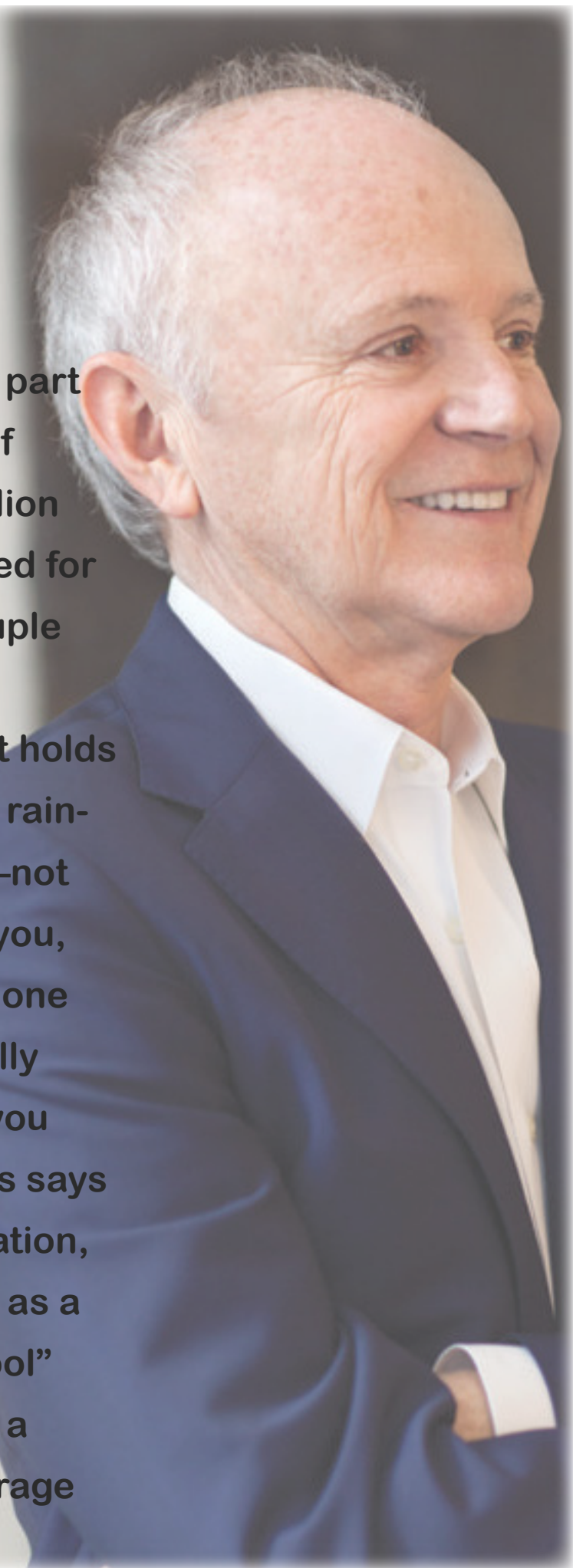




# **Architect Steven Harris Designs the Ultimate Hamptons Dream House**

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**“(...)Part sculpture, part retreat, part flight of fancy, the pool pavilion that Harris conceived for a New York City couple is tucked beneath a sinuous canopy that holds some five inches of rain-replenished water—not for splashing mind you, just for effect. “It is one of the most heroically engineered things you can imagine,” Harris says of the airborne creation, which he describes as a “flying reflecting pool” and which contains a kitchenette and storage area in its base.**

The superstructure is not unlike a ship, in terms of construction, with an undercarriage of steel ribs that is encased in wood planking and then sheathed in weather-resistant plaster stucco finish. Harris compares its free-form silhouette, as well as the similarly shapely limestone terrace around it, to the



undulating motifs of the late, great Brazilian landscape architect Roberto Burle Marx. “He had this ability to make organic forms that were abstracted architecture.”



As for the actual swimming pool, which the flying oasis partially shades, its water is precisely calibrated so that it's level with the surrounding terrace. Harris calls it "a feat in itself."



The architect's novel concept was to bring the ocean closer to the main residence, which he also designed, overcoming an intervening dune without disturbing it.

An elevated water feature—bold, captivating, and its highest point aligned with the top of the terrain—would bridge the gap visually, especially when seen from the upper floor of the house.



“The canopy foregrounds the theme of water, which was very important to the clients,” he explains of the couple, a tech investor and a consultancy executive he proudly describes as “people who are obsessed with every detail, down to the color of the screws.”

(...)The project was intellectually and creatively fulfilling for everyone involved.

That includes Rees Roberts + Partners, which was responsible for the design of the interiors as well as bringing resilient native plants onto the site, from the feathery beach grasses to the sour gum trees, serviceberries, and Hollywood juniper that handle salt spray with ease. The main house responds to the locale too. Basically just one room deep and shaped a bit like a boomerang—"We worked very hard to fragment the building, so you don't see it all at once," Harris says—the structure is clad in sliding glass panels that are framed with marine-grade stainless steel. The upper floor is essentially a 70-foot-long living room, where everyone hangs out. "There is no dining room, no library, and no family room," says Harris. Very often, the clients just open the walls so that they, their children, and their guests can stroll in and out, dining here and there, and marveling at—and being part of—Harris's compelling synthesis of the natural and built worlds.





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