



PORTUONDO PEROTTI

ARCHITECTS

My name is Rafael Portuondo and I am the President and Design Principal of Portuondo-Perotti Architects. We have been practicing as a firm for 25 years and have worked hard to keep a very high level of design. Stated below are lists of the accomplishments throughout my years as a practicing architect.

Personal Achievements:

1. A.A: Miami Dade College
2. B.A: University of Miami
 - a. 4th year: Designer of the year
 - b. 5th year: Designer of the year
3. Masters: Colombia University
 - a. Was the teaching assistant to Susana Torre in the undergraduate studio.
 - b. Was nominated president of my class and represented the studio in faculty functions.
4. Sat on the Dade County Historic Board for about a year with John Fullerton as the Chair.
5. Sat on the Board of Directors for Camillus House for approximately 3 years.

Design Competition History:

1. First Place: Fort Lauderdale River Front Gate Competition.
(Approximately 400 entries)
2. First Place: Spectical Island Competition in Boston.
(Approximately 300 entries)
3. Third Place: Harvard Gate Competition.
(Approximately 300 entries)
4. Second Place: New Port News Competition in Rhode Island.
(Approximately 400 entries)
5. First Place: Brickell Bridge Competition.
(Approximately 300 entries)
6. First Place: 2nd Avenue Bridge Competition.
(Approximately 25 entries)
7. Second Place: Palm Beach Library Competition.
(Approximately 50 entries)

****All these competitions are entered anonymously and awarded at the end. ****

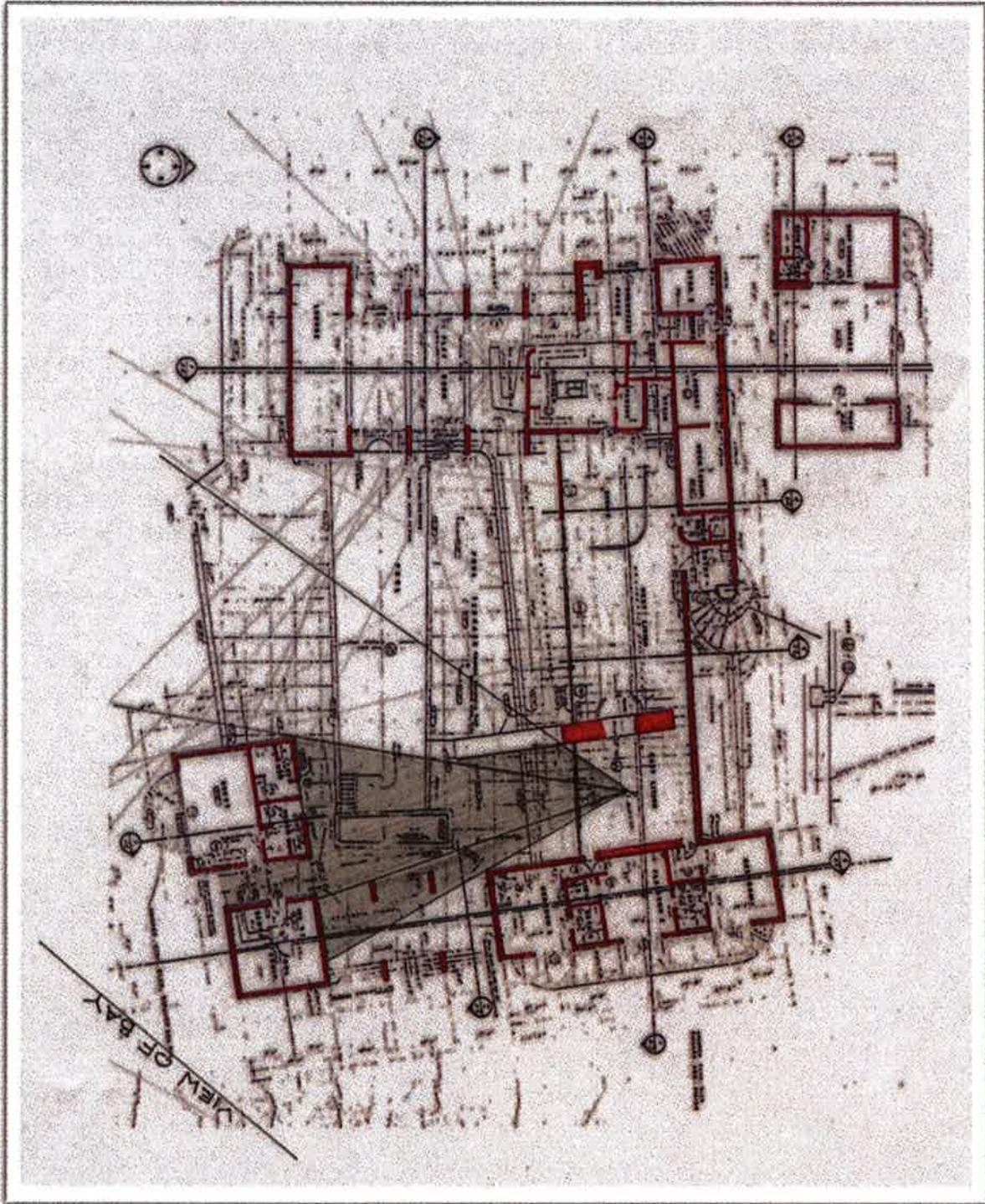
Reasons Why This Home Should Not Be Deemed Historic

There are times in the career of an architect that one has to design a home that is so customized it becomes unique only to the family in which it's designed for. In my opinion, this home is a courtyard home which revolves around the pool as its central feature. The rooms that surround this central court are: the foyer, living room, east living room, dining room, family bar, and family room. The kitchen faces the canal as well as the family room. The most unique request from the owner was to have the equipment room and the guest room on the most important view from the main house. This design move has blocked the main house from experiencing any major views of the bay; which leads me to believe that the owner wasn't interested in water views as much as a central court.

Homes with central courtyards are usually land lots that don't really have views of water or golf courses; therefore, one has to create this central courtyard to create an ambiance. I have done a series of diagrams that show how the guestroom, and pool equipment room—which are in the prime location—block the views of the major public spaces in the main house. These series of diagrams show the relationship of the major rooms to the view of the bay. It will also show how the solid wall at the end of the family room blocks any possible views of the bay, not allowing the family to have a panoramic view of the waterways.

COURTYARD AND PUBLIC SPACES

DIAGRAM 1: Views of the East Living Room to Waterways and Bay.



