

Wallpaper*

Primal urge: a NYC-based architect and developer gets back to basics

ARCHITECTURE / 19 JUL 2017 / BY ELLEN HIMELFARB

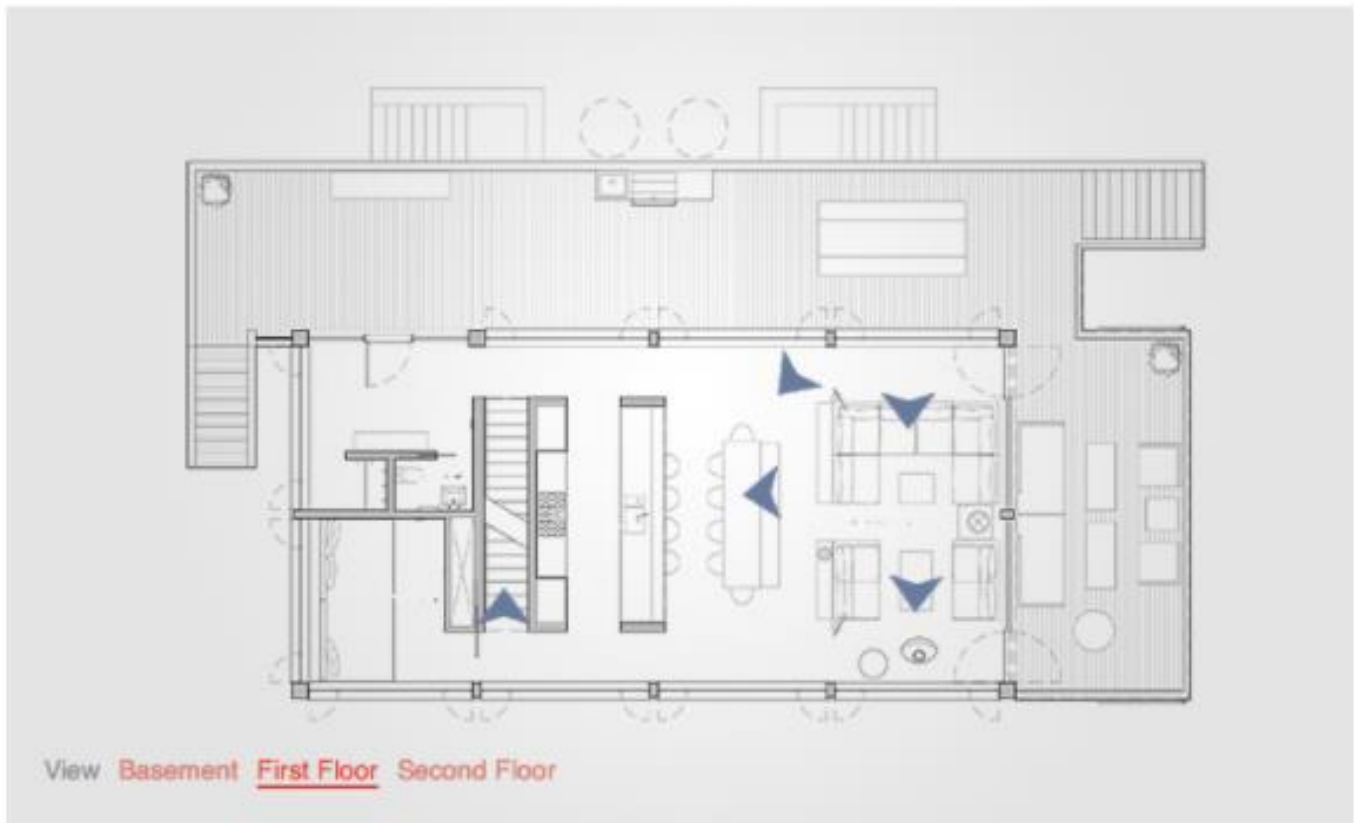


Island Creek, located in Southampton, is designed by New York architect-developer Cary Tamarkin. *Photography: Bart Michiels*

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New York architect/developer Cary Tamarkin designs all the condos and townhouses he sells with high-sheen, luxury details. But on the rare occasion a house commission comes along, he goes primitive.

Island Creek, a family home in Southampton, couldn't feel further than New York City. One simple timber box perched atop a local-stone base interacts at every level with the surrounding wetland and the natural arc of the sun – overlooked by nobody but osprey.



Take an interactive tour of Island Creek

Tamarkin lists his four chosen materials like essential food groups: wood, stone, concrete, steel. The old-growth cypress siding ‘turns a beautiful silver-grey over time,’ he says, ‘but more importantly it’s hard to get.’ His sources in Florida and Georgia harvest logs from deep water, where they’ve been immersed for a century. ‘They’re fully saturated, and the fact they don’t rot makes them great for waterfront houses.’

