

# remodeling

YOUR TOOLBOX FOR SUCCESS

2015 DESIGN AWARDS





# 2015 Design Awards

From more than 160 entries, these 18 stood out thanks to thoughtful details, innovative problem-solving, and a definite 'wow' factor

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**This year, the Remodeling Design Awards** went digital: From entering to judging, everything was done online. While that did streamline the process, the three judges still spent hours evaluating each entry—looking at photographs and floor plans, reading project descriptions, and deliberating as a group the merits of 162 remodeling projects from across the United States.

They looked for projects that feature ideas others in the industry will admire, be inspired by, and want to emulate. The projects that rose to the top were those that had “warmth and light,” a “connection to the outdoors,” and showed a “definite transformation” from their original designs.

#### THE AWARDS

Entries are organized into 11 categories, with an additional 39 subcategories based on price. Judges are not required to award a winner in each category and have leeway in determining which projects show the highest degree of design expertise and craftsmanship. Our judges selected 18 projects out of 162 for distinction: one Best of the Year, five Grand Awards, and 12 Merit Awards.

The whole-house remodel category faced the strongest competition, with 43 entries. Other hotly contested categories included kitchens (33 entries), bathrooms (20), and historically sensitive renovations (17).

#### THE JUDGES

**Karman Hotchkiss**, deputy director, home design content core, Better Homes and Gardens Special Interest Media, Meredith Corp., Des Moines, Iowa  
**Donald Lococo**, AIA, principal, Donald Lococo Architects, Washington, D.C.  
**Paul Masi**, AIA, Bates Masi + Architects, Sag Harbor, N.Y.



## Hill House

Whole-House Remodeling  
over \$500,000

**Location:** San Francisco

**Architect:** Cary Bernstein, Cary Bernstein Architect

**Contractor:** Felix Chan, Lara Construction

**Landscape Architect:** SurfaceDesign

Remodeling  
2015

DESIGN AWARDS

Two ideas resonated with the judges on this project—its sense of cohesion and its engagement with the property. That's the essence of why this home is this year's Project of the

Year award winner. The 1930s stucco bungalow "had no particular character," says architect Cary Bernstein, who was asked to expand the 1,100-square-foot house within its compact footprint. To keep within budget and the neighborhood scale, Bernstein chose to push the house out to the side property lines and 7 feet back. Contractor Felix Chan demolished the house to the first floor and reframed it.

Because the lot is fairly wide (for San Francisco) at 40 feet, it made more sense to demolish the house, then have SurfaceDesign do the landscaping before the build. The result is part of what makes the house seem cohesive, Bernstein says. Gaining space in the back meant creating a retaining wall close to the kitchen due to the hill's scale. Bernstein's solution: a step up within the house, which helps mitigate the retaining wall and give spatial configuration to the open plan. The house, now 1,800 square feet, is still modest. To increase the feeling of spaciousness, Bernstein raised the ceiling and specified large windows, five skylights and three clerestory windows.

The cohesion that struck the judges is by design. They remarked that "the composition considers everything, down to the detail of lighting and the furniture." Bernstein acknowledges that "the landscape and the décor were all of a piece conceptually." Her ultimate goal was to solve a problem of compact urban living: "It's not about having the biggest house and extra stuff. It was about having the right house." In this case, the right house took the top honors.—S.F.





Cesar Rubio Photography



## Fitty Wun

Whole-House Remodeling  
over \$500,000

**Location:** San Francisco

**Architect:** Jonathan Feldman, Feldman Architecture

**Contractor:** Andrew McHale, Design Line Construction

Remodeling  
2015

DESIGN AWARDS

Think of this project as an exercise in measured freedom. The owners wanted an open, welcoming house in which three energetic young boys could bounce about while the parents are, as the clients put it, “strategically within ear, if not always eyeshot.” Architect Jonathan Feldman did that by opening up what was a traditional townhouse. The main floor combines kitchen, dining, and living spaces into a great room area that becomes even greater with a two-story kitchen and a living area that flows onto an outdoor deck and backyard.

A metal-screened stair leads from the street level to a catwalk that surrounds an atrium. Bedrooms lead off the catwalk, and another stair that runs diagonally across the atrium leads to a floating office “pod”—the only place that’s acoustically separated from the mayhem below—and to a roof deck. All this lies behind a facade that gives the simple townhouse a more modern feel yet blends into the neighborhood.—C.W.



