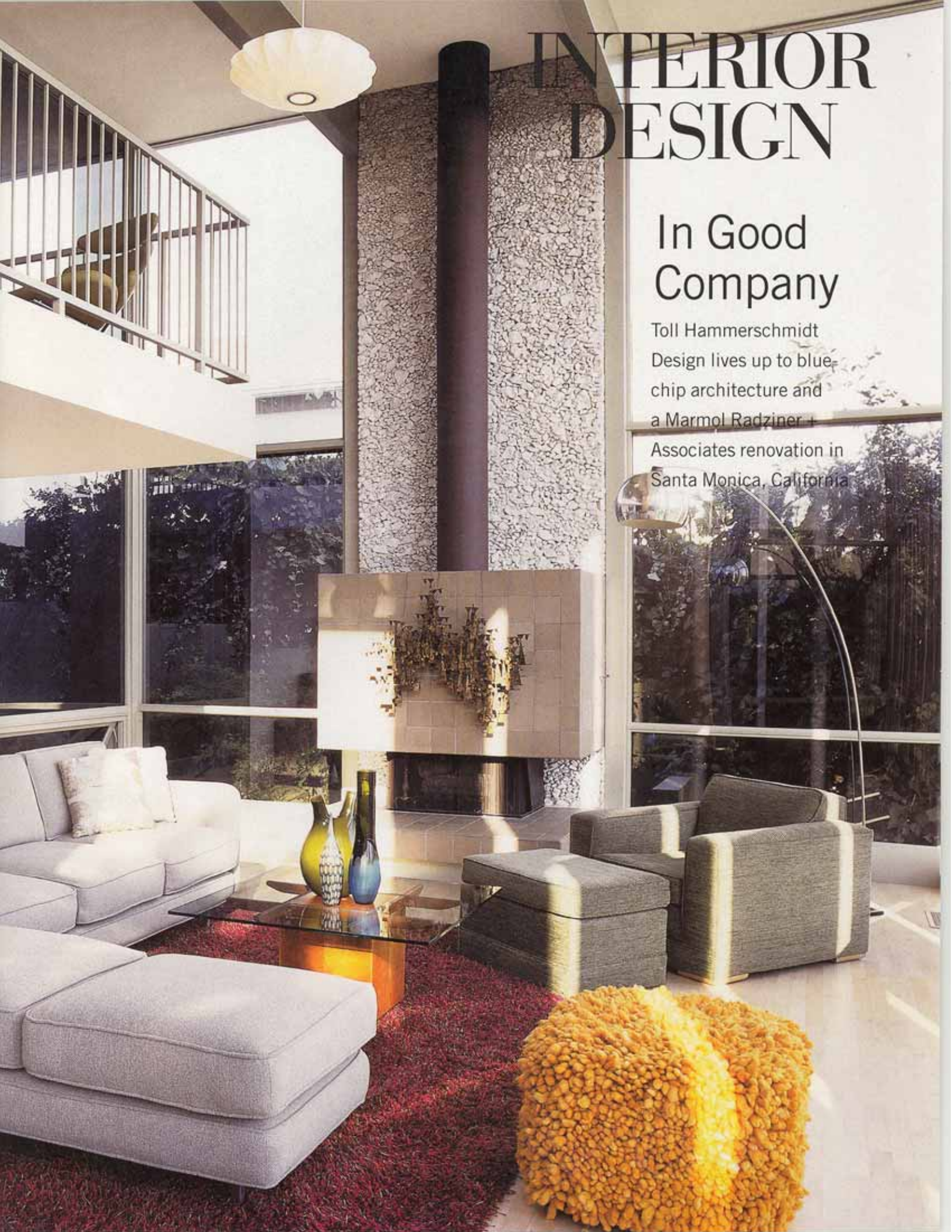


INTERIOR DESIGN

In Good Company

Toll Hammerschmidt
Design lives up to blue-
chip architecture and
a Marmol Radziner +

Associates renovation in
Santa Monica, California





"THE MORE THE merrier" doesn't usually pertain to design. But one hillside house in Santa Monica, California, unquestionably benefited when a cast of diverse characters joined forces. Commandeering building-related aspects were Leo Marmol and Ron Radziner of Marmol Radziner + Associates, known to devotees of California architecture through Costume National in Los Angeles, TBWA\Chiat\Day in San Francisco, and the renovation of Richard Neutra's Kaufmann house in Palm Springs. Rising stars Heidi Toll and Velvet Hammerschmidt of Toll Hammerschmidt Design took charge of furnishings. The client, Steve Glenn, participated actively as well. Educated at Brown University and Harvard University's Graduate School of Design, where he studied urban planning, he profited from the technology boom before branching out into real-estate development. At his house in Santa Monica, he put a lifelong passion for architecture to good use as the basis for property selection and subsequent renovation.

