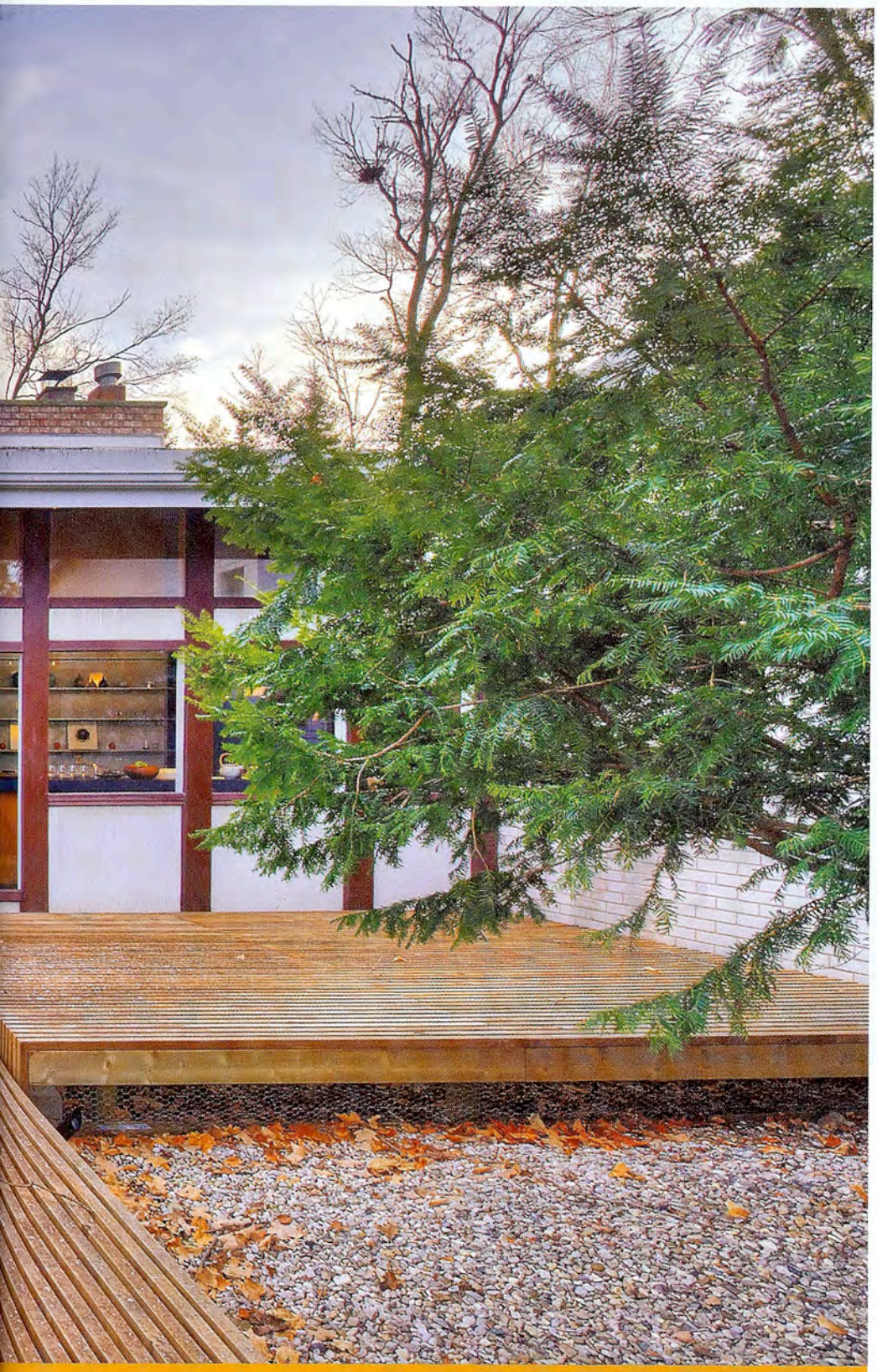
kitchen bath



fine lines

design: ***bulthaup*** *site:* ***waterloo, ontario***

"It's always important to be immersed in beauty," calligraphy artist Noriko Maeda says. "And the Japanese essence of simplicity is at the core of our lifestyle." Which is why she and her graphic-designer husband bought their Japanese-inspired 1960's house in Waterloo, Ontario, in the first place.