## Skyhaus

Whole-House Remodeling  
over \$500,000

**Location:** San Francisco

**Architect:** David Darling, Aidlin Darling Design

**Contractor:** Dan Matarozzi, Matarozzi Pelsinger Builders

Remodeling  
2015

DESIGN AWARDS

This mid-century modern home, the first one that the late Joseph Esherick built in the city, is not on the historic registry, but David Darling treated it as though it were. Because he viewed the structure as a significant resource, Darling and project designer Melinda Turner kept the front façade intact. The team set out to adapt the original design to its present-day context, reconfiguring the L-shaped structure to allow for as much natural light as possible. "Daylight is one of our recurring themes, using light to sculpt space," Darling explains.

At the center of the design is a multi-story interior atrium that captures outdoor space and serves as a spatial hub, pulling daylight deep into the home's interior. A transverse bridge and a sculpted wood wall help to reinforce the dialogue between earth and sky. The relationship between outdoors and the interior is further developed with a new lower level that physically connects the inside with the exterior landscape.—E.A.

GRAND AWARD

## House in Town

Whole-House Remodeling  
over \$500,000

**Location:** Blue Hill, Maine

**Architect:** Corey Papadopoli and Matt Elliott,  
Elliott + Elliott Architecture

**Contractor:** Peter Woodward, Jon D. Woodward & Sons

Remodeling  
2015

DESIGN AWARDS

According to the requirements of this 19th-century home's historic district, the parts of the house visible from the road need to remain historically consistent. The project team added functionality while respecting the original structure by salvaging an unfinished barn connected to the home via an ell. The kitchen was moved into the barn, which now has three floors. A low-profile skylight provides natural light throughout the second-floor gallery space and shines onto the kitchen island.

The street-facing side of the barn is filled with steel-framed glass panels that can be covered by sliding wooden doors for privacy. At night, large windows allow the interior light to shine out onto the lawn. Toward the back of the house, contemporary design elements are more visible. Two large bump-outs provide an updated take on traditional bay windows, allowing the interior to interact with the outside gardens, and large steel-framed windows create an opening into the kitchen.—C.S.



GRAND AWARD

## Penthouse Master Bath

Bathroom Remodeling

\$50,000-\$100,000

**Location:** San Francisco

**Architect/Contractor:** Stephen Shoup, building Lab

Remodeling  
2015

DESIGN AWARDS

Sharing a bathroom, especially with guests who are operating on different schedules, can be challenging. This condo had its owners sharing the master bath, so they decided to tackle the project right away to avoid any complications. The goal was to create an en suite master that, according to architect and builder Stephen Shoup, "would afford a sense of privacy and strike a balance between original detailing and a modern spa-like feel."

Shoup was able to take an existing closet and transform it into part of the new bathroom, which gave enough space for the addition of the toilet and a second sink. Tall mirrors help emphasize the room's high ceilings and reflect the window's natural light. The mirrors were also custom-wrapped with LED lights, creating an even brighter space. The shower is separated from the rest of the bathroom by glass partitions, with no steps or doors, while the sinks are situated on custom walnut cabinets suspended above the porcelain tile floor.—C.S.



GRAND AWARD

## Shenandoah Valley Discovery Museum

Commercial Remodeling  
over \$500,000

**Location:** Winchester, Va.

**Architect:** Beth Reader, Reader & Swartz Architects

**Contractor:** Jeff Boehm, Howard Shockey & Sons

Remodeling  
2015

DESIGN AWARDS

With considerable square footage and limited funds, transforming a utilitarian commercial building into an interactive children's museum was a substantial task. Built in the 1940s as a furniture store and most recently used for a church and offices, the building had been chopped into small rooms with sparse architectural detail. To create a lively space that would suit its new mission, the team gave the structure a top-to-bottom overhaul. The interior was almost entirely gutted to create open space for hands-on museum exhibits. A new glass garage door enhances the front façade, while bright colors and artwork on both the interior and exterior add vibrancy and whimsy.

For one dramatic transformation, visitors need to look up: The team installed a multi-dimensional roof terrace onto the previously unoccupied space, complete with assorted pavilions and sculptural sun shades. Guests can explore exhibits, participate in educational programs, host social events, or simply enjoy the view.—L.M.



