

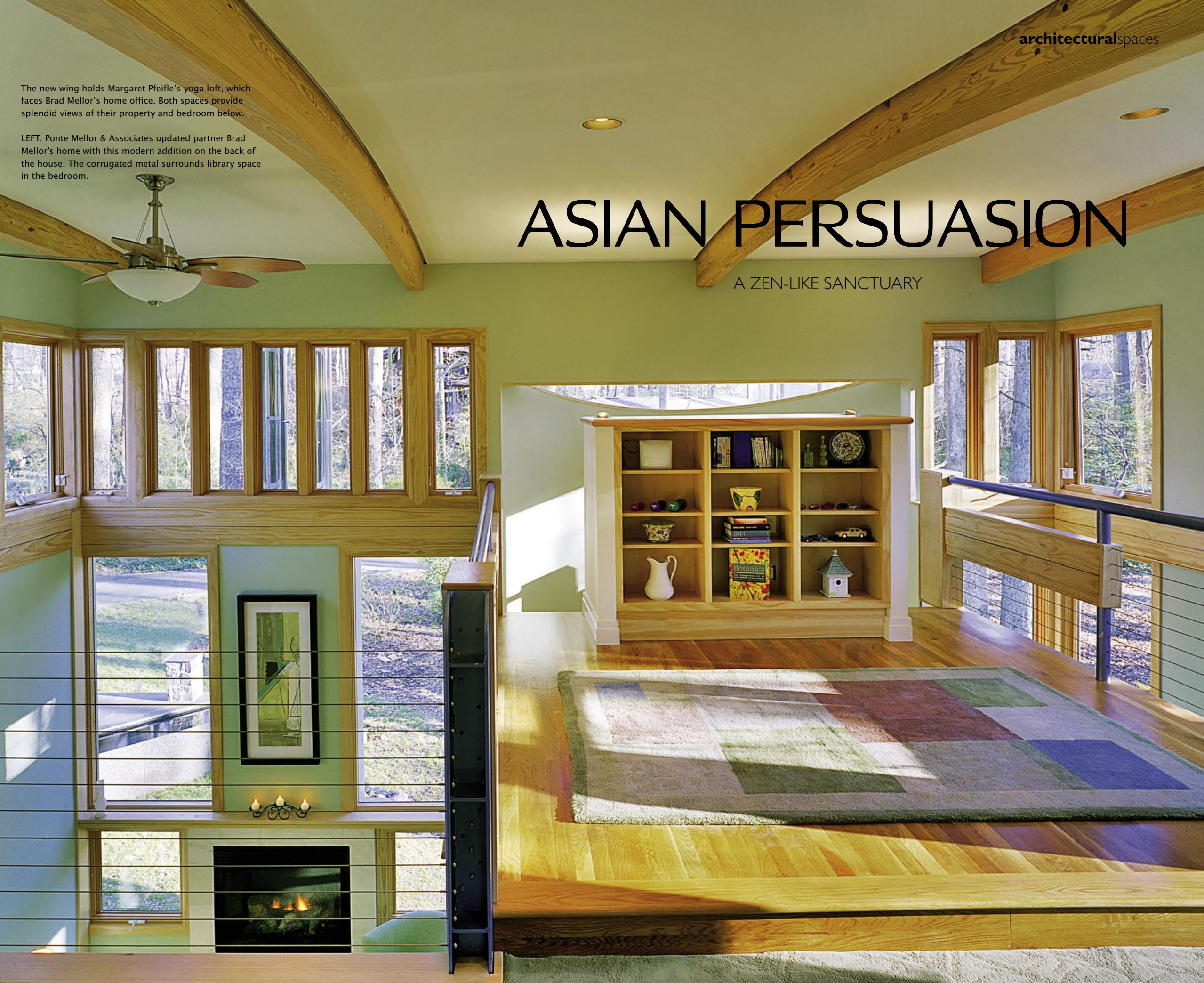


The new wing holds Margaret Pfeifle's yoga loft, which faces Brad Mellor's home office. Both spaces provide splendid views of their property and bedroom below.

LEFT: Ponte Mellor & Associates updated partner Brad Mellor's home with this modern addition on the back of the house. The corrugated metal surrounds library space in the bedroom.

ASIAN PERSUASION

A ZEN-LIKE SANCTUARY



WRITTEN BY **TRISH DONNALLY**
 PHOTOGRAPHY BY **KENNETH M. WYNER**, KENWYNER.COM

Brad Mellor and his wife, Margaret Pfeifle, who live in a vintage “California modern” house in Vienna, VA, contemplated whether to move or remodel. The couple wanted more room than the 2,700 square feet they had, yet they adored the location of their home and its wooded three-quarter-acre lot.

Mellor, principal of Ponte Mellor & Associates, an architecture, planning, and interior design firm in Bethesda, MD, led a team of architects from his firm and designed a dramatically open, thoughtfully integrated addition that doubled the space of the house. The glorious new wing includes a glass-enclosed, two-story bedroom suite with a vaulted ceiling that crowns their bedroom and spa bathroom on the main level and a yoga loft and home office on the second level. A recreation room in the basement provides getaway space for Austin, their 15-year-old son.

The serene yoga loft, which almost floats above the bedroom with expansive windows on three sides providing views of the wooded property, is a place to let one's mind escape into the wild. Mellor designed the cable railing to optimize the view when Pfeifle stretches on her yoga mat or sits in the lotus position. “I wanted to be able to look out at the woods and the sparkling creek,” Pfeifle says.



ABOVE: Brad Mellor and Margaret Pfeifle prepare for an evening out at their custom vanity, which includes an upper pullout shelf designed for manicures and a lower one for pedicures.

RIGHT: The seating/dressing area opens to the "outdoor room," gallery, closet, and bedroom.



