

RESIDENTIAL ARCHITECTURE | FEATURED HOUSES

Featured Houses

Understory House by Gluck+

Catskill Mountains, New York

By RECORD Editors



Photo © Here and Now Agency

Understory House by Gluck+

July 30, 2026



Location: Catskill Mountains, New York

Project size: 3,170 square feet

Architects & Firms

Gluck+

Program: Set on a long, gentle slope in the foothills of the Catskill Mountains, Understory House takes its name from its position within the forest—neither rooted on the forest floor nor lifted above the canopy but suspended in between. Located in a rural second-growth forest marked by miles of historic stone walls, the house is a secondary home that accommodates the clients' desire for aging-in-place accessibility and the needs of visiting older parents. The program includes three bedrooms, a kitchen, dining and living rooms, a library, and a deck.



Photo © Here and Now Agency

Design Solution: The clients camped on the site for years and had developed a deep familiarity with its subtleties. They wanted a single-story house—lifted above the forest floor, where limited light and visibility compress the experience, yet without stairs. From the uphill approach, the house reads as a low, quiet form nestled into the slope.

Perched on slender steel pipe columns, it barely touches the ground, minimizing physical impact and disruption to the forest floor. The house is a pure 50-by-65-foot rectangle. Within this simple footprint, open social spaces, enclosed private rooms, and outdoor living areas are carved from a single volume.

Public and private zones interlock around a central void that blurs the line between the interior and exterior. Both the roof and floor planes are folded into a clear structural form—the entire floor is structured as one large deck—framing seasonal change from dense summer foliage to expansive winter views.

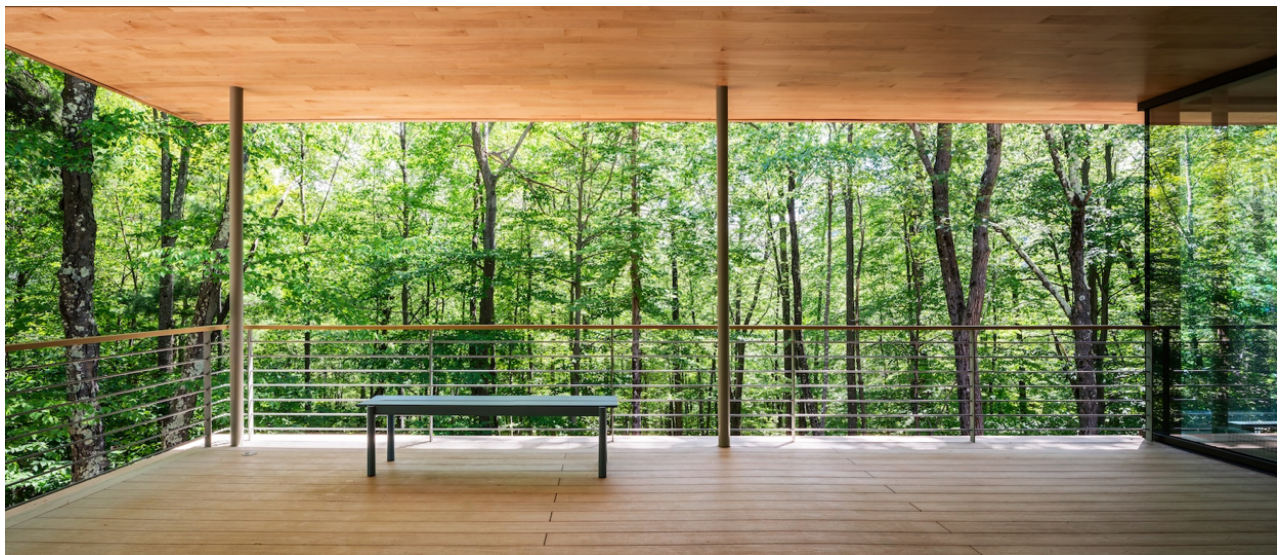


Photo © Here and Now Agency

Structure and Materials: The house is clad in dark, stained-wood siding and glass. Inside, maple floors and ceilings wrap daily life in warmth—a soft core within a folded hard shell. The house is entirely electric, operating without fossil fuels. Large expanses of high-performance European glazing are paired with perimeter hydronic heating served by a water-to-water heat pump, balancing energy efficiency with comfort.