They lived there with their two daughters for 15 years before deciding on an update centering on the kitchen. "It was very open and space-efficient, but the appliances had become too old," Maeda explains. So she turned to her daughter Natsuki, a Massachusetts Institute of Technology architecture graduate, for help researching showrooms. The daughter suggested Bulthaup, which impressed the Maedas with its precision, innovation, and commitment to creating seamless spaces, not just placing cabinetry.

Beyond food preparation, of course, the mandate for the kitchen was that it needed to look beautiful at all times and for all scenarios, in use or not. "Lots of people come in and out of our home, whether for the art classes I teach or when we're entertaining guests. Living space and living style are central to my artwork," Maeda says. Since she uses the house as a gallery, the kitchen had to be an extension of that as well.

A 1960's house now features a galley kitchen with enlarged windows overlooking a cedar deck.

Co-owner of Bulthaup's Toronto outlet and granddaughter of the German manufacturer's founder, architect Antje Bulthaup and her husband and business partner, Stefan Sybydlo, accepted a dinner invitation at the house to get a better sense of the Maedas: who they are, how they think, and what they do. This reconnaissance mission resulted in Bulthaup selecting the company's B3 system, which lends the galley kitchen an airiness previously absent.

Bookended by a large and a small dining area—both of which double as art studio space—the 300-square-foot kitchen is dominated by a large island with carefully planned storage, so the most essential items are close at hand. Open shelving, meanwhile, displays not only kitchen wares but also Maeda's calligraphy. "The shelves give the impression they're floating," Bulthaup says. On the wall behind them, high-gloss acrylic paneling adds a little glamour.

Vertical-grain cherrywood veneering the island integrates it with the rest of the interior by connecting to the original wood ceiling. "The kitchen system has the same philosophical underpinnings as the architecture of the Maedas' house, even though it was built 50 years ago," Bulthaup says. "Complementing rather than trying to falsely emulate what exists, the kitchen fits in both on a conceptual level and in the details." Slate flooring, newly installed throughout the ground level, unifies the kitchen with the dining areas and the living area. Track lighting crosses boundaries between the zones.

