

PACIFIC NORTHWEST



AMAZING SPACE

NEWPORT SHORES: For art and children • **BELLEVUE:** Northwest style redefined • **LESCHI:** Modern minimalism • **CARNATION:** Designing with wood • **WHIDBEY ISLAND:** The Schell garden
• **PLUS:** Great home gyms and a striking Woodinville garden

'99 FALL
HOME
DESIGN

MINIMAL. ELEMENTAL.

► A sleek Leschi hideaway sheds its '70s style



Drama and serenity, as seen from the second-level catwalk perch. Over the concrete hearth (fabricated by Dog Paw of Seattle), a provocative painting by Romanian Artist Georges Mazilu titled "Lise et Ses Copains" (or "Lise and Her Friends"). All is protected by exterior-mounted sunshades from EGE Systems, which are connected to the home's custom computer system. When the sun is intense, the black mesh screens lower automatically; when the wind whips, up they go.

WOMEN UNDERSTAND the power of restraint: Boldly stain the lip, but refrain from doing both lest one cross the minimalist line. The same with jewels: a bold band of pearls, a diamond only if it's perfect and very, very large. Colors run to black, white, constructed, few.

In such an ordered world, clutter — be it on the body or in the home — is thought to be best left elsewhere. It's a way of seeing the world and the things in it that requires a constant paring away of the extraneous. When done well, such style shines. When it's not, the result is pretentious.

Fortunately, three years spent thinking about how to transform a boxy, 1970s Leschi home into a stripped-to-the-bones work of art paid off for one thirtysomething couple. Sleek and handsome, today the 1,800 square feet of main living space seems to reach out and embrace the sky. Inside, all is similarly elemental: raw concrete, raw steel, fine ash woods and metal-clad doors.

Open, connected, primitive, sensuous, extreme. A minimalist manor to lust for.

"We didn't want a bigger house, but the walls were getting in the way," said the female half of the couple, a compulsive reader of design mag- ➤



In an act of everyday bravery, the clients decided to have the main bathroom completely open to the second-level bedroom. The bath also opens to the 10-foot span of sliding floor-to-ceiling glass in the view corner of the bedroom. The shower and rectangular sinks are from Villeroy & Boch, as is the free-standing tub (both ordered directly from a wholesaler in France). The maple vanity tables are by Neu Woodworking. (The bathroom has a sliding door that disappears into the wall, although the owners say they seldom use it.)