

STONE

STONE ARCHITECTURE

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STONE ARCHITECTURE

Company Profile

Founded in 1991, Stone Architecture is committed to cultivating strong client relationships through excellence in design. By wedding timeless forms and materials with contemporary construction techniques, the firm seeks to reveal the beauty and uniqueness hidden in the spaces that surround us.

Hicks Stone, the firm's principal, believes that meaningful spaces resonate with their context and are responsive to the specific needs of their users. Every facet of the firm's work is approached with a scrupulous attention to detail. Each phase in the creative process reflects their four guiding principles:

TIMELESS.

Invoking the enduring nature of classical proportions and materials.

RESONANT.

Celebrating the cultural essence of each project's site.

SYMBIOTIC.

Embracing the natural setting.

RESPONSIVE.

Meeting the client's needs.



BENJAMIN HICKS STONE, III

Principal, Stone Architecture

Hicks Stone established Stone Architecture in 1991. His work includes the design of private homes, resorts, and museums as well as the renovation of public venues including retail spaces, athletic facilities, and plazas in North America and the Caribbean.

His recent work includes a new home in Sharon, Connecticut that utilizes inexpensive but cutting-edge building technology to produce a 90% reduction in energy consumption and the design of the main plaza and ceremonial fountain of the 80,000 student State University of New York in Albany, New York.

Prior to founding Stone Architecture, he was a project manager and senior designer at Philip Johnson & John Burgee Architects from 1988 to 1991. During that time he worked closely with Philip Johnson designing Port America, a 250-acre mixed-use development in the Washington, D.C. area. He was a significant contributor to the design of MacArthur Centre, a 70-story office tower in Brisbane, Australia, the Texas Medical Center Park in Houston, Texas and Takashimaya, a stylish East/West department store on Fifth Avenue in New York City, among other projects.

Born in San Francisco and raised in New York City, he received his Bachelor of Arts degree from Hamilton College and his Master of Architecture degree from the Graduate School of Design at Harvard University. He is the son of the renowned American midcentury modern architect, Edward Durell Stone.

Mr. Stone and his work have been featured in *House & Garden*, *Palm Beach Cottages & Gardens*, *The New Yorker* and *This Old House* Magazines. He has also written the only biography of his father, *Edward Durell Stone: A Son's Untold Story of a Legendary Architect* which was published by Rizzoli in 2011. *Metropolis Magazine* rated the book on their top ten list of books in 2011. He has lectured extensively at academic and cultural institutions throughout the country in support of the book.

Mr. Stone is a certified Passive House Designer, having received his training under the aegis of the Passivhaus Institut based in Darmstadt, Germany. Mr. Stone strongly believes that substantial energy savings can be realized for building owners by making simple and inexpensive adjustments to conventional construction methods.



PALM BEACH PHOTOGRAPHIC CENTRE

West Palm Beach, Florida

A photographic museum, school of photography and retail store located in the new city hall complex in West Palm Beach, Florida, this 13,000 square foot facility was designed to fit within an existing shell space. The facility includes the

debut retail store in North America for the esteemed German manufacturer of cameras and optics, Leica, and is the first of a series of stores for Leica that Stone Architecture would design.





LEICA STORE

Washington DC

Leica, the esteemed manufacturer of high-end cameras and sports optics, hired Stone Architecture to design its debut store in Washington, DC. Located at F and 10th Streets, the facility includes a gallery, meeting room and administrative functions

in addition to the sales area. The façade of the building was substantially redesigned to make it more compatible with the brand image.



LEICA STORE

Interior Architecture and Details





LEICA STORE

Coral Gables, Florida

Continuing its work for Leica Camera, Inc. Stone Architecture produced a serene retail interior for Leica's local retailer, Dale Photo and Digital. Located on Miracle Mile, the facility

includes administrative functions in addition to the sales area. The façade was modified to make it compatible with the brand image.





LEICA BOUTIQUE

Rancho Mirage, California

Designed for Camera West, a prominent California camera retailer, this boutique was one of a series of smaller projects designed and built within existing camera stores. Stone

Architecture also planned a Leica boutique for Camera West at their location in Walnut Creek, CA.





LEICA BOUTIQUE

West Palm Beach, Florida

Designed as part of the Palm Beach Photographic Centre pro shop and located in the new West Pam Beach City Hall complex, this boutique was one of a series of smaller projects designed and built within existing camera stores. Other

boutiques done by Stone Architecture for Leica Camera include projects in Los Angeles, New York City, Walnut Creek and Vancouver, British Columbia.



STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK AT ALBANY MAIN PLAZA AND FOUNTAIN Albany, New York

Stone Architecture teamed with March Architecture and Engineering of Buffalo to renovate the main plaza and fountain of Edward Durell Stone's State University of New York in Albany. The Albany campus was originally conceived as the centerpiece of Governor Nelson A. Rockefeller's state university system and the main plaza remains the most important ceremonial space on the campus to this day. The goal was to make the plaza and fountain a year-round destination and embellish and enrich the work that Edward Durell Stone had started in 1961.

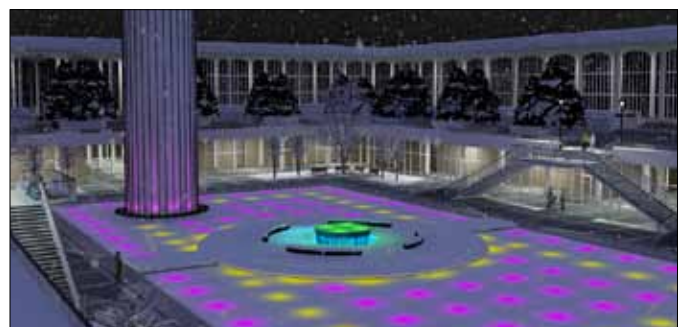




Illustration: Thomas Schaller

THE INN AT OLD BAHAMA BAY

West End, Grand Bahama Island

As part of the Old Bahama Bay development scheme at West End harbor on Grand Bahama Island, Stone Architecture created designs for a luxury hotel complex that reflect the casual rhythms of island life. The Inn at Old Bahama Bay is a self-contained resort set in a gated residential and marina community comprising 24 hotel and condominium suites.

The overall plan was conceived as a village of secluded two-story beachfront cottages. Recognized for his skillful melding of a modern sensibility with vernacular traditions, Stone paid careful attention to the specific qualities of the landscape so that the architecture would feel integral to the site.



“Hicks was everything that you could ask for in an architect. He immersed himself in the local architectural traditions and produced a modern community that created a strong sense of place.”

— William T. Criswell, *President and CEO*, West End Development Corporation

THE INN AT OLD BAHAMA BAY

Exterior Features and Details



Photos: Vincent Ricardel





Photo: Thomas Loof

COGAN RESIDENCE

New York, New York

Stone Architecture restored and modernized Edward Durell Stone's famed and controversial home at 130 East 64th Street in Manhattan for its new owner, the CEO of Knoll. The project updated the kitchen and bathrooms, restored the interior

finishes, replaced all of the exterior glazing and modernized the environmental control systems. The work had to be delicately steered through the complex approval process at the New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission.



Photo: Thomas Loof



Photo: Thomas Loof



Photo: Adrian Wilson



BLOMEYER APARTMENT

Palm Beach, Florida

The town of Palm Beach, Florida has a strong tradition of Spanish Colonial architecture established in the 1920's by architects like Addison Mizner and Maurice Fatio. The Blomeyer residence was commissioned by a couple with a strong affinity for traditional architecture and respect for Palm Beach's

architectural legacy, who wanted an interior that reflected their sensibilities. Dividing the 3,300 square foot apartment into a series of serene and discrete spaces, Stone unified the project through the use of Tuscan colonnades, traditional moldings, Venetian plaster walls, and luminous coffered ceilings.



