

GLUCK+ Screens a Modern Great Camp

[Architecture](#), [East](#), [Envelope](#)
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[Anna Bergren Miller](#).



The two main buildings at GLUCK+'s Lakeside Retreat feature sliding wooden screens over massive glass curtain walls. (Courtesy GLUCK+)

Custom sliding wood shades maximize privacy and views in Adirondack Mountains retreat.

Architect-led design build firm [GLUCK+](#) designed the [Lakeside Retreat](#) in the Adirondack Mountains on an historic blueprint: the Great Camps, sprawling summer compounds built by vacationing families during the second half of the nineteenth century. "The clients wanted to hold events there, and to make a place where their kids—who were in college at the time—would want to spend time," said project manager Kathy Chang. "They wanted to create different ways of occupying the space." GLUCK+ carved the hilly wooded site into a series of semi-subterranean buildings, of

which the two principal structures are the family house and the recreation building. These buildings are, in turn, distinguished by massive lake-facing [glass](#) facades, camouflaged by [wooden](#) screens designed to maximize both privacy and views.



GLUCK+ carved the buildings out of the hillside between road and lake. (Paul Warchol)

The project, explained Chang, “was really about sculpting in and out of the landscape, manipulating the ground plane.” By using the existing site as a primary element of construction, the GLUCK+ team was able to accomplish two things. First, “it gave us a new level area for the clients to hang out outside,” said Chang. “It provided a new way to occupy the site, because before there was no flat ground.” Second, they were able to manipulate the program so that the mechanical spaces were tucked into the underground portions of the houses, making way for a transparent facade along the lakeside. “The fact that so much of the program is buried allowed us to build the glass facade, despite the energy requirements,” said Chang.

The custom [curtain wall](#) is in fact quite simple, said Chang. “What made it custom was sizes and the ability to integrate the screen support: we have various slope conditions, and at the highest point the pieces are really very heavy.” GLUCK+ installed [Siegenia](#) lift and slide hardware to insure easy operation of even the largest [sliding glass doors](#). “The client was really intrigued with the idea of open sleeping porches,” said Chang. “They wanted to be able to open up the house and have the breeze come through.”



The screens are arranged in two layers to maximize both privacy and views, and to break up reflections on the glass. (Paul Warchol)

The [screen system](#) was partly a response to concerns expressed by the local environmental commission. “The commission was very nervous about having a tall glass building facing the lake,” recalled Chang. “We set the buildings back from the lake, in the trees. In addition, part of the idea of the screen was to break down reflections from the glass so that it wouldn’t be so apparent from the lake.” The wood shades are arranged in two layers, both attached at the top to the underside of the roof slab. Stainless steel outriggers placed in the window system between the first and second stories provide an additional point of attachment for the screens above and below. To reduce the gravity load, the outriggers are supported by cables attached to the roof slab.

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- **Facade Manufacturer**
Sanxin Facade Technology Limited (curtain wall, sliding doors), Rio Welding (screen frames), Northern Hardwoods (wood louvers), Precise Painting and Wall Covering,

Each screen comprises thermally modified poplar slats from [Cambia Wood](#) affixed to a [Cor-ten](#) frame with horizontal steel elements for additional strength. “We calculated that there’s almost four miles of wood, so we really spent a lot of time looking at different options, at different ways to price it and build it,” said Chang. “We looked at doing this in mahogany or other woods typical for outside use, but both the weight and expense were prohibitive.” GLUCK+ performed analyses to determine which rooms would require more or less privacy, or open spaces at sitting or standing levels for views. Many of the screens are designed to slide from side to side. In addition, some individual slats can be rotated to enhance privacy. On the top level of the buildings, the (fixed) inner layer of screening doubles as a balcony guardrail.

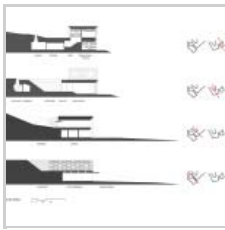
GLUCK+ used the same poplar on the buildings’ other exterior walls, some of which are occupied underneath, others serving as filler. “We used the same wood in a more solid condition to try to tie those walls in with the screen, and with the solid earth,” said Chang. “It’s really hard to tell where the building stops and the landscape begins.”

Because one building was ahead of the other during construction, Chang and her colleagues had the opportunity to compare the uncovered curtain wall with its shaded neighbor. “The unscreened building just looked naked and cold,” she said. “It didn’t have this life to it.” The clients, reluctant at first to embrace the screens, agreed. “In the beginning of

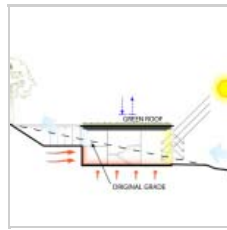
the process, the clients were a little worried about losing the view,” recalled Chang. “We needed iterations of the mockups to convince them: no, it’s actually adding to it. It ended up being one of their favorite parts of the whole project.”

Inc. (wood louvers)

- **Architects**
GLUCK+
- **Facade Installer**
Architectural Glass and Mirror (curtain wall, sliding doors), V & H Construction (screens)
- **Location**
Adirondack Mountains, NY
- **Date of Completion**
2010
- **System**
custom glass curtain wall with sliding glass doors, custom sliding wood screens on Cor-ten frames
- **Products**
custom sliding doors, custom fixed glass, Siegenia sliding door hardware, custom milled



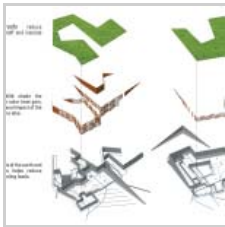
Both the family house and the recreation building feature two-story glass curtain walls and wood screens. (Courtesy GLUCK+)



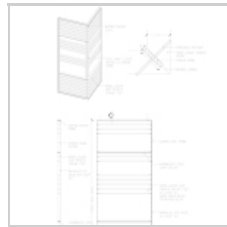
The buildings are set into the hillside, with glass facades facing the lake. (Courtesy GLUCK+)



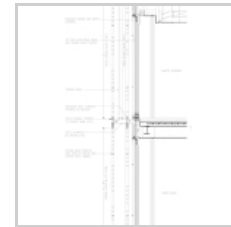
At ground level, it is hard to determine where the roof ends and the lawn begins. (Courtesy GLUCK+)



The green roof, sunshades, and surrounding earth all contribute to the buildings’ energy efficiency. (Courtesy GLUCK+)



The screens comprise thermally modified poplar slats on Cor-ten frames with horizontal steel supports. (Courtesy GLUCK+)



The shades are attached to the house via a system of cables and steel outriggers. (Courtesy GLUCK+)



The architects could incorporate large curtain walls without sacrificing efficiency because so much of the buildings’ mass is below-grade. (Courtesy GLUCK+)



To preserve views elsewhere on the lake, the buildings are set back among the trees. (Paul Warchol)



The screen system serves to camouflage the buildings on the wooded site. (Paul Warchol)



On the second level, the inner screen doubles as a balcony guardrail. (Courtesy GLUCK+)



The shades filter daylight and frame views of the lake. (Courtesy GLUCK+)