

THE MASTER ARCHITECT SERIES

CHARLES R. STINSON ARCHITECTS

COMPOSITIONS IN NATURE



When Charles Stinson was five years old, his mother hung a blackboard with an array of colored chalks near the back door as his "message pad." She had intuited what he wouldn't realize for years: that the young Stinson was a visual thinker, and drawing was his best and most articulate means of communication.

After graduating from the University of Minnesota's architecture school, Stinson's further studies drew him toward the compositions of artist Charles Biederman and architect Frank Lloyd Wright. Biederman's colorful, geometric forms, combined with Wright's compositional strategies, set him on a unique creative path.

Today, as an internationally renowned architect with a distinctive style in which line, light, and space express a dynamic co-existence, Stinson still draws every project, an array of colored pencils always at hand. "For me, creating architecture is an organic compositional process during which a variety of elements must be connected piece by piece until they become a balanced whole," he explains.

For more than 30 years, Stinson has honed an original compositional methodology elastic enough to encompass a range of site conditions and geographical locations, and project types from a bank to a poolside gazebo, an entire master-planned community to a condominium, a new lakeside or urban home to a rural renovation. Many of these outstanding projects are featured in this monograph and include Stinson's signature drawings.

As his practice moves forward alongside advances in green technologies and materials, and with national and international clients whose visions of an architectural future surpass even his own, Stinson's self-appointed challenge is to evolve his singular architectural methodology to encompass, with integrity and flexibility, new possibilities as they reveal themselves.

For anyone who enters that trajectory, Stinson remains the creative force that holds each project together. "Architecture is about the invisible, like faith," he says. "It's about manifesting the dreams people have." As Stinson's practice and design philosophies evolve, he's ready to travel the world, sketchbook and colored pencils in hand, to make that happen.

Excerpted from the Introduction by Camille LeFevre.

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