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MAINE HOME + DESIGN

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WOODLAND WONDER

A HOME THAT CHANGED THREE
CRAFTSPEOPLE AND THEIR
RELATIONSHIP WITH NATURE FOREVER

CAMP REVIVAL

RESPECTING THE PAST
FOR A BETTER FUTURE

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SUMMER COLOR

HOW TO USE LEAF
GREEN IN YOUR HOME

A photograph of a rustic cabin nestled in a dense forest at dusk. The cabin's interior lights are on, and a campfire burns brightly in a stone fire pit in the foreground. A blue tarp and a red plaid blanket are draped over a log in the foreground, with a white mug on a small table nearby. The scene is illuminated by the warm glow of the fire and the cabin, contrasting with the cool blue tones of the twilight sky.

CAPSTONE

A 15-year collaboration culminates in a gift from three
craftspeople to a special client

BY KATHERINE GAUDET // PHOTOGRAPHY BY SARAH SZWAJKOS



Nate Holyoke now owns one of Maine's larger high-end building companies, but he was a 21-year-old just starting out when he began working on a special piece of lakeside property. The owner was building a camp there, and the general contractor hired Holyoke to do carpentry. Will Winkelman and his then-partner, Rob Whitten, were the camp's architects, working with landscape architect Todd Richardson to make the most of a site strewn with dramatic ledges and boulders. For 15 years Holyoke, Richardson, and Winkelman continued to work with the owner, adding fanciful landscape elements and outbuildings, while their practices and businesses grew. That wasn't a coincidence. "He's very much a basis of my growth as a professional, my confidence as a professional," Winkelman, who now leads his own architecture firm, says of the client. "I learned so much from the trust that he placed in me."

From the beginning, the camp design was driven by the landscape. "It's a phenomenal piece of land, like a minia-

ture national park," says Richardson. The client wanted the camp to blend in with the landscape—not only by complementing its natural features but also by suggesting the story of a traditional Maine camp that has grown and changed with the years. From these directives emerged a building in three parts. To the left is a three-story "lodge" that might have been built a hundred years ago, with walls and roof covered in cedar shakes; it houses the public spaces and the owners' suite. To the right is what looks like a 1950s bunkhouse inspired by a kids' summer camp, with rooms for boys, girls, and adult guests. And in between, as if an afterthought, is a screened-in "link porch" that provides a lake view from the driveway—a priority for the owner. Just inside the French screened doors there's a long bench and a row of hooks. "It's truly the mudroom, where you walk in and drop everything. It's very informal, very 'camp,'" says Winkelman. The other side of the porch is a "more refined" space to sit and socialize over the view of lake and trees. "It's a magical space," adds Winkelman.

(Opening spread) A firepit nestled into the landscape provides a quiet retreat. In the background, the glass roof that tops the bark-on-log structure of the screen porch is visible.

The property (above) resembles a "miniature national park," according to landscape architect Todd Richardson. A firepit built below an impressive cliff (opposite, top) is accessible from the property by boat. On the lake side of the home, swimmers returning from the lake can walk right into the ground-floor shower area, below the sitting area of the screen porch (opposite, bottom).



While a sense of tradition was important to the project, it didn't get in the way of innovation. Shaded by forest and cliffs, the house was predictably dark. To bring daylight into the screened porch, Winkelman replaced the roof's planned cedar shakes with glass. "You can't call it a glass roof and you can't call it a skylight," he says. "You have this texture of the horizontal wood bands of skip sheeting, and it has a border of cedar shakes that frames the glass. The space just glows, even on the gloomiest day. You want to be in it." The home also puts traditional wood materials to unusual uses—including a wooden walk-in refrigerator and freezer (Winkelman calls it "a technical tour de force") and an automated entrance gate made from a log.

After the main building was completed, the camp continued to evolve. Holyoke, Richardson, and Winkelman collaborated with the client on projects

large and small—a suspension bridge to smooth the way to the "swim rock"; a network of trails, boardwalks, and bridges; a guest cabin; a cliffside firepit destination accessible only by boat; a hot tub that nestles into weathered boulders. "A lot of lip service is given to collaboration," says Richardson, "but some pretty incredible things came out of the team. We fed off each other's interests and ideas, had great respect for each other, and had overlapping skills and talents. The client really saw that and put the team in motion. He made sure we were connected, and we were given freedom and support to do something really special together."