Diagrammatical analysis of views from East Living Room

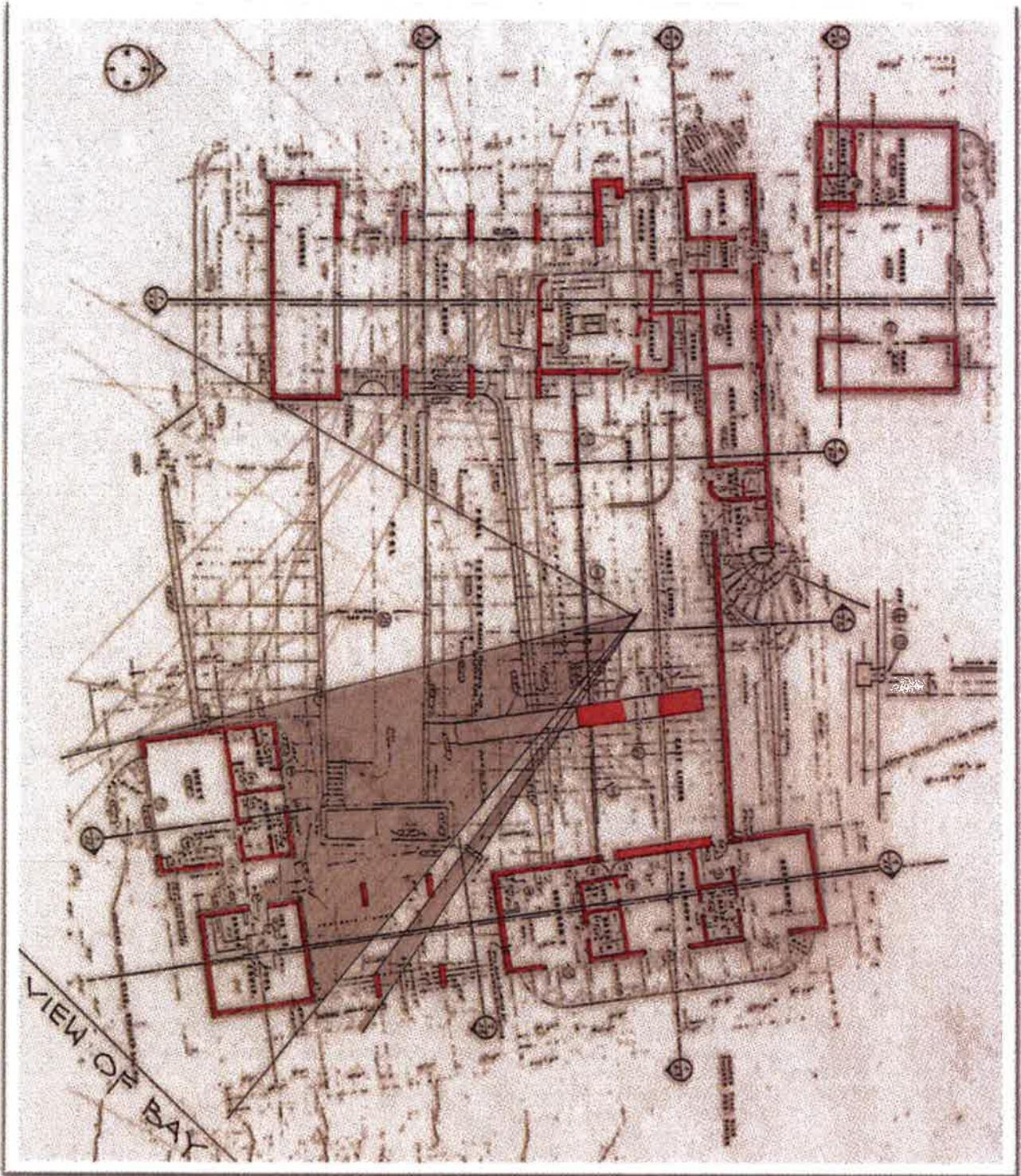


View of Waterway



View of Guesthouse blocking view of waterway

DIAGRAM 2: West Living Room Views of Waterways and Bay



Diagrammatical analysis of views from West Living Room.