Natural Light

The new wing, oriented 45 degrees to the rest of the 1961 house, skillfully maximizes garden and wood views. Blending beautifully with its environment, the home provides access from several places to a multilevel "outdoor room," as Mellor calls it. This inviting exterior area includes a striking granite water feature with an infinity pond and gourmet grill. While the addition is dramatic from the inside and back of the house, it's hardly discernible from the front.

Mellor, 53, spent years considering the design for this calm, peaceful addition. When it came time to build, he was the project manager for the construction and did much of the work himself. One is struck by the many windows, some stretching two stories high, throughout the addition. "We're sort of 'light' people," Mellor says. The fact that they have so many large windows sans window coverings underscores this point. "Our family loves natural light ... We wanted to be a part of nature." During the summer, when the foliage is full, the family has virtually complete privacy. During the winter, when it isn't, deer and foxes, who frequent the property, can see inside. "The addition faces south for maximum winter sun and the roof

curves down toward the west to control late afternoon sun in the summer," Mellor says.

He and his team designed a "gallery" to connect the original house to the addition. "We took the outer windows in the gallery right down to the stone, which carries you right out onto the patio," Mellor says. "The idea was to carry your eye from the glass and out to the pond." This gallery also provides space to expand the dining room table for big family gatherings, it brings light deeper into the house, and leads to the lovely new wing.

Flow

Mellor and Pfeifle, 48, who works for Michael Baker, designed their bedroom suite with flow in mind. A seating/dressing area leads to their spacious walk-in closet, which connects to their bathroom. This leads to their bedroom, which includes a fireplace centered on a two-story glass wall.

"We can walk in through the closet, get undressed, do our ablutions, and have our lingerie in drawers when we get out of the shower. That way, we don't have to clutter up the bedroom with clothes, so the bedroom remains a sanctuary," Pfeifle says.



Four major laminated beams span the owners' bedroom. "We wanted to create an open structural span covering the bedroom and master bath on the main level and yoga loft and home office on the second level," Mellor says.

Spa Bathroom

The bathroom is Pfeifle's favorite part of the addition. "It turned out a lot better than I even envisioned it would," she says. Both the shower and whirlpool tub frame sylvan views. On the day of our shoot, a brilliant red cardinal perched just outside. "This is a great place to commune with nature when you're lying in the bath," Mellor says.



Bathroom walls
Benjamin Moore
Pittsfield Buff
HC-24*



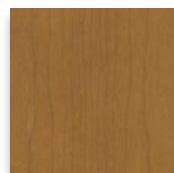
Bathroom walls
Benjamin Moore
Huntington Beige
HC-21*



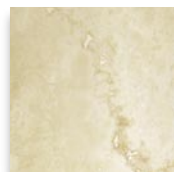
Bathroom ceiling
Benjamin Moore
Bird's Egg
2051-60*



Floor tile
Dom Ceramiche
Porcelain tile
Khadi Beige



Built-in millwork
Cherry wood
paneling
Matte finish



Shower walls
Sabbia limestone
Honed/filled



Wall treatments
River stone
Black Sea Minor

*Colors shown may not be exact. Visit benjaminmoore.com for more information.



Built-in cherry cabinets by Classic Millwork Ltd provide storage for lingerie and linens. Black Sea Minor river stone wall treatment from Architectural Ceramics. Vanity top, Crema Marfil Polisse, from R. Bratti Associates Inc., American Standard "studio" series undermount lavatory basins, Danze lavatory faucets. Drawer pulls from Target.

Warmth and Texture

"We, the architects in my firm, wanted to try things out we don't normally have a chance to do." For instance, Ponte Mellor & Associates included more wood in the bathroom than most people normally do to warm it up. They used cherry for the soffits, vanity areas, and built-in drawers, basically places where it wouldn't get wet. They also warmed up the room literally with heated floors. "We used under-tile electric resistance heating timed to be activated in the early morning and evening," Mellor says. The Italian ceramic floor tiles have a bark-like texture. Black river stone in the shower below the bench contrasts with the beige tumble marble tiles of the shower floor and flanking columns and the limestone of the shower walls.

"The shower has concealed 'daylight' color-temperature lighting and is fitted with a 'Steammist' stream shower generator and controls," Mellor says.

A dressing table in a nook of the bathroom is customized with an upper pullout shelf designed for manicures and a lower one for pedicures. A laundry chute in the closet drops to the laundry room in the basement. Eschewing doors for her closet because she wanted to be able to see everything in it at once, Pfeifle says, "We reused our dining room curtains to cover up our closet. They fit perfectly." Mellor's half of the closet is raised a few steps above Pfeifle's. "The steps work like a bench. Brad sits on them every morning to put his shoes on."

As Mellor and Pfeifle reflect on their decision about whether to move or remodel, they know they made the right choice. Their home is now like a retreat. Pfeifle says, "When you're lying in bed and looking out at all the trees in the winter, it's really interesting with all the tree trunks. You can see the stars from bed and I've seen the moon rise." **ws**



ABOVE: The tub, a pipeless Sanijet unit, includes six separately motorized jets and is positioned to provide views on two sides.

BELOW: Pfeifle enjoys gardening and wildlife. A cardinal greets her just outside her bath.



RESOURCES

■ **Architectural Ceramics**
301.762.4140
architecturalceramics.net

■ **C&M Marble & Tile Co.**
703.901.5068

■ **Classic Millwork Ltd**
717.556.0900
classicmillworkltd.com

■ **Estoril Construction Inc.**
301.652.2775
estocon.com

■ **Mirror and Glass Center Inc.**
703.212.7171
mirrorandglasscenter.com

■ **Ponte Mellor & Associates**
301.652.9336
ponte-mellor.com

■ **R. Bratti Associates Inc.**
703.549.1135