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Text **Katya Tylevich**

puts life at home in full view



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In 2003 architects Robert Choeff and Krystyan Keck became the owners of a 74-m² brain-teaser. 'Not only is the house small, but there's no land around it,' says Choeff, describing the Los Angeles home, built in 1913, that he, his wife and two small children now call the ground floor. 'There was nowhere to go but up.'

Tight quarters, a tight budget and further restrictions – including a height limit and required setbacks – navigated the architects towards their design solution: a 54- m² trapezoid perched above the existing structure on steel stilts, topped by a roof deck with views in all directions.

With a skin of transparent polycarbonate, the addition reads like a structural X-ray. 'You see all the screws, all the bolts,' Choeff tells me. 'You see the two-by-four construction and the posts, the building paper between the plywood and lumber. I wanted it to be clear how the pieces were put together,' he explains. 'It's a celebration of the workmanship of those involved.'

In the same way the home exposes the interactions of its elements, it exposes the interactions of its inhabitants – to those within the structure, and to the world beyond. Completed in April 2009, the upper storey has no doors, and its only piece of freestanding furniture is the dining table. Lean work desks and kitchen counters hug the perimeter, and built-in storage spaces double, discreetly, as screens. Where there isn't cabinetry and Sheetrock, there's a window. As for the million-dollar question? The reply is brief and to the point: 'We don't need privacy.'

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