



This small dwelling provides its occupant with a retreat to call home for short stays, as well as an art studio in which to work in a quiet environment. The retreat, carefully nestled among tall trees, enjoys views that stretch from the tree crowns and dark mossy undergrowth to long vistas of the Pacific Ocean. The client's wishes for simplicity in program, gentle exterior appearance, small footprint, and abundant natural light set the guidelines for an open sculptural form. Great effort was put into minimizing the building's impact on the site, resulting in a long, yet slim, structure.

Rain Forest Retreat

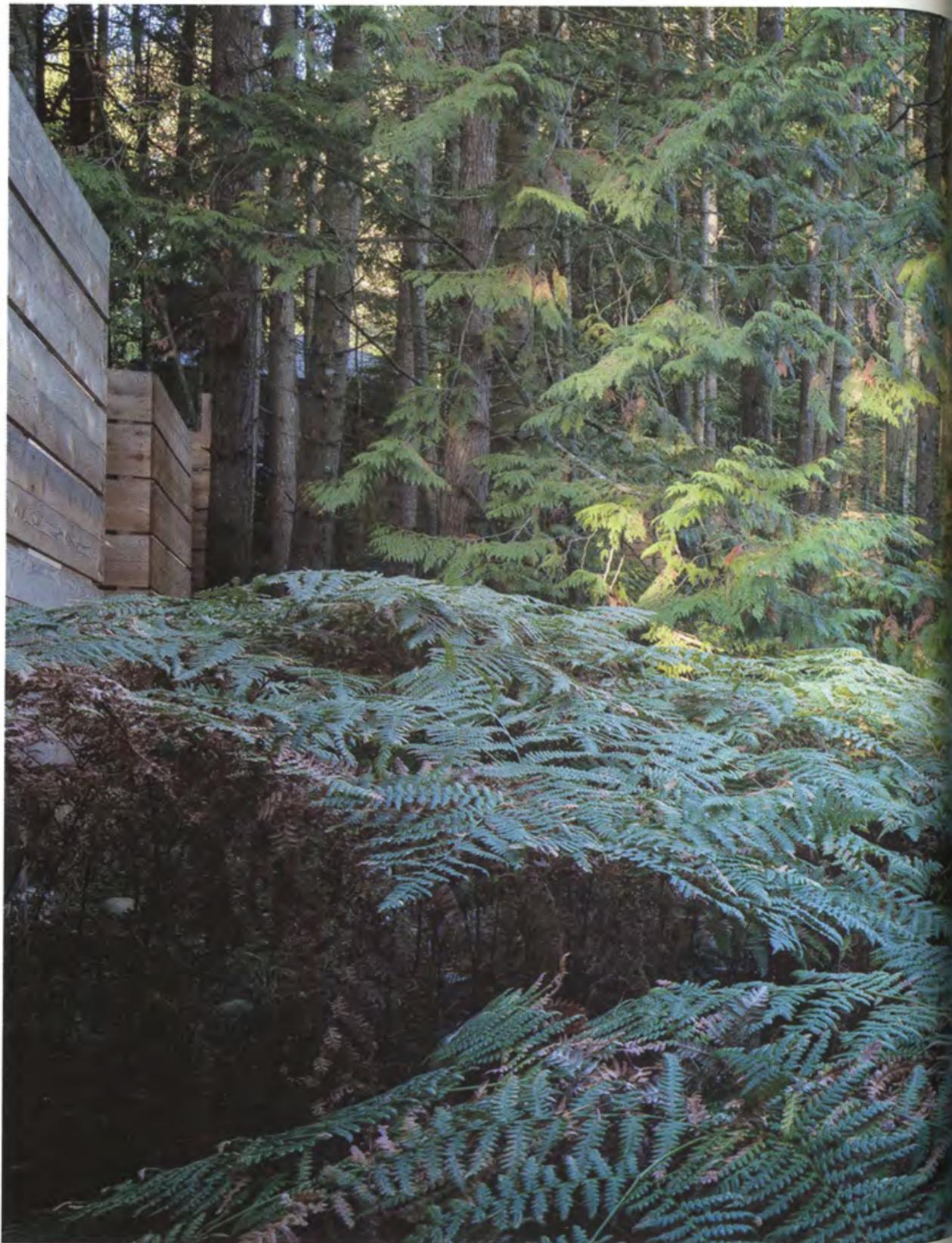
AGATHOM Co.