MERIT AWARD

## Sky Loft

Whole-House Remodeling  
under \$250,000

**Location:** Washington, D.C.

**Architect:** Janet Bloomberg, Kube Architecture

**Contractor:** Sonya Singh, Metrix Construction

Remodeling  
2015

DESIGN AWARDS

By enlarging an existing opening in the first floor ceiling, using lots of glass, and hiding storage—even rooms—behind panels and pivoting doors, architect Janet Bloomberg created a stunning central volume of space that spills light throughout this 1,300-square-foot loft. The client wanted more room and a white, pure space. The glass was all the firm's idea, Bloomberg says. She removed the knee walls that surrounded the opening upstairs, replacing them with a frameless transparent glass rail.

The project team captured wasted space where walls had been built out further than necessary and brought everything up to the rafters. They widened the galley kitchen by almost 3 feet, snatching space from a powder room. Upstairs, closets lie behind white pivoting doors that run the length of the second floor. The master bath's privacy is maintained behind a frosted glass door and adjacent 7x7-foot fixed frosted glass panel, which serves as a visual focal point from the living room below.—K.T.



MERIT AWARD

## Mi Casita

Whole-House Remodeling  
\$250,000-\$500,000

**Location:** Washington, D.C.

**Architect:** Richard Loosle, Kube Architecture

**Contractor:** Sonya Singh, Metrix Construction

Remodeling  
2015

DESIGN AWARDS

With this renovation, a bit of island style made its way to the urban core. The owner of this nearly century-old D.C. row house grew up in Puerto Rico, and a home that reminded her of those early years was a must. The project architects focused on three key elements—color, light, and materiality—to breathe new life into the 2,400-square-foot space.

By removing most of the interior walls, Kube Architecture and Metrix transformed the segmented floor plan into an open living area. Large windows on both levels of the rear façade and an enlarged skylight create abundant natural light, while an open-riser staircase and light colors enhance the airy atmosphere. The rich oranges, yellows, and greens used in the design are traditional to Puerto Rico; bold sculptural elements and artwork on opposing walls pop against an otherwise neutral palette. Muted bamboo and poplar finishes appear throughout the home, used for flooring, the stairs' mampara screen, and on pendant lights.—L.M.

Paul Burk Photography





MERIT AWARD

## Creekside House

Whole-House Remodeling  
over \$500,000

**Location:** San Francisco

**Architect:** Jonathan Feldman, Feldman Architecture

**Contractor:** Kyle Mortz, Art of Construction

Remodeling  
2015

DESIGN AWARDS

Entrepreneurs, such as the Silicon Valley-savvy pair that inhabit this home, understand it can take a few tries to get something right. After a series of additions and alterations left

this house an amalgamation of awkward spaces and mismatched aesthetics, the clients approached Feldman Architecture to transform it into something more representative of their family's playful nature.

The firm repurposed the footprint of the ranch-style home, which sits between a quiet cul-de-sac and running creek. From there, the team opened up the home's public spaces to create a sanctuary that seamlessly blends indoors and out. At the center of the home is a glass vestibule that draws family and visitors inside. The dining room extends onto the back patio, creating a place to eat, work, and enjoy the natural surroundings. A muted palette lets the wooded exterior highlight its façade. Outside, custom radiant-heated flooring allows the family to move comfortably within the peaceful, polished retreat.—L.D.





MERIT AWARD

## Melville

Whole-House Remodeling  
over \$500,000

**Location:** Cincinnati

**Architect:** Rob Busch, Drawing Dept.

**Contractor:** Robert Crapsey, Crapsey & Gilles

Remodeling  
2015

DESIGN AWARDS

Originally designed by modernist architect Carl Strauss in 1952, this home's location in a wooded hillside ensured it was always private, with panoramic views of Cincinnati and the Ohio River. Unfortunately, the house fell victim to 60 years of exposure to Ohio weather, an insensitive addition, and poorly executed renovations.

To accomplish the homeowner's goals of replacing a flawed glass addition and creating a modern, open kitchen, architect Rob Busch largely focused on celebrating the home's original design. Busch removed the vertical and horizontal mullions from the glass wall in the main living space, increased natural light by rebuilding the roof lantern, and replaced that glass addition with a simple extension to the existing roofline. In order to strengthen the house's connection to the outdoors, new interior stairs join the first floor and the redeveloped backyard. The pool was integrated into an outdoor living space complete with an outdoor kitchen, spa, and fireplace.—D.W.

