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MAINE HOME + DESIGN

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2024 AIA MAINE DESIGN AWARDS

19 WINNING PROJECTS SHOWCASING INNOVATIVE AND INSPIRING ARCHITECTURE

NET-ZERO NEST:

AN ARCHITECT'S DREAM HOME ON WESTPORT ISLAND

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INSIDE A LODGE-INSPIRED SEBAGO LAKE RETREAT

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2024 AIA Maine Design Awards

As Maine's definitive design authority, *MH+D* is thrilled to showcase the winners of the state's prestigious Design Awards distributed by the Maine chapter of the American Institute of Architects (AIA Maine). The awards, which recognize the incredible talents of Maine-based architects and firms for projects completed both here and away, serve as a fundamental record of the evolution of contemporary architecture in the state. "The design work that Maine architects have submitted this year continues the trend of excellence in our awards program," said Paul Lewandowski, founder of Paul Designs Project and chair of the awards committee. "Each year, we see more work that is thoughtfully conceived and espouses sustainability, energy efficiency, and water conservation."

For the 2024 program, AIA Maine received 46 submissions from 31 applicants in the categories of commercial, single-family residential, renovations and adaptive reuse, and small projects with budgets under $350,000. In the past, the awards committee has selected a jury of peers from Iceland, Montreal, and Wyoming to review the entries; this year's jury hailed from Connecticut. "We work very hard to keep the sanctity of the jury pure and allow our jurors to select the best of the best," says Lewandowski. "They decide on the number of award recipients; we don't have a formula for them to determine the number of winners." The total of 19 winning projects grace the following pages, though all entries in the Design Awards program are displayed at the recognition reception. "This helps us to achieve our goal of celebrating design in Maine; even if a project isn't awarded, it is on display for all to see," adds Lewandowski.

AIA Maine introduced the Architrave Award this year to recognize excellence in traditional design. "In our mission to showcase all of the excellent design work happening in Maine, we felt the addition of a traditional design award would celebrate design even further," Lewandowski explains. A separate jury was selected to review the Architrave entries and select winners based on the thoughtful adaptation of tradition to address twenty-first-century needs.

The "unbuilt" category, which is the only area that extends to both professional architects and students from Maine (as well as those studying architecture in the state), offers an opportunity to recognize projects that were fully conceived but never constructed. "There is so much excellent work that is on the drawing boards of Maine architects that never gets to see the light of day," says Lewandowski, adding that the student work coming from the architecture program at the University of Maine in Augusta "is an indicator that Maine will have some very strong 'homegrown' architects soon."

MH+D is honored to present the winners of the 2024 AIA Maine Design Awards.



PHOTO: JEFF ROBERTS

Winners at a Glance

Honor Awards

The Paula Crane Lunder House, Jane Powers House, Carol Swann-Daniels House & Jacqueline Núñez House

50 Exchange

A House in Three Parts

The Overlook

Juniper I

Lowell Makerspace

Merit Awards

USM Portland Commons Residence Hall & McGoldrick Center for Career & Student Success

West End Apartments

Sweatt-Winter Child Care and Early Education Center

Pine Cove

Somes Sound House

Harbor Residence

Bridging the Gap

Citation Awards

Husson University College of Business

Gable Archipelago

Studio 84

Spring Street

YMCA Summer Camp

Architrave Award

Little Hen House



The Overlook, Kingfield

Whitten Architects

Honor Award for Excellence in Architecture

Principal Architect: Russ Tyson, AIA
Associate Architect: Tom Lane, AIA
Project Designer: Drew Bortles
Landscape Architect: Soren deNiord Design Studio
Interior Designer: Heidi Lachapelle Interiors
Structural Engineer: Albert Putnam Associates
General Contractor & Millwork: Sebastian Tooker Construction
Photographer: Trent Bell

From the Jury:
The simplicity and clarity of this project is commendable. The materials feel "of the place" and have an experiential quality that is richly residential. There's a sophistication to the detailing on the inside and outside.