Vancouver Island,
British Columbia, Canada

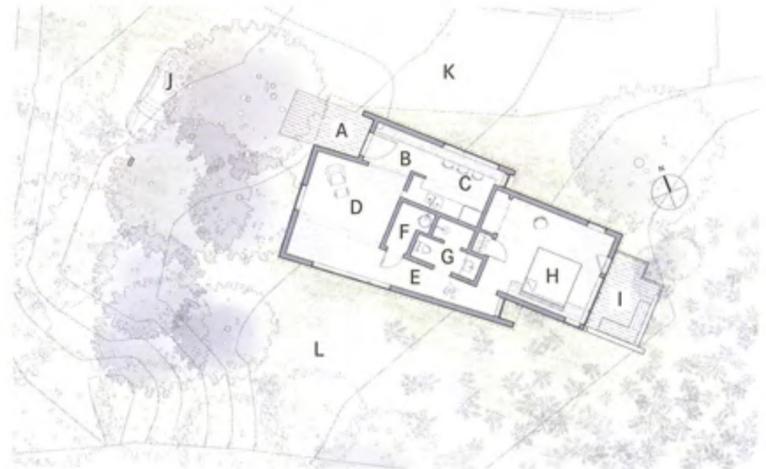
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Being set in the shade of the tall trees, all that was required for cooling were carefully chosen operable windows at low and high reaches, creating constant and natural fresh air movement.

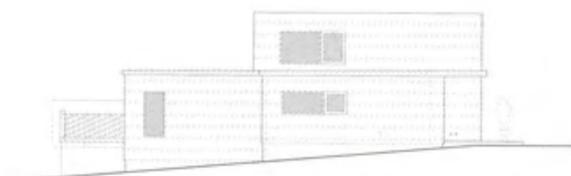


The main art studio is set against the poetic stand of slim but towering Douglas fir trees, framed by a 14-foot-high window. In contrast, a low, horizontal picture window celebrates the darkness and damp mosses of the forest floor. The juxtaposition of these views engages the fine detail of immediate foreground with the power of the larger rain forest setting.

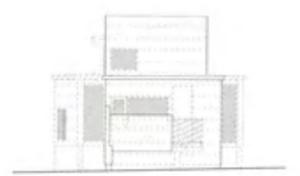


Floor plan

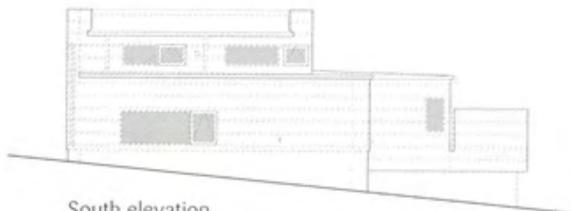
- A. Porch
- B. Entry
- C. Kitchen
- D. Art studio
- E. Passage
- F. Utility
- G. Bathroom
- H. Bedroom
- I. Deck
- J. Parking
- K. Driveway
- L. Woods



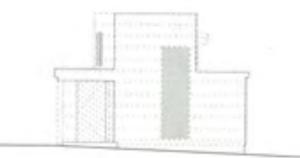
North elevation



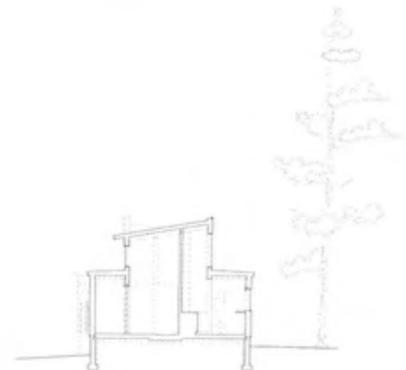
East elevation



South elevation



West elevation



Building section



By slightly twisting two main blocks of the plan, and overlapping these shapes, a building modest in area is ever expansive and full of unexpected depth. Spaces overlap and reveal themselves gradually as one moves through the house.

The use of local red cedar on the exterior and local Douglas fir in the interior reflects the traditional timber building style of the region. The lumber for the project was locally milled to project-specific sectional profiles that provide warmth, distinction, and high quality.

