highly genteel Yorkville—a district currently experiencing an





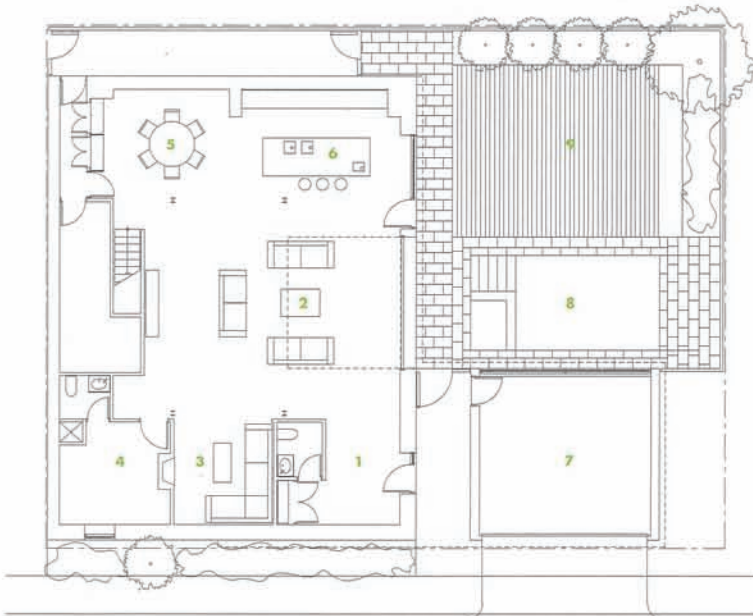
**OPPOSITE** INDUSTRIAL MATERIALS OF ZINC AND CONCRETE BLOCK ARE EVIDENT ON THE FRONT ELEVATION OF THE BISHOP STREET RESIDENCE, WHICH STANDS IN CONTRAST TO ITS IMMEDIATE VICTORIAN ROW-HOUSE NEIGHBOURS. **TOP RIGHT** WITH THE GLASS GARAGE DOOR OPEN, THE DOUBLE-HEIGHT LIVING ROOM OPENS OUT TO THE COURTYARD, BLURRING THE DISTINCTION BETWEEN INTERIOR AND EXTERIOR SPACES. **RIGHT** VIEW FROM THE COURTYARD SEATING AREA REVEALS WARM IPE WOOD DECKING ADJACENT TO THE COMBINED POOL AND HOT TUB, THE GLAZED GARAGE WALL, AND THE FLOWING GALLERY-LIKE SPACES OF THE HOUSE'S INTERIOR.





**SECOND FLOOR**

- |                  |           |
|------------------|-----------|
| 1 OPEN TO BELOW  | 5 DEN     |
| 2 MASTER BEDROOM | 6 BEDROOM |
| 3 MASTER ENSUITE | 7 GALLERY |
| 4 WALK-IN CLOSET |           |



**GROUND FLOOR**

- |          |           |          |
|----------|-----------|----------|
| 1 ENTRY  | 4 LAUNDRY | 7 GARAGE |
| 2 LIVING | 5 DINING  | 8 POOL   |
| 3 NOOK   | 6 KITCHEN | 9 DECK   |

explosion in upmarket condominium construction—the house is still distinctly urban. Some vestiges remain from its previous life as an industrial and commercial space: its vocabulary of industrial materials, the generous ceiling heights, the open-concept flow of rooms. Further, its assertive street façade and existence on a relatively tight site is adjacent to the unique property mix of small commercial offices and galleries, eventually bleeding to the more blatantly bourgeois designer culture on the holy trinity of high-end retail streets: Yorkville, Cumberland and Bloor, all running in parallel succession to the south of Bishop Street.

The building was completely gutted down to its existing steel structure, and the exterior rebuilt with grey concrete block, black zinc, stucco and clear anodized aluminum. Ground-floor public functions flow together effortlessly: the dynamic core of a two-storey central space is modulated by the surrounding single-storey spaces of entry foyer, kitchen, dining, den and nook, which feels particularly cozy due to its low ceiling height and compact dimensions. In creating a gallery-like setting, hydronically heated

**CLIENT** KEN ZUCKERMAN  
**ARCHITECT TEAM** MICHAEL TAYLOR, MIKE LAFRENIERE  
**STRUCTURAL** BRENK ENGINEERING LTD.  
**MECHANICAL** TROPICAL HEATING & AIR CONDITIONING LTD.  
**LANDSCAPE** HOLBROOK AND ASSOCIATES LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTS INC.