From the Architect:
This family-oriented Carrabassett Valley retreat balances a desire for sweeping mountain views with the need for protection from harsh mountain winters as well as privacy from the surrounding popular trail system. Its gabled form echoes traditional alpine shelters, while deeply set openings offer valley views and direct access to the landscape.

Prospect and refuge were guiding principles—balancing protection from and connection with nature. The single elongated structure captures sunlight throughout the day. The large gable efficiently sheds snow away from entrances, offering immediate protection.

Collaboration and adaptability empowered the skilled local builder and craftspeople to create a robust home with a high level of finish that reflects the owner's vision. Local eastern white cedar shingles, a standing-seam roof, and sustainable western red cedar siding withstand harsh conditions and echo New England traditions. The board-formed concrete base roots the structure to the site. The traditionally clad envelope, featuring a rainscreen system, continuous insulation, and remarkable airtightness, was informed by building science experts to ensure comfort and longevity.

Interiors are zoned by activity. The porte cochere offers refuge during loading, buffering the transition from harsh weather to shelter under the gable. Large sliding doors block wintery gusts and open wide for summer breezes. The gear room organizes the makings of myriad outdoor activities. The sauna offers a retreat for relaxation and self-care. Upstairs, bedrooms and living areas frame curated views from within the shelter, while views from the loft extend perpendicular to the peak across the valley.

The architecture narrates the story of the landscape and region. The central staircase, crafted from local reclaimed elm, branches out to strategically divide public and private spaces. Stone extracted from the site to form the foundation sets the tone for the entire home—from hearth to countertops and fabric schemes.





Little Hen House, Harpswell

Whitten Architects

The Architrave Award for Excellence in Traditional Design

Principal Architect: Rob Whitten, AIA
Project Designer: Alyssa Moseman
Structural Engineer: Albert Putnam Associates
Landscape Designer: Tide Walk Designs
Landscape Installation: North Road
Millwork & Furniture: Derek Preble
Masonry: Bullock Stonework
Timber Frame: Seth Gallant
Photovoltaic System & EV Charging: ReVision Energy
General Contractor: Emerald Builders
Photographer: Trent Bell

From the Jury:
Traditional architecture needs to embrace the materials and detailing of the past, but it must also employ historic design principles such as proportion and speak to the history of a place by exploring the architectural vernacular. Little Hen House does all three, creating a timeless beauty characteristic of traditional architecture and making it the clear winner of AIA Maine's first Architrave Award.

From the Architect:
The design team worked in close collaboration to fulfill the owner's vision to revitalize the site of a dilapidated island cottage off the coast of Harpswell, including protecting and retaining native blueberries and fruit trees. The result is a collection of energy efficient, finely detailed, and crafted vernacular buildings for living, gathering, and connecting with the local island community.

The owner wanted an efficient home for her active retirement, alongside a barn/community-hub/gallery for island artifacts. Embracing the local vernacular, she sought a blend of careful craftsmanship and timeless design with distinctive details.

The house came first, to anchor the owner's new full-time island life. Historically, cottages began as modest gable forms. Porches were added, then gradually infilled to meet evolving needs. We aimed to capture that aesthetic without the expense of time. We also reduced the footprint by 20 percent and pulled the building away from rising tides.

The covered entry porch leads through a carefully configured mudroom to reveal an open-plan kitchen/living area with panoramic water views for entertaining. Wider door clearances and pocket doors enhance the maneuverability at ground level, ensuring the owner can age in place. Collaborating with a local artisan, we curated built-in storage to consolidate a lifetime's collection of books, media, and memories. Upstairs, the bedroom and stairs offer sweeping water views, with a private bath and dressing room tucked into the eaves.

The client's vision extended beyond the completion of the home. A traditional, heavy timber-frame barn provides an office and garage and serves as a gathering space with a kitchen to host community barn suppers. Working closely with the town to obtain historical photos, maps, and stories of the island's rich history, the owner dubbed the loft space the "Little Hen Island Historical Society." MH+D