Stairwell



Sitting Room

BLOMEYER APARTMENT

Interior Architecture and Details



Kitchen, side 1



Kitchen, side 2



Bedroom



Living Room



Bathroom Sink



Dining Room



Dining Room View



Illustrations: Tom Booncharone

MORIARTY RESIDENCE

Cornwall, Connecticut

With its weathered steel frame and uncoursed stone walls, this modern house in Cornwall, Connecticut imparts a mysterious beauty to a dense forest setting. Poised on

a steep hillside, stone walls encased within a soaring transparent volume provide a secluded country retreat for a city-dwelling couple in the Litchfield Hills.



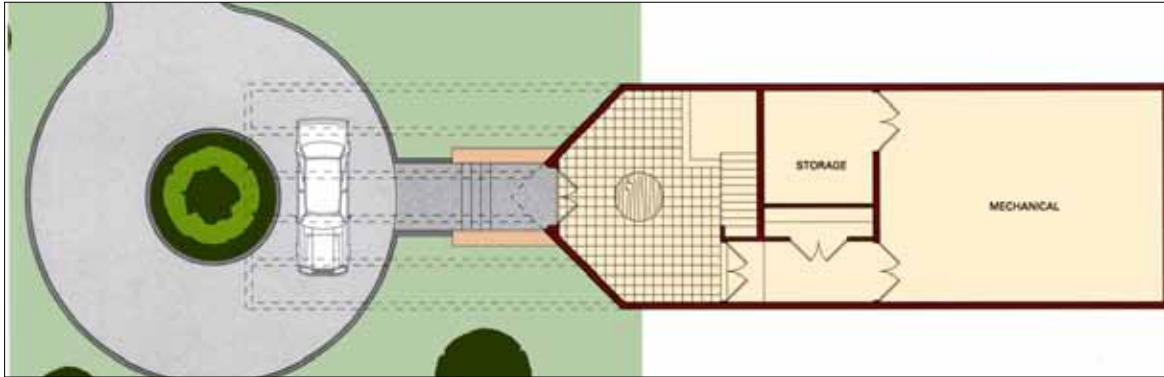
Living Room



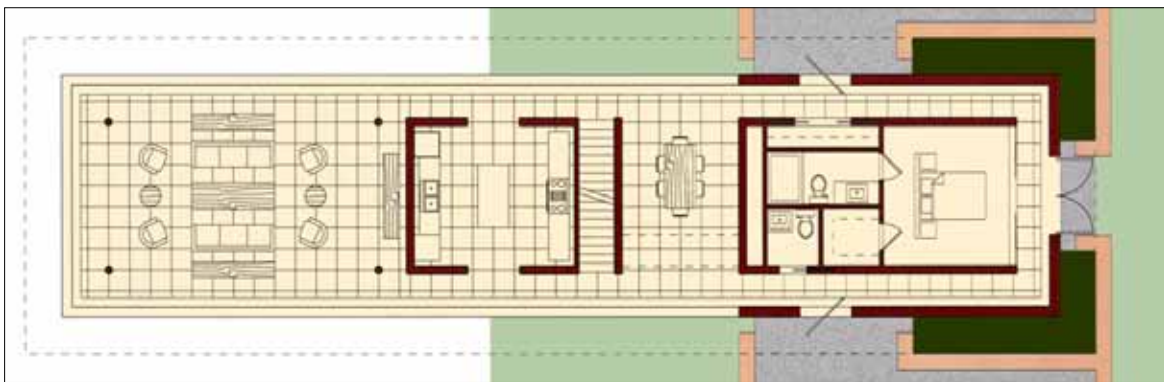
Dining Room

MORIARTY RESIDENCE

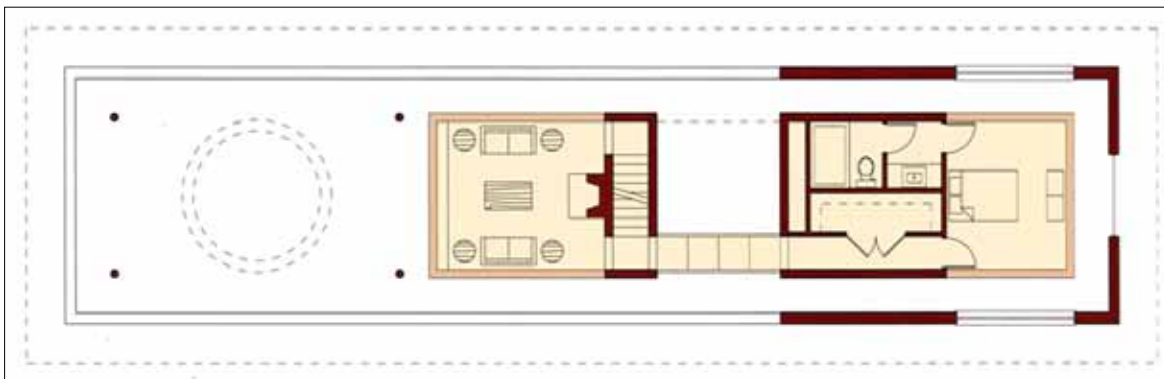
Floor Plans



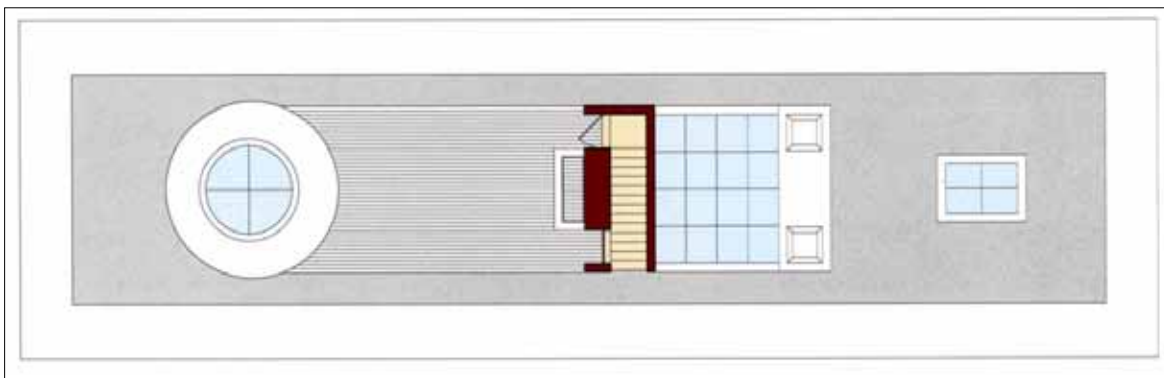
Ground Floor



Second Floor



Third Floor



Roof



Illustrations: Tom Booncharone

STONE RESIDENCE

Harrington, Maine

Poised over a steep sloping site facing a picturesque deep water bay in Harrington, Maine, the home projects itself into the trees and orients itself westward to the setting sun.

While employing traditional and nautical forms in an abstracted fashion, it is fundamentally a modern house.





Ezra Stoller, ©Esto

400 SOUTH OCEAN BOULEVARD

Palm Beach, Florida

Hicks Stone drew on his experience in both renovation and contemporary design when he was asked to restore and update this 1964 oceanfront condominium complex designed by his father, Edward Durell Stone, in Palm Beach, Florida. After 35 years of exposure to the elements, the complex needed a full renovation as well as the completion of critical details that were

either absent or under-developed. Eager to maintain the same architectural language employed by his father, Stone extracted motifs from other projects and designed new elements including grillwork, entrances and elevator cabs, lavishing attention on features that elevate the overall quality of the structure.



