



Nestled amidst a neighborhood of single story bungalows in Venice, California, the Solar Umbrella Residence boldly establishes a precedent for the next generation of California modernist architecture. Located on a 41' wide x 100'-0" long through lot, the Solar Umbrella addition transforms the architects' existing 650 square foot bungalow into a 1900 square foot residence equipped for responsible living in the twenty-first century.

Inspired by Paul Rudolph's Umbrella House of 1953, the Solar Umbrella provides a contemporary reinvention of the solar canopy—a strategy that provides thermal protection in

climates with intense exposures. In establishing the program for their residence, which accommodates the couple and their one child chose to integrate into the design, principles of sustainability that they strive to achieve in their own practice.

The architects carefully considered the entire site, taking advantage of as many opportunities for sustainable living as possible. Passive and active solar design strategies render the residence 100% energy neutral. Recycled, renewable, and high performance materials and products are specified throughout.



Hardscape and landscape treatments are considered for their aesthetic and actual impact on the land. The Brooks Scarpa Residence elegantly crafts each of these strategies and materials, exploiting the potential for performance and sensibility while achieving a rich and interesting sensory and aesthetic experience.

Taking advantage of the unusual through lot site condition, the addition shifts the residence 180 degrees from its original orientation. What was formerly the front and main entry at the north becomes the back as the new design reorganizes the residence towards the south. This move allows the architects to create a more gracious introduction to their residence and optimizes

exposure to energy rich southern sunlight.



A bold display of solar panels wrapping around the south elevation and roof becomes the defining formal expression of the residence. Conceived as a solar canopy, these panels protect the body of the building from thermal heat gain by screening large portions of the structure from direct exposure to the intense southern California sun.

Rather than deflecting sunlight, this state of the art solar skin absorbs and transforms this rich resource into usable energy, providing the residence with 100% of its electricity. Like many design features at the Solar Umbrella, the solar canopy is multivalent and rich with meaning—performing several roles for both functional, formal and experiential effect.

By removing only one wall at the south, the architects maintain the primary layout of the existing residence. The original bungalow, which was tightly packed with program (kitchen, dining, living, two bedrooms and a bath) is joined by a sizable addition to the south, which includes a new entry, living area, master suite accommodations, and utility room for laundry and storage. The kitchen, which once formed the back edge of the residence, opens into a large living area, which in turn, opens out to a spacious front yard.

An operable wall of glass at the living area delicately defines the edge between interior and exterior. An unbroken visual corridor is established from one end of the property to the other. Taking cues from the California modernist tradition, the architects conceive of exterior spaces as outdoor rooms.



By creating strong visual and physical links between outside and inside, these outdoor rooms

interlock with interior spaces, blurring the boundary and creating a more dynamic relationship between the two.

The entry sequence along the western edge of the property further demonstrates this concept. A cast in place concrete pool provides a strong landscape element and defines the path to the front entry. Upon reaching the entry, the pool cascades into a lower tier of water that penetrates and interlocks with the geometry and form of the residence. In a move that reinvents the welcome mat, stepping stones immersed in the water create an initiatory rite of passage into the residence as the visitor is invited walk across water. The distinction between outside and inside is once again blurred.

The master suite on the second level reiterates the strategy of interlocking space. Located directly above the new living area, up a set of floating, folded plate steel stairs, the bedroom strategically opens onto a deep covered patio which overlooks the garden. Conceptually reminiscent of R.M. Schindler's Kings Road Residence, this patio extends the bedroom area outdoors, creating the sensation of a sleeping loft exposed to the exterior. This deep porch carves out an exterior space within the visual bounds of the building envelope and provides the front elevation with a distinctive character. What appears to be a significant area of the second floor is actually never enclosed but rather it is protected by the planes, which wrap around it.



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A small note about the Firm:

In 2011 Pugh + Scarpa will change its name to Brooks + Scarpa to reflect the new leadership of the firm. As announced by Laurence Scarpa, on September 1, 2010, firm principal Gwynne Pugh FAIA ASCE LEEDap has launched Gwynne Pugh Urban Studio. Gwynne Pugh Urban Studio is an architectural and urban design firm that specializes in the design of structures, urban design, planning, sustainability, and consultation to companies and public entities. Further information will be forthcoming shortly.

Pugh + Scarpa will continue to operate under its current name, business structure and leadership under the direction of Lawrence Scarpa and Angela Brooks. In 2011 Pugh + Scarpa will change it's name to Brooks + Scarpa. An announcement regarding the new firm's

direction and staff will be released at that time.

Together, Gwynne Pugh and Lawrence Scarpa led Pugh + Scarpa Architects for 22 years. Over that period of time the firm won over 50 local, state and national AIA awards. Most recently the firm was awarded the 2010 AIA National Firm of the Year award.