For many years the client had dreamed about adding a pizza oven to an area the family used as an outdoor kitchen, but other projects and needs kept getting in the way. In 2019 Holyoke offered to build the oven as a gift, and Winkelman and Richardson quickly got on board. It was an unusually big and complex proj-

The entry side of the screened porch acts as a rustic mudroom (opposite, top); the side near the lake is meant for sitting, and is more refined. In the dining room (opposite, bottom), folding doors can be closed to scale down the space for smaller groups. Heart pine walls throughout the home bring in natural texture.

A dramatic fireplace built by Freshwater Masonry anchors the living room (above). Will Winkelman fabricated the chandelier from industrial pipe fittings patinaed with waxed rust. The fixture includes recessed downlights for reading, decorative lights for general illumination, and an uplight that makes the space glow in the evening.



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Architect Will Winkelman, builder Nate Holyoke, and landscape architect Todd Richardson collaborated to build a unique outdoor grill that merges into the rocky landscape (above). Towels hang from a boulder near the outdoor shower (opposite, top), around the corner from the hot tub. Nestled among “car-sized boulders,” the hot tub (opposite, bottom) was designed to look “as if you plucked one of them out of the ground and it happened to fill with water,” according to Richardson.



ect to offer—but this was an unusual client. “We were going to do this thing for this person who has been such a big part of forming the success of my business, my personal growth, my professional growth, my self-confidence,” recalls Winkelman.

The idea of a pizza oven gave way to a wood-fired grill, and the team decided to build around a mechanized model from Grillworks. They brought on “metals magician” Tim Greene of StandFast Works Forge and mason Mike Harkins to help figure out how to integrate the grill into the landscape. “We had to take something that was fixed, factory-built, and set it in something very fluid,” says Holyoke. The “fluid” element was, ironically, the rocky setting. Dominating the area was what the owner’s kids had named “frog rock.” Winkelman describes it as “huge and cool, with moss all over and trees growing on top. Above it is a cliff composed of

boulders that look like they are in the process of falling down. But the other side of the area was a little bit of a flat wasteland.” Winkelman found inspiration for the shape of the grill setting on a trip to Iceland, where he saw a rift formed by the pulling apart of tectonic plates. “That was my ‘aha’ moment,” he recalls. “I’ve got the frog rock, and I’ll create an opposing earth mass, as though it’s one side of the rift, creating tension or energy between the two.” A granite slab would provide a cap: “Just like the floating boulders, it’s irrational, but natural. It’s there!”

Holyoke had recently acquired an old granite quarry, so the team had access to weathered stones unearthed in the nineteenth century. Winkelman modeled his ideas in clay, and at the quarry the team spray-painted the design on the ground while they searched for the right slabs and boulders. After the stones were installed, the

To the left of the dining table is a unique wooden refrigerator and freezer (opposite, top) designed by Will Winkelman. This guest room (opposite, bottom) is on the attic level above the childrens’ bunks. It was a priority for the homeowner that the lake would be visible through the home from the car arrival (above).



team “buried the whole thing in landscape,” Winkelman says. “Todd Richardson did all the choreography of plantings and earthworks, so it feels like a little alcove found in the woods. You can imagine that an early settler found it and nurtured it into a little bit of a fireplace, all with found piles of stones.”

In 2021 the client and team celebrated the completion of the project with a ceremonial lighting of the grill—and the cooking of a rib eye steak. (“Delicious. Totally worth it,” says Holyoke.) The moment was bittersweet for all of them: the client’s life had shifted

to the west coast, and he had decided to sell the property. The gift of the fireplace became the final cadence of a 15-year collaboration, a unique conjunction of client, craftspeople, and place. “It’s one example of many,” Richardson says. “Each idea found its heart and soul in the property, guided by the client’s interests and needs. Everything connected back to reinforcing what is special about the place. It’s beautiful, and nature did that—but you don’t leave it there. You build upon it and connect to it. That’s the real project right there.” **MH+D**

The owner’s bedroom (opposite, top) has a unique configuration, with a headboard partition that floats in the room; washbasins are integrated into the side opposite the bed. A dock (opposite, bottom) invites voyages into the pond. The dressing area in the owner’s bedroom (above, left) is designed for casual but elegantly efficient clothes storage. The team built a suspension bridge over a boulder-strewn area to create a smooth path to the “swim rock” below (above, right).