Atrium



Balcony

“Hicks was exposed to many of the great artists and architects from the late 20th century so he is conscious of that heritage. It informs the way he works.”

— Dennis Gallo, *President of the Board and Resident*

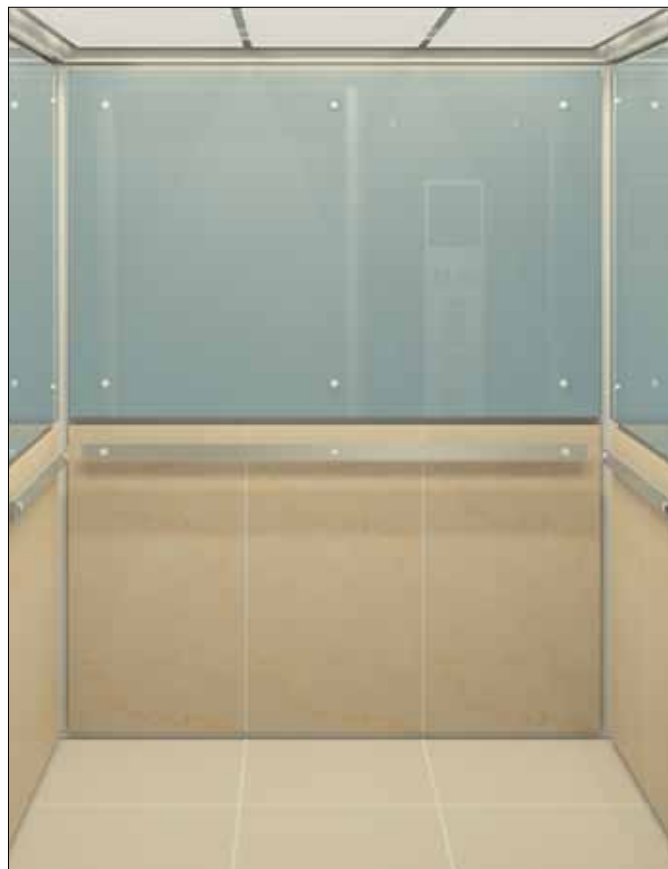
400 SOUTH OCEAN BOULEVARD

Interiors



Lobby

Illustrations: David Black



Elevator Cab



Illustration: Tom Booncharone

THOMAS RESIDENCE

Coastal Island, Maine

The house that Stone Architecture designed for Steve Thomas, former host of the television program, *This Old House*, leans toward the traditional, yet has modern flourishes that play with and against stereotypical images of Maine’s vernacular

architecture. Hicks Stone wanted to simplify the often cluttered Shingle Style and introduce a nautical theme appropriate to the setting and the owner’s interests.



First Floor Plan



Second Floor Plan

“Among the things I appreciate most about Hicks is that he listens to all the voices that are critical to the design process and incorporates these multiple points of view.”

— Steve Thomas, Host of PBS’ *This Old House*



Illustration (above): Concept Visualization; Illustrations (below): Tom Booncharone

BAUER RESIDENCE

Rancho Mirage, California

Located in Rancho Mirage and distinguished by spectacular views of the San Jacinto Mountains, the owner of the home, a long-time resident of the desert community, was determined to honor the modernist legacy evident in the area's most coveted housing stock. Stone Architecture's design embraces the geometric forms of desert modernism and the landscape of the surrounding desert.



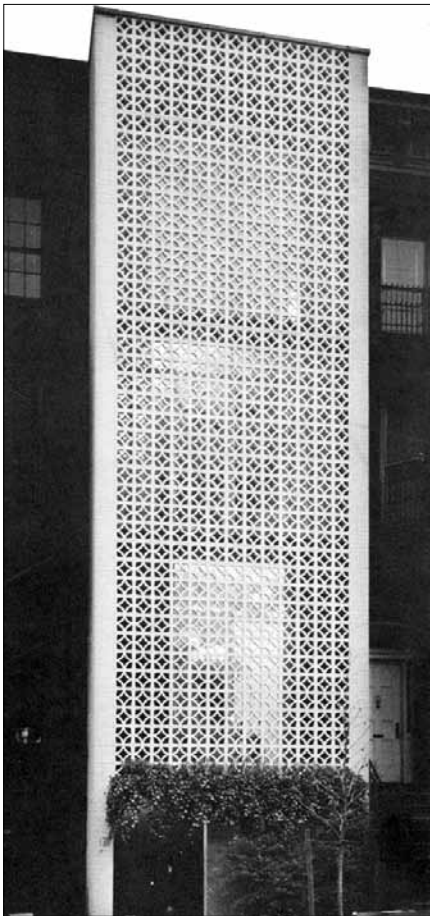
Entry



Courtyard



Living Room



Existing



Proposed

130 EAST 64TH STREET

New York, New York

At the request of his family who were eager to address problems inherent in the original design, Hicks Stone petitioned the New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission to approve a complete transformation of the townhouse that his father had designed in 1953. However, the Landmarks Commission disapproved of the work and

discouraged Stone from proceeding to a public hearing. While the commission viewed the work unfavorably, the architectural critic of *The New Yorker*, Paul Goldberger, viewed the work in a different light saying that Hicks Stone had “produced a handsome modern design that relates to his father’s earliest work.”

“Hicks Stone produced a handsome modern design that relates to his father’s earliest work.”

— Paul Goldberger, *Architectural Critic*, writing in *The New Yorker*



Photo: Vincent Ricardel

LOGAN RESIDENCE

Darien, Connecticut

The Logan residence stands on a leafy residential street amid the quiet affluence of Darien, CT. Built almost one hundred years ago, the simple two-story wood frame structure had two things going for it when Stone Architecture was asked to design a much-needed renovation and addition, a porch and bay window. Hicks Stone expanded the porch and gave it architectural prominence. He then simplified the bay window and used it as the form generator for the larger addition, ensuring a harmonious transition between old and new.