**INTERIORS** KEN ZUCKERMAN / TAYLOR SMYTH ARCHITECTS  
**CONTRACTOR** ZINC CONSTRUCTION  
**AREA** 3,400 FT<sup>2</sup>  
**BUDGET** WITHHELD  
**COMPLETION** APRIL 2005

and tinted sealed concrete provides a neutral flooring material against which the owner's impressive art and furniture collection is displayed. Walls are painted stark white and black, a fitting backdrop to showcase the paintings, photographs and sculpture. The owner's wine collection is also elevated to an art form: in the dining room, floor-to-ceiling glass encloses an internally lit custom-designed wine cooler, vaguely reminiscent of Brit artist Damien Hirst's shocking formaldehyde-soaked vitrine displays of the 1990s. The cooler is capable of storing hundreds of bottles of wine at one time, all stacked neatly in a translucent Plexiglas grid of boxes.

Ascension up a flight of blackened steel stairs leads to a second floor awash in light. Barrel-vaulted skylights over the stair and corridor permit daylight to penetrate down to the ground floor thanks to a wide glass floor slot in the second-storey corridor. The centrally located expansive master suite overlooks the living room below via full-height interior glass walls flanking either side of a zinc-clad fireplace: electronically controlled curtains afford privacy and shading during evening hours. To achieve a greater sense of warmth and intimacy, the flooring material changes from blackened steel in the outside corridor to walnut plank in the bedroom. The master suite enjoys its own private den, spacious ensuite bathroom, and a walk-in closet which runs an enviably long 20-plus feet down the east wall. Where else to store, display and access a potentially massive Prada, Cavalli and McQueen collection from nearby Holt Renfrew? Two additional bedrooms with ensuite bathrooms complete the second floor, and are situated at the front of the house facing Bishop Street. Though the front of the residence is pressed right up to the street edge, privacy is maintained through the strategic placement of slot windows in the bedrooms that nonetheless permit ample daylight and controlled views.

Outdoor spaces are critically important to Taylor, and he strives to maintain visual and physical connection and flow from interior to exterior. On axis with the outdoor pool, a large transparent glass garage door separates the house from the peaceful oasis of the enclosed garden courtyard. When the door is thrown open, outdoor and indoor spaces seamlessly become one, highly conducive to entertaining in temperate months. Paved with local Ontario stone, the courtyard contains an expansive wood deck adjacent to a pool and hot tub: these elements don't read so much as separate entities as they are skillfully integrated into an outdoor landscape element forming a dynamic ground plane within the confines of the courtyard parameters. Lending natural warmth, texture and colour, the Ipe wood used for the deck is a sustainably harvested rainforest material that also appears on the front entrance gate and the garden walls.

Unusually, the garage is not merely treated as a practical storage space for the barbecue, lawnmower, and gardening tools, but rather as a showcase for the client's prized automobile collection. A low window running the full length of the back garage wall affords wide-angle views from the social courtyard space of a series of gleaming European vehicle grilles. Garage as gallery.

Taylor has interpreted and refined the modernist tradition of Toronto residential architecture begun by his former employer and mentor Barton Myers some 35 years ago. His mastery of form, light and refined material choice can be traced from his beginnings as a junior at Myers' office, to sen-



ior associate at Kuwabara Payne McKenna Blumberg, then as founding partner of Taylor Hariri Pontarini and finally as founding partner of Taylor Smyth in 2000.

Clearly, Zuckerman likes what he sees. Although intensely involved in the design process and practically a member of the architectural team himself, he couldn't resist the urge to move on and tackle new projects. After living there for only a few brief months, Zuckerman sold the Bishop Street residence to a young high-profile buyer last summer. And following the subsequent renovation and resale of a Forest Hill residence that again utilized Taylor's design expertise, the pair have begun collaboration on two more projects just a few blocks northwest of Bishop Street and within spitting distance of Taylor Smyth's own office: an office building conversion and an adjacent single-family laneway residence. A dream client, indeed. **CA**



**RIGHT** VIEW FROM ONE END OF THE COURTYARD POOL ON AXIS WITH THE GARAGE DOOR OPENING DIRECTLY INTO THE TWO-STOREY LIVING ROOM. **BELOW, LEFT TO RIGHT** A BLACK STEEL COLUMN DEFINES THE DINING AREA, FLANKED ON ONE SIDE BY THE FULL-HEIGHT DISPLAY OF AN IMPRESSIVELY STOCKED WINE COOLER; A GLASS FLOOR SLOT IN THE SECOND-STOREY CORRIDOR LETS LIGHT WASH DOWN TO THE GROUND FLOOR FROM THE BARREL-VAULTED SKYLIGHT; ANOTHER BARREL-VAULTED SKYLIGHT ILLUMINATES THE ART-LINED STAIRWAY DOWN TO THE GROUND LEVEL.

