

THE LOCAL PROJECT

PROJECT FEATURE • ARCHITECTURE & INTERIOR DESIGN FEATURES

The Lake House — Dunelands by Kevin Toukoumidis

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On the shores of Lake Michigan, Dunelands – the home of architect Kevin Toukoumidis of dSPACE Studio – is a modernist vision that seamlessly inhabits its lakeside locale. Perched atop a sand dune on the eastern shoreline of Lake Michigan, Dunelands slowly reveals itself in a beautiful conversation between architecture and landscape.

Kevin Toukoumidis, a founding principal of Chicago-based architecture firm dSPACE Studio, wanted to create a modern home for himself and his partner that was deeply respectful of its surrounds, would integrate the outdoors and accommodate large gatherings, and was an artful expression of their life. “We had always dreamed of designing a home together but the timing never seemed right,” Kevin says. “During the pandemic, our perspective and priorities changed, and when we found land overlooking Lake Michigan, we decided to build.”







Given the untouched beauty of the area, Kevin wanted a home that would blend in unobtrusively with the landscape.



The overall feel and allure of Dunelands are grounded in its location. Built on a sand dune within the world's largest system of freshwater dunes, the site is a narrow ridge between the lake and the 400-hectare Saugatuck Dunes State Park. Given the untouched beauty of the area, Kevin wanted a home that would blend in unobtrusively with the landscape. As the shoreline of Lake Michigan is marked by an extreme climate – hot dry summers and harsh winters – the residence was designed to comfortably cope with these extremities.

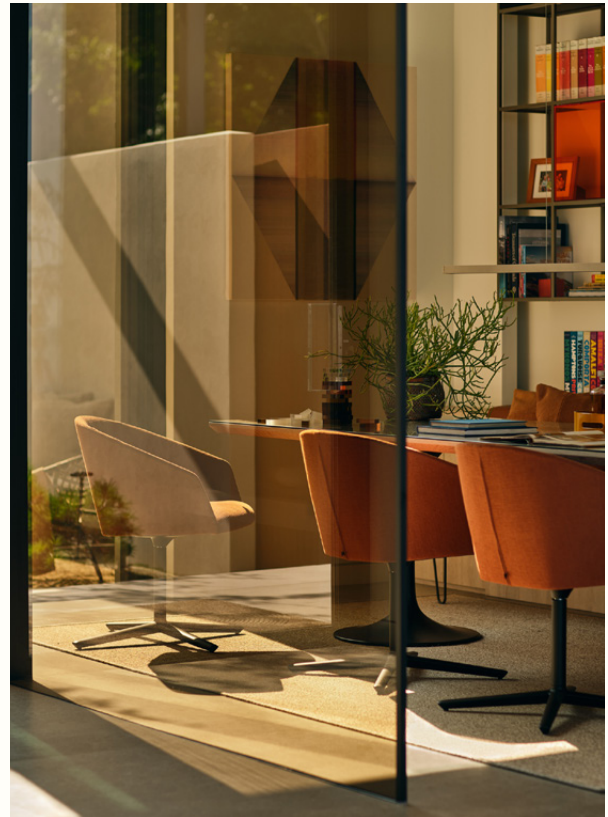
Defined by an understated, subtle façade, the home immediately feels calm. Outdoor spaces are intentionally layered to follow undulations in the sand, while the stucco and wood exterior reflects the sand's colouring. The roofline has an ultra-thin profile with large overhangs for passive solar design and, to the west, it gently lifts to open views of the lake and sky. The lake-front aspect of the home appears somewhat transparent, with expansive planes of glass, while a modern screened deck, concealed by vertical louvres, reinterprets the vernacular of the classic American porch.





The innovative design merges interior and exterior spaces at every opportunity, creating a residence that is a retreat from the chaos of daily life.

Entry to the home is via a striking 3.6-metre glass pivot door: walking through it, visitors are offered their first glimpse of the lake, which stretches out seemingly endlessly towards the horizon. Beyond, the expansive wall of nine-metre-high windows beckons. This level includes the primary bedroom suite and living spaces while the lower level houses two secondary bedroom suites, a 'flex' room currently used as a gym and additional storage. The interior design has a laid-back, coastal feel, with a light and textural palette. Furnishings are predominantly designed by dSPACE, including a bespoke bar cabinet and coffee table constructed of bronze-coloured glass and tarnished metal.



The innovative design merges interior and exterior spaces at every opportunity, creating a residence that is a retreat from the chaos of daily life, encourages active living and allows its occupants to reconnect with nature. Outdoor features include firepits, a lap pool with expansive views over the lake and a crushed granite courtyard at the front that blurs the boundary between indoors and outdoors while remaining sheltered, enclosed by artful Corten steel panels. The panels are a deft sculptural solution to balance the home's open nature and the need to preserve privacy. Porcelain flooring unites inside and out, while bronze-coloured interior glass walls artfully define spaces without blocking views. The large glass windows, which are triple-paned to maintain a tight thermal envelope, are also retractable, offering abundant ventilation and water breezes for passive cooling, and dissolving the barrier between the home and the lake.







Dunelands is a captivating and layered expression of the simple joy and beauty of everyday life.





A contemplation of the dialogue between architecture, wellbeing and nature, Dunelands is a captivating and layered expression of the simple joy and beauty of everyday life. Kevin Toukoumidis has created a simultaneously graceful yet robust masterpiece that will be enjoyed and admired by anyone lucky enough to encounter it.





