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FIGHTING
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SERENITY AND ELEGANCE

These pages: the main volume of the cottage of Renee and Ken Metrick and their family at Lake Joseph, one of the famous Muskoka Lakes of Canada. The cottage consists of three individual yet connected pods. It was designed in close collaboration between the Metrick family and architect Kelly Buffey. Chairs, dining table, and coffee tables are by Elte. The rug is a 90 year old antique Persian Kilim.



Renee and Ken Metrick were used to working seven days a week in their retail business in the Canadian Town of Toronto. If not travelling they were at their home base. Never thinking they were cottage people. But when that bug hit, it was the beginning of a new life surrounded by serenity and nature at the border of Lake Joseph, Muskoka. They asked architect Kelly Buffey of Akb Architects to realize their dream cottage.

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Top left: the boat house and behind that the cottage of Renee and Ken Metrick at Lake Joseph, just north of the Canadian town of Toronto. Together with architect Kelley Buffey they designed their dream home in nature. Below: view from the boat house. Right-hand page: Renee Metrick.





One of the corridors between the pods with basalt stone floors with a flamed finish. The walls are wrapped in torrefied ash, which was baked to achieve a deep brown color. This wood was used throughout the entire cottage.

Right-hand page: detail of the main area with a painting by artist HB Metrick, as part of the 'social photos' collection, a series paying homage to the way people experience, capture and share everyday life. Charcoal, honey and gum Arabic on paper. The carved wooden candlesticks are by Elte.





Left: the master bathroom surrounded by nature and rocks with Waterworks faucets and shower, Gingers bathtub and sinks and custom vanities and mirrors. This page: the almost Japanese serene quality of the collage. A semi-charred cedar was used to clad the building to provide a unique rusticity.

Renee and Ken Metrick, made their names with Elte, the successful interior business from the Toronto started by Ken's grandfather in 1919. Furnishing and rugs are their specialty with an extension with Elte Mkt, an affordable luxury line and their bathroom and kitchen brand: Ginger's.

Their sons Andrew and Jamie have been working alongside their parents for year and have gradually taken over the business, so they could spend time out of the city.

Below: the three pods of the cottage, slightly skewed from each other, are careful nestled into the nature. Right: the master bedroom with a view on the naked rocks. The bed, the bed linens and the lounge chair are by Elte.

Visiting friends at their cottages was an eye-opener: it was like heaven and the beginning of a cottage adventure with no way back. They found a location at Muskoka's Lake Joseph, a two hours drive from the city where a whole new live started.

Renee and Ken: "We decide to built something where we not only could enjoy the trees, the lake and the nature, but also the serenity of the interior. We wanted a cottage that

would blend in into the environment but also a cozy home that makes you feel happy"

Renee: " We are now so hooked to this place, that we only go back to the city if we have to. We love it all year round enjoying the changing of the seasons."

Their objective: a home with contemporary clean lines, meticulous composed and with a woody feeling. One side should be facing the rocks, one side forest and on side should offer full view of the lake. The result was a refined, almost Japanese serene composition.

Architect Kelly Buffey came up with a plan consisting of three oblong volumes on one level interconnected with hallways of glass and wood under a specific angle.

The design process was a real collaboration between the Metrick family and Kelly Buffey. Renee and Ken had a strong

vision of their own and the architect interpreted their vision and elaborated on it through her architectural vision.

The design of the cottage was conceived as three individual yet connected pods. The main, middle Pod consists of the public areas where the family communes in the kitchen, dining and living spaces while the other two pods both house the private spaces. One pod was designed specifically for Renee and Ken with bedroom, bathroom and office space.

The other pod was designed with two bedrooms, 2 bathrooms and a lounge area for their adult sons, Jamie and Andrew. The concept of 3 separate pods allows the family the ability to retreat to their private quarters or engage with one another in a shared hub.

The cottage was carefully situated into the landscape with the master bedroom glass wall facing a stone ridge. The angle of each of the pods is slightly skewed from each other

to capture the longest views from the screened porch on the central pod and more private views from the others.

Each pod has a gabled roof with deep overhangs and exposed timber wood joists that run inside and out of the building. A semi-charred cedar was used to clad the building, providing a unique rusticity, contrasted by large expanses of glass openings and a refined standing seam metal roof.

The interior floors, walls and ceilings are wrapped in torrefied ash which was baked to achieve a deep brown color. The predominant use of this single material inside the cottage unifies the interior and conceptually defines a stereotomic volume that appears to have been intricately carved from the inside-out.

At the water they built a large boat house with two levels. On the water level there are the boat slips and the lounge areas and on the upper level were a small living and two bedrooms with bathroom created.





These pages: the lounge area of the upper floor of the boathouse overlooking Lake Joseph. On the floor a vintage, 70-80 years old Second Life Elte Rug, stripped of the original color and over-dyed grey to give it a 'second life'. Lounge chairs, sofa, coffee table and nickel side tables are by Elte.