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CANADA

DECORATION

WOOD:
Warm,
wonderful
and...local!

COTTAGES:
MORE STYLE,
BEAUTY AND
COMFORT,
YES,
BUT STILL
EVER SO
HUMBLE



ECO-INSPIRED
HAVENS
OF PEACE



Architect Maxime Frappier, founder of ACDF Architecture, in the living room in front of the apple tree that inspired the design of his family's country home.

La Maison du Pommier at sunset. Irregular concrete slabs, reminiscent of Japanese steps, are used to access the garden and the surrounding forest. A firepit and hot tub out on the covered terrace allow the family to enjoy outdoor living while still staying connected to indoor activities.



Covetable Cubes

Architect **MAXIME FRAPPIER** has rooted his family life in the forests of Lanaudière, Quebec, in a glass house with clean lines. Conceived around an apple tree, the design brings its inhabitants closer to the abundance and fragility of nature.

Text and styling by Muriel Françoise — Adapted by Zarya Rubin — Photographs by Sylvie Li (pages 58, 60–63 and 65–67) and Adrien Williams (pages 59, 64 and 67)

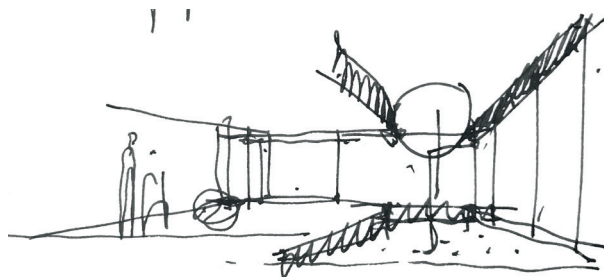


Once you enter architect Maxime Frappier's country home, your gaze begins to wander. Brightness cascades among a series of lines formed by the surrounding fir trees, welcoming visitors with a play of shadows and light. Standing in an inner glass courtyard, a young apple tree reveals its slender silhouette. The tree is at the heart of this passion project nurtured by the founder of the Montreal architecture firm ACDF. Inspired by his memories of growing up in Quebec's Montérégie region, he infused his vision with the sweet nostalgia of picking apples in lush orchards. In 2019, a 250,000-square-foot lot came up for sale, a stone's throw from his in-laws, in Saint-Donat-de-Montcalm, where he often vacations with his family, prompting the decision to begin a new chapter. The U-shaped single-storey construction, much like a farm, revolves around the apple tree, the heart and soul of the structure. "This fruit tree, which is quite delicate, is fascinating to be around in all four seasons. We take care of it as we would a human being. This intimate relationship with a tree allows us to see the surrounding natural world in a different light," says Frappier.

Three wood boxes (one for the garage and the living room, another for the bedrooms and the bathroom shared by

Upon crossing the threshold, a series of visual impressions of the landscape and the apple tree, housed in an inner courtyard, surprise the visitor. A covered terrace at the back joins the living room to the master suite. The use of slightly amber-tinted glass brings a warm glow, particularly at the end of the day. In the living room, a rotating, suspended Gyrofocus fireplace created in 1968 by Dominique Imbert (focus-fireplaces.com) helps to lend definition to the open space.

A sketch by architect Maxime Frappier of the living room and the inner courtyard that surrounds the apple tree





his two sons, aged 13 and 17, and a final one for the master suite) define the premises. They meet the need for communal living as well as privacy, thanks to alternating open spaces and other more intimate ones. The transparency of a large part of the exterior shell of the building contributes to a recipe for successful shared living space between adults and teenagers. "When you leave a room, you can see who's in the next one. Unconsciously, your mind prepares itself to greet someone. You're ready to have a positive interaction," observes the architect. Floor-to-ceiling windows in slightly amber-tinted glass in the common rooms also allow the house to blend in more seamlessly with the landscape and let sunlight scatter freely throughout.

To shape the flow of family life, the architect has created contrasting effects by juxtaposing light and dark hues. The piano is housed in a white alcove surrounded by black-tinted wood. And the kitchen, at the entrance to the living room, is also swathed in black. The room emerges from these consciously created, clever uses of *chiaroscuro*, inviting calm and rejuvenation. Secondary spaces are suggested through furnishings and lighting in a subtle *trompe-l'oeil*. Like the →




Halfway between the entrance and the hallway leading to the bedrooms, an alcove has been fitted out to accommodate an Essex piano, designed by Steinway & Sons (essexpianos.com). Iittala glass carafe from the 1960s with Floramama flowers (floramama.ca). The statue at the end of the hall was acquired on a family trip to Asia.