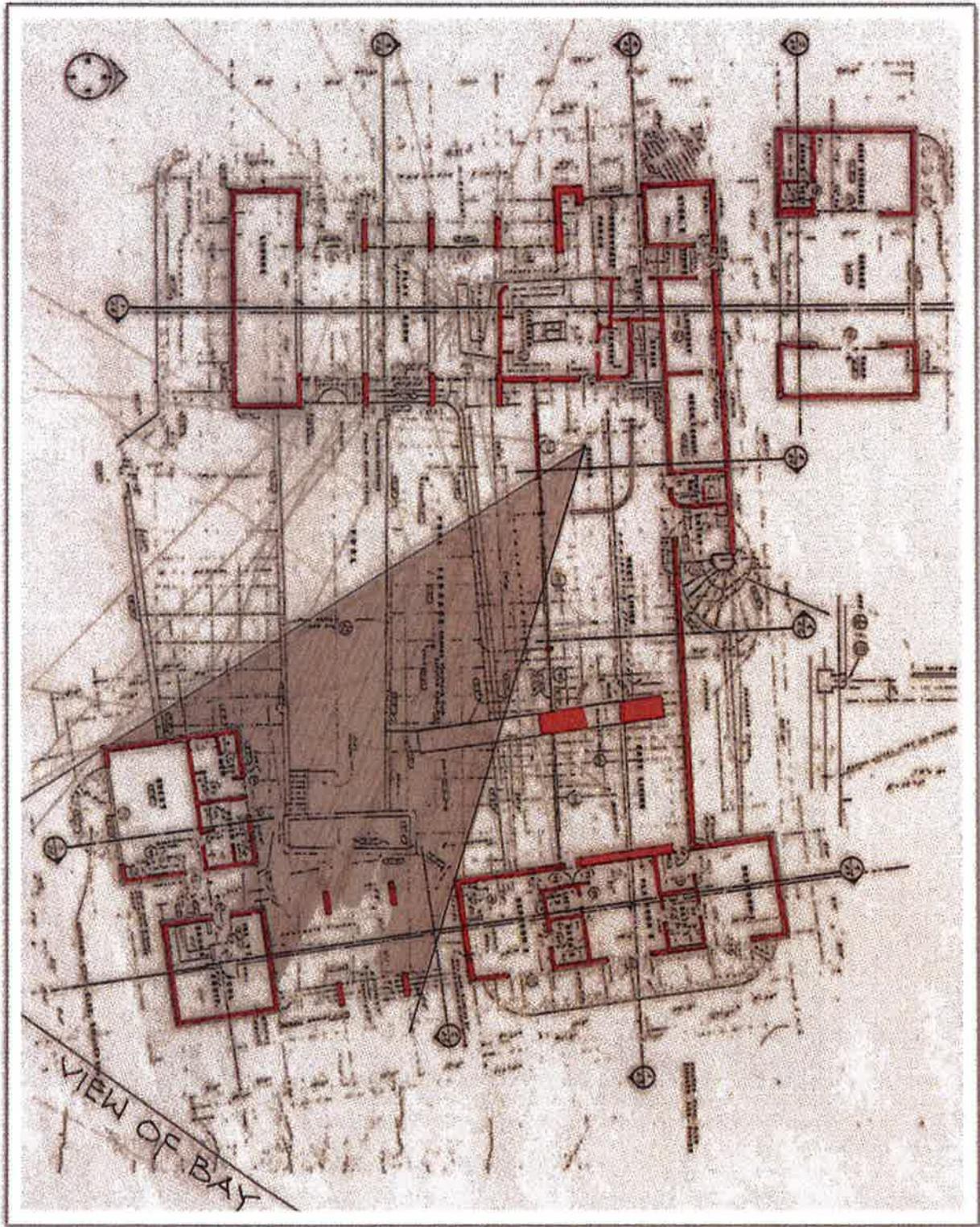


View of Bay and Waterways from West Living Room

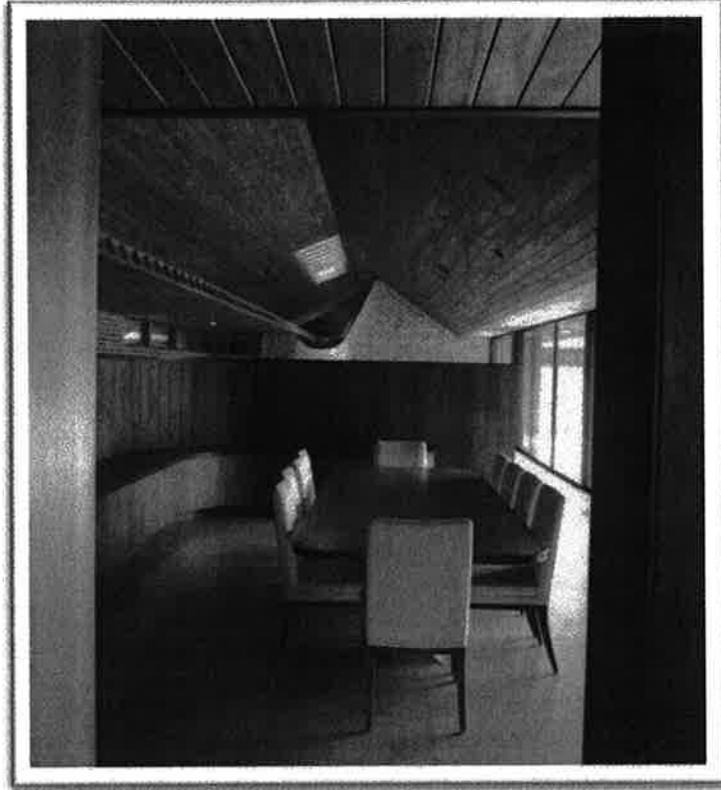


View of Bay and Waterways from West Living Room

DIAGRAM 3: Dining Room/ Gallery Views of Bay and Waterways



Diagrammatical analysis of views from Dining Room/ Gallery



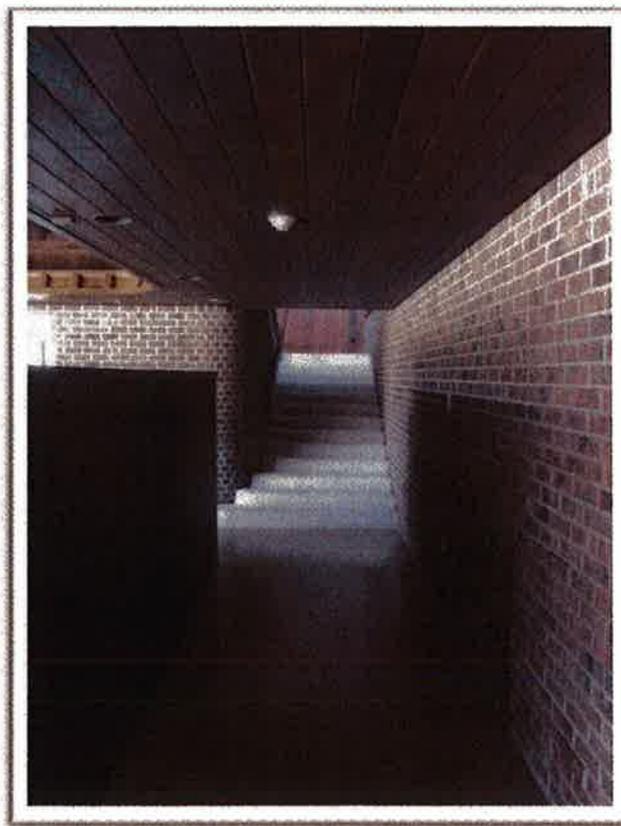
View of Dining Room from Kitchen



View of Dining Room and Living Room



View of Bay from Dining Room

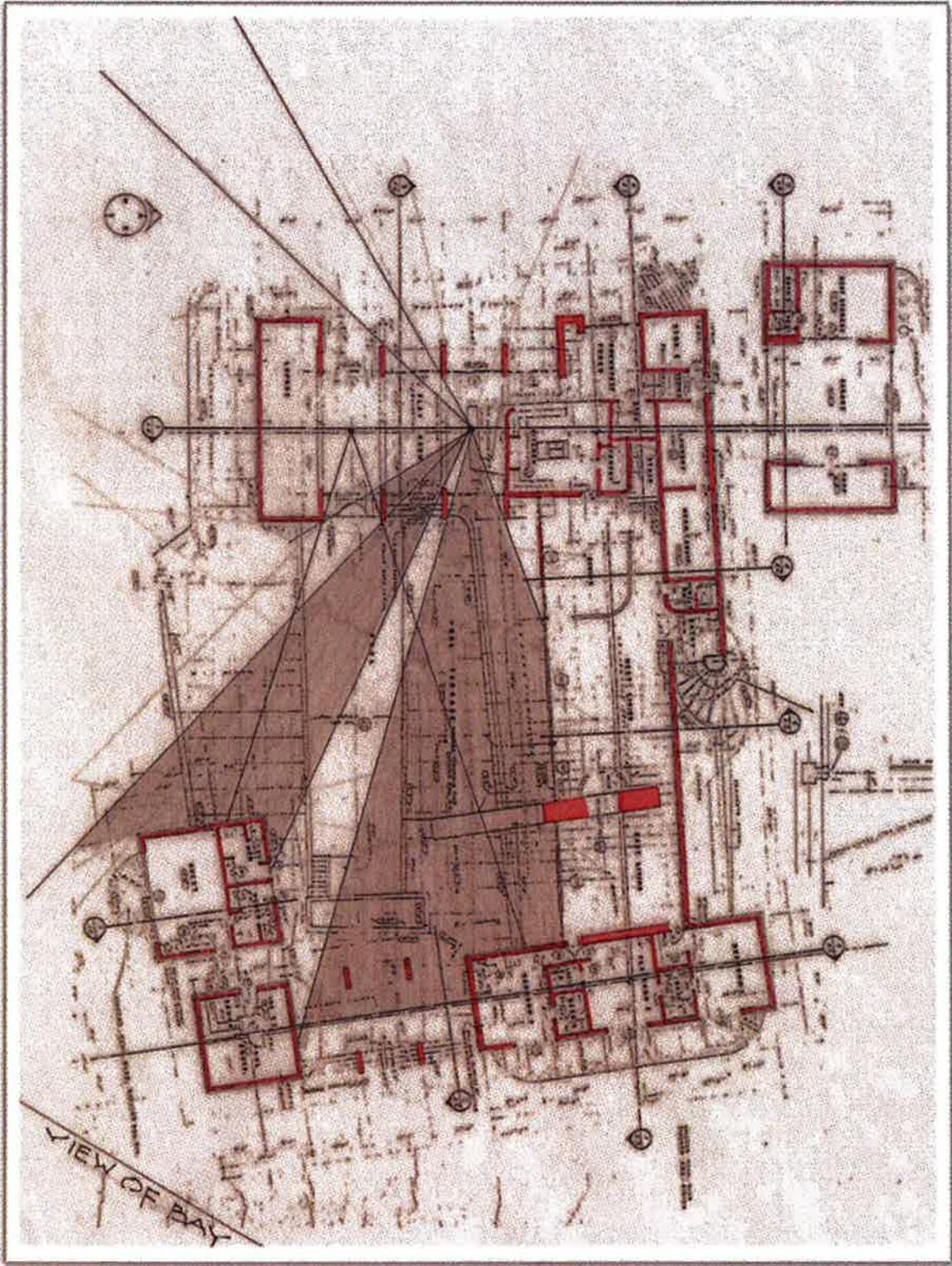


Gallery Wall Next to Dining Room



Gallery Wall in Main Space, Brick Height approx. 6'-6" with a 1'-6" Clearstory

DIAGRAM 4: Bar/ Playroom/ Lounge Views of Bay and Waterways



Diagrammatical analysis of views from Bar/ Playroom/ Lounge



View of Canal towards the West from Bar



View towards bay from family room, the guest room and the cabana bath can be seen at a distance blocking the view to the bay.



South view of wall from Bar. Behind the wall is the canal.



North View of Bar/ Playroom.



View of the Courtyard showing the Guest House at a distance and the Pool in the foreground.