Before



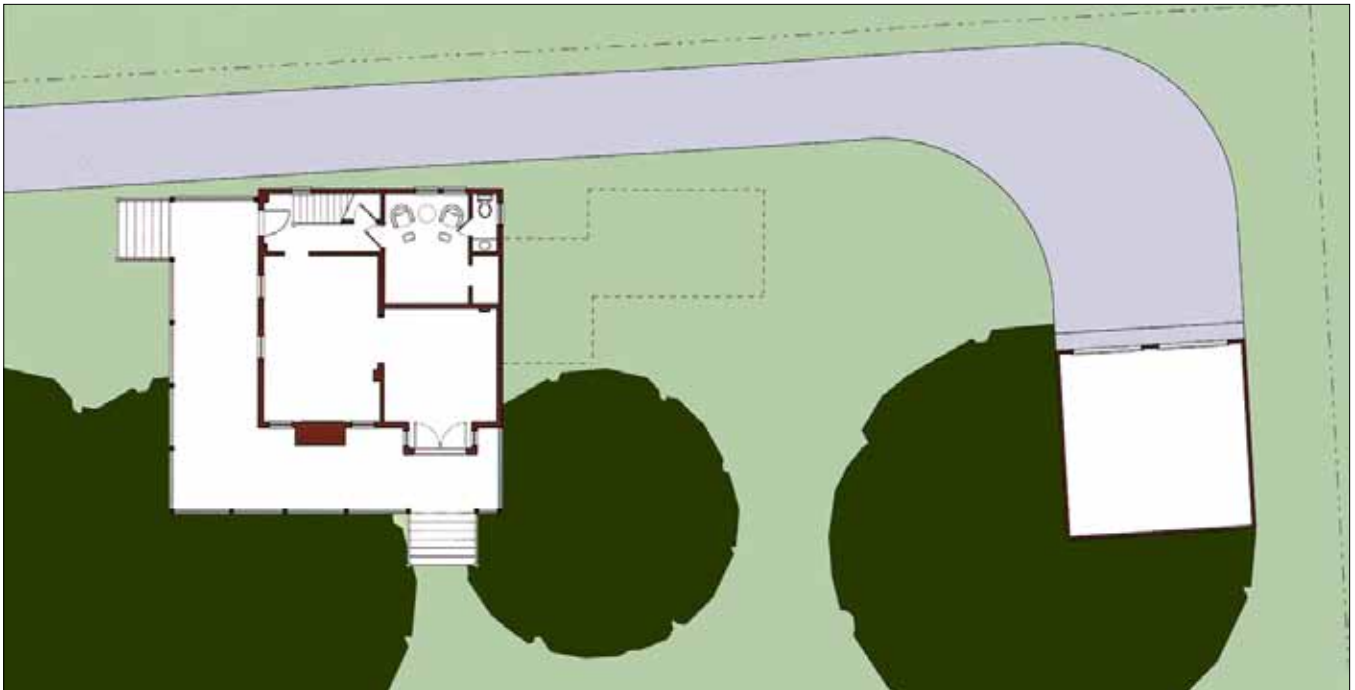
Photos: Vincent Ricardel

“Hicks did a very good job of integrating a large addition onto the house so that there is no division between the old and the new.”

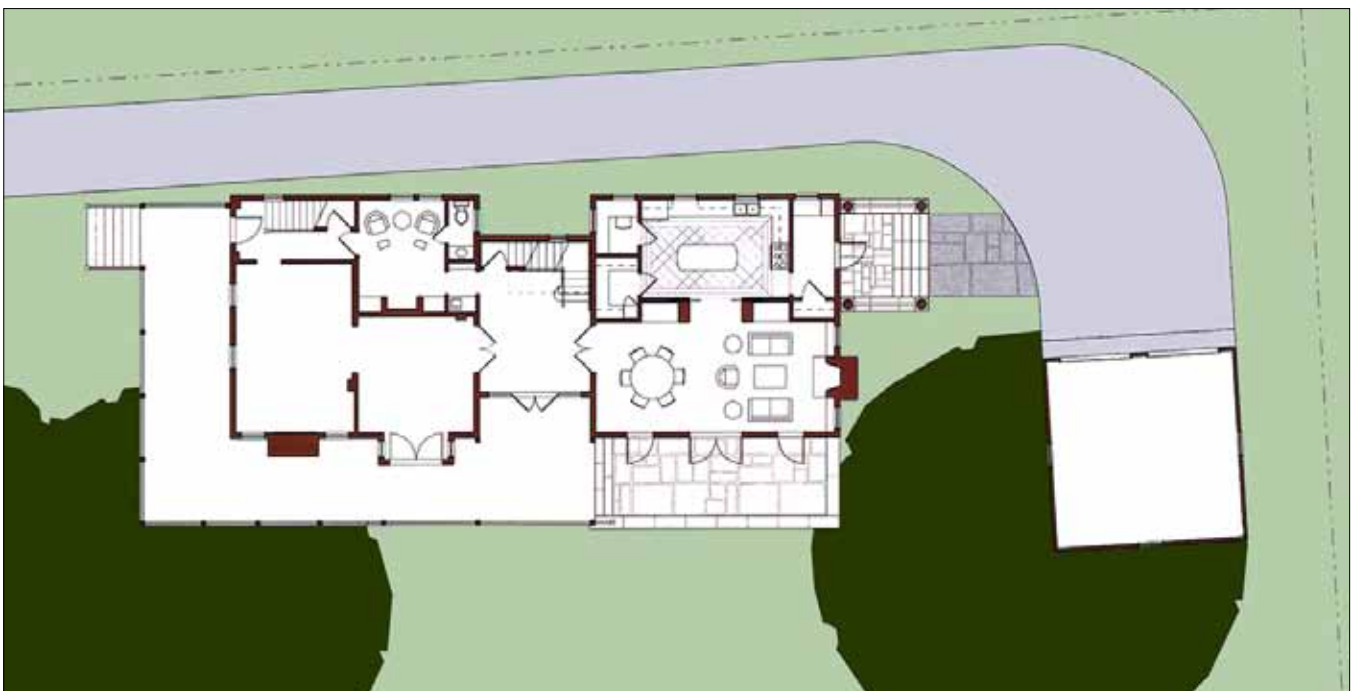
— Parke Logan, *Residential Client*

LOGAN RESIDENCE

Floor Plans



Before



After



McVEY RESIDENCE

Stockbridge, Massachusetts

The town of Stockbridge, Massachusetts is a weekend destination noted for its distinguished 19th-century homes, many by the architectural firm of McKim, Mead and White. Designed as a weekend home for a New York City couple,

Hicks Stone sought to embrace the tradition of the regional Shingle Style architecture by incorporating period details and providing a picturesque retreat that celebrates the area's natural setting.



Back Corner



Front Corner



Back Porch

“Hicks put a lot into the house given the budget. We’ve since had people knock on our door to find out who the architect is!”

— David McVey, *Residential Client*

SELECT PROJECT LIST

COMMERCIAL

And Partners Offices – West 27th Street, New York, NY; East 24th Street, New York, NY
Availvs Showroom, New York, NY
General Motors Building Lobby, New York, NY – *Design Consultant to Gensler*
Hearst Media Lab, New York, NY – *Design Consultant to And Partners*
Karen Harvey Consulting Group, New York, NY
Leica Camera Headquarters, Allendale, NJ
Mamaroneck Recreational Facility, Mamaroneck, NY
Niagara Health Club, Ontario, Canada
Pacific Holdings, New York, NY
Stone Architecture, New York, NY
The Monitor Channel – Boston, MA; Greenwich, CT
WQTV-CHANNEL 68, Boston, MA

CONDOMINIUMS

400 South Ocean Boulevard, Palm Beach, FL

PRIVATE HOMES

Bauer House, Rancho Mirage, CA
McVey House, Stockbridge, MA
Moriarty House, Kent, CT
Pomeroy Residence, Block Island, RI
Stone House, Harrington, ME
Thomas House, Hupper's Island, ME

PUBLIC SPACES

Jakobson Sculpture Garden, New York, NY
Palm Beach Photographic Centre, West Palm Beach, FL
State University of New York at Albany Main Plaza and Fountain, Albany, NY – *Design Consultant to Mach A&E*

RESIDENTIAL RENOVATIONS

Bartlett Apartment, New York, NY
Blomeyer Apartment, Palm Beach, FL
Charny Apartment, New York, NY
Cogan Residence, New York, NY
Janszky Residence, Bedford, NY
Kelly Residence, New York, NY
Logan Residence, Darien, CT
Ramos-Gomez Residence, New York, NY
Ricardel Residence, Palm Beach, FL
Rose Apartment, New York, NY
Sackler Residence, Greenwich, CT
Stone Residence, New York, NY
White Residence, Newton, MA
Winter Residence, Darien, CT

RESORTS

Long Haul Bay, Nevis, Leeward Islands
Montauk Yacht Club, Montauk, NY – *Design Consultant to The Tamarkin Company*
Old Bahama Bay, West End, Grand Bahama Island

RETAIL

Leica Camera Boutiques – Rancho Mirage, CA; Los Angeles, CA; Vancouver, BC; West Palm Beach, FL; New York, NY;
Walnut Creek, CA; Westwood, NJ
Leica Camera Stores – Washington, DC; New York, NY; Coral Gables, FL
Pentax Camera Boutique, New York, NY



Photos: Thomas Loof

HOUSE & GARDEN, February 2006 Second Generation, by Elizabeth Blish Hughes

When a design executive and his family bought the Manhattan house that architect Edward Durell Stone renovated for his own family in 1956, they updated it by looking into the building's past.

