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INTERIOR
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natural beauty



text: **ted loos**
photography: **matthew millman**

hawaii's new wave

Traditional meets contemporary at a Kona Coast compound by Walker Warner Architects and Philpotts Interiors



Given a truly spectacular oceanfront site on Hawaii's Big Island—set along an ancient footpath, atop a hardened lava flow, with views of sky, sun, and water for days—you would think that the design team could just lay back and chill. How could you screw it up? A hut would nearly suffice.

Turns out it took nearly three years to perfect a Kona Coast vacation home on just such a plot for a couple based in Portland, Oregon. The clients' wait was rewarded with spectacular results. Architecture and interior are ultramodern and yet rely heavily on traditional materials and touchstones. Old and new ebb and flow as easily as the tides right outside the home's copious sliding-glass doors.

Principal Greg Warner of Walker Warner Architects and Philpotts Interiors partner Marion Philpotts-Miller approached the project in a thoughtful and methodical manner. "We call it the 'Village,'" Warner says of the unusual arrangement, a grouping of four separate structures linked by a lush courtyard and a series of walkways and patios. Indeed, traditional Hawaiian villages, typically organized in loose clusters, inspired both the site plan and the daring architectural style, an angular composition of canted steel columns, steep-pitched roofs, and rhomboidal window and door openings. "The structures represent a contemporary interpretation of early *hale* shelters," Warner says. "They're like modernist lean-tos."

The clients wanted to use the compound to entertain friends and family. But they also desired privacy. So, Warner located the volumes housing the master suite and the main living areas on the site's ocean side. Set back deeper in the property are pods containing the two guest suites and communal relaxation areas. Bedrooms open onto concrete-walled private courts for additional seclusion. The parcel of land isn't huge—around 1½ acres—and the buildable area is much smaller; in total, interiors encompass approximately 4,800 square feet. But the arrangement (not to mention the sweeping views) makes the three-bedroom residence feel expansive.

The rugged rock walls of historic Mokuaikaua Church, located in nearby Kailua, inspired the primary building materials: lava rock and other stones mortared with lime putty. Warner and his former colleague, senior project manager David Shutt, also chose durable Western red cedar as the dominant wood—both for cladding and the roof shingles—since it resists heat, moisture, and insects. Inside, stained and lightly polished concrete flooring keeps things cool during the day.

As for the decor, Philpotts-Miller and her team were inspired by what she describes as the "adventurous nature" of the clients. Accordingly, "the use of color is very playful and dynamic," she says. In the rec room, for instance, custom surfboards are mounted on the wall like artworks.

Otherwise, the scheme is no-frills, simple, and airy, with a midcentury vibe that Philpotts-Miller explains was inspired by the work of Hawaiian modernist Vladimir Ossipoff. And the rooms aren't stuffed to the gills with furnishings. "Because the architecture is so thoughtfully put together and there's so much natural texture, we didn't need to load up the interiors," Philpotts-Miller continues. She is particularly proud of how the living room riffs on an abstract oil on canvas by Lee Kelly. "We really let ➤



Previous spread: The cedar-enclosed main living pod is one of four structures comprising a residential property on Hawaii's Kona Coast by Walker Warner Architects and Philpotts Interiors.

Opposite top: The master suite's study culminates in a sitting area with a Charles and Ray Eames lounge offering Maui views. **Opposite bottom:** The kitchen's island and table are topped in honed Cararra marble.

Bottom: A Lee Kelly oil on canvas animates the living room's assemblage of Christian Liaigre furnishings, including an oak lamp and sofa and wenge lounge chairs; the ceiling slats are bleached Douglas fir.





Opposite: The volume housing the master suite, with a custom bed by Philpotts Interiors, was built of traditional lava stone and lime putty; windows are framed in stained sapele mahogany.

Top left: A koi pond is the focal point of the courtyard between the main living and master suite pods. **Top right:** The master bedroom's bench is walnut. **Bottom:** Custom surfboards—one hand-painted, the other crafted of paulownia—hang above the rec room's Eero Saarinen table.