In addition to creating a feeling of comfort and warmth, the ceiling, made of bleached pine slats spaced half an inch apart, allowed for the installation of acoustic wool panelling masked by black fabric as well as lighting that prevents unsightly flickering after dark in this large, glass-encased room. On the polished concrete floor, Must wicker mats and wood baskets designed by ACD and manufactured by Acier Nordfab (nordfab.ca).




“Like an artist does with his paintings, I created a series of visuals to accentuate the emotions evoked by nature.”

— Maxime Frappier



Floor-to-ceiling Alumilex (alumilex.com) windows in the living room allow the family to stay connected with the surrounding natural world at all times. Cove sofas with simple lines by Must (mustsociete.com) accented by Salvador khaki Gabrielle Paris cushions (coeurdartichaut.ca) blend in with the decor. Cyclone glass side tables by Must let light pass freely through the space. A stone sculpture by Christine Noël and a ceramic vase by young Montreal artist Charlyn Reyes (charlynreyes.com) seem to float in mid-air in this minimalist setting. Kokushuu sake set in earthenware by Kumagai and Hasami walnut tray (ecoledepensee.com).

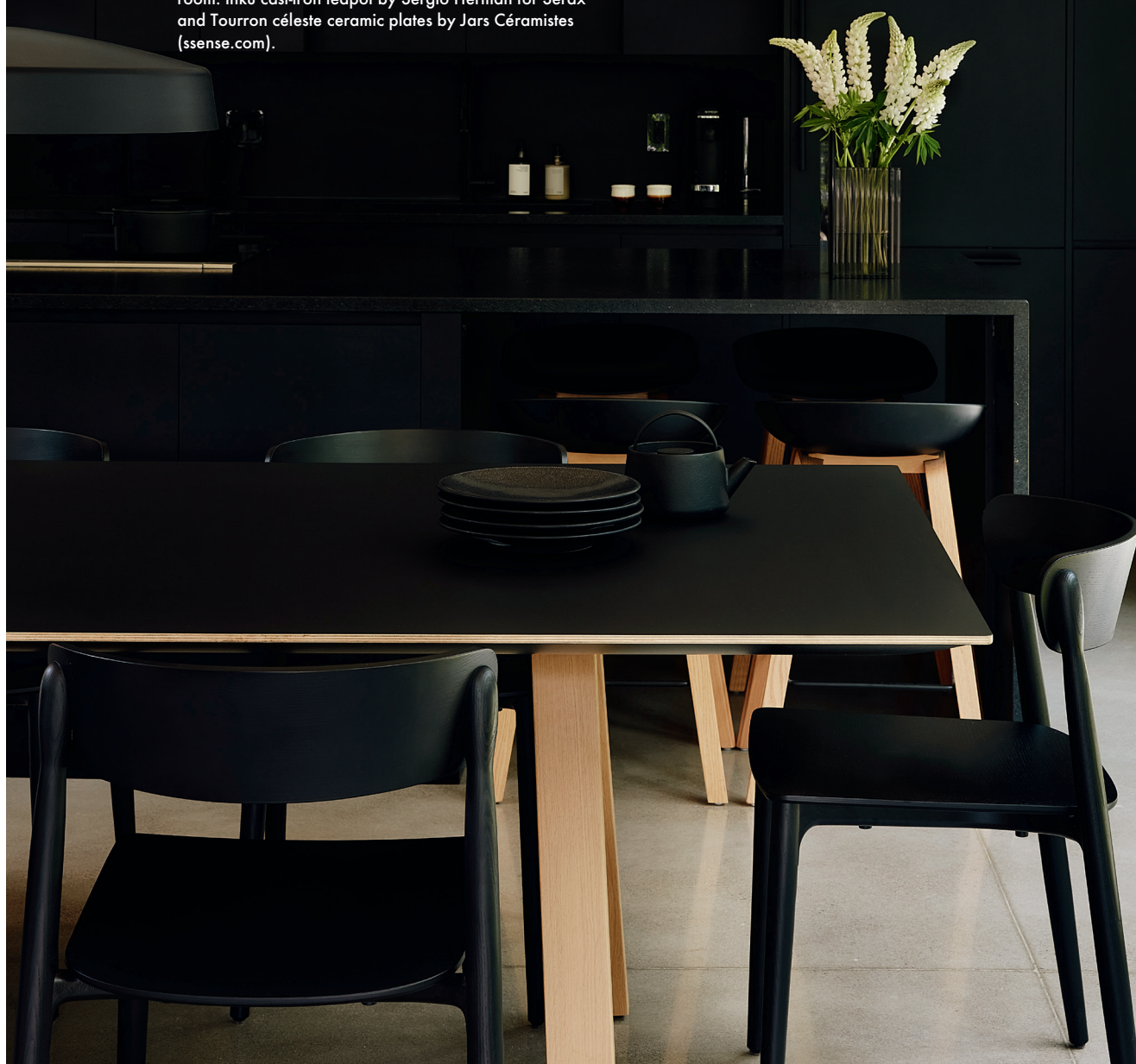


“This architectural excursion connects us to one another.”

— Maxime Frappier

The kitchen, with black Fenix laminate cabinets and a black Cambrian granite countertop with an antique finish, forms an elegant corner that stands out from the rest of the large common living area. Inku cast-iron saucepan by Sergio Herman for Serax and AYT M Flos taupe glass vase (ssense.com), with Floramama flowers (floramama.ca). Frama soap and hand cream (ecoledepensee.com). A Stool 32 bar stools, Nüspace (nuspace.ca).

The Arki table and black Tivoli chairs by Pedrali (pedrali.com) create a secondary space in the living room. Inku cast-iron teapot by Sergio Herman for Serax and Tourron céleste ceramic plates by Jars Céramistes (ssense.com).