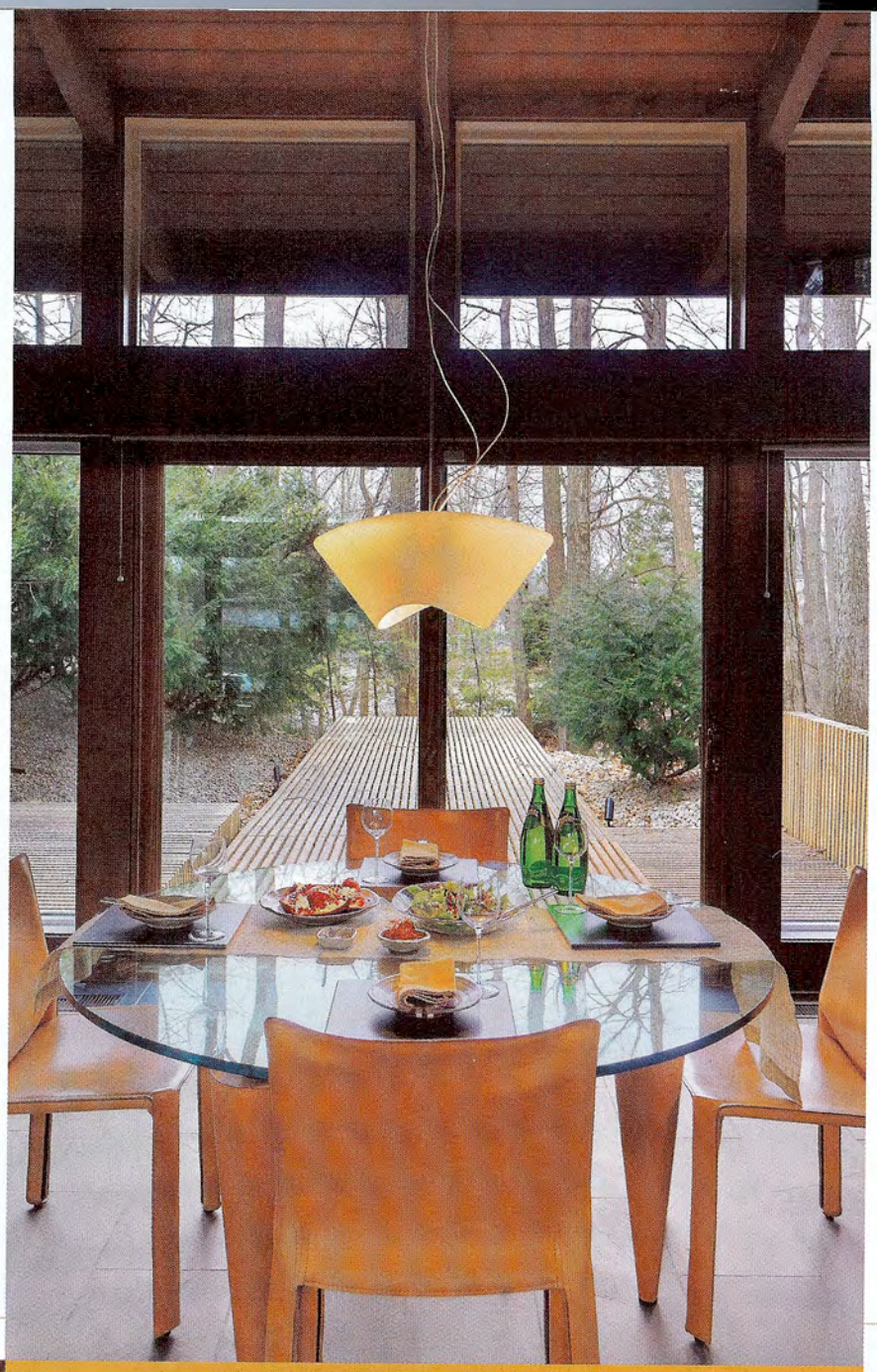
Clockwise from top left: *Two dining areas flank the kitchen, where the island combines cherrywood veneer, stainless steel, paper-composite laminate, and melamine-coated MDF. A drawer in the island contains Japanese handmade ceramic dishes. Aluminum shelving is backed by acrylic panels.*

Standing at the cooktop or sink, also part of the island, or sitting at the table, you can enjoy the view outside the expanded windows. And the smaller dining area has glass doors that slide open to the back deck. Its concept was that of a boardwalk, constructed with two-by-two cedar. No screws are visible, thanks to the pegs covering all the holes—3,000 of them in all.

Maeda's MIT-educated daughter was likewise the one who designed the deck. She built it with the assistance of her father, sister, and architect boyfriend during one summer vacation. Maeda assisted by providing all the meals.

—Barbara L. Dixon

FROM FRONT ARTEMIDE: TRACK LIGHTING (LARGE DINING AREA). CASSINA: CHAIRS (DINING AREAS). BULTHAUP: HOOD, SINK, SINK FITTINGS, ISLAND, CABINETS, PANELING (KITCHEN). MIELE: COOKTOP, OVENS. THROUGH URBAN LIGHTS: TRACK LIGHTING (KITCHEN, SMALL DINING AREA). FOSCARINI: PENDANT FIXTURE (SMALL DINING AREA). FLOS: SCONCES (KITCHEN). **THROUGHOUT** OLYMPIA TILE: FLOORING. BENJAMIN MOORE & CO.: PAINT. SAUER & STEINER: WOODWORK. SCHELLENBERG CONTRACTING: GENERAL CONTRACTOR.



Clockwise from top left: *An aluminum-clad unit incorporates two ovens. In the small dining area, Mario Bellini chairs surround the table. Flooring throughout the ground level is slate.*

BOB GUNDU