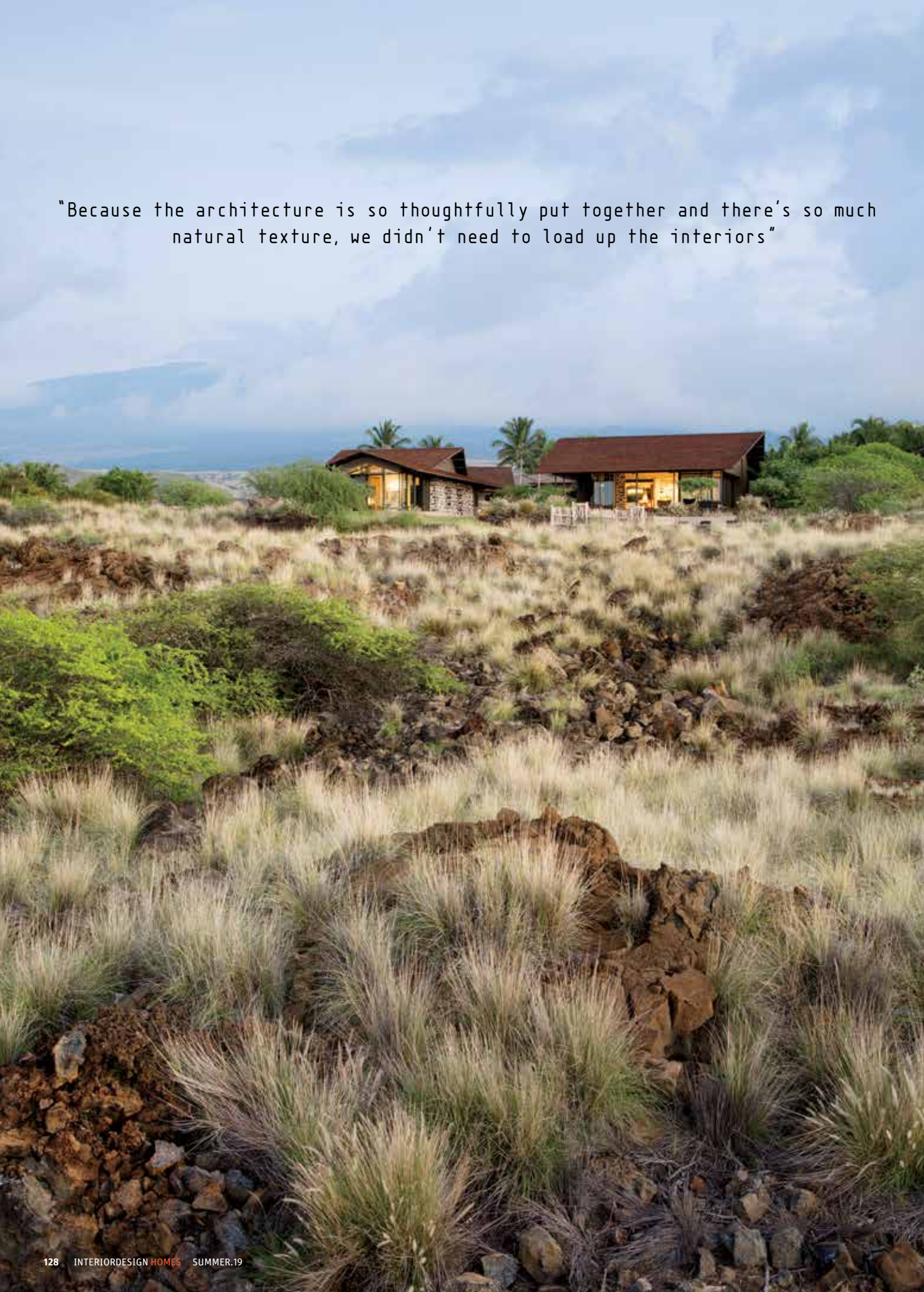


that piece define the palette," she says. Note the neutral-toned Christian Liaigre oak sofa and wenge lounge chairs, plus a custom wool-cotton rug in a funky orange hue. "All the furniture is in harmony and set up to celebrate the view," she summarizes.

The master bedroom is likewise grounded with earthy, timber-toned accents—whitewashed wood wall paneling, a walnut bench—and also lifted via a sky-blue rug and throw pillows. Philpotts-Miller and her team designed the project's biggest pieces, including the master suite's clean-lined bed with raffia and white-oak headboard, as well as the living room's cocktail table in butterfly-jointed Australian mahogany.

By design, there's very little barrier between indoors and out. Sapele-framed sliders glide open to the elements, and operable windows swivel to coax in the breeze and encourage cross ventilation. "The living room unfurls to become porchlike," Warner adds, noting the continuity of floor and ceiling materials between interiors and adjacent alfresco spaces. The degree of openness led Philpotts-Miller to favor "indestructible" solution-dyed acrylic upholstery for much of the casual furniture. ➤

"Because the architecture is so thoughtfully put together and there's so much natural texture, we didn't need to load up the interiors"



Opposite: The compound is surrounded by a field of lava and native grasses.