"We work in support of the architecture," declares Toll. Despite the recent founding of Toll and Hammerschmidt's studio and their relative youth—both are in their 30s—the partners have 22 years of experience in total. Toll's résumé begins at the top of the

residential heap, where a first job with Larry Totah had her working for Vidal Sassoon and Barry Levinson. After that, she headed Michael Graves's interiors department and worked for four years in association with Lauren Rottet. Hammerschmidt began her career in an equally rarefied atmosphere, with Eric Owen Moss Architects, then built on that experience at Gensler and HLW.

Toll and Hammerschmidt had each harbored dreams of a partnership practice, →

Previous spread: In the master bedroom of a 1963 house in Santa Monica, California, Marcel Wanders's Fish Net chair contemplates the Japanese garden. Toll Hammerschmidt Design and Marmol Radziner + Associates handled furnishings and architecture, respectively.

Left: A vintage acrylic light fixture hangs above the Hans Wegner dining table and chairs.

Below, left: Heidi Toll takes a seat in Poul M. Volther's Corona chair on the balcony, while Velvet Hammerschmidt commands the railing.

Below, right: Above Christophe Pillet's Sunset chair near the elevator hangs a Woods Davy artwork in the unusual medium of smoke on paper.

Opposite: Landscaping and a stone pathway span interior and exterior spaces. The stairs lead to the den-kitchen-dining level.

PHOTOGRAPHY: JOHN ELLIS



but neither had met the right match. A 1999 promotional trip, cosponsored by German manufacturer Wilkhahn and U.S. licensee Vecta, changed all that. In a move of design kismet, the two founded their firm almost instantaneously. Since then, Toll Hammerschmidt has completed offices for the Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles, and Internet-services companies Digital Boardwalk and Digital Planet in Santa Monica, among other projects.

The firm's 12th completed residence is Glenn's house. When buying, his criteria included view, proximity to retail, and that elusive trait of good design. He would have settled for two. He got all three in a 3,300-square-foot 1963 period piece built by architect John Chapman, a frequent collaborator with L.A. icon A. Quincy Jones. Glenn hired Marmol Radziner first; a year later, he met Toll and Hammerschmidt.

All players deferred to the existing structure. A modernist's dream, it features entry by elevator, a living area 16 1/2 feet high, and a central atrium that—with its massive ficus and stepping-stone pathway—reinforces the Southern California indoor-outdoor theme. Arrayed around this atrium, living area and master suite occupy the entry level; six steps lead up to an office and guest room; up

another six steps, a dramatic balcony configuration accommodates a den, kitchen, and dining area. Level changes confer a gentle, meandering quality to spatial progression.

The most significant of Marmol Radziner's initial architectural treatments was a new master bath. Occupying the footprint of the original, this sybarite's dream offers a sunken tub, a garden, and a graphic of azure, aqua, and brown tiles that allude to the elements. Other treatments, Radziner says, "warm the place up and make it more idiosyncratic." His firm installed cork and maple flooring and birch cabinetry, placed discreet color accents on walls and railings, and repaired the kitchen and dining area's birch-veneer millwork. Adding a full-height expanse of glass in the master bedroom transformed this once bleak part of the house into a light-filled space connected to a Japanese garden.

Kudos to the interior designers for bypassing furnishings that have become ubiquitous in houses of the same era. A more distinctive approach took form in several classically themed custom elements, plus selected statement pieces and art glass. Responding to the client's request for a coffee table to accommodate board games, books, and candles, Toll Hammerschmidt came up with a design in cherry and glass; glass and wood top →

Opposite top, from left: An original tile mounted on a wall poolside. A reprint of a 1941 Ansel Adams photograph above an existing console in the dining area.