Additional Information

Completion date: July 2024

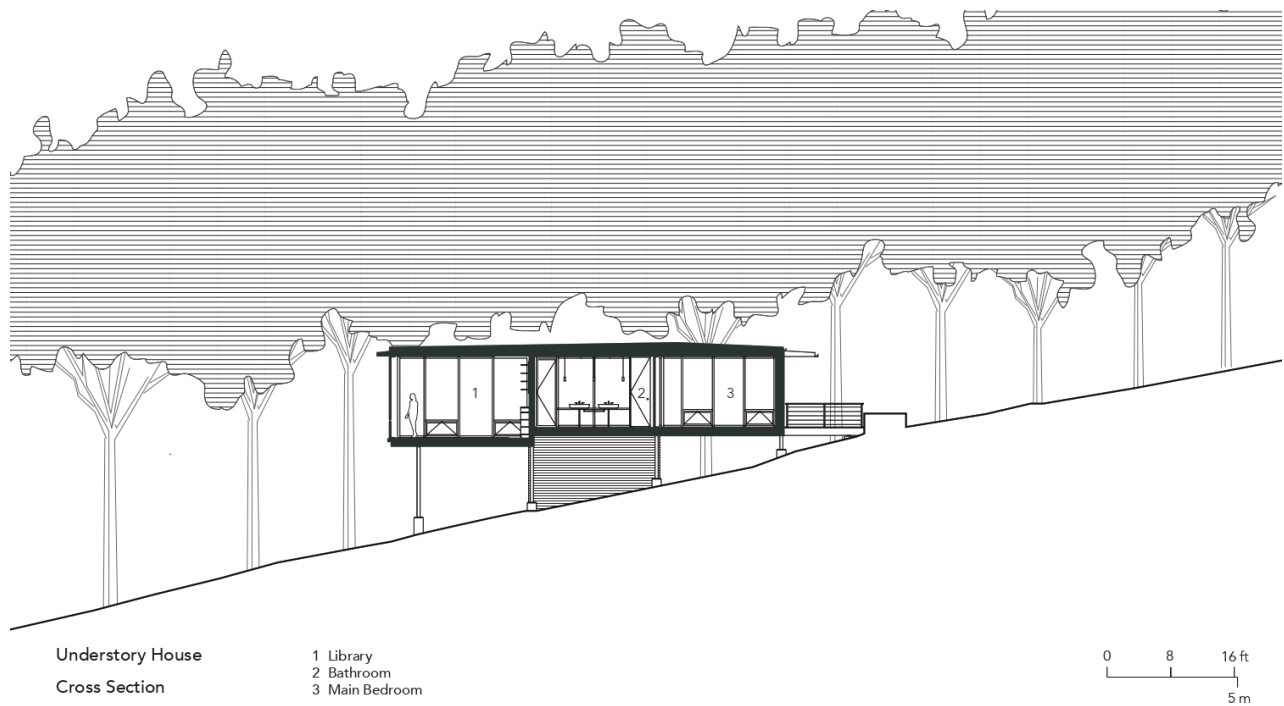
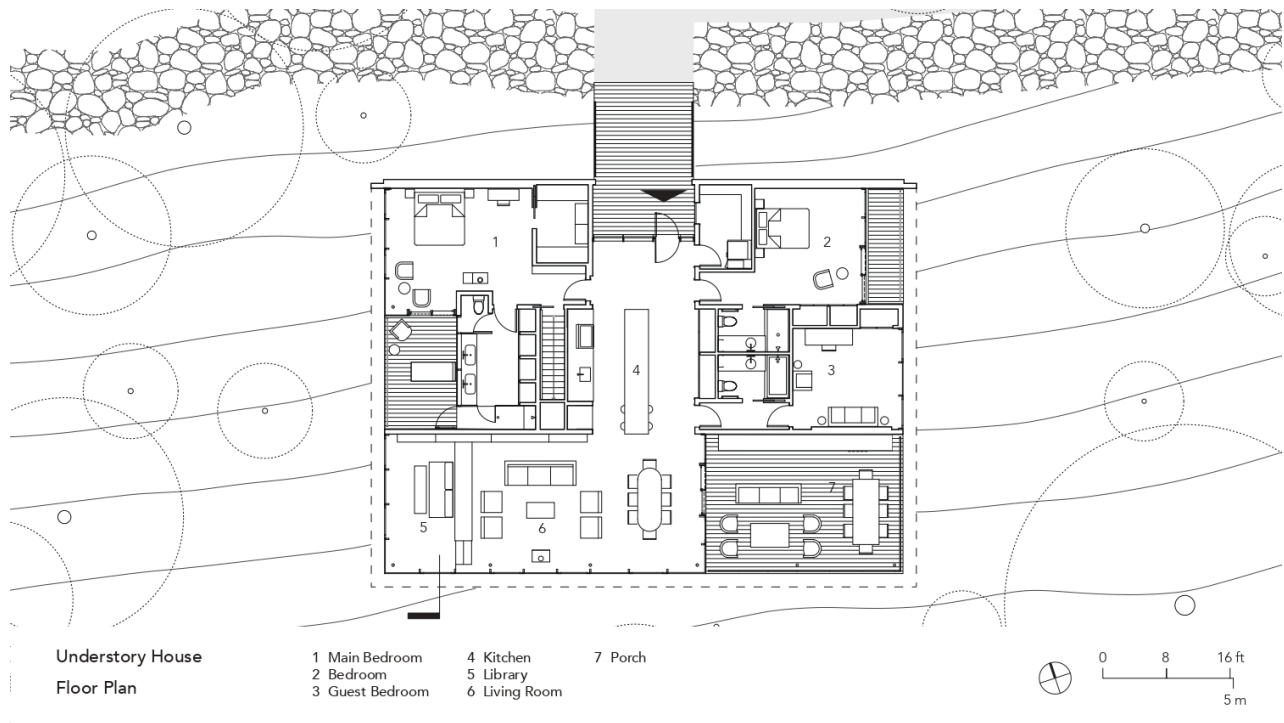
Site size: 43.2 acres

