



A House of Glass

INSPIRED BY HIS CHILDHOOD HOME, CHICAGO-BASED MASTER ARCHITECT FRANCISCO GONZALEZ-PULIDO EXECUTES A STUNNING RENOVATION OF A GLASS-CLAD 1967 PROPERTY JUST NORTH OF THE CITY. BY STELLA TIRONE, PHOTOGRAPHED BY RAFAEL GAMO

THE BACKGROUND The founder of renowned architectural firm FGP Atelier (fgp-atelier.com) whose award-winning projects range from Diablos Rojos Stadium in Mexico City to Starring by Ted Gibson salon in Beverly Hills, Francisco Gonzalez-Pulido was immediately drawn to 15 Country Lane, a stunningly modern, all-glass 1967 home in Northfield by noted Chicago architect Tony Grunsfeld. Nestled in a wooded neighborhood, the one-story property boasts a pool, tennis courts and a poolside pavilion perfect for entertaining. According to Gonzalez-Pulido, who had been searching for the perfect home for almost a decade, it's one of Grunsfeld's best projects and a remarkably modernist approach for the era, especially in regard to residential properties—an aesthetic that's right up Gonzalez-Pulido's alley. "The

way we approach interiors is what I call an architectural approach," says Gonzalez-Pulido. "I'm not a believer in interior design as a separate entity from architecture—interiors have to really reflect the spirit of the exteriors."

THE PRIORITY "I grew up in a glass house," recalls Gonzalez-Pulido fondly, "and I want the same for my son." When Gonzalez-Pulido and his wife and business partner, Gergana, purchased the home, they did so with the vision of raising their soon-to-be family of four in the glass pavilion. "I wanted to find the place that was going to bring me back to the memories of my childhood—how wonderful it was to grow up in a place that taught me about democracy and freedom," remarks Gonzalez-Pulido. Although emotion

played a part in the duo's decision to buy the home, the two are designers first and saw an architectural masterpiece that they simply couldn't pass up. "My wife was really the interior designer of the home, and I was the contractor," explains Gonzalez-Pulido. "I think this was actually beautiful because this is the way we work every day in our practice."

THE CHALLENGE The renovation held a host of obstacles for Gonzalez-Pulido, the majority of which centered on the use of different materials to make the house feel transparent and free-flowing. Gonzalez-Pulido hoped to bring the feeling of new materials into the home without losing the past and Grunsfeld's original work. Much of the renovation was spent trying to find materials that were reflective without being shiny, from marble

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Clockwise from top left: Roche Bobois furniture makes the *gran salón* pop; a custom vanity and mirrored walls highlight the powder room; the kitchen boasts top-of-the-line Gaggenau appliances and vintage warming drawers; Ligne Roset furniture and works by artist Rhys Owens accent the projection room. Opposite page: The home's understated exterior is in stunning contrast to the visual delights inside.



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Clockwise from top: A table designed by Gonzalez-Pulido for the library makes for a minimalist desk with a view; the primary bedroom; the house is one with its sylvan surroundings; a vintage pingpong table serves as a dining table, watched over by Marcos Raya's work "The Spirit of War." Opposite page: The sculpture "Mono," by Mexican artist Emilio García Plascencia, adds visual interest between the living and dining areas.

and concrete to glass and Pirelli rubber. "To achieve those feelings of intimacy, comfort and easiness in the way we were creating finishes and selecting materials was a challenge," says Gonzalez-Pulido. "[Our goal was to keep] a simple palette and find a good balance between modern and vintage."

THE DETAILS The home sings with thoughtful touches, from the expertly curated furniture to the use of teak for cabinetry, closets and bars. "The closets are incredible," remarks Gonzalez-Pulido of the 99-inch-tall storage spaces original to the home. "They are all solid wood; the amount of storage space is unbelievable." According to the couple, much of what was in the house when they bought it felt very permanent, something they wanted to avoid, so they opted for modular furniture by Ligne Roset to provide versatility (the duo also worked with Gaggenau, Roche Bobois, Molteni and Minotti to furnish the abode). "It's so light and easy to move, you can reconfigure the room for bigger or smaller groups of people," says Gonzalez-Pulido. A fan

of abstract art, Gonzalez-Pulido has a minimalist collection that adds visual impact to the space with pieces from artists like Salvador Dalí, Marcos Raya and Carlos Mérida. "We have two of Mérida's pieces," notes Gonzalez-Pulido of the pair of blue and gray paintings that take pride of place in the entrance and complement the angularity of the home. "One represents the male spirit and the other one the female spirit, and I love them."

THE RESULTS With much time and consideration, the house turned out to be an even greater success than the design duo had hoped. "I love every single space—it's really remarkable," says Gonzalez-Pulido. With their second child newly welcomed into the beautiful home, all seems content in the Gonzalez-Pulido family. "How we connect with our environment and others," shares Gonzalez-Pulido, "how we welcome others, how we welcome light and the natural elements into a place makes it extraordinary—an extraordinary experience. And I wanted that for my son, for my children." ■

