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DESIGNER JHANE BARNES AND HER HUSBAND TURNED THEIR MODERN GLASS HOUSE INTO A SANCTUARY THAT CELEBRATES NATURE AND MAXIMIZES STRATEGIES FOR RELAXATION.

For most of her 13-year marriage, Jhane Barnes—the internationally known fashion and furniture designer—had lived with her husband, Katsuhiko Kawasaki (who is in the textile business), in a leafy town an hour north of New York City. They had totally renovated their house, Barnes reports, so “there was nothing left to do.” But they were ready to upgrade to a larger place with enough room for their three spirited dogs to run free and ample property for a swimming pool and a garage for the cars Kawasaki collects.

“I wanted a modern house by a noted architect, so I would have a solid basis I could work from,” Barnes says, “and we looked at all the famous houses in the area—the Breuer House, a Frank Lloyd Wright house, a Philip Johnson house.”

The discerning twosome liked these architectural gems, but didn’t care for their settings. “There were too many neighbors,” says Barnes, “or the house was too close to the road.” After showing his clients some 40 possibilities, their real estate agent had a brainstorm: He took them to the house he grew up in, a modernist glass structure built on six private wooded acres. It sits nestled in trees atop a gentle slope, with big stone boulders forming a pathway down to a pond.

“We walked in the front door and out the back,” recalls Barnes, “and said, ‘This is it!’”

Although the house was cluttered with toys, Barnes could see it was in good condition. She would want some changes, but in large part they would be limited to cosmetic matters of style—oxygen for a designer. “There was nothing wrong with the house,” Barnes says, “but it wasn’t us. We changed the sensibility. We made it more serene.”

The living room features furniture Jhane Barnes designed: The King Hussein sofa (the monarch owned one) is “like a futon on a raised floor.” New bluestone floors give stylish ground to the sheer modernist house.

PRODUCED BY LINDA O’KEEFE. PHOTOGRAPHS BY JEFF McNAMARA. WRITTEN BY KATHLEEN BECKETT.



When the house was built in the 1950s, it consisted of little more than a kitchen and a living room. The last owners added a wing that includes a stunning entryway that sets the mood for the entire house: a curved glass two-story atrium with stepping stones winding through black river pebbles and a bamboo garden. It's one of the few flooring surfaces the couple let stand. "When we first moved in," Barnes remembers, "the house was urban modern: white walls with gray carpeting everywhere—*very* city. Little by little, we're trying to soften it."

They laid a maple floor in one room and a cherry floor in another in an attempt to warm things up, but they kept gravitating to stone, laying slabs of sturdy bluestone throughout. Part of an effort to bring the outdoors in, it's practical as well: "You see why we need stone," Barnes laughs, as the canines bound through the sliding-glass doors, direct from one of their muddy fishing expeditions. She loves the stone so much

she dreams of covering the house with it someday.

Barnes opted for carpet in the entertainment room—a space in the new wing filled with a large screen for viewing films as well as several musical instruments—to "test-drive" one of her own designs. Created in tile form, with ecologically correct backings made of recycled carpet, the swirling pattern can be laid at random and replaced tile by tile should a rambunctious pet, say, cause any damage.

Although originally intended for corporate settings, Barnes's pieces are beautifully functional in the new home, which also serves as a perfect stage set to showcase her multicolored, computer-designed fabrics. She has used them in the new home primarily for pillows and throws.

Center, top: Barnes's throw—inspired by the Mandelbrot Set—on her own sofa. The entertainment room floor (above) is covered in her carpet tile. At right: Incense, stone, bamboo and an amazing view provide a soothing welcome in the entryway for owners, guests and pets alike.







Elements of the original '50s modern house remain in the corrugated metal ceilings and steel beams; many of the lighting fixtures were installed by previous owners. With this much glass, however, light is hardly scarce. "I can't work in my office," says Barnes of the second-floor space she and her husband created for that purpose. "It's too sunny, too cheerful."

Expanses of glass can create problems: "When you live with glass walls, you see everything," Barnes laments, "like clutter. That's why I have closets and cabinets everywhere. It would be blasphemy with that view to keep the house messy."

Where the former owners, film producers, had a gallery of posters of all their movies, Barnes and Kawasaki arranged bamboo wall hangings. In the same room, the couple replaced the pedestrian doors on a wall of closets with sliding shoji screens created by the same Japanese master-craftsmen who work on the luxe Nikko hotels. In the office itself, a wall of Visions cabinets from Bernhardt in warm honey anigre wood provides more space for stashing stuff out of sight.

