Space is a luxury in any location. Outdoor living areas, views and privacy are added bonus, particularly in crowded urban environments where windows look into other windows, sidewalks require alert navigational skills and being alone is more a state of mind than a reality.

For the U.S.-born, Japan-based Toppinos, finding a place near family in Aspen and in an environment rich with space to recreate and entertain was a high priority. Discovering a 5-acre lot with creek frontage in the upper Roaring Fork Valley was a stroke of luck and one that promised a startling and refreshing alternative to their daily lives in dense and dynamic Tokyo.

Once they had purchased the lot, located in the community of Woody Creek, Stephanie and J-P Toppino hired Rich Carr, principal of Basalt-based CCY Architects, to design a home that would comfortably accommodate the needs of their three growing children and allow for hosting friends and family. When Carr began the process, one element in particular stood out. “Being able to incorporate the creek made this a very unique project,” he relates. “The Toppinos really wanted to take advantage of the site, fully engaging in the privacy and intimacy afforded by the creek’s proximity.”

The property includes approximately 450 feet of Woody Creek frontage as well as a significant section of flat area on a bluff above. The location of the 5,500-square-foot house may seem counterintuitive at first, but it spoke to the homeowners’ desire for a secluded refuge. “We made the decision not to build the house on the upper bluff, where obviously there is more sun and numerous views,” says Carr. “The existing cottonwood bosque and the assemblage of the creek became central features to this private and intimate space, which is almost treehouse-like.”

The second-nature ability to build close to the creek was made possible because of a previous house that was subsequently removed. “Current code requires a hundred-foot setback from the creek,” says project architect Simon Elliot. “Because there was an existing house and vested rights that were secured at purchase, we were able to build to within 20 feet of the creek’s high-water line.” The new house follows, almost to a T, the footprint of the original home. A 50-foot swimming pool, since rebuilt, and a deck that cantilevers out over the creek were an additional bonus, particularly because neither could be replicated today, thanks to the revised zoning regulations. For the family, however, this outdoor environment was almost mandatory, especially considering the tight quarters of their neighborhood in Tokyo. “We live in a very busy and crowded city most of the year,” says Stephanie. “We wanted to feel enveloped by the trees in a way that allows us to connect with nature. I think we definitely succeeded.”

The family, which includes two boys and a girl, is very sporty. “We enjoy the home [during] our summer and winter holidays,” says Stephanie. “We spend our time inside in the winter, with occasional runs out to the pool and hot tub. In the summer, we practically live in the pool, and we ride our bikes on the [nearby] Rio Grande Trail.” She adds, “For the kids, the fields and even the driveway are places to run and play, and numerous views,” says Carr. “The existing cottonwood bosque and the assemblage of the creek became central features to this private and intimate space, which is almost treehouse-like.”

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Carr and his team recognized the desire for a house that engages the land but also employs an appropriate balance of adult entertainment space with playful and unexpected architectural features customized for the whole family. “For them, having an eclectic, multitiered space really works,” he says. “It’s a hybrid design of the more typical big, open living area. It’s still open but has intimate cubbies for specific use.”

Stephanie agrees: “We had a general feeling of how we wanted the house to live, and we really wanted to incorporate some elements from our life in Japan into the overall design. Building a home with a modernist aesthetic was intimidating, but from the beginning, we were enthralled with the idea of living under a floating roof with endless glass.”

“What we ended up with is a home that is designed well and expresses distinct architectural elements that reflect the various cultures in which we live.”

To enter the home, completed in 2013, guests must park their vehicles on the upper bluff and cross a bridge to the front door. A frameless glass railing, used on both the bridge and the decks, creates an immediate sense of intimacy with the surrounding environment and reinforces the dynamic playfulness found throughout the home. The bridge also draws immediate attention to the home’s signature folded roof plane, which appears to hang effortlessly in the shadow of a deep canopy of cottonwood trees.

“This unique roof system felt a bit like origami to us,” says Carr, “and it seemed like a fun and appropriate way to incorporate their life in Japan.”

More importantly, the folded plane emphasizes the site’s intimacy while also elevating sections that introduce light and capture carefully curated glimpses of the sky and surrounding ridgetops—concepts that are otherwise hard to bring to fruition on a site that sits so low in the river bottom.

The two-story home mimics the creek, literally cascading from the living room—a glass-enclosed, perch located at the house’s highest...
点——到家庭房间，它与现有地面相接，形成草坪级。公共空间，所有位于上层，都统一了动态天花板形式。同时，舒适的对比与较大的手势存在，以形成用餐、烹饪和生活的私密空间。

在下层，所有四间卧室都位于溪流侧，以获得最大化的暴露。"室内/室外生活是工作的一部分，"Carr说。"即使是二楼的客厅，也感觉像是在地面上。露台延伸到树梢，你真的感觉像是在小溪边。"

洛杉矶地区的室内设计师Luis Ortega与Toppinos紧密合作，将他们收藏的亚洲古董融入了线性、现代的线。他使用颜色和纹理，非常适合于符合环境的家，而家具则是舒适而优雅的，以反映Toppinos的跨文化生活方式。Ortega说，"家的色彩和织物直接来自于你通过窗户看到的环境色彩。家的亚洲件和艺术品被用作点缀，而总体效果就是一种现代的室内，带有东方的影响。"另外，J-P和Stephanie还要求特定的特性，包括共享的共用浴室和Toto厕所，都是在美国比较不常见的，但在日本是常见的。

Toppinos很快就感谢了他们的设计团队和承包商，因为他们的时间和精力，创造出了一个远离家的家庭。Elliot表示，"在解决日本和科罗拉多州之间时区差异方面，我们进行了很多深夜的电话会议，但合作非常顺利，我们都玩得很开心。"这些深夜值得了。Stephanie说，"我们第一次待在房子里时，树叶是秋天的全盛期，房子就像外面的一切一样，是完美地延伸和反映了外面的一切。正是我们一直希望能实现的。"

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**DESIGN DETAILS**

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**LIGHTING DESIGN**

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