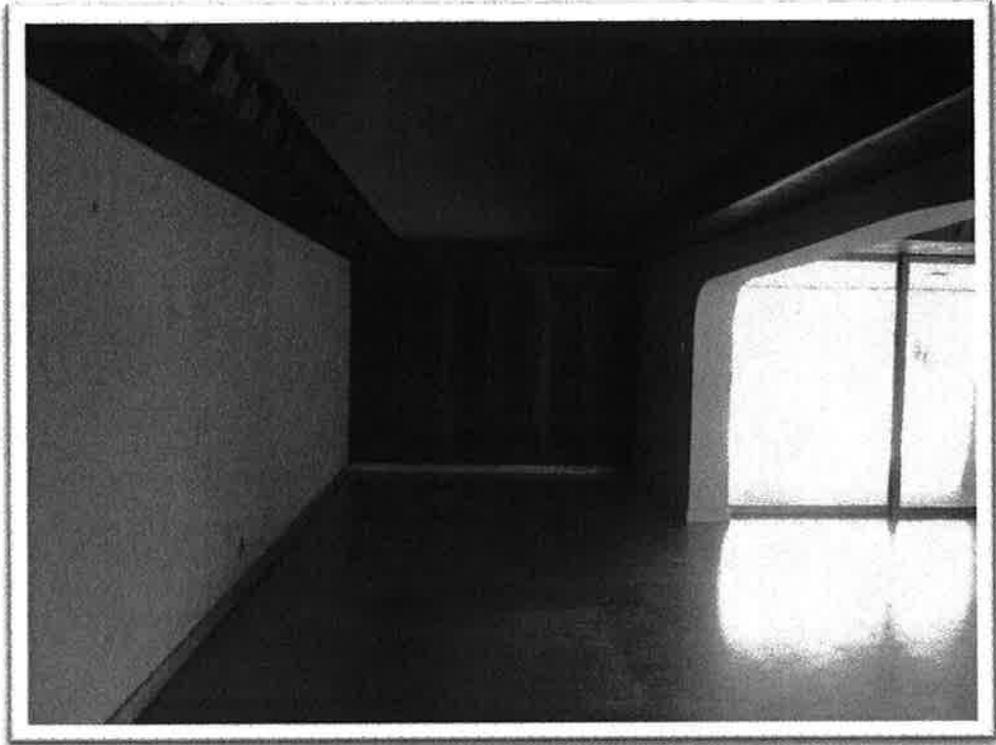
View of Pool Area from Bar. Guest Room and Cabana buildings obstruct views of the bay.



View of Pool from Play Room. Guest House at the distance blocks the view of the bay.



The cabinetry located on the east wall, and the solid wall on the south side of the Lounge Room are two of the prominent locations of the house where one has the opportunity to see the canal and the bay.



West view of the canal showing a solid wall.

KITCHEN AREA



View of canal towards the west from the kitchen.



Looking south towards waterway from the kitchen. Notice the solid wall at the end of the room; behind this wall is the canal.



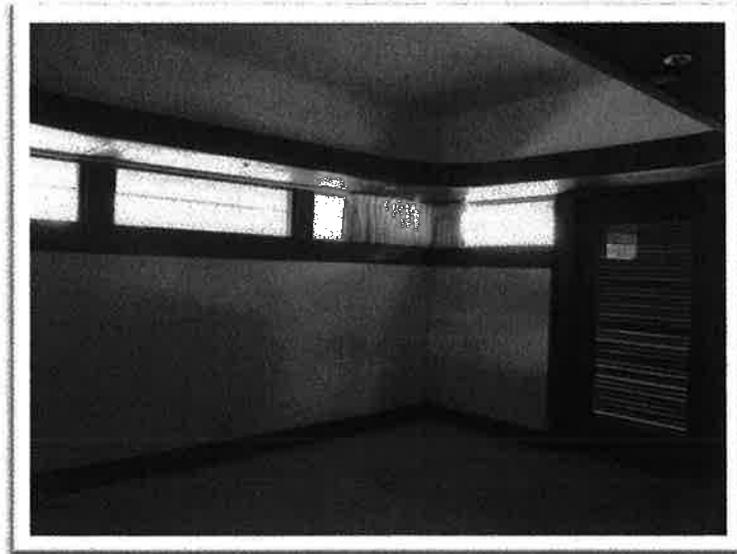
View of the waterway on the west side of the kitchen.

It is also important to discuss the bedrooms, which in most homes on the water make a conscious effort to have water views. In this case, the secondary bedroom does not participate in the central court; it views into the side yard and aims toward the front of the home, eliminating their view of the water. In addition, the room's primary source of light depends on wrap-around clearstory windows, creating a dark, fort-like environment.

BEDROOM ONE



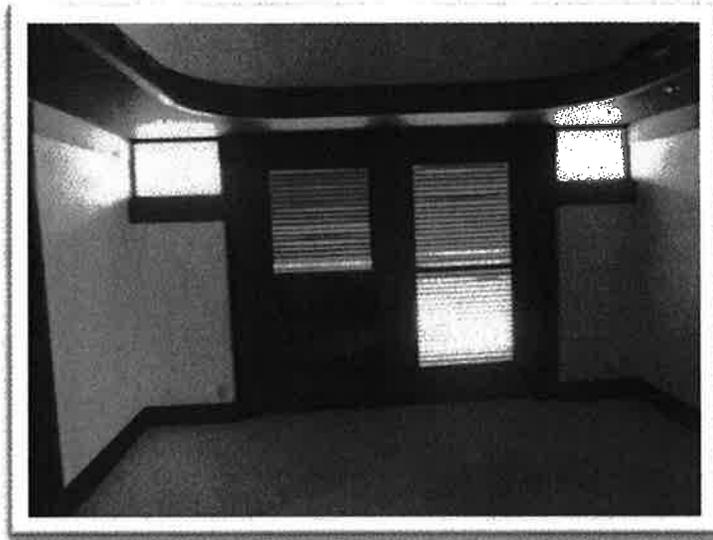
View from bedroom one.



Bedroom one clearstory windows. No views out to the garden.

Bedroom 1 has clearstory windows approximately 7'-0" above the finished floor, and Old Florida louvered doors which are beautiful, but do not allow a lot of natural light to come in, therefore creating a dark interior environment.

BEDROOM TWO



View from bedroom two.

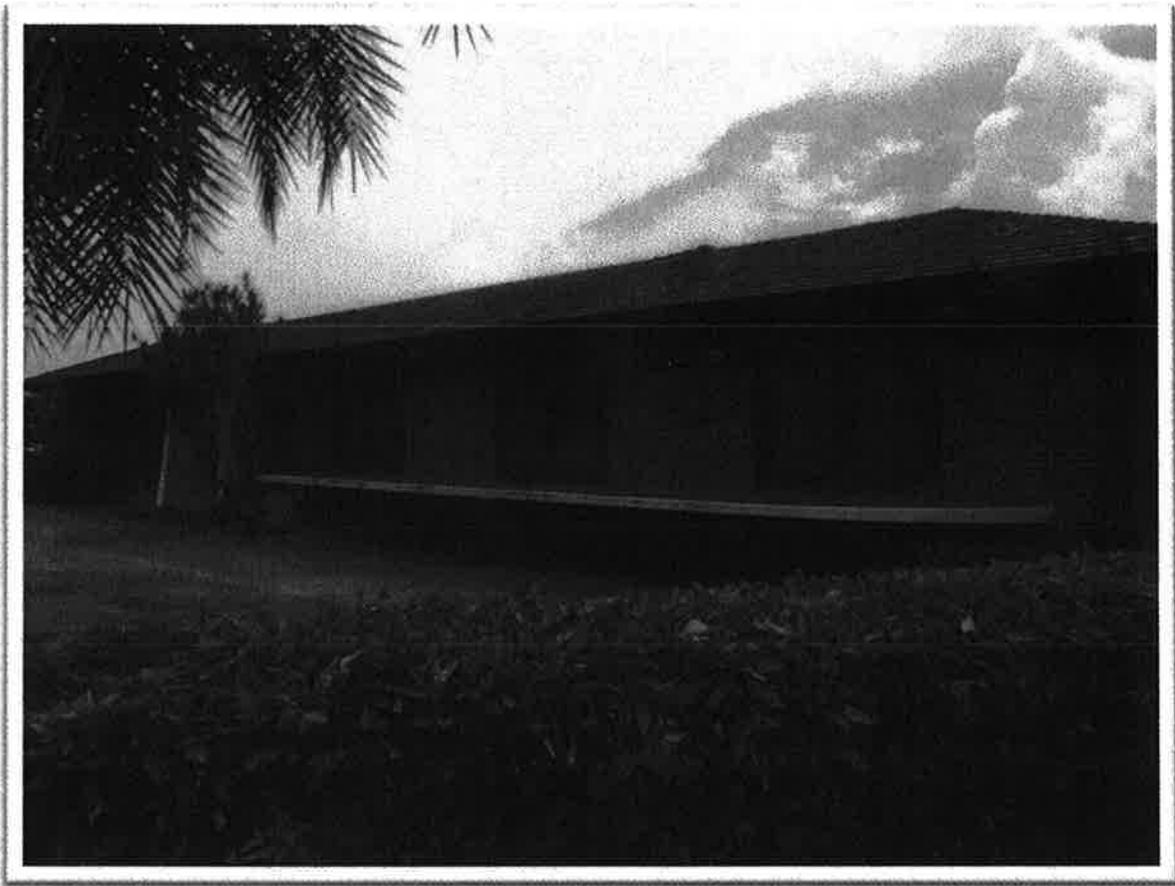
Bedroom 2 has the same problem as room one but worse. Its clearstory window is only on one side, making this room even darker.