But Barnes's computer sits out on a desk at the ready. She designs all her furniture and fabrics by computer using mathematical formulas and even employs two mathematicians as full-time consultants. One pattern is based on the fractal geometric formula of the Mandelbrot Set; another is digitally printed with what looks like prisms of light. "I was the first to do digital printing in fashion and in interior design," Barnes says. "You can get an incredible expression of detail, and production is environmentally friendly. It's what printing will be in the future." For now, the fabric is being road-tested on pillows. "I'd love to cover all the furniture with fabric, but because of the dogs I have to use leather. It wipes clean."

This page (top): Upstairs, Saki enjoys the renovation on a warm maple floor. Shoji screens hide clutter (they replaced the closet doors in the "Before" picture above). Opposite page: In a hallway, new floors and lights join the corrugated ceiling, which is original to the house.

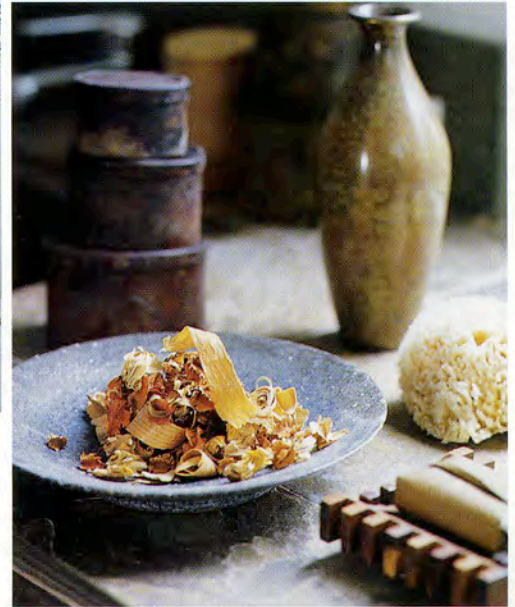
BEFORE



WHAT THE PROS KNOW ABOUT Stone Floors

Having worked with stone in previous homes, Jhane Barnes considers herself experienced in the pros and cons. She and her husband chose bluestone for the floors because "it is sturdy, very hard and lasts forever—and, believe me, when we do renovations, we want them to last forever." Bluestone is expensive, however. The couple paid \$36,000 for 1,100 square feet.

"Bluestone is a warm stone," the designer explains, "because it is rough. We gave it a matte finish because shiny finishes can peel. We have Indian slate in the entry, which is flat and easy to clean—you can mop it. The bluestone, because of its texture, needs to be vacuumed. Don't assume that someone who can put down granite and marble can put down bluestone. Grouting it is problematic."



Because Barnes and Kawasaki travel a lot, often to Japan where his family owns a company that produces some of his wife's fabric, they look forward to private time together when they can catch up. The best place is in the tub, a slate gray Jacuzzi set in a slate platform and surrounded by glass with a view of the trees. "We do a lot of our best talking in the tub," Barnes says. It's also where they sometimes strategize about business. The bathroom contains a steam shower, too.

Barnes has an additional sanctuary where she sorts out problems: a flotation tank (the water is made buoyant by 800 pounds of Epsom salts). "It's so soothing, my mind

goes places it normally doesn't go. If I've got to solve something, I'll go into my tank."

Another den of meditation that the house provides is an exercise room. It's filled with equipment, although Barnes concedes she prefers yoga to machines and has instituted daily yoga classes at her Manhattan offices for all employees.

In warm weather, the couple can unwind in the swimming pool with its tinkling waterfall (triggered by a computer). At the pool's side is an outdoor Jacuzzi. If that doesn't get the kinks out, the duo and their dogs can scamper down the stone steps to the pond. It's a lovely setup, and it's little wonder the pair strives to bring the outdoors, with all its calming pleasures, in.

But the most restful retreat is the bedroom, where fabric designed by Barnes covers a Saarinen Womb chair as well as a plump duvet. When it's time to sleep, the whole family, including the three dogs, curls up under the covers. **mh**

See Resources, last pages.

This page, from left: Aiko, Genki and Saki snooze on a duvet designed by Barnes; the new kitchen has easy outdoor access; earthy colors from many places collect on a bathroom counter: Potpourri on a dish from Japan, a metal vase made in India and old tin American boxes.

Opposite page: A Jacuzzi and a steam shower.