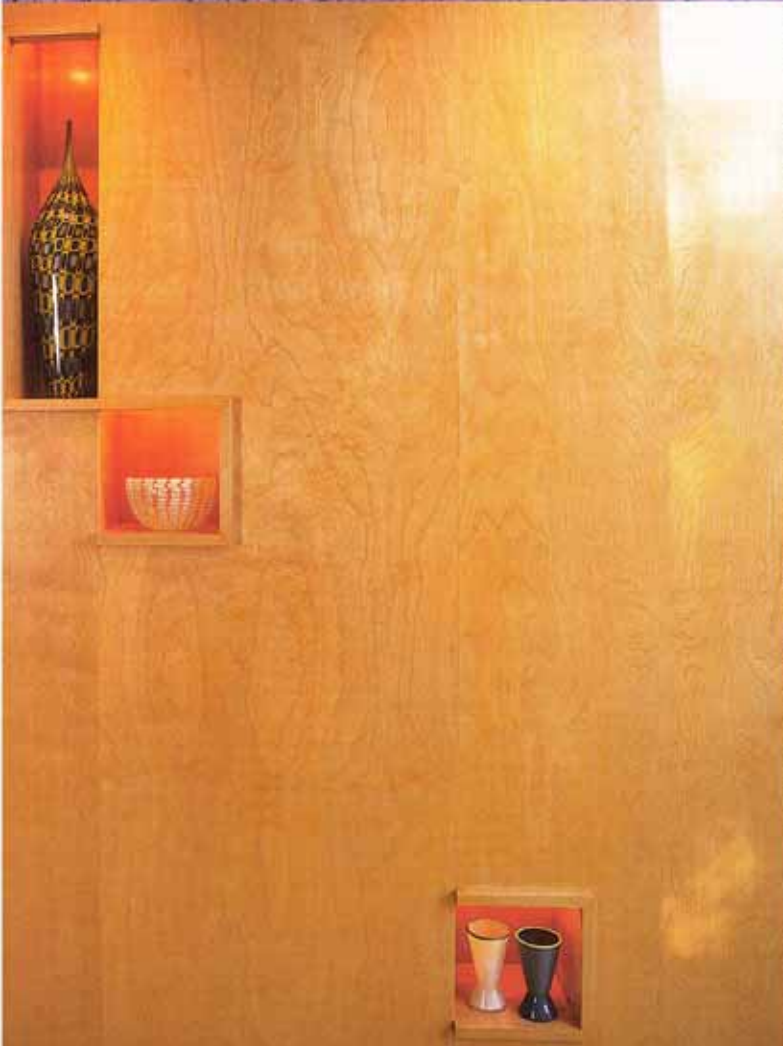
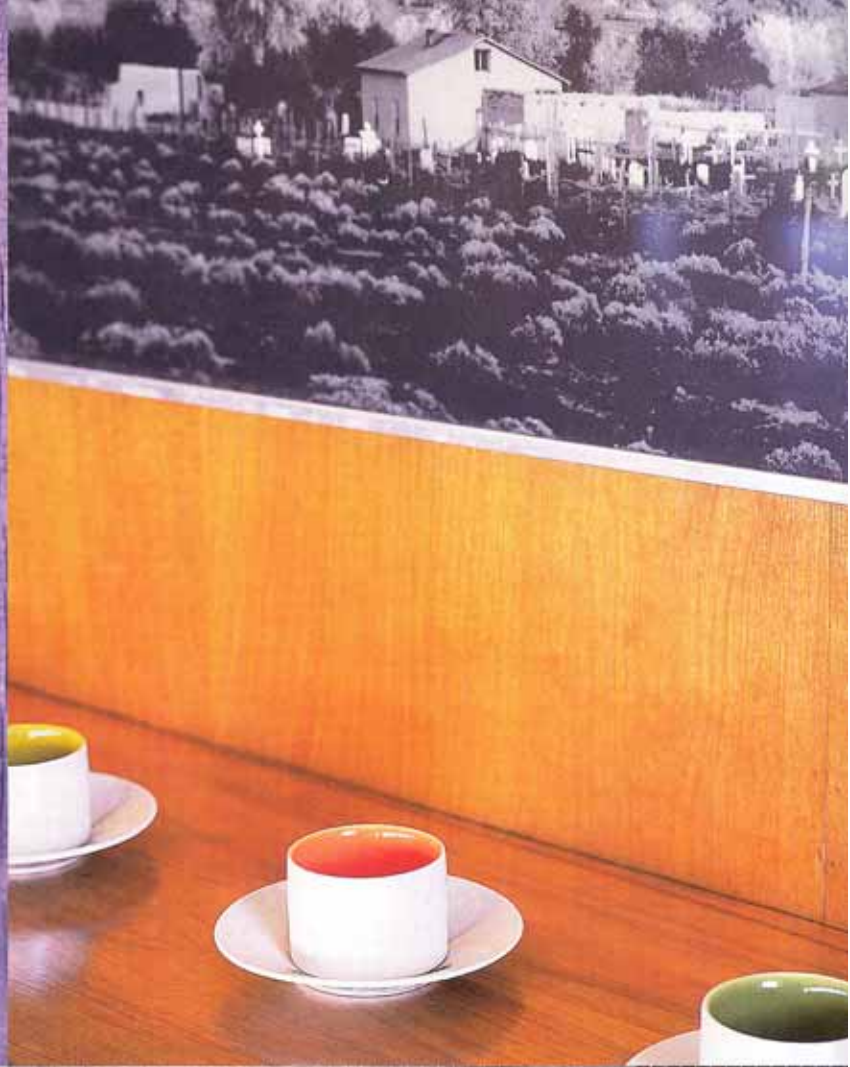
Opposite bottom, from left: Art glass by Bill Burch, Robin Mix, and Studio Paran fills wall niches near the entry. Tile colors in the master bath allude to the elements.

