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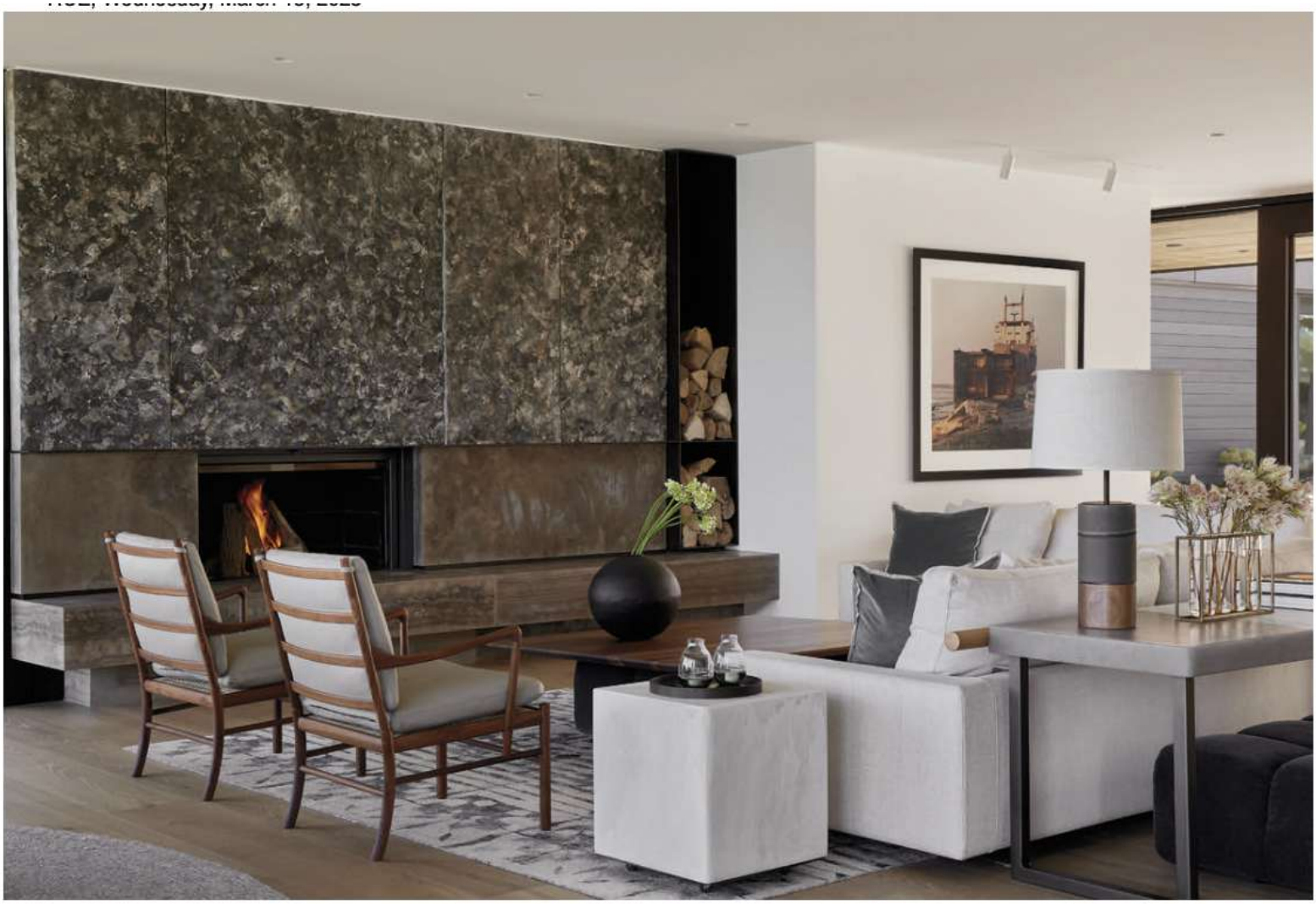
AN ARCHITECTURAL MASTERPIECE COEXISTS WITH THE BEAUTY OF THE CANADIAN LANDSCAPE.

BEAUTY *on the* BAY



Tucked into the rugged northeastern corner of Lake Huron is Georgian Bay—a sprawling body of water often referred to as the sixth Great Lake. It's one of the gems of Ontario, Canada, drawing many year-round residents thanks to its calming natural beauty. There's an innate respect for the land and the history of the area here, acknowledged by old and new residents alike.

This exquisite property was originally designed by noted Canadian architect Eb Zeidler and built in the mid-1980s for a local businessman. "The original owner was interested in preserving the local heritage of the area and was himself a sailor," interior designer Tanya Bonus tells us. "The house was situated on the property with unobstructed views of the bay, which is what drew my clients to the property. They purchased the house from the original family and were intent on honoring its history and design." The couple has adult children and friends that visit frequently, so their goal was to create a warm and comfortable home that everyone could enjoy and looked forward to spending time at.

The family lived in the home's original state for a few years to fully appreciate the property—how it weathered the seasons and interacted with sun, wind, and light. Tanya and architect Michael Lafrenière of Setless Architecture were grateful for the thoughtful approach. "This also gave everyone time to work and rework the location of various rooms in order to maximize views and narrow down the selection of materials," she says.

Another plus for the project: This wasn't first time the designer and architect had worked together, so when it was time to begin, they quickly hit their stride. "Our familiarity and respect for one another was well established," Tanya says.

Tanya was responsible for the selection of all materials and interior finishes, design of the custom millwork, space planning, and furniture and fixture selection. "The clients are well versed in custom home building and had a clear vision of what they wanted when it came to materials and finishes and specific details," she says. "And because of our history together, we had a great collaborative process when it came to final decision making."

It's one of those homes that stops you in your tracks at every turn—a beautiful piece of architecture with no expense spared. "At the end of the day, what matters is the owners love their home," Tanya says. "That is when I know I have done my job well."

The home's original windows (*previous spread*) were designed to mimic the front of a ship. "We kept the footprint, and Michael and the owner redesigned the layout making the curved custom windows larger and more modern," explains interior designer Tanya Bonus.

The fireplace is in the original location. "The owner wanted to use a locally-sourced stone which was also used on various exterior applications. He also designed the steel details for the firewood box and shallow blade-like shelf, used as a mantel for votive candles. The space is large and open

The original turret was modernized for a cleaner look. The design team removed ribbed wood paneling and replaced it with drywall and a custom round skylight, which was an early design request of the clients. Downstairs houses a lounge area and bar along with storage. "The family

The kitchen design was successful due to expert planning. "When the pandemic hit, we had just started framing," Tanya recalls. "We worked through the worst of COVID—trying to secure as many materials and finishes as possible. Some items we purchased a year in advance of installing them because we had no idea what was going to happen with supply chains."

The main floor was designed to include a primary suite, which includes a luxury bathroom, lounge, spa area, and gym. "The addition of this space creates a courtyard for the pool and outdoor space," Tanya shares. "Because the house has unobstructed views, the wind became a key player."

The second floor is divided to include guest bedrooms, a lounge, and a private office with a deck. "Due to the pandemic, we had to keep the crews small and spread out for the first few months," Tanya recalls. It added time to the project but, like all good things, it was well worth the wait.