BEDROOM THREE



View from bedroom three.

Bedroom 3 ironically has the same problem as bedroom two, but design-wise there is a huge missed opportunity. The wall which would have given the room somewhat of a water-view is solid. The strange thing about this area of the house is that the two rooms that open to the covered terrace both have solid walls. Bedroom three, the pool equipment room, and sauna room are all in the most important corner of the house and block the major views of the bay from the rest of the home. In my opinion, this is such a custom home that it would have only worked for the original family.



It is also important to state that bedrooms 1, 2, and 3 have very limited views to the side yard due to the high clearstory windows and louvered doors.

MASTER SUITE

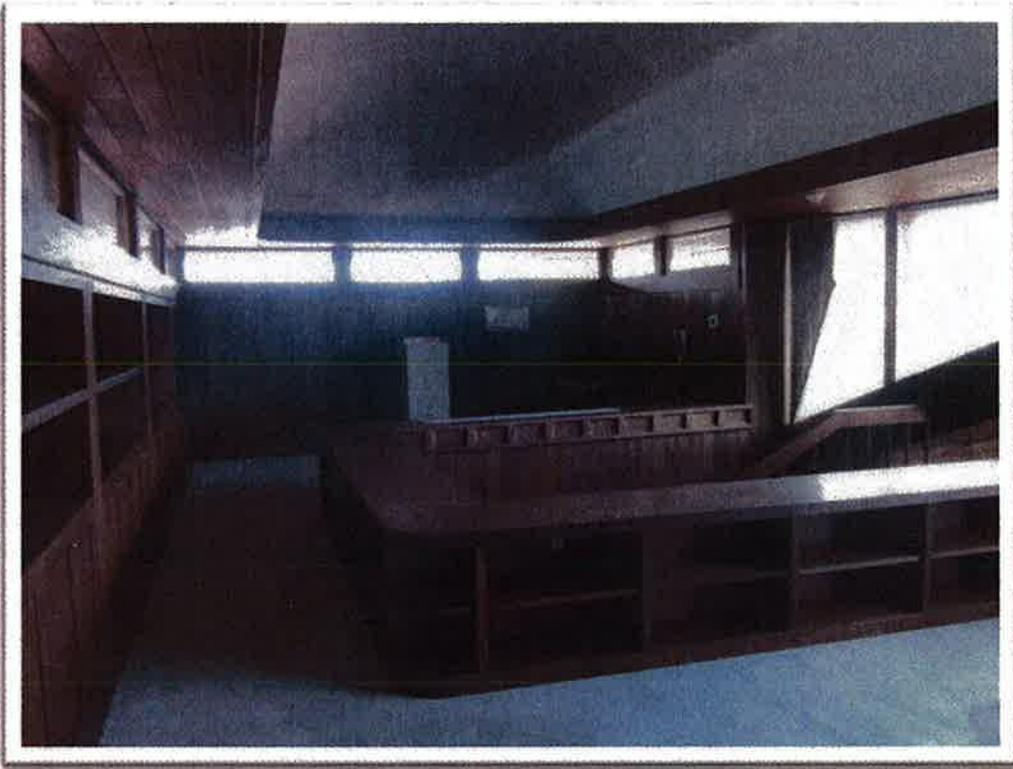
The master, master bath and master sitting room have the same issue. The master bedroom sitting room— which can only be accessed from the downstairs main gallery area— is a fairly large room with absolutely no views to the water, but does in fact give you a glimpse into the dining and living area.



Stairwell leading to master suite.



View of stairwell from master sitting room. Blocks any water views.



Master sitting room.



View of Living Room from Master Bedroom sitting area.



View of Bay from upstairs sitting room if one is standing right against the window. The solid wall of the master bedroom balcony and the guest room block the majority of the views to the bay.

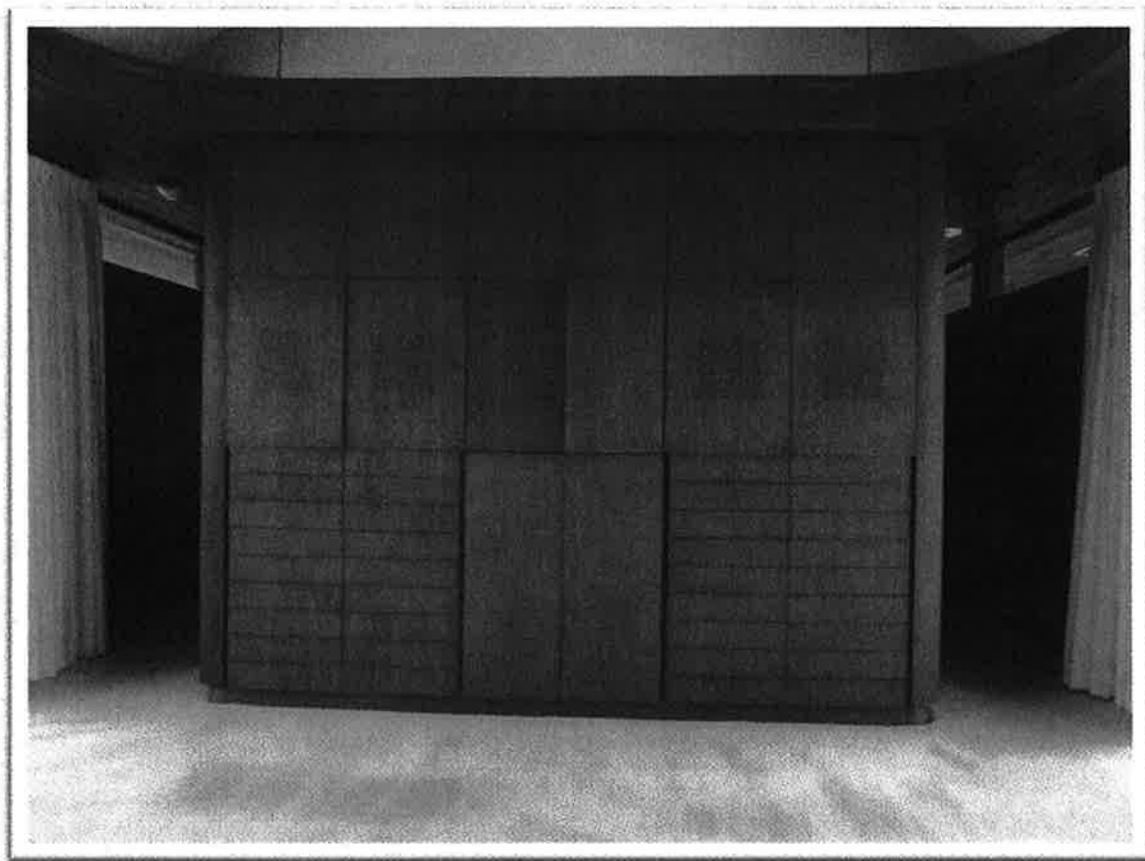


View of dining room and living room from upstairs master sitting area.