When a Manhattan couple with two rambunctious boys moved into an Upper East Side town house, they wanted to preserve and restore everything they could of the 1890s building in a landmark district: dark, elaborately carved mantelpieces; curving banisters worn smooth by time; and the lacy façade of cast concrete grillage, added in 1956 by architect Edward Durell Stone when he bought the place.

It was that juxtaposition of sensibilities that made the project “on the one hand more complicated and on the other hand easier,” says Philip Galanes, the designer, whom the couple knew through mutual friends. “It was a Victorian house with a transformative layer applied to it in the fifties.” That transformative layer is what persuaded the couple to buy the property, which stands out (literally,

as Stone extended the façade five feet) from others on the block. The couple—he’s a design executive, she’s in finance—understood the significance of the house, which has sparked controversy for almost 50 years. The husband was excited to find pieces that Stone had designed, such as the panels for dropped and cutout-patterned ceilings (stored in the basement by the previous owners) and chain-mail hangings.

“Disparate elements,” the designer says, “created permission to go into a range of periods. The context was already laid for a mix.” The clients agreed, and hired architect Hicks Stone, who had grown up in the house, to renovate and update his father’s work. The crumbling façade had been removed in the 1980s, but the Landmarks Commission required its restoration, so it was in good shape.

Discarded elements came up from the basement. As work went on, the clients edited their art collection, using pieces they loved to anchor the design of the family home. The result is a boisterous centenarian seen through a prism of Manhattan sophistication of a kind peculiar to movies like *Auntie Mame* and *The World of Henry Orient*, a world of timeless repartee, dry martinis, and outrageous good fun.

In the kitchen, a golden saucer light fixture bubbles with space-age optimism. Lacy sliding screens hide in the walls. Pulled together, they mask the kitchen from the family area and the dining room, which, like the kitchen, is floored with light-reflecting patinated marble tiles Durell Stone laid. In the family corner, a Harvey Propper settee is the perfect place for the two boys to watch TV.



Just beyond, in a space defined by David Hicks wallpaper and Philip Galanes dining table, Jacques Adnet dining chairs, and a photograph by Thomas Struth.

The eye feast is even richer in the living room, with its '50s sectional sofa, a Propper club chair, Lady chairs by Marco Zanuso, an Ico Parisi console, and a Kittinger coffee table. Galanes kept the room focused by using the dark original wood trim as a frame and lighting fixtures appropriate to the original building. The study has a stunning dropped ceiling of mahogany-framed screens. "It is a testament to Edward Durell Stone," Galanes says. "It is just chunky enough, and there is just enough light that it feels like a comforting part of a nest." Here, as throughout the house, Galanes and the clients trusted their collective sensibility, selecting Gio Ponti chairs, a nineteenth-century German chaise, and a Wormley desk.

Only on the top floor can the eye rest. In the master bedroom, sliding glass doors combine with the façade's lattice to act like shoji screens, letting in light but keeping the world at bay. This refuge of a room is dreamy, and each piece in it is simple.

The owners revel in the house's airiness. "Stone really craved one of the first loft-like spaces," the husband says. "He did so while combining his interest in Moorish and Islamic architecture with modern design in a Victorian shell—a pretty wild and provocative mixture of influences that predated his followers. "The house attracts gawkers, but the owners don't mind. "We feel," the husband says, "that we are custodians of a very special piece of architecture."

Elizabeth Blish Hughes is a writer based in New York and San Francisco.

NUTS & BOLTS

Hicks Stone's renovation of his childhood home including restoring his father's work and adding a few new ideas. "After growing up there, I can't imagine anyone who knows the place better," he says.

Saving Façade

Durell Stone first used the patterned architectural screen block in 1954 on a New Delhi embassy, then in 1956 for this town house. Since the façade didn't hold up well in the urban environment, Hicks Stone had a screen block custom-cast in a brighter, finer concrete aggregate mix that should stand up to the elements for decades.

Window Walls

Hicks Stone updated the sliding window walls that open to the patterned façade and the outside air. "Glass curtain wall technology has gotten so much better over the years," he says. Monsey Glass replaced the original with insulated glass in aluminum frames.

Light Space

Throughout the house, recessed downlights by Lightolier are controlled by simple Lutron panel dimmers. The overhead light is augmented by desk and table lamps.

Eye-catcher

Pattern continues inside. A shoji screen that Durell Stone installed at the entrance to the kitchen was painted white and the rice paper backing removed to allow more light into the room. "Dad was close with Frank Lloyd Wright, and they shared an enthusiasm for elements of Japanese design," Hicks Stone says. "A local shoji fabricator told me this was a prize pattern."



Photos: Claudia Uribe Touri

PALM BEACH COTTAGES & GARDENS, April 2006

Like Father, Like Son, by Saxton Henry

Architect Hicks Stone picks up where his father, Edward Durell Stone, left off to modernize a historic condo.

The question “Which came first?” has a way of sparking heated debate. When applied to the relationship between interior design and architecture, however, there is often a hearty chorus of agreement where well-designed buildings are concerned. “With good interior design, the architecture should always be taken into consideration, as should what is appropriate for the client,” explains designer Constantin Gorges. Every project he works on is based upon an equal regard for both.

True to his word, when Gorges designed an apartment in the historic building at 400 South Ocean Boulevard, he used the structure’s modernist architecture as a starting point. Then he heeded his client’s request to take full advantage of ocean views. The result is a chic hide-away that seems to have sprung from the pale aqua-marine shallows near the shoreline below.

As the first condominium complex in the state of Florida, the building has pedigree: It was designed by Edward Durell Stone in 1964. Between 2001 and 2005, Hicks

Stone, the architect’s son, and an architect himself, updated the common areas of the building, going back to his father’s original drawings to include important details that had been passed over due to budgetary constraints.

“This design was modeled on Dad’s New Delhi embassy, which was highly regarded,” Stone says. “One of the wonderful things about it is that he took a very simply set of elements and fashioned a remarkably elegant building without lavishing a lot of expense on materials.” Taking his father’s vision into consideration, Stone redesigned the lobby areas, improved the lighting, replaced the painted concrete floor with travertine—which Durell Stone had specified—and updated the reflecting pool with a luminescent blue tile. Though it is a graceful element in the atrium, this shallow pool, dotted with planters that seem to float on their watery perches like lotus flowers, joins with several other architectural features to provide natural air conditioning.

“The fountains in the reflecting pool cool the air, convection currents bring breezes in through the openings on the sides of the building and warm air is drawn up through the opening in the roof,” Stone explains.

“These elements combine to create a design that is perfect for a hot climate.”