Below, left: Birch cabinetry and stainless-steel counters, all existing, define the open kitchen. The aluminum stools are by Pepe Cortés.

Below, right: Ching dynasty panels hang above a vintage bed unit. The vases are by David Garcia.







elements can be removed to fill the hollow center column with books, and a small tray fits into the space on top. For sound equipment in the living area, the designers built a cherry console of stacked components reminiscent of the Eames Storage Units of 1952. It's so in tune with the surroundings that a first sighting raises questions of vintage or contemporary provenance.

The teak bed unit and the Hans Wegner dining table and chairs are bona fide vintage. So are the dining area's light fixture, a composition of suspended acrylic icicles, and the master bedroom's lilac glass pendants. Bubble lamps in the living area are contemporary editions of George Nelson's 1952 design. Seating generally leans to the contemporary: Marcel Wanders's Fish Net chair in the master bedroom, the Corona chair by Poul M. Volther on the balcony, and the orange Sunset chair by Christophe Pillet in the elevator niche. Clearly of the moment, the living area's mottled orange shag rug is a bold infusion of color and texture. "There's fantastic light in the space. It needs to have something to bounce off of," Hammerschmidt says. She and her partner required no elaborate rationale for Ivan Baj's kooky looped-wool ottoman. It's just witty and fun.

—Edie Cohen

Below, left: Steve Glenn hired a contractor to retiling the pool and placed Harry Bertoia chairs on the terrace.

Below, right: The master bath's indoor greenery and proximity to outdoor gardens capture the Southern California spirit.

Cover: The 16 1/2-foot-high living area features a looped-wool ottoman by Ivan Baj, a custom sofa and cocktail table, and a vintage Paul Lazlo lounge chair and ottoman.

PROJECT MANAGERS (MARMOL RADZINER + ASSOCIATES): SARITA SINGH, BOBBY REES. PROJECT TEAM: ESTHER TSE; ERICA SANGSTER.

DRAPERY FABRIC (BEDROOM): MAHARAM. CARPET, WESTWOOD CARPETS. BED UNIT: THROUGH FUTURAMA. BEDDING: MATTED. CHAIRS (BEDROOM, ELEVATOR NICHE): CAPPELLINI THROUGH DIVA. TABLE, CHAIRS (DINING AREA): THROUGH WERTZ BROTHERS. CHAIR (BALCONY): ERIK JØRGENSEN THROUGH MODERN LIVING. SMOKE ON PAPER: CRAIG KRULL GALLERY. PENDANTS (LIVING AREA, ATRIUM): MODERNICA. CUSTOM SOFA, COCKTAIL TABLE (LIVING AREA): VILLAGE WOODCRAFTS. PILLOW FABRIC: ANZEA; DONGHIA FURNITURE/ TEXTILES. OTTOMAN: AVEC THROUGH MODERN LIVING. SHAG RUG (LIVING AREA), ESPRESSO CUPS (DINING AREA): THROUGH DIVA. ART GLASS (LIVING AREA, ENTRY, BATHROOM, BEDROOM): SALVIATI THROUGH DIVA; THROUGH FITZSU SOCIETY; THROUGH OK. SOFA FABRIC (LIVING AREA), STOOLS (KITCHEN): KNOLL. TILE (BATHROOM): BISAZZA NORTH AMERICA, REFRIGERATOR: SUB-ZERO FREEZER COMPANY, OVEN: MIELE, RANGE: THERMADOR, MICROWAVE: SHARP ELECTRONICS CORPORATION. FAUCET: HANSGRÖHE. SHOWER HEAD (BATHROOM): CONCINITY. SHOWER CONTROLS: DORNBRACHT. CHAIRS (TERRACE): KNOLL THROUGH JULES SELTZER ASSOCIATES. CHAISE LONGUES: RICHARD SCHULTZ THROUGH JULES SELTZER ASSOCIATES. LANDSCAPE ARCHITECT: STAMPS & STAMPS. POOL CONTRACTOR: JOHN CRYSTAL POOLS.

