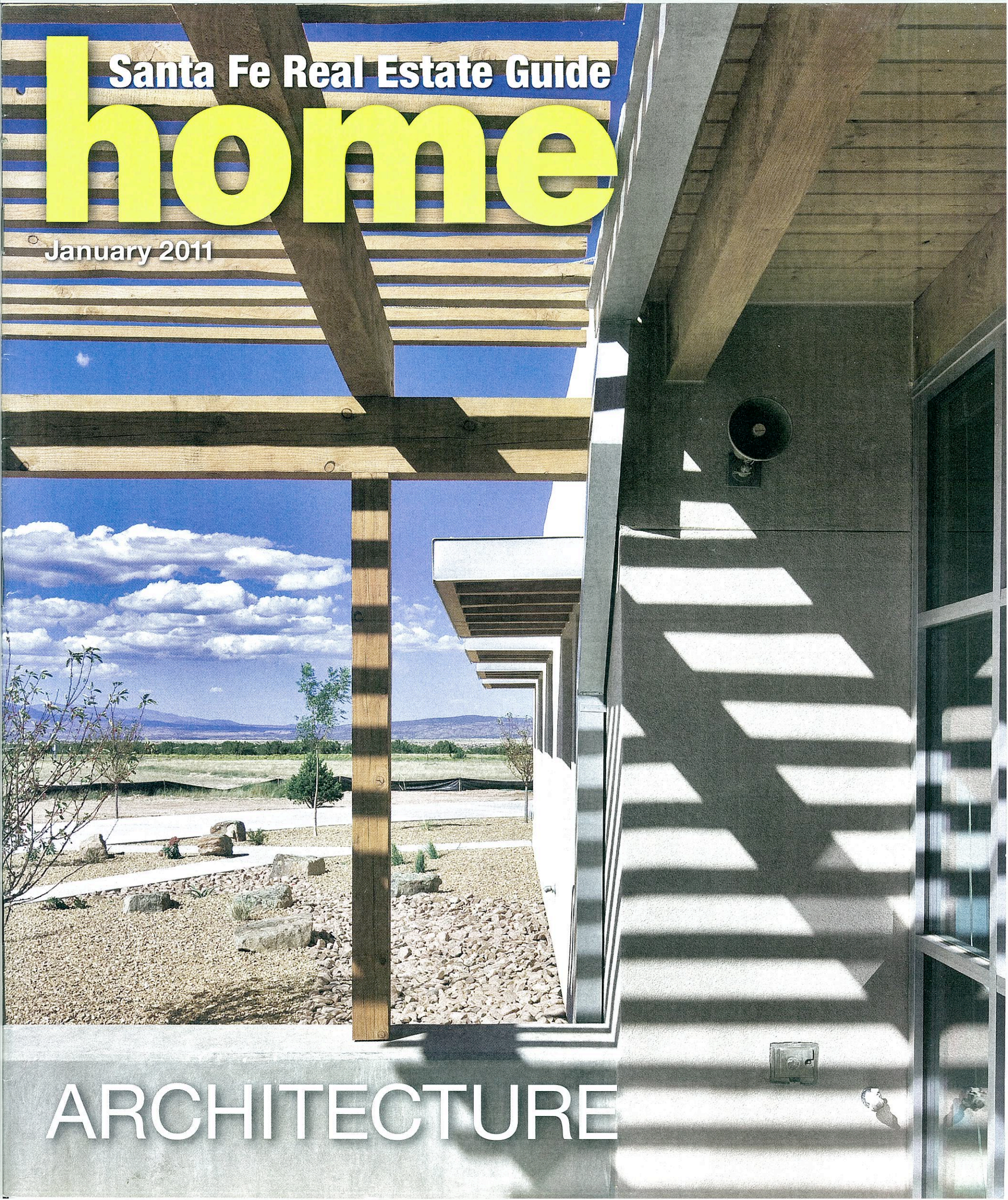


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ARCHITECTURE

New Lannan work nets award for Spears

By Paul Weideman

The graceful Santa Fe home of the Lannan Foundation is an intriguing blend of old and new. It has been built around a pair of buildings that are more than a century old, with sensitive updating by Spears Architects.