From the master sitting area you walk into the master bedroom. This room is small and cozy and typical of the 1960's, however, the views it has to the bay can only be seen when one is standing up. The moment you lay down the solid parapet wall blocks your view to the bay and the canal. The problem doesn't end there; this same issue continues all the way into the master bath and closets. It's safe to say there are no views of any waterways from any spaces in this area.

- **No views from the shower**
- **No views from the tub**
- **No views from the toilet**
- **No views from the vanities**

MASTER BEDROOM



View of built-in from bed. Notice the solid walls and the clearstory windows flanking the room; both are entrances to the master bedroom.



View of canal from Master Bedroom. Notice the solid wall that blocks the majority of views to the canal.



View of the bay from master bedroom. Notice the solid wall and the roof of the guest house as it blocks the majority of the views to the bay.

MASTER BATHROOM

***** No views from the shower, No views from tub, No views from the toilet, No views from the vanities*****



Entrance to closet on the right hand side as one enters master bath area.



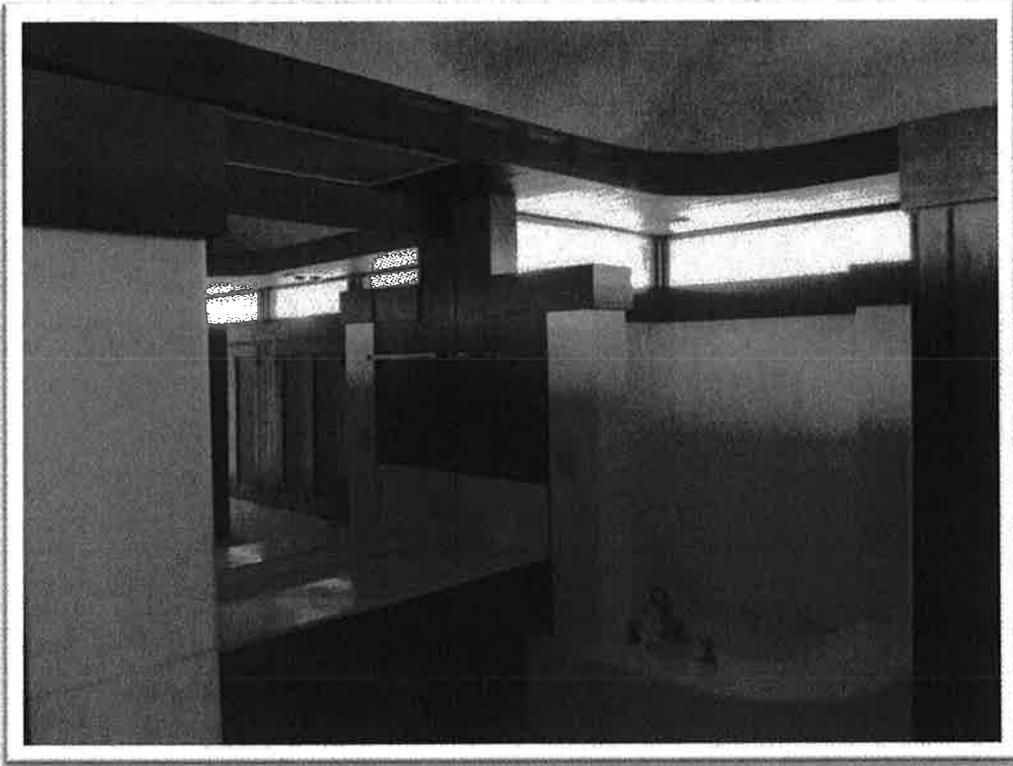
Views from vanity in master bedroom.



View of shower from master bedroom. The solid walls throughout block any views to the water, creating a very enclosed environment.



View of shower inside master bathroom.



View of tub and vanity from shower inside master bathroom. One can see that there are no views to the water.

Ironically, there seems to be a pattern here. It seems like the most important locations of the home are blocked by solid walls (bedroom 3, the pool equipment room and sauna, the family room, guest room, and master bathroom). After analyzing Alfred Browning-Parker's work, it seems like the design decisions he made must have been dictated by the demands and the lifestyle of the client. Given the location of the property, all of these spaces would have been completely open to the sun and waterways like in the Royal Road Residence, the Graham Miller Residence, and the Woodsong Residence.

After evaluating the home, I'm convinced that the original owners probably wanted to have a lot of walls for artwork and a courtyard for sculptures. This home— like a lot of homes designed by Frank Lloyd Wright, an internationally known modern architect at the time—has low ceilings in the gallery and bedroom areas, which create somewhat of a problem for displaying artwork. The gallery which is the wall that fronts the main façade is approximately 8'-0" high with a clearstory of about 1'-4"; which ends up leaving about 6'-8" in height for artwork. This would only work if you housed small paintings, because large paintings range between 5' to 6' in height. You also want to hang paintings at eye level, but at this point it would encroach into the clearstory. One of the strengths this home has is its simple and introverted sense of design; however it lacks the ability to house art. The only areas in which artwork could successfully be displayed in are the wall that backs up to the kitchen from the dining room, and the wall at the end of the lounge area. But the lounge area also has low ceilings that range from 8'-0" at its low, to 9'-0" at its high. Now, had this room been designed to facilitate views to the water, the architect would have designed it to have lots of windows. But the issues don't stop here, there are other major flaws.

The first would be that the home does not have a garage; it has two carports, which by nature isn't bad, but most people today have enclosed garages to protect their cars and tools from the salt spray. The second would be that the house has very little closet space in the master and secondary bedrooms. Finally, the third is that all the bathrooms are small, especially the master bath because they tried to fit too many functions into one small space.

Due to the introverted nature of the home there are some features that are sculpturally interesting. Some of which are:

- The fireplace in the living room. The way that it divides the west living room from the east living room seems to work nicely.
- The wall that divides the gallery from the dining room and how the server is integrated in this wall.
- The sculptural quality of the pool as the main feature of the home with a water feature at the far end of the pool.
- The base of the house which is raised 4' off the ground without any railings, giving off a more streamlined, less cluttered look to the home.

EXTERIOR IMAGES

In this section are a series of exterior photographs that depict the fortress-like qualities of the house:

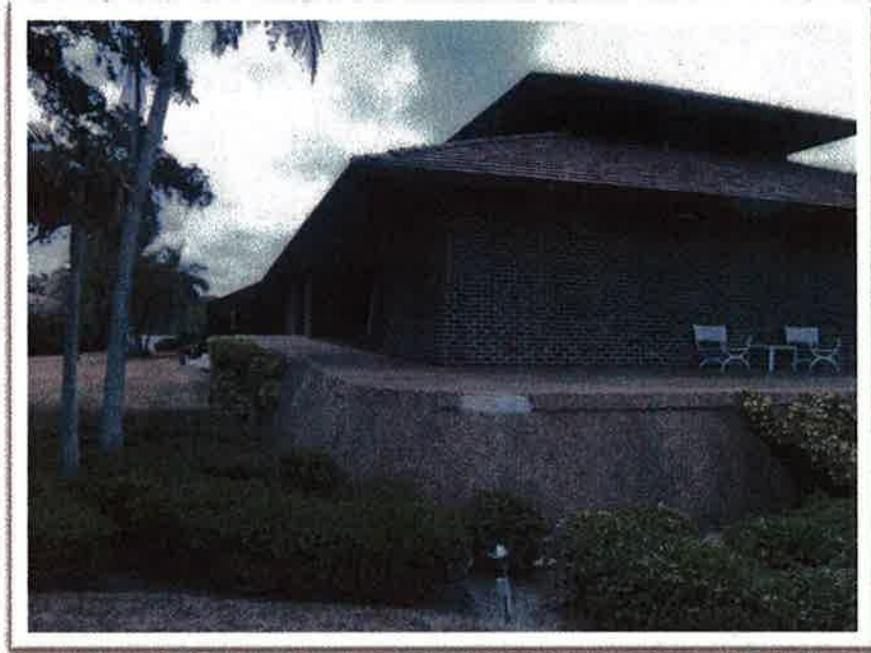


Front Door - Main Entrance

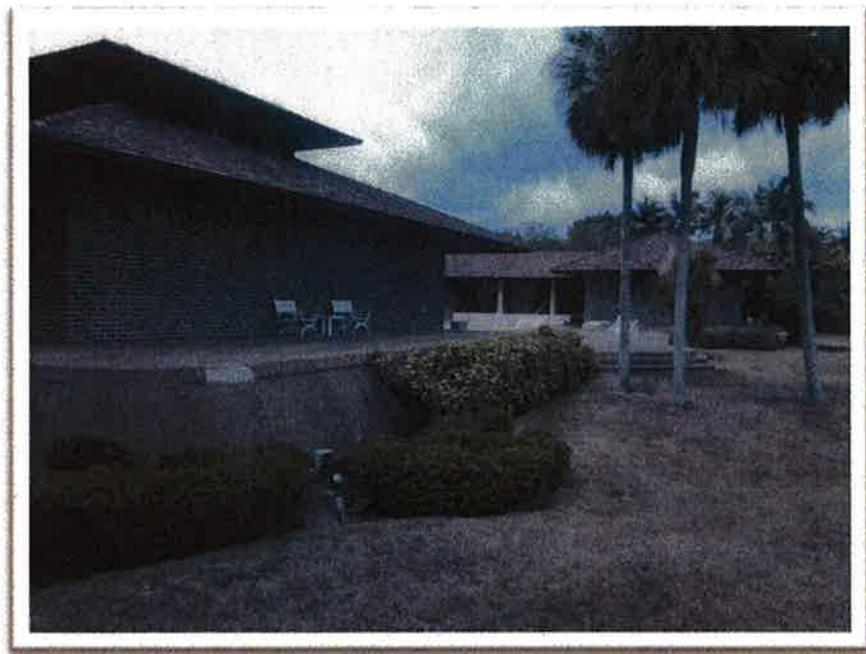
Extremely low overhang at entry steps



View of Main Façade (Front) with clearstory windows tucked underneath eave.



View of south wall of Family Room



View of south wall of Family Room

This solid wall obstructs what would be a main water view from within the house.



View of south wall of Family Room



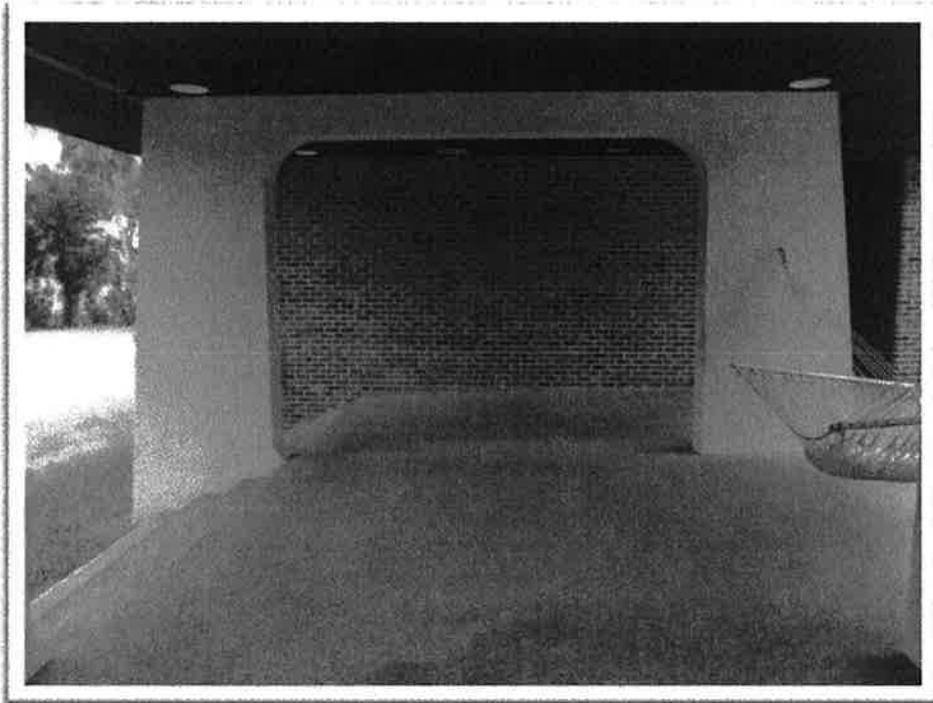
View of bay from behind guest house and Cabana building



View from the bay towards Cabana Bath & Guest house. Solid walls deprive the main house of bay views



Bedrooms 1, 2, & 3 have very limited views to the side yard, because of the high clerestory windows, and louvered doors



View of Cabana building from outside of Bedroom 3

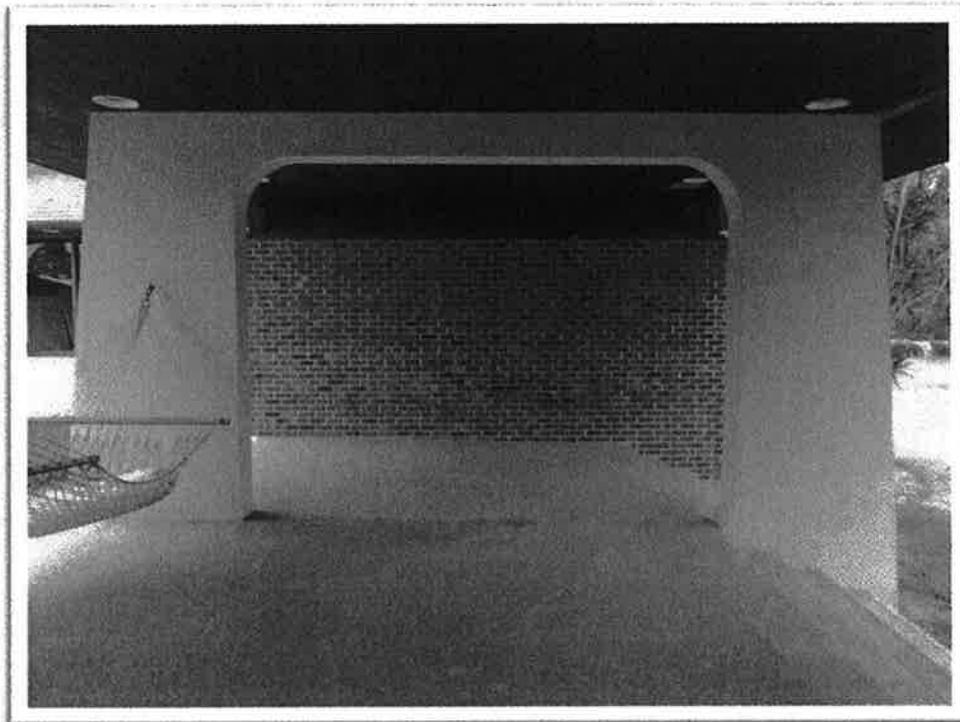
Cabana building blocks direct view of the waterway, and creates an architecturally severe wall without fenestrations