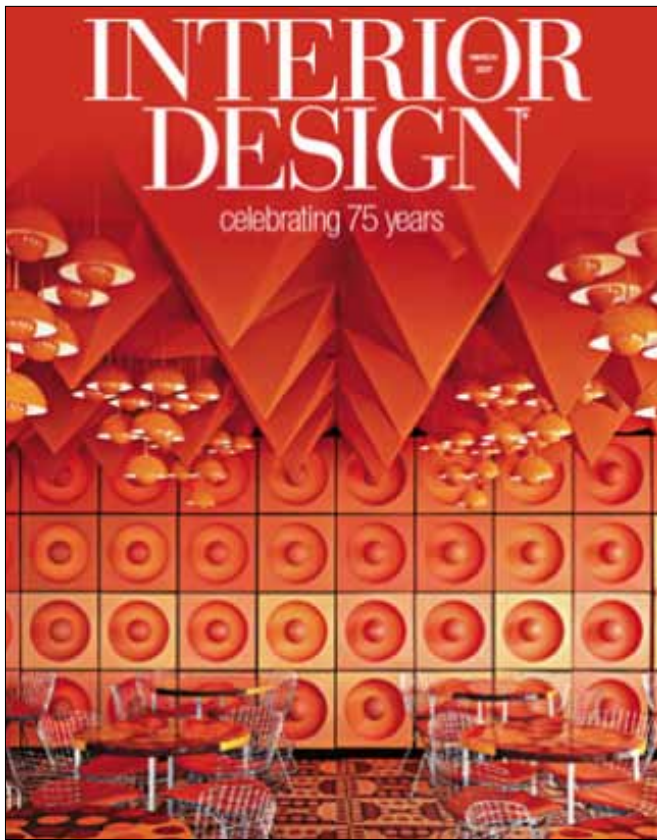
Stone praises his father’s brilliance when he revisits projects like this one, and finds the process of updating Stone père’s ideas rewarding. “I think working with Dad’s drawings is easy for me because I know his vocabulary so well,” says the architect, who was too young to have chosen the profession before his father’s death in 1978. “This is a wonderful way for me to reconnect with him on a level that most children never have the opportunity to do once a parent is gone.”

Stone’s exterior renovations were winding down when Gorges went to work on his client’s gutted apartment in mid-2004, and the designer was happy to have such an architectural gem to use as one of his inspirations. He created a grid pattern on the walls of the main living space, which imitates the interplay between the slim columnnets and cantilevered balconies on the façade, and filled the area with aquamarine glass and mirror.

“My main goal was to provide an experience of encountering the sea,” Gorges explains. “The way the glass shimmers when it interacts with light resembles the quality of water, and I chose to leave the wood grid natural because it reminds me of driftwood and brings the context of nature into the rooms.”

The apartment’s color scheme is also elemental. The master bedroom is awash in the palest turquoise, and touches of coral and aqua tones buoy the main living area, which is anchored by the cognac color of the dining room chairs and the datum line at ceiling-height that circumnavigates the space. Chair styles, chosen to imitate the divided wall panels, were arranged thoughtfully.

“I placed the furniture so that it wouldn’t interrupt the flow of the space,” Gorges says. “That’s also why I picked open-backed chairs for the livingroom. Basically, I wanted everything to look as transparent and open as possible.” The living room sofas were arranged for maximum water views. “The sofas face each other so that the thrust of the space is the vista beyond the windows,” explains the designer. “I always try to create a context for clients that is both at home in its surroundings and that fits who they are. The worst mistake that people can make is to fail to be true to themselves or to their chosen environments. After all, we express and identify ourselves through how and where we choose to live.”



Photos: Adrian Wilson

INTERIOR DESIGN, March 2007

Romancing the Stone, by Edie Cohen

Hicks Stone wasn't necessarily rebellious. But he did entertain thoughts of pursuing professions other than architecture. Marine biology was one teenage enthusiasm, law another. The latter "mercifully faded," he says. Those types of books don't have pictures." On a serious note, though, he certainly had a tough act to follow: specifically his father, Edward Durell Stone.

The architect of the U.S. Embassy in New Delhi and the Kennedy Center for the performing Arts in Washington, D.C., to name just two highly visible projects, died in 1978, right after his son graduated from Hamilton College in upstate New York.

"That's when I decided to become an architect, and I got into Harvard," Hicks Stone recounts. Facetious again: "I know Dad didn't pay anyone off."

After practicing in Boston with Stephen L. Faulk and Associates, he came to New York to work for Johnson/Burgee Architects. In 1991, he founded Stone Architecture, which now has four employees. "I don't

want my staff to get big," he says. "I love working on design everyday."

Most of that design is residential, including a renovation of his childhood New York town house, an 1890's brownstone that his father transformed with characteristic latticework.

Stone Architecture is currently renovating three apartments in New York and building a house in Rockport, Maine, for former *This Old House* host Steve Thomas; the firm is also building the 30,000 square-foot Photographic Centre in Palm Beach, Florida.

Unexpectedly, most of those projects are traditional, but that's his clients' pick. He has two contemporary designs on the boards, too.

In Cornwall, Connecticut, glass and fieldstone define a pavilionlike house with a transparent living room projecting over the wooded landscape. And there's an Albert Frey-inspired courtyard house set, fittingly, at the base of the San Jacinto Mountains in Rancho Mirage, California.





United States Embassy, New Delhi, India (1960). Courtesy Edward Stone Archives.

THE ARCHITECT'S NEWSPAPER, March 2012

Edward Durell Stone: A Son's Untold Story of a Legendary Architect, by Hicks Stone, Book review by Paul Gunther

With characteristically caustic wit, the late critic Herbert Muschamp summarized Edward Durell Stone's career with the epitaph "from bar to grill," thus linking his ultimately successful battle with alcoholism to the ornament associated with his later work by fans and detractors alike.

For Muschamp, it was a putdown expressed paradoxically, given his evident respect for a career underappreciated and needlessly, even foolishly, unexamined. This sentiment was crystallized in one of Muschamp's more memorable riffs in *The New York Times* about Stone's Gallery of Modern Art for Huntington Hartford as a gay haven vis-à-vis the Landmark Commission's indefensible refusal to place the Venetian-decorated modern building on its calendar for consideration. Go check your coat on the basement level of the now-residing Museum of Arts and Design for a thrilling glimpse of Stone's eviscerated design intent, at least for the interior finishes.

Evisceration comes to mind as well in reading this fine, overdue biography that is disguised as a memoir with a misleading subtitle and its hint of a son's insider tell-all. This history as roman à clef is

eccentric in assiduously denying all traces of the younger Mr. Stone—so much so that it's a sort of guessing game as to where Hicks falls in order of birth. It is never "my mother" but "his second wife" or "my stepbrother" but "his oldest son."

Edward Durell Stone: A Son's Untold Story is primarily a chronological narrative of a formerly famous architect who ranked, in the mid-20th century, as one of America's brightest design lights, as boldly testified by a March 31, 1958, *TIME* magazine cover citing commissions for the American embassy in New Delhi, the United States pavilion for the Brussels World's Fair, and the National Cultural Center (soon rechristened the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts). All this achieved in spite of his having no degree but rather a rigorous Beaux Arts training enriched by travel abroad sponsored by the prestigious Rotch fellowship. Not bad for a young man from Arkansas whose family has seen its best days come and go.

The book examines what is, in the architect author's view, a great sweep of design history as a divergence between an organic American modernist vocabulary

hatched from Art Moderne—as evidenced by Stone's original building for the Museum of Modern Art—and the European International Style hegemony favored by Alfred Barr, Henry-Russell Hitchcock, and the young Philip Johnson that had so rapidly taken over in critical discourse if less in practice. The argument is an old chestnut but duly invigorated here as passed through the prism of Stone's desultory yet finally fecund career, even as it declined in its last years. The architect's end is a woeful combination of unmanageable growth on two coasts, a lifelong aversion to professional partners, personal problems crowned by a "toxic" third marriage following an embittering divorce from the second (spoiler alert: Hicks's mother), and changing tastes. Fueling them all was an ever-shriller elite denunciation of emerging postmodernism (ultimately today's modernism), expanded by technologies that made ornament and pattern affordable in new materials that are accepted as authentic, even when formally of classical precedent.

Author Stone never shies from the gossip of patron skirmishes (the Henry Luces and the Dallas Grafts), politics, and internecine battles for credit starting from



Courtesy Edward Stone Archives (left, center).
Courtesy MOMA (right).



