



# Sleeping Beauty

Deep in the forest on Mount Rainier, a small pavilion gently connects with its lush site

photography by Art Grice

text by Vanessa Kogevinas

Seattle architect Philip Beck designed a two-bedroom sleeping pavilion in a forest clearing adjoining Washington's Mount Rainier National Park.

A FEW YEARS OUT OF SCHOOL, I decided to build a pavilion up near Mount Rainier as a kind of experimental design and construction project with two of my classmates," says Philip Beck. Beck earned his master's degree in architecture at Harvard Design School, and before opening his own firm in Seattle last year, he worked with Cottle Graybeal Yaw and Harry Teague Architects in Colorado, and with Olson Sundberg Kundig Allen and Finne Architects in Seattle. He also spent a year living and working in Nepal. The sleeping pavilion, located on a five-acre plot adjoining Mount Rainier National Park in Washington, was intended to provide additional space for a one-bedroom log cabin built in the 1930s and purchased by Beck's family in 1969. Beck and his classmates, Frank Dill and J. Cordell Steinmetz, wanted to "create a separate structure in a different little ecosystem than the cabin," says Beck.

"We spent a lot of time walking the site and identifying experiential qualities of the place, and we let the design take advantage of that," explains Beck. "We didn't want to disrupt the vegetation, and so the



whole thing is raised up off the earth." Inside, there are two bedrooms—one looks west toward a fern-filled clearing and an alder forest beyond, and the other looks east toward moss-covered vine maples and a darker forest, which effectively screen off the log cabin.

Because there is no road access to the site, materials had to be carried in by hand. The team settled on a polycarbonate material for the translucent panels of the east-facing bedroom. "It provides some insulation, and it's nice to look through it and see all the green outside turn a little blurry," says Beck. "It also contrasts with the clear glass in the west-facing bedroom." Cedar was used for the siding and trim, and cedar posts harvested from the site anchor the walls; the window frames are fir, and the ceiling is pine.

"The environment of the Northwest, the lushness and the soft quality of the light, led us to a more transparent design and transparent materials," notes Beck. "The Northwest is still a close-to-nature sort of place," he adds. "This pavilion is very respectful of its natural setting." ↗

"We found spectacular natural features on the site, like a moss-covered vine maple that you walk through to get to the structure," notes Beck. Clear glass and semi-translucent polycarbonate were used to maximize views. Cedar siding, fir window framing, pine interiors and fiberboard flooring were carried to the site by hand.