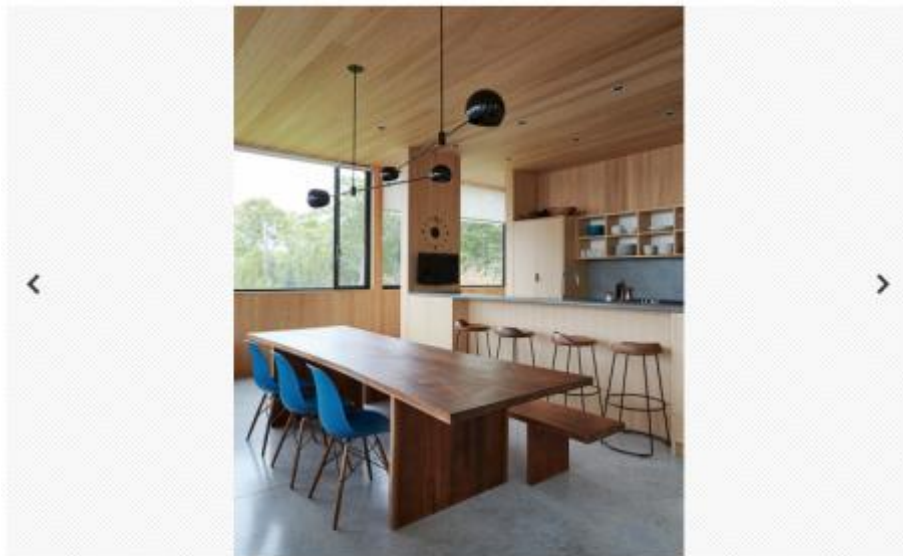
He restricts his steel to thin cables around the suspended deck and a discreet balcony for the recessed second storey. It also frames the panoramic windows that trace the perimeter, making the wood tiers appear to float. The effect is evocative of a Donald Judd installation – unsurprising for a man who considers his residential work to be ‘an artistic rather than business move’. Those windows, with their pull-open panels, circulate light and breeze so the blown-air systems are seldom deployed.



The interior of wood and concrete reflects the rural location and the intimate nature of its function as a family home. Photography: William Abranowicz

To keep the interior open and loft-like, a mechanical core at the centre contains all the plumbing and wiring. Natural sunlight streams down from the rooftop deck through the treads of the floating concrete staircase, into airy spaces packaged in new-growth cypress. Tamarkin chose the wood, like the siding, for its potential to weather. ‘This is a vacation home and I want it to be treated without fear,’ he says.

‘All the materials lend themselves to changing over time – even scratches in the stainless-steel sink. The patina becomes part of its identity, like a kid growing up.’

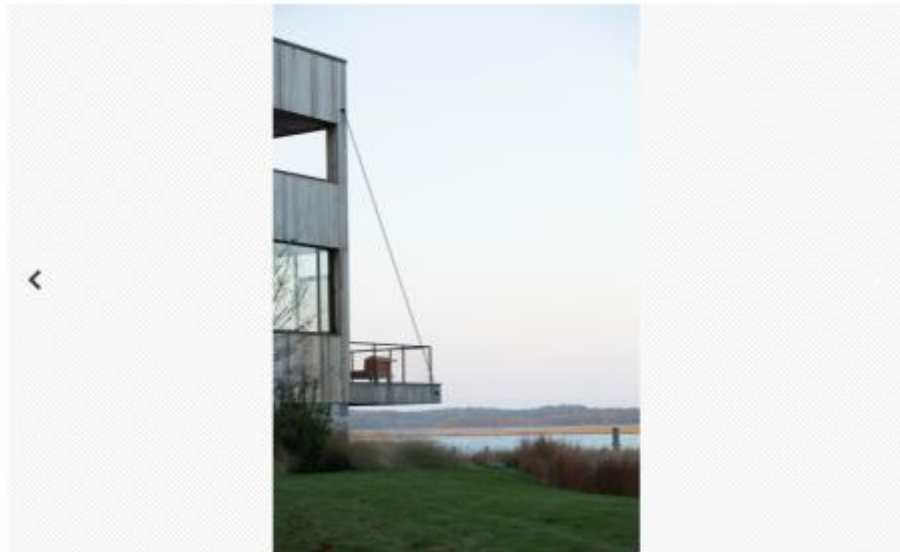


Concrete floors have under-floor heating and wooden panelling is used across the home. Photography: William Abranowicz