Ryan Kurtz



MERIT AWARD

## Baptist Church Annex

Historically Sensitive Renovation  
over \$300,000

**Location:** Glen Echo, Md.

**Architect:** Jeffery Broadhurst, Broadhurst Architects

**Contractor:** Matt McFarland, McFarland Woods

Remodeling  
2015

DESIGN AWARDS

This 110-year-old building, a popular historic feature in the community, was once used for worship functions, but had since fallen into disrepair. Since current zoning laws prohibited building a new structure of the same size in its place, the team opted to renovate the existing structure when hired to transform it into a family home.

In order to make the space livable, major renovations were needed. The wood frame was restored, structural insulated panels were installed over new trusses, and new windows, doors, and siding were added. On the first floor, the church hall, sanctuary, classroom, and offices were restructured to become an entry foyer, home office, kitchen, dining area, and family room. The lower level was transformed from Sunday school classrooms and a kitchen with low ceilings to an open living space with plenty of natural light, four bedrooms, and a laundry room. The result is a beautiful modern space the owner can call home, with a nod to the building's traditional roots.—R.G.

Anice Hochlander



**MERIT AWARD**

## Pope House

Historically Sensitive Renovation  
over \$300,000

**Location:** Washington, D.C.

**Architect:** Stephen Vanze, Bames Vanze Architects

**Contractor:** Richard Zantzinger, Maurck, Zantzinger,  
& Associates

Remodeling  
2015

DESIGN AWARDS

When renovating this classic capital estate, Stephen Vanze sought to modernize the home for its current owners while remaining respectful of original architect John Russell Pope's design. First built in 1932, this home was designed for entertaining, with a large circular driveway, an expansive rear terrace, and a pine-paneled reception area, but it suffered from the financial burden brought on by the Great Depression and from ill-suited additions. When it was sold in 2012, the new owners embraced the opportunity to transform the house into one suitable for family living.

On the first floor, Vanze restored the main rooms and redesigned the primary stair to suit the entry. He removed an existing bedroom on the second floor to make room for an expanded master suite and a new bedroom and bathroom for the children. The enlarged attic now functions as an in-law suite, while the spirit of Pope's design lives on through the restored gardens, enlarged terraces, and a new pool house.—D.W.



MERIT AWARD

## Deck House

Kitchen Remodeling  
over \$100,000

**Location:** Washington, D.C.

**Architect:** Jane Treacy, Treacy & Eagleburger  
Architects

**Contractor:** Carl Petty, Carl Petty Associates

Remodeling  
2015

DESIGN AWARDS

In this modern redesign, architect Jane Treacy not only honored the homeowners' request to retain their kitchen's view, she worked with contractor Carl Petty to improve it.

Treacy was able to incorporate an existing dining room into a larger, more open kitchen. Floor-to-ceiling windows and 8-foot-wide sliders seamlessly connect the indoor and outdoor spaces, allowing diners to enjoy the peaceful view of a waterfall and koi pond located at the rear of the property. Seating at a center island faces the koi pond, while a built-in-breakfast banquette faces a scenic woodland outlook for an alternate view.

The new floor plan also opens up the area between the kitchen and the double-height living room. Its more cohesive design gives the illusion of outdoor living from the comfort of indoors. The use of earth tones and natural materials, combined with carefully selected artwork, allow the koi pond and wooded surroundings to shine as the main focal points.—R.G.





**MERIT AWARD**

## Los Angeles Bath

Bathroom Remodeling

\$25,000-\$50,000

**Location:** West Hollywood, Calif.

**Architect/Contractor:** Lindsay Chambers,  
Hazel.Wood Design Group

Remodeling  
2015

DESIGN AWARDS

Working within a small space always is a challenge. It's even more so when that space is inside a historic structure. Such was the case for the bathroom of this 1919 craftsman home. It had been a mere 15 years since the room was renovated with a Mediterranean look, but the homeowner wanted to restore a traditional style more cohesive with the rest of the home.

To achieve this, Lindsay Chambers had to meet the client's request for spa-like ambiance without making any changes to the room's size, leaving the walls and windows in their original locations. What made the task more daunting was the desire to have both a shower and a tub in the 100-square-foot area. The zero-entry shower "makes the shower feel big, light, and airy, and we also were able to fit in a freestanding tub without it feeling too crunched for space," Chambers says. A floating glass wall and the white and light gray color scheme solidified the modern design without imposing on the architectural integrity.—E.A.





