

CALIFORNIA HOMES

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THE ARTS & DISTINCTIVE DESIGN

Country
Living
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STATE
OF
WINE

Contents

64



44



Departments

FALL 2025



48

- 26 **CALENDAR**
California Museums,
Galleries & Events
BY KATHY BRYANT
- 39 **NOTEBOOK**
39 Visionary | BDDW
42 Product | Pinch
44 Product | Rosemary Hallgarten
48 Cloth & Paper | Otis Textiles
48 Q&A | California Closets
52 Spotlight | Chic Design Group
- 54 **SHOWCASE HOUSE**
2025 San Francisco
Decorator Showcase
- 60 **SHOWCASE HOUSE**
Pasadena Showcase
House of Design

- 64 **ARCHITECTURE**
Butler Armsden Architects
Celebrates 40 Years Of Timeless
Residential Design
BY ROGER GRODY
- 66 **WINE**
Two Napa Wineries Embracing
Change With Innovation
And Stewardship
BY SARAH H. BRAY
- 110 **OUT & ABOUT**
California's Special Events
for the Design Industry

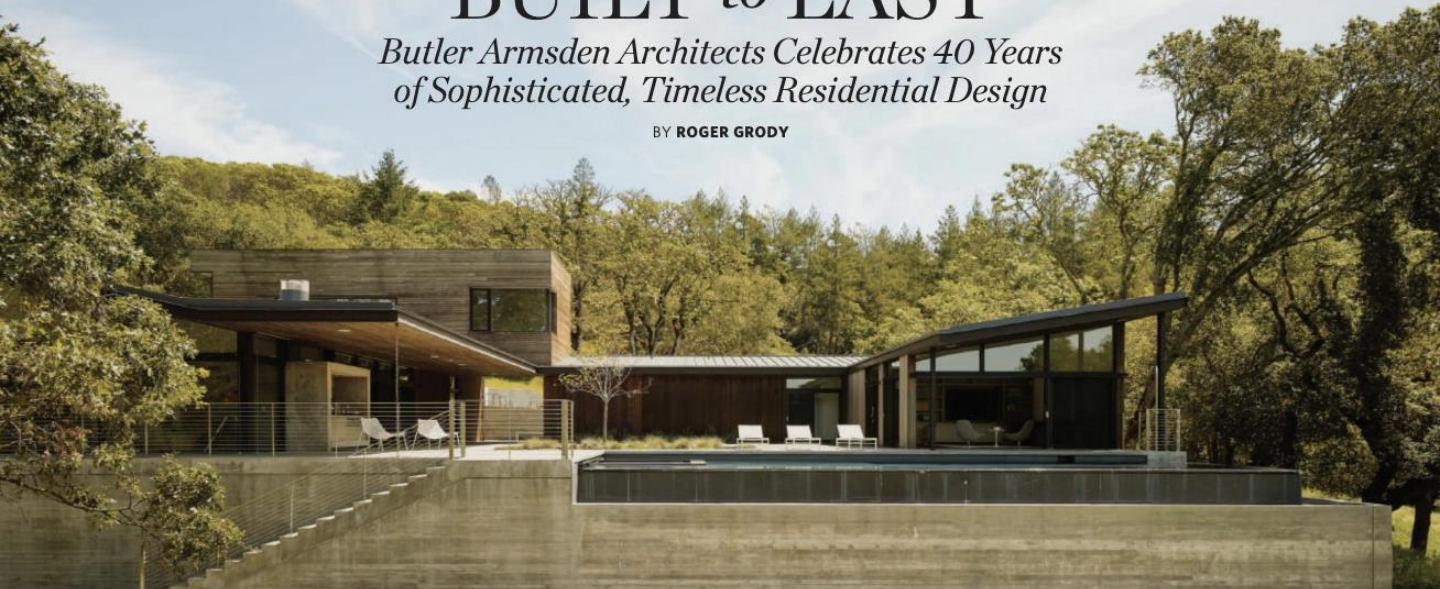


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BUILT *to* LAST

Butler Armsden Architects Celebrates 40 Years of Sophisticated, Timeless Residential Design

BY ROGER GRODY



NOW CELEBRATING ITS 40TH ANNIVERSARY, San Francisco-based Butler Armsden Architects has amassed an impressive portfolio of residential projects. Each home conveys a distinctive, timeless architectural expression shaped by the context of the site and a shared vision with the client. Most projects are in the Bay Area, where every meticulously-designed residence reflects a genuine sense of place.

Founded in 1985 by the late Lewis Butler, one of the firm's prevailing inspirations is the dynamic local culture its design professionals have evolved with. "Both San Francisco and the Bay Area have a very diverse landscape and topography," explains managing principal Glenda Flaim. "The area has also attracted people from around the world with different points of view, making it an exciting environment in which to design," she maintains. Citing another influence, Flaim states, "Mid-century modernism informs many of our projects, with its emphasis on indoor-outdoor living, as well as an elegance and simplicity of design." Reinforcing the firm's affinity for blurring borders between indoors and out, Butler Armsden CEO Chandra Campbell adds, "Even inside, our projects are integrated with the outdoors, with generous windows capturing expansive views."

Campbell and Flaim have both been with the organization for more than 20 years, and many of the firm's associates have also made long-term commitments. Campbell



ABOVE A historic home in San Francisco's Sea Cliff community, reimagined with a sculptural staircase. Photo by Shade Degges

TOP Recreational amenities, including infinity-edge pool, at a Sonoma Valley retreat artfully clad in fire-resilient board-form concrete. Photo by Joe Fletcher.

OPPOSITE TOP A courtyard house in Portola Valley—Butler Armsden also provided interior design services for this project—

features a soaring fireplace framed in board-form concrete. Photo by James Carrière

OPPOSITE BOTTOM An early project of founder Lewis Butler in Stinson Beach, designed for family members, is a warm, approachable retreat. Photo by Matthew Millman.

OPPOSITE FAR RIGHT A residence featuring both vertical and horizontal cedar planks. The wood's varied patinas warm the modern design. Photo by Joe Fletcher.



states, "We believe in professional development and mentoring, allowing people to grow as designers and individuals." Butler Armsden's ability to deftly navigate the city's complex, often-draconian planning and zoning regulations makes the firm a natural choice for San Francisco clients encountering challenging sites. "The people attracted to our firm appreciate design that's elegant, sophisticated and timeless," states Flaim. Campbell observes, "Another common thread among our clients is a love of art. We find that incorporating art into a home creates intimacy and really elevates a project."

For every commission, Butler Armsden develops a shared architectural language through a collaborative process, one that recognizes the unique sensibilities of each client. Flaim submits, "We're most successful when clients are very engaged and passionate about their projects." She adds, "In addition to aesthetics being client-driven, the design process is uniquely tailored to each individual client."



Representing the firm's remarkable versatility, its portfolio includes everything from a contemporary-rustic cabin on a Yolo County farm to a neoclassical-inspired estate in Atherton or a Sonoma Valley retreat clad in fire-resilient board-form concrete. The reimagining of a historic Sea Cliff home features a sculptural staircase, while a waterfront residence in Belvedere presents a sleek expression of California modernism.

Humbled by the firm's 40th anniversary, Chandra Campbell suggests, "That's a long time, but with every project taking three to five years to complete, the decades pass in the blink of an eye." Concurring, Glenda Flaim reports, "As I look through our portfolio, every project from the last 40 years still feels relevant, and there's a continuity of quality throughout them." CH

butlerarmsden.com