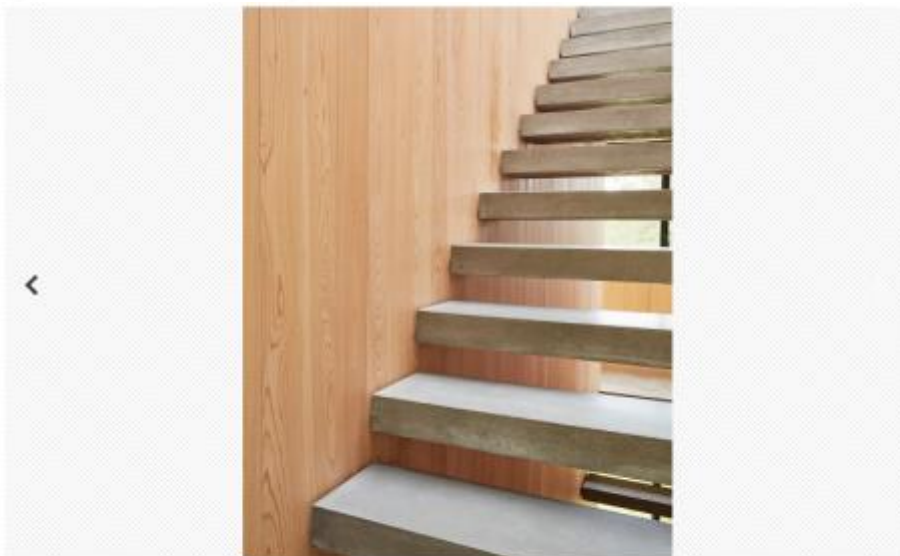
Windows open with a manual crank rather than a mechanical one. *Photography: William Abranowicz*

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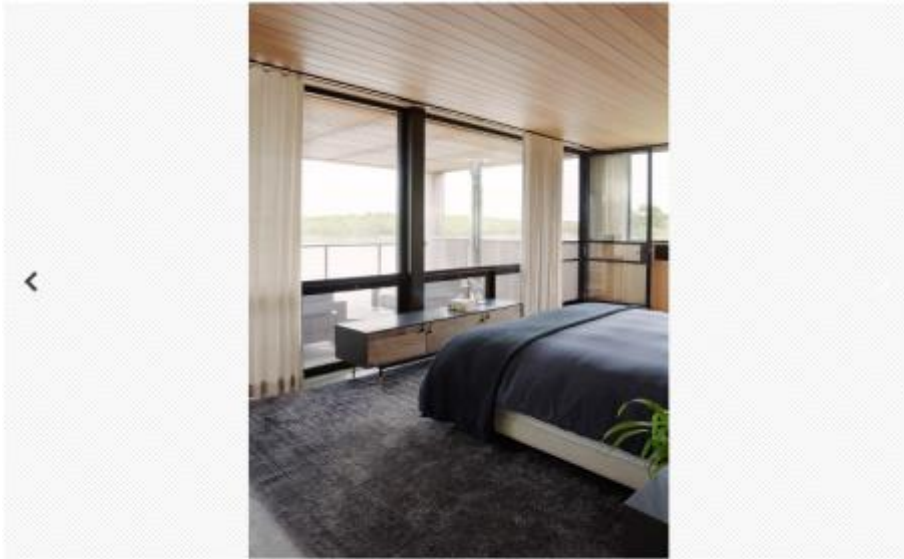
The 3,500 sq ft house looks east toward the water and sunrise, but the best light comes from the north in the mornings.

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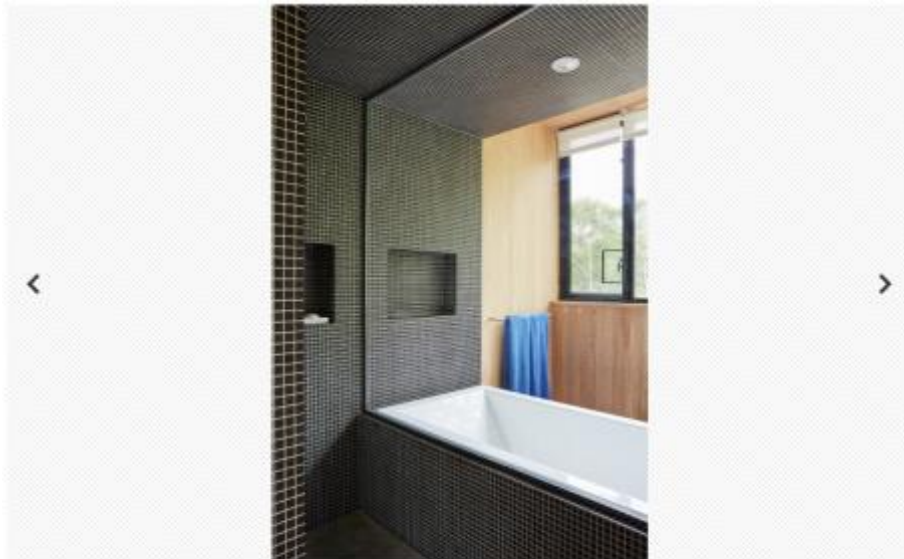
Smoothly finished concrete stairs connect the three floors. *Photography: William Abranowicz*

