

# MHD

MAINE HOME + DESIGN

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## 2025 AIA MAINE DESIGN AWARDS:

19 WINNING PROJECTS THROUGH  
THE EYES OF ARCHITECTS

THE MODERN REVIVAL OF  
A JOHN CALVIN STEVENS  
MASTERPIECE IN PORTLAND



HOW PLUNGE POOLS  
BLEND EFFICIENCY  
AND WELLNESS





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# Through These Architects' Eyes

## The 2025 AIA Maine Design Awards

Each year, the Maine chapter of the American Institute of Architects (AIA Maine) shines a spotlight on the best architectural work from our state's design community. From reimagined historical structures to brand-new builds that push the boundaries of sustainable living, the AIA Maine Design Awards program celebrates projects that exemplify thoughtful design, technical rigor, and a commitment to shaping a better built environment.

For the 2025 program, jurors from eastern New York brought their diverse perspectives to the judging table. The Design Awards jury included Beth Lacey of Lacey Architecture, Arien Cartrette of architecture+, Karin Kilgore-Green of JMZ Architects and Planners, and Michael Phinney of Phinney Design Group. For the Architrave Award—created to recognize excellence in traditional design—a separate jury was assembled, including Ira Grandberg of Grandberg and Associates Architects, Michael Tuck of Balzer and Tuck Architecture, and Scott Wallant of Wallant Architecture.

A distinguishing feature of the 2025 awards is the continued emphasis on the AIA's Framework for Design Excellence, a national initiative that calls on architects to lead the way toward a zero-carbon, equitable, resilient, and healthy built environment. This year's applicants were offered two submission paths: answering streamlined yes-or-no questions related to the framework's core principles or submitting the Common App for Design Excellence, a visual and data-driven tool that maps project performance against the framework's ten measures.

"Every year, the AIA Maine Design Awards program celebrates the best work of Maine-based architects. The 2025 program, like those before, is a testament to our architectural community's deep commitment to creating beautiful, thoughtful spaces that honor the people and places they serve. Their work not only elevates the profession and enriches communities but also inspires us all to bring more care and intention to the spaces we occupy," says Jeannette Schram, outgoing executive director of AIA Maine.

While the tools and criteria may evolve, the mission remains constant: to elevate Maine's architectural excellence. The awards program highlights a wide range of work: a currently enrolled architecture student's unbuilt project, a Maine firm's unbuilt project, and commercial, residential, renovation, and adaptive reuse projects designed both in and beyond state lines by AIA Maine members. Whether built or on the boards, honored or not, each submission adds to the broader conversation about what design can—and should—do.

MH+D is proud to present the winners of the 2025 AIA Maine Design Awards.



Photo: Trent Bell

## Winners at a Glance

### Honor Awards

Ferland Engineering Education & Design Center

The Honeymoon Cottage

The Narrows

East View

Subterranean Car Barn

### Merit Awards

Paul J. Schupf Art Center

Sweetwater Residence

Green Haven

The Outpost

Computational Craftsmanship

### Citation Awards

The Smith Center for Education & Research

Woodhull Headquarters

Fern House

Notch House

Squid Cove

Tidehead Woods House

West End Garden House

### The Architrave Award

Falls Pasture





## The Honeymoon Cottage, Edgecomb Knickerbocker Group

### Honor Award for Excellence in Architecture

**Project Architect:** Julien Jalbert, AIA

**Architecture Practice Leader:** Rick Nelson, AIA

**Senior Project Designer:** Scott Stark

**Senior Interior Designer:** Leah Lippmann, AIA

**Interior Designer:** Ashley Lowe

**Landscape Architecture Practice Leader:**

Kerry Lewis

**Landscape Architect:** Carson Douglas

Landscape Architecture

**Structural Engineer:** Albert Putnam Associates

**General Contractor:** Knickerbocker Group

**Photography:** Jeff Roberts

#### From the Jury:

What a stunning cottage! The siting, massing, and materials all work effectively to create a highly impactful experience, both from the tidal river and from within. The individual black boxes perched on concrete plinths exhibit an enchanting playfulness while simultaneously giving prominence to the land and the trees. The interior is cozy and warm yet refined, offering perfectly balanced views of the water.

#### From the Architect:

The Honeymoon Cottage is a low-impact retreat designed for a newlywed couple seeking an immersive experience in Maine's coastal forest. As a continuation of a multiproject collaboration between the clients and Knickerbocker Group, the design reflects a deep commitment to craftsmanship, sustainability, and enduring quality.

The structure consists of three distinct "pods" connected by glazed bridges, creating a sequence of intimate yet unified spaces. By anchoring directly to the site's ledge and minimizing the foundation footprint, the design preserves the existing landscape while reducing environmental disturbance. The cantilevered forms combined with the minimalist structure create an impression of floating above the forest floor.

The materials palette was selected for durability, performance, and environmental sensitivity. Locally produced black *shou sugi ban* siding, combined with a dark bronze metal roof, ensures lasting protection while harmonizing with the wooded surroundings. Expansive floor-to-ceiling glazing optimizes daylighting and passive solar gain, reinforcing a connection between interior and exterior spaces.

Inside, a refined Douglas fir interior envelops the space, bringing warmth and tactile richness. Every detail—from custom millwork to floating design elements (including the fireplace, bathroom vanity, shelving, and lighting)—reinforces a sense of lightness and continuity with the surrounding landscape. Natural materials, handmade tile, and solid stone provide grounding, while a carefully balanced color palette amplifies the calming, nature-inspired ambiance.

Designed for adaptability and lasting performance, the cottage's modular approach allows it to evolve with the owners' needs. A combination of passive design strategies, high-performance insulation, and energy-efficient systems ensures the home remains comfortable and efficient through Maine's seasonal extremes. The Honeymoon Cottage exemplifies how a small-scale residence can have an outsized impact—minimizing environmental disruption while maximizing architectural experience.