Ezra Stoller, ©Esto

Top left to right: Arcade at The State University of New York at Albany, 1961-1971; United States Pavilion and Reflecting Pool at the 1958 World's Fair in Brussel's Belgium; Main facade of The Museum of Modern Art on West 53rd Street, 1939.

Left: Goodyear House in Old Westbury, New York, 1938.

the get-go with Stone's auspicious debut assignment for the ornamentation—inside and out—of Radio City Music Hall. But the author only goes there when it is germane to his central biographical enterprise.

Absent in this volume is any trace of the *Mommie Dearest* peekaboos and self-reflection as found in Alan Lapidus's *Everything by Design* (St. Martin's Press, 2007), about a famous but flawed father. Likewise there is nothing of a personal quest as so widely celebrated in the 2003 documentary *My Architect: A Son's Journey*, by Nathaniel Kahn, about his search to understand his legendary if scoundrel-behaving dad, Louis.

The swiftly dispatched mention of a contemptuous relationship limited to

the foreword and epilogue only serves to reinforce what Hicks Stone sees as an almost urgent need to record and persuasively celebrate a body of work now, when such a record is still possible. He sees it as his duty to be an insightful interpreter to the broader design community rather than to his father, which lends implicit poignancy to what is otherwise a fine, straightforward account. Indeed such urgency impelling Hicks leads to the biggest criticism, which is only one of format. Large, lush illustrations, both archival and new, along with blueprints and ephemera, make the underlying biographical text a bit unwieldy.

But finally it does not matter as there were many jobs to be done in filling this historical void. The author's apparently suppressed emotions lend narrative

force and encourage reconsideration of a recent past that contributed so much to the built environment we still inhabit. In sum, don't let the grills of prior scholarship block your view. A bravely self-abnegating son bears witness and all gain from it.

Paul Gunther is president of the Institute of Classical Architecture & Art.



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Edward Durell Stone: A Son's Untold Story of a Legendary Architect, by Hicks Stone

Book review by Hilary Lewis

Hicks Stone, the youngest son of renowned architect Edward Durell Stone, has just released a large-format biography of his fascinating father. The elder Stone played a major role in mid-century architecture, both in America and abroad, working on projects as diverse as The Museum of Modern Art, Radio City Music Hall, the US Embassy in New Delhi, the US Pavilion at the Brussels World's Fair of 1958 and the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing

Arts in Washington, DC. Stone's graceful forms were extremely popular, yet he was highly criticized for his approach to design, which included a serious appreciation of decoration, something which is highly deserving of reappraisal today.

The book is an elegant, image-filled volume that is fitting for the figure of Stone who looks beautifully comfortable in a finely tailored suit amidst the likes of President and Mrs. Kennedy. A product

of Fayetteville, Arkansas by way of Harvard, MIT, New York, Paris and Venice; Stone is the epitome of a learned American who garnered fame, prestige and wealth due to talent, education and effort. He was one of few architects to grace the cover of Time magazine.

Nonetheless, Stone is not part of the canon as taught in most of the major architectural schools. This book is the first biography to be released on him. When one of his major works, the former Huntington Hartford Gallery of Modern Art in New York was threatened with destruction, architectural debate centered on the Venetian-inspired façade, not for its artistry but for its audacity to embrace the mere concept of decoration. Despite the outcries of preservationists who recognized that this was the work of a seminal designer who had stepped outside the Miesian box, the structure was eventually entirely re-clad and the building was reborn as the Museum of Arts and Design.

Stone, a contemporary of Louis Kahn, Morris Lapidus, Philip Johnson and Eero Saarinen, was born at the very beginning of the 20th century—part of the generation that practiced and reinterpreted European modernism in America in a host of ways. The powerful differences among this group of architects rightly should be celebrated as proof of how capable the American environment has been for fostering innovation as opposed to conformity. Alas, for decades, the lens of what we deem to be traditional modernism has made us all-too-often believe Adolf Loos's dictum that "ornament is crime."

Perhaps we should be more in tune with the likes of Stone who had his vision shaped not only by the transformative modernism of Europe in the 1920s but also by his view of the Venetian lagoon—he kept an apartment in the Campanile at San Marco in the late Twenties. In combination with an appreciation for Frank Lloyd Wright, Stone was a marvel of synthesis. The pages of Hicks Stone's in-depth history are testament to the sophistication of Stone who could merge clean lines with complex forms and surfaces. How is that not modern?



Ezra Stoller, ©Esto

Left: Courtyard at the Museo de Arte de Ponce in Puerto Rico. Finished in 1966, the building used a hexagonal grid throughout, and won an American Institute of Architects honor award in 1967.



INTERVIEW WITH HICKS STONE

Stone Architecture

Your father, Edward Durell Stone, was an important American modernist architect. As a result you grew up in a cultural milieu that included such figures as Alexander Calder and Philip Johnson. How did exposure to these individuals shape your decision to become an architect?

Ironically, I resisted Dad's attempts to bring me into his practice. It was only after he died in 1978 that I focused on architecture, but then I did so with great commitment and unwavering determination. The cultural milieu that surrounded me during my childhood left a deep imprint on me. As a young boy, my family made a point of exposing me to the great monuments of Classical Greece and Rome, the Renaissance buildings of Italy, and the Georgian buildings of Great Britain. My father, who was a surprisingly knowledgeable architectural historian, rented one of Palladio's villas outside of Venice (the Villa Malcontenta near Mestri) where my mother and I stayed for a year. I remember looking up at the ceiling and seeing frescoes in my room. It's hard for me to believe that my architectural education didn't begin right at that moment, when I was 5 years old, sitting on that villa's great portico between those grand columns looking at the willows hanging over the Brenta Canal.

My father was a great friend of Frank Lloyd Wright. We would often go to Taliesin and stay. I have only the vaguest memories of Wright, but the exposure to all of this important work established a belief in me that what architects do is fundamental and so important to our existence that I feel what I do viscerally. I approach every project with a spiritual commitment and as an opportunity to create a perfect world, at least within the bounds of the site.

The steady stream of artists and architects, people like Willem de Kooning, Alexander Calder, Larry Rivers, Gordon Bunshaft (of SOM) made me understand that what I do is never just a building but an extension of my persona, my emotions, my world view. It is who I am and how I want to be regarded.

What working methodology do you employ to arrive at a set of vernacular references that are historically resonant yet appropriate within a contemporary architectural context?

I look at traditional architecture and find those elements that strike me as resonant. I remove the discordant or complex notes and organize it in the simplest way possible. Architecture should move people through its boldness, its simplicity, and its seamless detail. The modern world can be alternately troubling and enthralling. I prefer to celebrate those aspects that I find uplifting. I choose to exclude the less pleasing elements like chaos, confusion, or disorder from my architecture. There is enough complexity in modern life without embracing it in our buildings. For me, architecture is a refuge.

Nearly all your clients have commented on your ability to listen well and consider the multiple points of view of those who will make use of the house. How do you manage to incorporate so many diverse needs without compromising your creative vision?

This is the fundamental challenge of a commercial art form. You have to be able to sell your vision. Compromise, for any number of reasons, is inevitable and has to be accepted. Your ideals must be adaptable to a wide variety of expressions. Since I chose to do work that is simple, elegant, and sensitive to its cultural and environmental milieu, I have this flexibility. Fundamentally, I want to please my clients. I couldn't imagine ever being happy with a project that the client was unhappy with.

INTERVIEW WITH HICKS STONE (continued)

Stone Architecture

You spent several years after graduating from the Harvard Graduate School of Design working for Philip Johnson at Johnson/Burgee. What was the most important thing you learned during those years?