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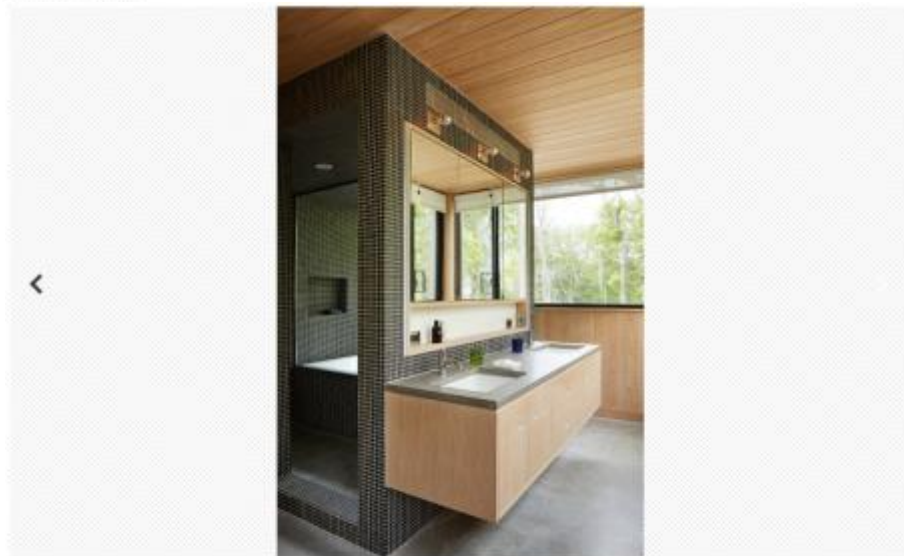
The master bedroom is orientated east towards the view. *Photography: William Abranowicz*

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The master bath has a plumbed core covered with $\frac{3}{8}$ -inch tiles. *Photography: William Abranowicz*

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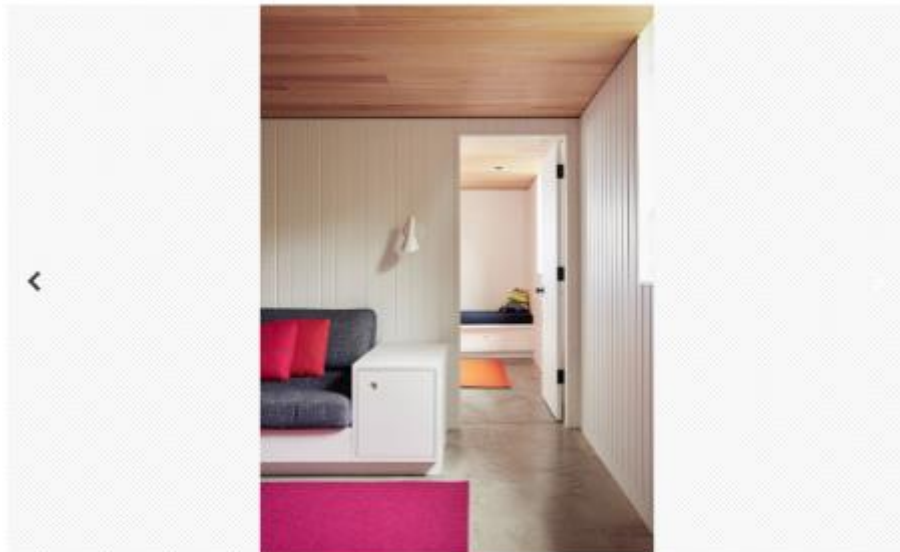
Double sinks in the master bathroom. Ribbon windows feature across the upper floor. *Photography: William Abranowicz*

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The raised basement level holds utilities and the children's sleeping quarters. *Photography: William Abranowicz*

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Windows bring in light from ground level into the basement floor. *Photography: William Abranowicz*

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As per strict zoning regulations of the site, the house follows the footprint of the original unattractive house that was demolished. *Photography: Bart Michels*

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