

FINANCIAL TIMES

# super interiors

OCTOBER 20 2018

how to spend it  
interiors edition





The sculptural outline of Caring Wood resembles that of oast houses but expressed in a contemporary manner



From top: Caring Wood – designed by Macdonald Wright Architects and Rural Office for Architecture – puts a twist on traditional Kentish forms. The surrounding Catskill Mountains inspired the irregular peaks of Corpus Studio’s cabin in New York state. The roof of Blee Halligan’s Five Acre Barn in Suffolk follows a zigzag pattern



revival. The roof becomes the house itself, lending a delightful purity to the genre. In New Zealand, architect Chris Tate is fascinated with A-frames and decided to build his own version on Waiheke Island as a holiday retreat. Another key source of inspiration was a camping trip, where the simple shape of his tent got him thinking. “The roof line is the complete skin of the building, so it becomes wall, roof and envelope,” says Tate of his resulting Tent House (pictured on third page). “We used a black metal cladding, which accentuates the pure white interior, and the roof also collects our water for household use. It is so crazy and fun to be in and completely different from our 110-year-old everyday home. The children love it.”

In Canada, YH2 Architecture has created another variant of the A-frame with its country cabin in Québec for a landscape designer. Known as La Colomnière, or “The Dovecote”, the house (pictured on previous page) is a reinvention of a forest hut that previously sat on the site. Architect and client were intent on using the same footprint to preserve the natural surroundings, and so built upwards and topped it with an A-frame roof featuring an elevated hexagonal-shaped deck indented within the side of the building. It serves as a treetop eyrie, looking out into the woodland. “It’s more difficult to design a roof like this than a flat one, but it does have a great effect,” says architect Marie-Claude Hamelin. “The house is really a refuge in the forest reminiscent of a bird box.”

The roof has become a place of high ambition – and there is a growing interest in creating expressive designs for all kinds of buildings. Thomas Heatherwick’s pair of sinuous kissing roofs hovering over his conversion of the Coal Drops Yard building (pictured on third page) in King’s Cross, which opens next week as a retail complex, is a beautiful example. “The roof has been an underappreciated component of modern architecture,” Yantrasast concludes. “I have always loved roof forms that are a key architectural element of a building.” ♦

#### ON TOP FORM

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