Client/Owner: Michael Cooper and Ailsa Wong





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Images courtesy Gluck+, click to enlarge

Credits

Architect

Gluck+

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Project Team

Peter Gluck, principal; Thomas
Gluck, principal in charge; Olga
Reeder, Jun Ito, architects

Architect of Record

Gluck+

Interior designer

Gluck+

Engineers

TYLin (Structural), IBC Engineering
(mechanical)

Consultants

Lighting design and custom
millwork/furniture design by Gluck+

General Contractor

Upstate Precision Builders

Photographer

Here and Now Agency

Specifications

Structural System

Wood framing with steel columns
and flitch beams

Exterior Cladding

Wood: Pine siding stained with
Arborcoat semi-solid stain by
Benjamin Moore
Curtain wall/Windows: Elvial
windows, curtain wall, and narrow
sightline sliders

Roofing

Wood painted aluminum flashing:
Pure+Freeform sheetmetal – Miele
maple

Windows

Metal frame: Elvial

Hardware

Locksets: Quickset

Interior Finishes

Cabinetwork and custom woodwork:
Cuisine Ideal represented by Kitchen
Classics (cabinetry); Rakks standards
(front of house shelf supports);
Knap & Vogt standards and brackets
(back of house shelf supports)
Special surfacing: Silestone Blanco
Maple (countertops)
Floor and wall tile: Atelier Grey by
Fiandre (guest bath floors); Elementi
Aquamarina by Fiandre (guest bath
walls); Atelier Grey by Fiandre (office
bath floors); Elementi Ramine by
Fiandre (office bath walls); Skoven
Blanco (primary bath walls)
Composite Decking: UltraShield
Naturale
Raised flooring: Kember Kreative
Ecoclick clear maple prefinished
flooring (wood flooring, walls, and
ceiling)

Furnishings

Chairs: Hans Wegner, Bruno Rey for Hay, Herman Miller

Tables: Modernica Studio

Upholstery: Cini Boeri for Arflex

Other furniture: Linear Steel Bench by Muuto; Moduluxe Bed by Copeland; wood stove (bedroom) by Rais; wood stove (living area) by Stûv

Lighting

Interior ambient lighting: Pablo Studio, Belfer LED Wedge

Downlights: Lotus 4"

Pendant: Pure Edge Lighting – Nova

Exterior: Hinkley Atlantis

Plumbing

Faucets: Kohler, Grohe Lineare

Showerheads: Grohe Cosmopolitan

Basins: Primary bath: Nameeks – Scarabeo (primary bath); Miseno (secondary baths)

Tubs: Duravit – Architec

Toilets: Toto – Nexus

Energy

HVAC: LG split system with Hydro kit for hydronic, radiators by Slantfin

KEYWORDS: [modern residential architecture / New York](#)