

Maine Home

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MASTERS OF

Fresh work from 13 of Maine's visionary architects

by Rebecca Falzano



IN Maine, “architect” is a title hard earned and carefully used; in fact, the word is reserved under law for those who have passed the state’s seven-part licensing exam. While Maine is one of the few states that allows those with at least 11 years of professional experience alone to sit for the exam, the most typical path to becoming an architect is to graduate from an accredited program and then fulfill about three additional years of training under the guidance of a licensed architect, similar to a doctor doing a residency. Only after meeting these qualifications can one sit for the Architect Registration Exam (ARE), and only after passing that can one say he or she is an architect.

MH+D has had the privilege of covering Maine architecture

for nearly nine years now. It is no secret that architects here are doing cutting-edge work, creating designs reflective of, respectful of, and responsive to our one-of-a-kind climate, history, and environment. These architects know how to choose materials that will endure the spray of salt from the sea; to design for the weight of snow on roofs; to make walls that withstand heavy winds; and to account for limited sunlight in winter. They recognize the beauty in our historic farmhouses and shingle-style homes, and they see the future in public buildings that form a handshake with their surrounding communities. Some of these lessons they learned in school, of course, but many they learned working firsthand on projects like the ones on these pages—projects

ARCHITECTURE



that required innovative solutions, deep collaboration, willing clients, and above all, creative, conceptual thinking.

For Will Winkelman, architecture school began with abstract two- and three-dimensional studies and moved into conceptual design exercises that had nothing to do with buildings, per se, but everything to do with building the mental tools for critical thinking. Over time he learned to apply those skills to actual buildings. “For some in the program,” says Winkelman, “it was a frustrating time, as we were not yet working on anything tangibly architectural. But we were learning a scalable approach to design in general that could be applied not only to buildings but also to objects, urban environments, and so on. Those studies have proven

to be a great foundation.” Kevin Browne learned about New England history at architecture school in Pennsylvania, and how to design and build within that context. “Many of the homes that form our towns and villages have been standing and functioning for more than 100 years,” he says. “The goal of our work is not necessarily to recreate these historical structures, but to build on the design of the past with modern architecture to create a new, timeless vernacular that will help to form a style for the next 100 years.”

In this year’s Architecture Listing, we present to you a baker’s dozen—13 architecture firms who are quite literally designing Maine’s future.

A NET-POSITIVE PASSIVE HOUSE DESIGN





Falmouth-based TideSmart Global is an experiential marketing company committed to investing in the future of its employees, its community, and the sustainability of the natural environment. When it came time to replace a small residential structure on its campus, the company decided to walk the walk. They hired Briburn of Portland to design a new building that would meet the highest energy-efficiency standards and serve as an example for the building industry in Maine and beyond.

The result is a certified Passive House, the Viridescent Building, which generates twice the energy it consumes, making it net-positive. Briburn achieved this by dramatically reducing the building's energy demand and installing a 19.4-kilowatt solar array that occupies the entire roof and produces copious amounts of renewable energy. The extra electricity is used to power a vehicle-charging station and to offset power consumed by existing buildings on TideSmart's campus.

Founded on passive solar principles, the design orients the building and configures the fenestration to maximize solar heat gain in the winter and minimize it in the summer. It features a highly insulated and tightly sealed exterior thermal envelope consisting of vapor-open Larsen truss walls (20 inches thick and filled with dense-packed cellulose), a frost-protected slab (8 inches of polished concrete over 10 inches of expanded polystyrene insulation), European triple-pane tilt-turn windows, and detailed connections that are tenaciously sealed and thermally isolated from the exterior. It also features resource-efficient and highly durable materials, LED lighting, water-efficient fixtures, and an energy monitoring system.

Since the building is located in a commercial zone, it was also important that it be flexible enough to be used as an office as well as a residence. While TideSmart currently occupies it as an office, with a few small modifications, it could easily be transformed into a two-bedroom home.

ARCHITECT: BRIBURN

Builder: R&G Bilodeau Carpentry & Electrical
Photovoltaic System: ReVision Energy
Passive House Rater: Horizon Maine
Passive House Consultant: Edward Pais
Structural Engineer: L&L Structural Engineering
Landscape Architect: Cowles Studio
Interior Design Consultant: Birkbeck Design
Kitchen Consultant: Balance Design Studio
Photography: Corey Templeton