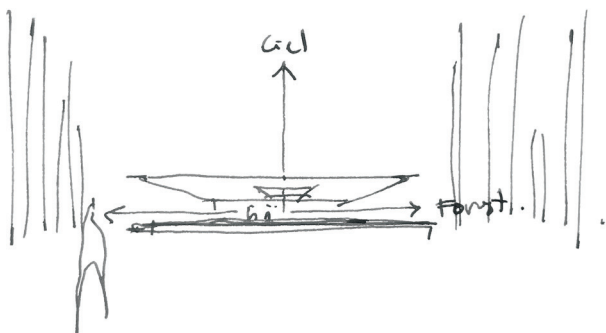






Opposite page — Like everywhere else in the house, the master bedroom plays with contrast; here we see a wall partly in bleached pine juxtaposed with black paint. Cliff wall lamp in aluminum and brass by Lambert & Fils (lambertetfils.com). Side table by Charles and Ray Eames, from Herman Miller (eq3.com/ca), and Japanese ceramic pebble vases (ecoledepensee.com). Libeco wool and linen throw (coeurdartichaut.ca).

Above — In the spacious entrance to architect Maxime Frappier's country home, the Alban concrete chair, by Quebec designer Etienne Hotte in collaboration with AterlierB (atelierb.ca), alongside a wood basket designed by ACDf, built by Acier Nordfab (nordfab.ca)



long dining-room table with its black surface that sits below a lacquered aluminum light fixture in the same tone.

In this vast space swept by light, where the rays emphasize the relief of a material in one area and the shadow of foliage in another, the design remains low-profile so as not to distract the eye from the horizon. "It's a place that's conducive to a fairly minimalist design aesthetic, creating harmony based on the landscape that you can see wherever you are thanks to the glass walls," notes Frappier. "We aimed for neutrality. We wanted anything we added to accentuate certain tones or highlight the decor without creating visual complexity," he continues. In this same spirit, a grey punched up with pastel shades was chosen for the convivial living room, blending seamlessly with the polished concrete floor. The only exception to the ambient minimalism is in the living room, where a Gyro-focus fireplace by Dominique Imbert features organic shapes suspended in mid-air. Maxime lights a fire there every morning. "These choreographed gestures, almost ceremonial in nature, are a ritual that contributes to the serenity of the place," he says. — (acdf.ca)