This page: Concrete walls and cedar slats enclose the custom cast-concrete tub standing in the courtyard off the master bathroom.

The home is built to rest gently in the landscape but also to last for generations. “We execute enduring architecture—in the sense of material quality but also livability,” Warner says. “We have high hopes for the legacy of this project.”

PROJECT TEAM
ROB CAMPODONICO, ANJA HÄMÄLÄINEN, BOYCE POSTMA, RINA WIEDENHOEFT: WALKER WARNER ARCHITECTS. **RON UYESUGI:** PHILPOTTS INTERIORS. **DAVID Y. TAMURA ASSOCIATES:** LANDSCAPING CONSULTANT. **LIGHTING & ENGINEERING INTEGRATED:** LIGHTING CONSULTANT. **HAYES STRUCTURAL DESIGN:** STRUCTURAL ENGINEER. **MARK MORRISON MECHANICAL ENGINEERING:** MEP. **KONA WAI ENGINEERING:** CIVIL ENGINEER. **ARC WOOD & TIMBERS; NA KALAI LA'AU WOODSHOP:** WOODWORK. **OAKES MANAGEMENT:** GENERAL CONTRACTOR.

PRODUCT SOURCES
PATIO KETTAL: DINING CHAIRS. **STUDY HERMAN MILLER THROUGH DESIGN WITHIN REACH:** CHAIR. **KITCHEN MCGUIRE:** TABLE, CHAIRS, STOOLS. **PERENNIALS:** CHAIR FABRIC. **FLEXFORM:** PENDANT FIXTURE. **LIVING ROOM CHRISTIAN LIAIGRE:** SOFA, LOUNGE CHAIRS, TABLE LAMP. **GLANT TEXTILES:** SOFA FABRIC. **RAOUL TEXTILES:**



SOFA PILLOW FABRIC, LOUNGE CHAIR BACK FABRIC. **POLTRONA FRAU:** ARMCHAIRS. **MIKE RILEY WOODWORKS:** CUSTOM COFFEE TABLE. **DE SOUSA HUGHES:** CUSTOM BENCH. **NOBILIS:** BENCH CUSHION FABRIC. **INDICH COLLECTION:** CUSTOM RUG. **MASTER BEDROOM KONA COAST UPHOLSTERY:** CUSTOM HEADBOARD PANEL. **PERENNIALS:** HEADBOARD FABRIC. **JIM THOMPSON:** BED THROW FABRIC, PILLOW FABRIC. **MADELINE WEINRIB:** RUG. **NIDO LIVING:** BENCH, SIDE TABLE. **THROUGH DESIGN WITHIN REACH:** SCONCE. **B&B ITALIA:** CHAIR. **VICTORIA MORRIS POTTERY:** CUSTOM LAMP. **REC ROOM KNOLL:** TABLE. **THROUGH DESIGN WITHIN REACH:** DINING CHAIRS. **DEDON:** ROCKING CHAIRS, OTTOMAN. **HESS SURFBOARDS:** CUSTOM SURFBOARDS. **CHILEWICH:** RUG. **NIDO LIVING:** SIDE TABLE. **BATHROOM CONCRETE WORKS:** TUB. **NIDO LIVING:** SIDE TABLE. **SONNEMAN—A WAY OF LIGHT:** SCONCES. **GUEST BEDROOM HERMAN MILLER:** BENCHES. **JIM THOMPSON:** PILLOW FABRIC. **DESIGN WITHIN REACH:** FLOOR LAMP, SCONCES. **GALBRAITH & PAUL:** PILLOW FABRIC. **ROSEMARY HALLGARTEN:** CUSTOM COVERS. **ANTHROPOLOGIE:** CHAIR. **TUCKER ROBBINS:** SIDE TABLE. **THROUGHOUT SUN VALLEY BRONZE:** DOOR HARDWARE. **BENJAMIN MOORE & CO.:** PAINT. **MAUI CUSTOM WOODWORKS:** CUSTOM BEDS.



Opposite top: The oceanfront property encompasses 1 ½ acres. **Opposite center:** Flooring in the master bathroom and throughout is polished, stained concrete. **Opposite bottom:** A niche in the master bedroom features a chair by Naoto Fukasawa. **Below:** The larger of the two guest suites, furnished with a white-oak headboard and a pair of George Nelson benches, opens onto a private courtyard.