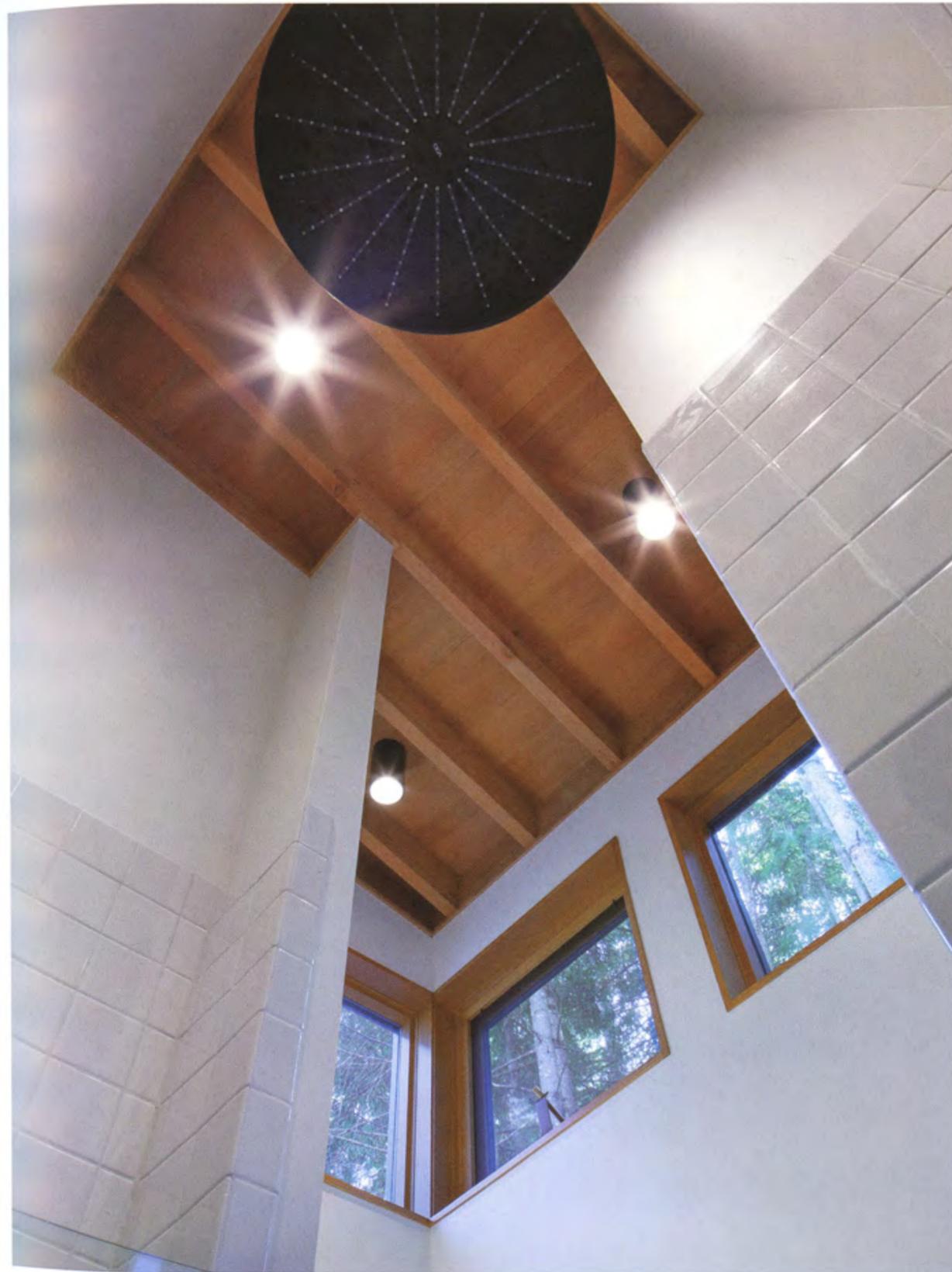




The structural roof members were carefully planned and exposed, an homage to the dwelling's natural environment. The millwork and windows were also crafted from local fir, completing a full set of ingredients sourced and prepared from within a short radius of the project.



Settling on the floor plan was an exercise in developing a program that demanded flexibility. This effort went hand in hand with the desire to create a peaceful creative retreat that embraced the natural sensory gifts of the site.



Carefully sited clerestory windows throughout the home's upper ceilings allow interior views to reach treetops, adding a great sense of expanse, unexpected canopy views, and dazzling light.