

# Design is a sum of the parts

(AP) — It is the details, the small things, that turn a house into a home.

That's the view of New York City architects Peter Shelton and Lee Mindel, who see a house as a whole and not a series of rooms. It is the accumulated details that make the difference.

"You shouldn't go into a house and experience just one thing — a great ceiling, a great sofa or a great staircase," Mindel said. "We believe in an integrated environment."

Shelton, 43, and Mindel, 37, have developed some signature themes — a judicious use of luxurious materials, a painstaking and rewarding passion for detail and the surprise of subtle visual tricks.

"With us, one thing leads to another," Shelton said. "You want a new light switch? To do that, we have to take down the walls. But the walls

will leave a mark on the floor, so we will have to change the floor."

Mindel agreed, adding: "The idea of cutting and design process at a certain point seems foreign to us. An environment is always the sum of its parts, including lighting, furniture and decorative objects."

To open up a space, Shelton and Mindel may frame the view of another room with an interior window. They may add light and interest by designing floors with glass-brick areas.

A Shelton-Mindel rug with dark squares might mirror their design of a coffered ceiling above. Or a parquet floor in a dining room will echo the wood inlay of the table.

THE PAIR custom-design furnishings for specific projects, and they have created their own line of clean-

lined architectural furniture, as well as rugs and upholstered pieces.

Architecture remains their first love.

"Our clients run the gamut from 20-year-olds to 70-year-olds who are interested in exciting design," Mindel said.

Like other good architects, they keep foremost in mind the needs of the people who live in a house. Asked how much a client influences the design of a project, Mindel said:

"Entirely, but it is our best fantasy of them. When we are designing a space for someone, it's as if we were making a movie about him, and we cast the best possible actor in the role."

The architects like to bring the outdoors inside, maximizing natural light. A family living in a colonial house in Short Hills, N.J., asked for a

second, more casual living room. They also wanted a tower to give them a view of nearby cliffs.

The architects built a two-story tower with an airy tree-house feel. The space has three prominent windows to bring in light from all sides. Seen from the outside, the windows become architectural "picture frames," offering views of the interior.

The proposed site of another house meant the front would receive southern light while the back would be dark.

To bring light to the whole house, Shelton and Mindel made generous use of glass walls, with a steel-framed skylit corridor running the length of the house. For privacy they built freestanding redwood walls a few feet away from the house itself.

"Here," Mindel said, "the structure really is the ornament."

# Bob Vila returns courtesy of Sears

(AP) Sears, Roebuck and Co. plans to finance and syndicate a television show starring home repair expert Bob Vila, who was forced to leave his long-running program on the Public Broadcasting Service earlier this year.

Kathy Guefa, a spokeswoman for Sears, said Wednesday the new television show, tentatively named "Home Again with Bob Vila," will be co-sponsored by Sears and syndicated nationally.

Vila also has been signed as the exclusive spokesman for all Sears

home improvement products, Guefa said.

The new weekly half-hour show will feature do-it-yourself remodeling jobs the average consumer can afford. It's scheduled to air in the spring.

Vila was host of the Emmy Award-winning "This Old House" on PBS from its national debut in 1979 until early last spring, when his annual contract was not renewed.

Vila had been doing commercials for a competitor of a major local advertiser of the show, which is produced by WGBH-TV in Boston, said

Daphne Noyes, publicist for "This Old House."

"He had agreed to give up some of his commercial activities, if we could indemnify him for the loss of income," she said by telephone Monday. The station chose not to do so and decided not to renew his contract, she said.

The new show is not designed to be a competitor with "This Old House," said Vila's agent, Ron Feiner.

"It's going to be a show that's absolutely going to stand on its own," Feiner said.

GUCEFA SAID she believes it's the first time the retail giant has sponsored and syndicated a television show.

In the early days of commercial radio, though, Sears had its own station, which lives on in the call letters WLS (for "World's Largest Store").

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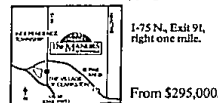
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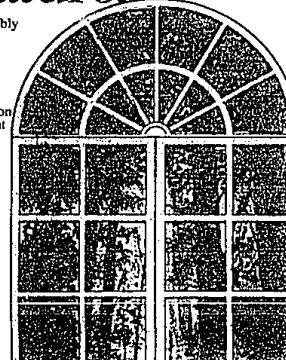
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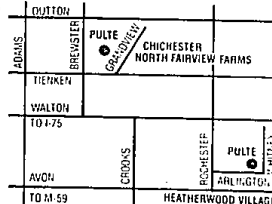
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