Philip Johnson was a strong influence on me, though he probably would not realize it from my tenure there. Both of us seek to produce work that is simple, elegant and informed by historic precedent. We both also appreciate boldness in design. I admire his ability to produce work in whatever vein he felt was appropriate for the time and place. It's what I aspire to. Ultimately, if we seek to "sell" our work, we are subject to the vagaries of the marketplace. We have to be sensitive to shifting tides. I think that Johnson is remarkably gifted, if not exceptional, in this respect.

How have you handled projects like 400 South Ocean Boulevard that involve revisiting, and even improving upon, the work of your father?

It's a wonderful opportunity to complete areas where I felt Dad's work was wanting. His work was bold and powerful, but his later work was never really effective at the level of detail that you might see in some of the work of his contemporaries—Mies van der Rohe, I. M. Pei or Gordon Bunshaft. Dad was probably too busy and too successful to worry about whether the joints lined up, whether the tile was cut too thin, or whether a light was slightly off center. That level of obsessiveness was not in his personality. Or, if it was, I didn't see it. Unfortunately, he wasn't able to pass that level of minute concern on to the people who worked for him either as successfully as I think Pei and Bunshaft did.

What kind of project have you not yet done that you would like to?

I have been a great admirer of landscape design, particularly the Moorish gardens of Spain, and the modern garden spaces of Luis Barragan so a project that blends luxurious gardens into the architecture interests me. It would be wonderful to have a client who had a vision that sought to create both great architecture and great landscape architecture, who sought to blur the distinction between the two.

Most of your projects have been in resort locations or as second homes for clients. Is there a particular atmosphere or emotional state that you want these places to convey or evoke for their inhabitants? How is this achieved?

When people travel to a particular destination, it is generally because they love the location's natural and built environment. Consequently, I want the houses I design to express the qualities of the region in explicit and heightened terms. Whether it involves embracing elements of a local architectural tradition, like the "Shingle Style", or using a local material, like adobe, I want the architecture to be appropriate to the place in which it is located. For this reason I can use bright, pastel colors on a home in the Bahamas, but would never do so in coastal Maine. Similarly, I feel comfortable proposing a modern glass house on an isolated 20-acre site, but would argue against it in a suburban neighborhood with strong examples of colonial era architecture. I think it's important to use the essential qualities of the place in the architecture that you produce and to do so appropriately.

In what way do these places differ from projects you have undertaken in an urban context, like New York, where you maintain a practice?

Most architectural projects in New York, unless you are doing a high-rise building, consist largely of interior design. While I enjoy interiors work, I am trained to be an architect—to design and build objects with a site, with exterior walls and interior rooms. I prefer to realize entire projects that interact with nature and their surroundings. New York is a wonderful place for an architect to practice, a constant source of ideas and inspiration. However, by design, most of my work continues to be out of the city where I can design complete buildings, not merely interiors. Because I practice in an international city, with unparalleled access to ideas and resources, I believe I offer more to a client building a home in Maine or Florida or California than most local architects could. The lens through which I see architecture has a much larger field of view.

What is the one thing you most wish clients better understood about the process of designing and building a house?

Many inexperienced residential clients come to an architect too late in the process. If a family is buying a home or considering a site to build on, they should come to an architect before they do so, rather than after. I recently had a young couple come to me who had a beautiful ridge top site with spectacular views, but the house was fundamentally flawed and it was painfully obvious to me after just a 30-minute walk through. Given poor advice by a building inspector and a real estate agent, they purchased it thinking they had a home they could live in but, in reality, they had an expensive house that in all likelihood was more suited to be a tear-down than a candidate for renovation.

CLIENT TESTIMONIALS

"Hicks did a marvelous job with the building in Palm Beach. He was the right person to restore 400 South Ocean Boulevard because he understands his father's work and feels responsible for maintaining his legacy by safeguarding the integrity of the building. As a child, Hicks was exposed to many of the great artists and architects from the late 20th century so he is conscious of that heritage. It informs the way he works, as well as the choices he makes. All of that is enhanced by the fact that when you work with him he's truly a gentleman."

— Dennis Gallo, *President of the Board and Resident, 400 South Ocean Boulevard, Palm Beach FL*

"When Hicks Stone became architect for the repair and reconstruction of 400 South Ocean Boulevard, he understood that the best approach was to respect his father's original design while modernizing the building through the latest technology. True to his father's remark that 'The desire for a beautiful environment must originate with the people,' he has been a tireless coach for the 400 owners, inspiring everyone to deliver the finest solution possible."

— Nancy Tuck Gardiner, *Board Member and Resident, 400 South Ocean Boulevard, Palm Beach FL*

"I loved how imaginative and collaborative Hicks was to work with. He was very open to ideas, able to respectfully and gently adjust my requests to make them work with his design. He renovated my loft and created a wonderful design for my office and media center. He also did a great job with the materials and colors. Throughout, he was meticulous, fastidious and accessible."

— Ruth Charny, *Residential Client, New York NY*

"Hicks was everything that you could ask for in an architect. He took my concept for the project, improved on it and brought it to fruition. He immersed himself in the local architectural traditions and produced a modern community that created a strong sense of place. His work was always creative, timely, and thorough. As a key member of a team involved in a long and complex project he could always be looked to for innovative thought and meticulous work. I wouldn't hesitate to recommend him for other projects of a similar vein."

—William T. Criswell, *President and CEO, West End Development Corporation, West End, Grand Bahama Island*

"If indeed the best architecture is the result of a successful collaboration between client and architect, I can truly say that working with Hicks Stone reified my true belief that good architecture comes from such a process. Although Hicks Stone is an architect who wants his clients to be happy, he has enough of an imagination to invent interesting solutions of his own for whatever the project may be."

— Barbara Jakobson, *MoMA Trustee and Residential Client, New York NY*

"Hicks and I are friends as well as collaborators on a house that my wife and I are building on a small island off the coast of Maine. Among the things I appreciate most about Hicks is that he listens to all the voices that are critical to the design process and incorporates these multiple points of view. That's why I've recommended him to other clients. He listens carefully to both husband and wife and makes sure that their concerns are reflected in the design. Working together has never gotten in the way of our friendship nor has our friendship ever gotten in the way of him speaking up for the quality of design."

— Steve Thomas, *Host of PBS' This Old House and Residential Client, Hupper's Island ME*

"Hicks designed a very stylish weekend house for us in a traditional style that has some interesting contemporary elements which are also practical. For example, we wanted a shingle house that would turn gray which is difficult if you work with regular cedar and don't live near the ocean. To solve the problem, Hicks found an Alaskan cedar that would age as we wanted. Because we often have guests we had privacy issues so he put in a skywalk. He paid a lot of attention to details, things that other architects may not focus on. He was flexible throughout and that made the process easy. In the end, he put a lot into the house given the budget. We've since had people knock on our door to find out who the architect is!"

— David McVey, *Residential Client, Stockbridge MA*

"Hicks was very receptive to our ideas and accommodating to our wishes. We wanted to be sure that any work we did fit in with the existing nature of the house: a late 19th century Victorian farmhouse. We did not want a McMansion. Hicks did a very good job of integrating a large addition in the back into the house so that there is no division between the old and the new. He extended a porch and a patio so the exterior spaces are integrated with the architecture. There are modern touches like a high ceiling in the master bedroom and traditional touches like elliptical windows. The overall design is very easy to live in and works well for our family. We constantly get comments on how much people like the house."

— Parke Logan, *Residential Client, Darien CT*

"Hicks is like a fine wine. Once the project is done the beauty of the design makes for a lovely finish that gets better and better with time. I worked with him on two renovations to the same property. The result is a traditional house with some modern elements. The design is wonderfully symmetrical and filled with small architectural details that speak quietly but are noticeable. Throughout the process, Hicks was very accommodating."

— Schuyler Winter, *Residential Client, Darien CT*