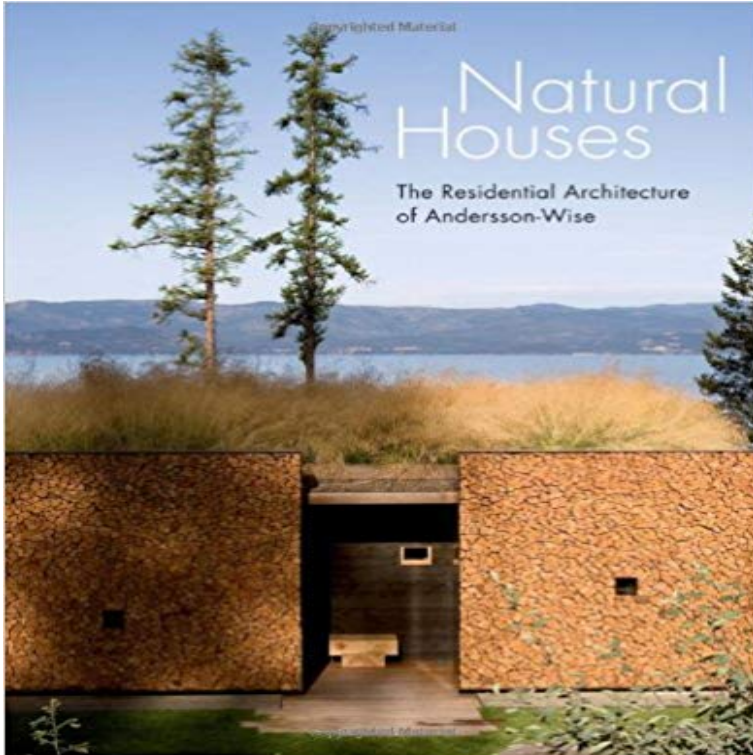


Natural Houses: The Residential Architecture of Andersson-Wise



For Arthur Andersson and Chris Wise, the fundamental elements that give buildings meaning are found in nature. Imbuing day-to-day activities with poetry and awe, their designs address both pragmatic needs and the psychological yearning for refuge and contemplation, centering and escape, joy and comfort. Their work is best experienced through the senses. Tactility, expressed through an eloquence of craft, the use of textured materials, and the logical design of structural systems, gives their buildings a rightness within the landscape. In their hands, daylight becomes a building material. Small wall apertures, three-sided dormers, clerestories, and other details grab, bend, and thread sunlight from one end of their houses to the other. Full of light and atmosphere, the houses are the physical embodiment of the great Charles Moores influential tenet that architecture is about enhancing a sense of place. Natural Houses presents seven of the Austin, Texas-based firms exquisitely crafted projects. Precise and cool, with forms often derived from the American vernacular of barns and cottages, these are painstakingly crafted houses made from regionally appropriate and aesthetically timeless materials. Natural Houses presents a range of sites and residences from a small cabin in the woods to a multibuilding camp. Sited on a cliff, the House Above Lake Austin uses terraces to descend its steeply hilly site. The buildings simple materials celebrate the site and climate not by drawing attention to themselves, but by blending in. The stone foundation is similarly tied to the natural stone of the mountain. Smooth plaster walls above the stone foundation appear to have been chiseled from the rock itself. In a deceptively simple boathouse the walls fold down to become impromptu diving platforms. Exceptional photography captures the light and atmosphere of each project setting and illustrates how the firm

rigorously expresses the design concept through detailing and construction. An introduction by Rick Sundberg of Olson Sundberg Kundig Allen Architects and essays by Jen Renzi and Frederick Steiner chart the firm's evolution and influences.

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