

PIONEER WOMAN

ARCHITECT **JAYA KADER'S** THOUGHTFUL AND SUSTAINABLE DESIGN APPROACH AIMS TO PUSH MIAMI MODERNISM INTO A NEW ERA.

BY JEAN NAYAR

After leaving her native Costa Rica to study art and architectural history at Brandeis University, and later earn her master's in architecture from Harvard, architect Jaya Kader launched her design career under the tutelage of contemporary masters Robert A.M. Stern, Moshe Safdie, and Graham Gund. More than a decade ago, Kader moved to Miami and started her own firm, KZ Architecture; she's been making her mark in commercial and residential design in South Florida ever since.

Sustainable principles are key to her approach. "I attribute it to my Costa Rican roots, where the context and the climate afforded a constant connection with natural light and the outdoors," says Kader. Here, the architect talks about a groundbreaking two-story house she designed in a 1950s modernist enclave in Bay Harbor Islands... >

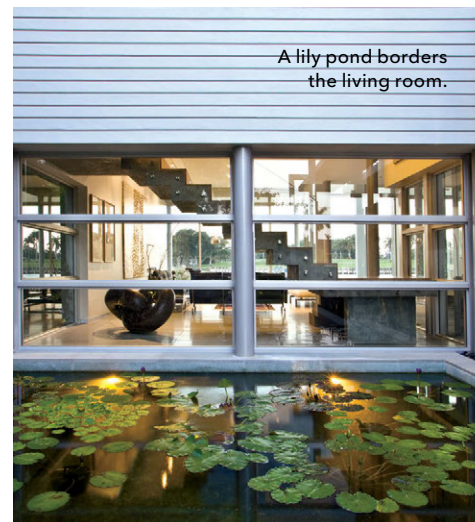




In response to the long and narrow waterfront site, the house is composed of two parallel volumes separated by a circulation spine, which begins outside as an entry loggia, continues inside as a gallery, and leads to the pool deck and dock.

“THIS HOME CELEBRATES THE EXTRAORDINARY BEAUTY OF THE SOUTH FLORIDA WATER LANDSCAPE.”

—JAYA KADER



A lily pond borders the living room.

What was your inspiration and concept for the house?

The modernist roots of the town of Bay Harbor Islands offered great food for thought. This residence also afforded the opportunity to work with a landscape that was not only familiar but also dear to my heart, as it is located just 200 feet from my personal residence. To call it paradise would be an understatement, as it celebrates the extraordinary beauty of the South Florida water landscape at its best. The concept of indoor/outdoor living is keenly celebrated throughout the house. The living room, flanked by water with the lily pond and the pool, offers the desired spatial expansiveness from street to waterway. The visual continuity experienced while indoors is punctured by the sculptural stair and enveloped by the greenery, water, and light of the outdoors.

What are some of the eco-friendly attributes of the house?

The green strategies included a rainwater-harvesting cistern for irrigation, solar hot water, the use of local and natural nontoxic materials, and daylight harvesting with



The bathrooms are a direct result of the minimalist approach, says Kader.



The owners' collection of vintage and Midcentury Modern furnishings is on display in the living room.

tubular skylighting. Sustainable design is important in *every* context. The built environment is the major contributor of greenhouse-gas emissions, and hence it affords us the opportunity to be an essential solution to the climate crisis.

How does the house relate to Miami's modernist context?

This home is a sequel to the Florida Regional Modern movement that developed in the '50s. Back then, it was through the engagement and enhancement of the context that the early modernist homes achieved the relevant timelessness that continues to inspire and guide us in current practices. It is from midcentury masters, who built before the advent of air-conditioning, that we learned ways to celebrate the potential of the South Florida indoor/outdoor lifestyle as well as the strategies of natural ventilation, building orientation, canopies, balconies, and porches. Moreover, the spatial freedom of the midcentury homes not only reflected an aesthetic value but also the optimist mindset in postwar America, with the vision of a freer and brighter future. Regional Modernism and sustainability, if implemented genuinely, have the potential to guide us towards a more conscious and responsible way of building the future for our developing city. *KZ Architecture, 7580 NE Fourth Ct., Ste. 116, Miami, 305-865-9911; kzarchitecture.com* ■



Architecture and interior design were integrated to yield a cohesive design throughout. The ceilings enhance the spatial qualities, and the staircase provided an opportunity for a sculptural gesture.



The residence was a pioneer for sustainable construction in Florida; it was the first house in Dade County to achieve Silver LEED certification as well as Gold certification from the Florida Green Building Coalition in 2009.