

Detached Charm

An addition doesn't necessarily need to be attached to a house. Rather than extend a wing out from Marta and Alan Galicki's existing house, their architects chose to create a freestanding structure that includes a two-car garage on the ground floor and a studio above for Marta's office. (She is an architectural historian and preservation consultant.) The new structure fit beautifully in the location of the original garage, which was beyond repair.

Designed by Houston architects Bill Curtis and Russell Windham, the studio is part of a comprehensive master plan that included a renovated sunroom (below). The 1930s original house was built in the English cottage style. English garden configurations and large live oaks give the site a lush feel. Preserving and enhancing the rear garden while adding the necessary square footage was the goal.



PHOTOGRAPHS: JEAN ALLSOPP/RENOVATED SUNROOM BUILT BY TALMADGE HARGRAVES



(CENTER) Wrapped by live oaks, this combination studio and garage becomes a backyard haven. Careful design and detailing help reduce the mass of the new two-story building. (LEFT) Timber brackets enrich the gable end above the studio's box bay.

The challenge was to keep the two-story structure from overpowering the small rear garden. Careful attention to detail and innovative uses of simple materials resulted in an 800-square-foot structure that seems much smaller on the outside. Although the square plan was dictated by the parking needs for two automobiles, the architects designed the side facing the garden to look like a narrow, more vertical structure. "We made it look as small as we could," says Russell.

On the ground floor, they carved out an arched recess with two small windows. Above, a box bay brings light to the studio. Although the recess is only about 6 inches deep and the box bay projects less than a foot, they effectively turn a big square box into a lively little backyard cottage. Marta says, "It's like a tree house."

Louis Joyner

ADDITIONS & REMODELINGS



Bill Curtis (left) and Russell Windham

WINNER
Galicki Residence, Houston

ARCHITECTS
Bill Curtis and Russell Windham,
Curtis & Windham Architects,
Houston

BUILDER
Temple Pace, Pace Development, Inc.,
Houston