In 2002, Spears helped Lannan convert an 1880s Congregational Church into its meeting house. The adaptive re-use project is remembered as "pretty rigorous" by James Horn, senior associate with Spears. "It was in pretty bad shape."

The old church had been well-constructed with triple brick walls. The Spears project (in space that had been occupied by Laura Carpenter Fine Art before Lannan's 1997 move from Los Angeles) restored windows, trusses, and the entry to original materials and appearance.

The architects also created a beautiful scrim ceiling feature with stretched fabric angling down to opposite walls from a central structure.

The Spears Architects work won a pair of merit awards from the American Institute of Architects: one each from the Santa Fe and New Mexico AIA chapters.

Five years later, Lannan called the firm back for a new job: replacing the roof, reworking the inner garden, and providing solar panels and a new, high-efficiency boiler. Those renovations, completed in 2009, brought a citation award in the AIA-Santa Fe awards gala held on Dec. 9.

The upgrades focused on the Lannan Foundation's main building, which began life as the Benjamin M. Read House, a three-room, adobe and lumber structure built in about 1883. Although there have been additions and other alterations to the house over the years, the Read family's walls, floor plan, and architectural details remain intact.

"Lannan wanted to reduce its impact on the environment, reduce the use of nonrenewables," said project architect Horn. "Also there was a feathered, wood-shingle roof they wanted to replace, plus re-doing the garden to be more environmentally conscious and maintenance-free."

The Spears firm proposed a standing-seam roof but the city's Historic Design Review Board wanted shingle. "We ended up compromising with a metal shingle system by Tamko," Horn said. "We worked



James Horn of Spears Architects added a new roof (above) and remodeled a courtyard for the Lannan Foundation. The main Lannan building was born in about 1883 as the Benjamin M. Read house.



hard to find the right texture and we did a special run in the color we wanted: timber brown."

Lannan's inner garden was reworked to better screen the building interior from excessive solar gain. In addition, the new garden was meant to be an inviting,

calming place for employees and visitors.

"The idea was to arrange the garden around an old fireplace and to create a contemplative space with a sound feature," Horn said. That feature is a long, trough fountain of blue-black steel, created by Jeff Overlie. Recirculated water spills from the

fountain into a basin of black pebbles. An enhanced landscaping plan gave the garden a Zen-like feeling of serenity and cleanness, while also cutting maintenance needs.

Hardscaping is an important part of the plan.

"We took sandstone bricks that were there and cleaned them and used them in a different way," Horn said, "and there's a black or dark-gray border of concrete with a sand-float finish."

The architect and workers took pains to fit the hardscaping closely at the building walls. It was very fussy work and resulted in an elegant look.

They also took out overgrown junipers, planted aspen trees, reworked ivy on a wall, added ornamental grasses, and installed pumice wicks to keep roofwater away from the old stone foundation. The unused outdoor fireplace was covered with a thick plate-steel element to add interest in the space.

The aesthetic at Lannan is very cool, and its staff has been receptive to the architects' interest and ideas, Horn said. Patrick Lannan, executive director of the 50-year-old foundation, was at all the design meetings for the renovation.

The recent work included solar panels to reduce the use of electricity and natural gas. The nine photovoltaic modules, a 2-kilowatt system by Positive Energy, were placed painstakingly.

"This is the historic district and you're not supposed to see the panels," Horn said. "So we were out there with foam boards [stand-ins for the expensive PV panels] moving them around to try to make them invisible from Garfield and Sandoval streets."

Horn is currently working on a house in the Santa Fe Estates area. The owners from Chicago contacted him to be their architect after perusing *Western Interiors* magazine and seeing a picture of a Tano Road house that he designed.

He also oversees the AIA-Santa Fe lecture series. Last year, he brought several outside architects to talk in Santa Fe, including Brad Cloepfil and others in conjunction with the *Museums in the 21st Century* exhibit at the New Mexico Museum of Art.

"This year, we have Larry Scarpa coming in, and I'm working on others," Horn said.

See www.santafeaia.org and www.spearsarchitects.com for more information.