**MERIT AWARD**

## Westwood Guest Bath

Bathroom Remodeling

\$25,000-\$50,000

**Location:** Charlottesville, Va.

**Architect:** Kate Tabony, Alloy Workshop

**Contractor:** Zach Snider, Alloy Workshop

Remodeling  
2015

DESIGN AWARDS

You're not far from the truth to call this bathroom a work of art. Its design was inspired by client favorite Piet Mondrian, a Dutch abstract artist and member of the

De Stijl movement. The basic forms and strong primary colors for which De Stijl gets its instant recognition translated admirably to this 42-square-foot guest bathroom. Brightly colored floor-to-ceiling recycled glass tiles were placed strategically against white surroundings to reinterpret Mondrian's compositions and to mark off space and functions: Red areas denote recessed niches, for instance, while the blue tiles set off a shower seat and yellow connects shower fixtures with the drain.

Note also how updates to the 65-year-old bathroom incorporate aging-in-place features requested by the clients. There's a zero-clearance shower, ADA-compliant grab bars installed to complement the tile work, and an extra-wide, space-saving pocket door.—C.W.



## Smith Residence

Exterior Remodeling

\$100,000-\$200,000

**Location:** Seattle

**Architect:** David Pelletier, Pelletier + Schaar

**Contractor:** Jeff Rudd, Peak Builders

Remodeling  
2015

DESIGN AWARDS

To capture the stunning views of the Puget Sound and the mountains beyond and to give his clients outdoor living space, architect David Pelletier designed a glass wall and a 500-square-foot deck for this 1950s home. Along with a desire for “the largest deck possible,” his clients requested a larger dining room, so Peak Builders removed the small existing deck off the dining room and infilled that space. To open the room to the view, Pelletier employed a moving glass wall system in two sections, which can be rolled back for a seamless transition.

The deck is carried atop 12-foot-tall engineered beams that angle and splay out, which serves the deck’s gently rounded shape. “Because the house sits on the hill, they had minimal yard space, and this helps create yard space,” Pelletier says. Underneath the deck, framework is exposed. The team used composite boards in a colorway that suits the age and design of the home, and cable railing that allows the view to be the dominant player.—K.T.



MERIT AWARD

## Landa Park Retreat

Additions

\$100,000-\$200,000

**Location:** New Braunfels, Texas

**Architect:** Craig McMahon, Craig McMahon Architects

**Contractor:** Johnny Canavan, Canavan Custom Homes

Remodeling  
2015

DESIGN AWARDS

Purposeful preservation and careful attention to detail harmonized this addition of a contemporary two-bedroom cabana to its 1950s-era residence located along

the fresh spring waters of Landa Park. The project team expanded the footprint of the 2,100-square-foot home, adding a 670-square-foot detached quarters for the clients' extended family members.

Zoning code and flood regulations decreed the addition be raised 30 inches above the finished floor of the main residence and be positioned at the home's rear, which would have posed a challenge in keeping the two parts in a respectful scale. To avoid the restriction, the team connected the buildings with a covered roof to classify the two parts as one structure. For a cohesive aesthetic, they extended the single-story addition as tall as the original, and blended the residence's materials with the new quarters. Vaulted ceilings and a stone-faced façade offer an inviting front door for the entire river-facing site.—L.D.



MERIT AWARD

## Milo + Olive

Commercial Remodeling  
over \$500,000

**Location:** Santa Monica, Calif.

**Architect:** David Montalba, Montalba Architects

**Contractor:** Ben Lunsky, Sarlan Builders

Remodeling  
2015

DESIGN AWARDS

While a student, David Montalba received this valuable piece of advice: "Make sure your ideas are rooted in pragmatism." This was especially relevant in the remodel of Milo + Olive,

where he was charged with merging two seemingly-disparate spaces—a wood-fired pizza restaurant and a high-end bakery—into one cohesive area.

The restaurant came to life through an industrial open kitchen concept drawing on utilitarian materials. Blackened steel, monolithic communal tables, exposed brick walls, open shelves with hand-stenciled signs, and creative use of millwork all encourage a practical yet playful arena. Perhaps most compelling is the lightbox above the cooking stations: The fixture disperses natural light from the skylights and allows for open beams in the ceiling. The county does not permit exposed wood in a food preparation area, but installation of the lightbox made it code-compliant. "It's a really high design element rooted in a practical ... idea," Montalba says.—E.A.



John Linden