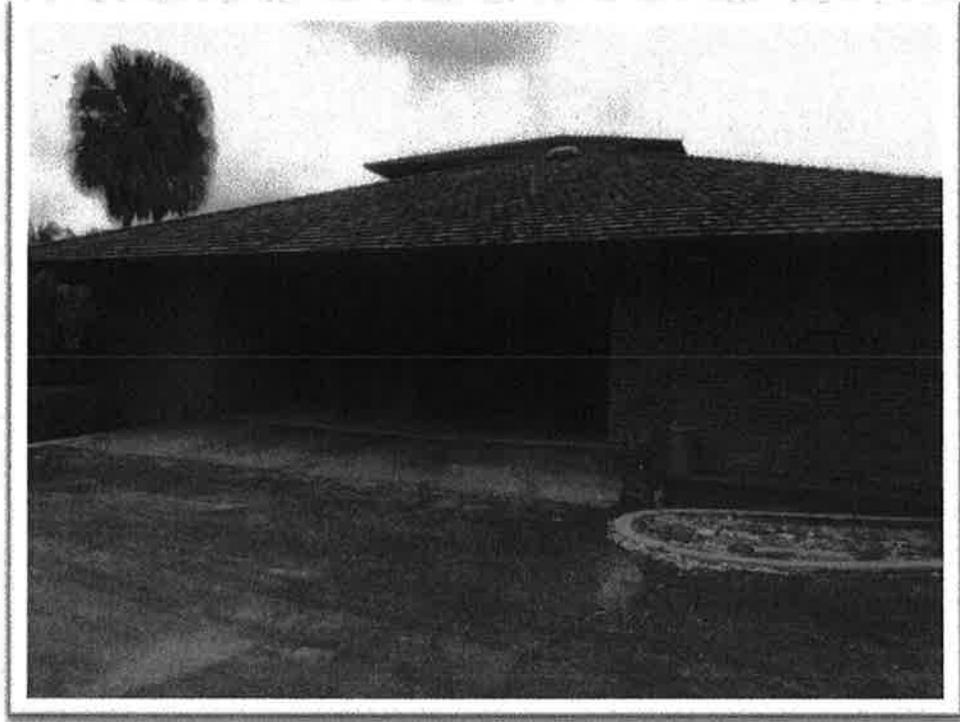
Guest house blocking view of waterway



View of waterway from covered terrace



View of Bedroom 3 from covered terrace

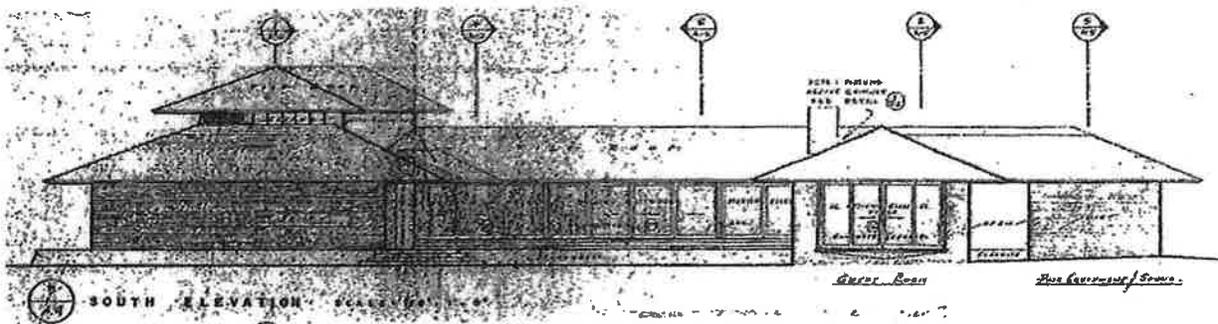
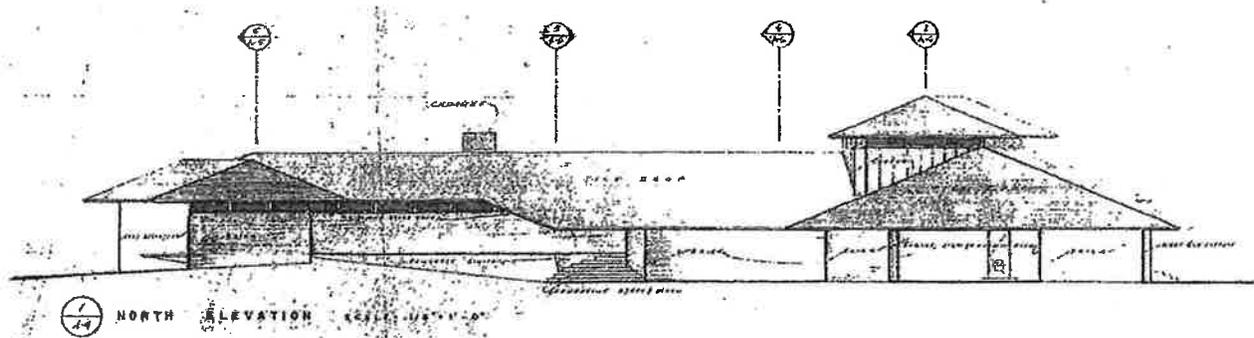


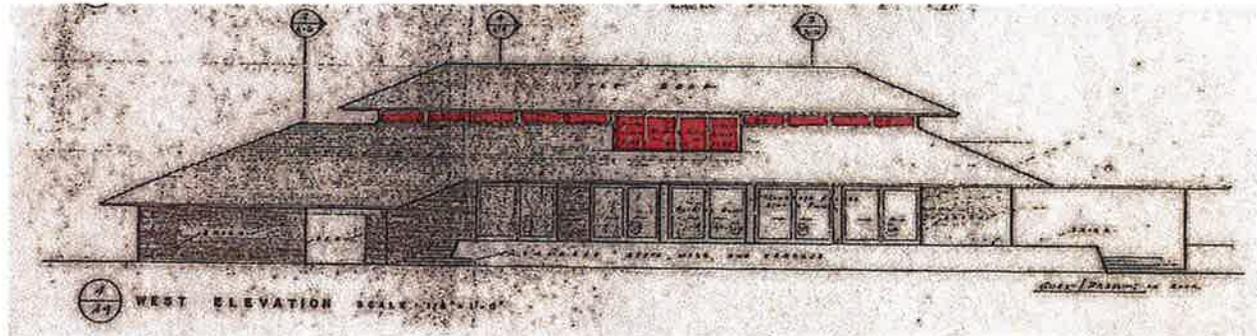
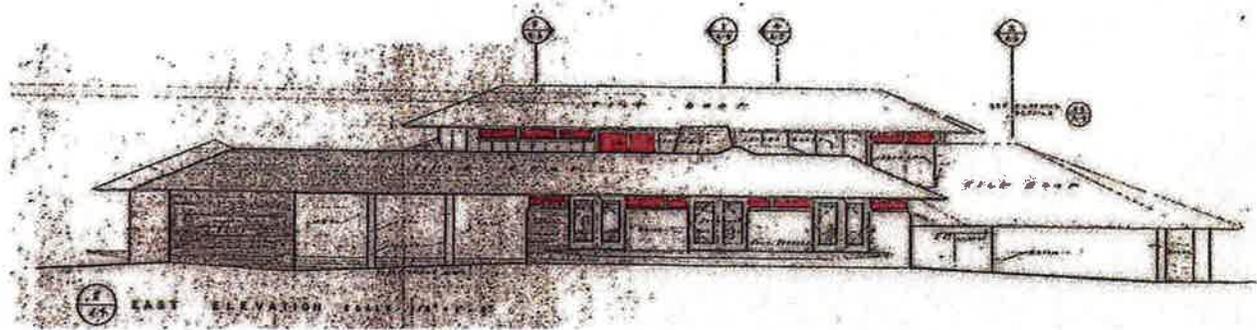
View of carport on the front of the house

No garage doors keep cars unprotected from wind-carried salt and elements.

SOLID TO VOID RATIO

While studying the house I found that the ratio between solid to void was substantially unbalanced. The solid walls clearly overpower the voids which are, in this case, the clearstory windows. The areas which are highlighted in red are the windows, while the areas that are not highlighted black are the solid walls, verifying that the views one has of the waterway and canal from the inside (and outside) are extremely limited.





In conclusion, I don't feel like the architect was given the flexibility to design a home that made good use of the site. The original owners' lifestyle was one of complete privacy and seclusion from their surroundings, and was executed through the use of fort-like walls and an enclosed courtyard. Because of this, they lost their most important amenity; their view of the bay. Due to all the restrictions put onto this site by the original owners, it makes it very difficult to appeal to most families today. Therefore, I would not deem it historic, leaving the home as is, and hoping someone enjoys its intent.

Respectfully,

x 

Rafael Portuondo

President, Portuondo-Perotti Architects