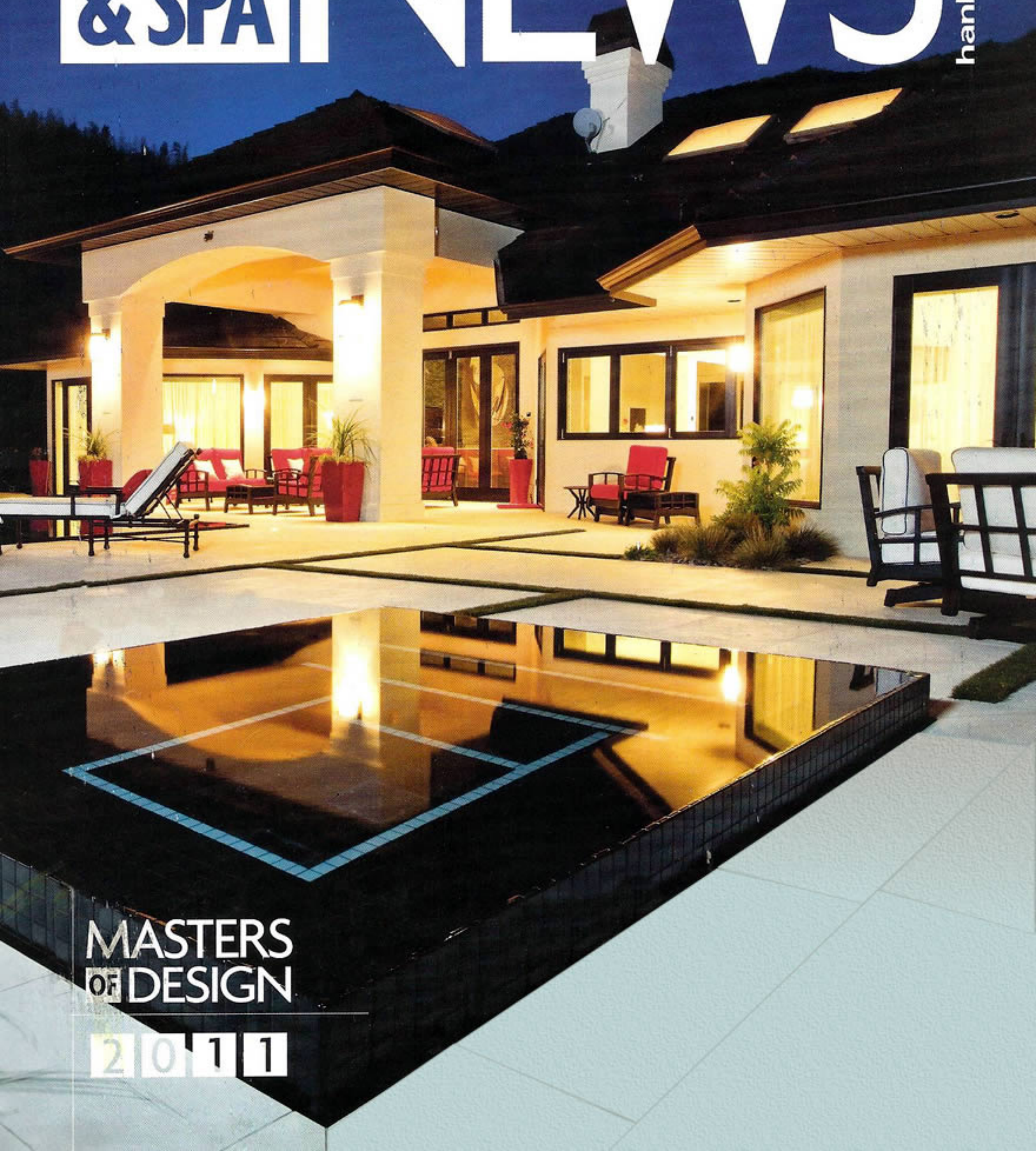


POOL & SPA NEWS

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MASTERS
OF DESIGN

2011

SPAS

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Skip Phillips Questar Pools and Spas | Gene Brown Valley Pool & Spa







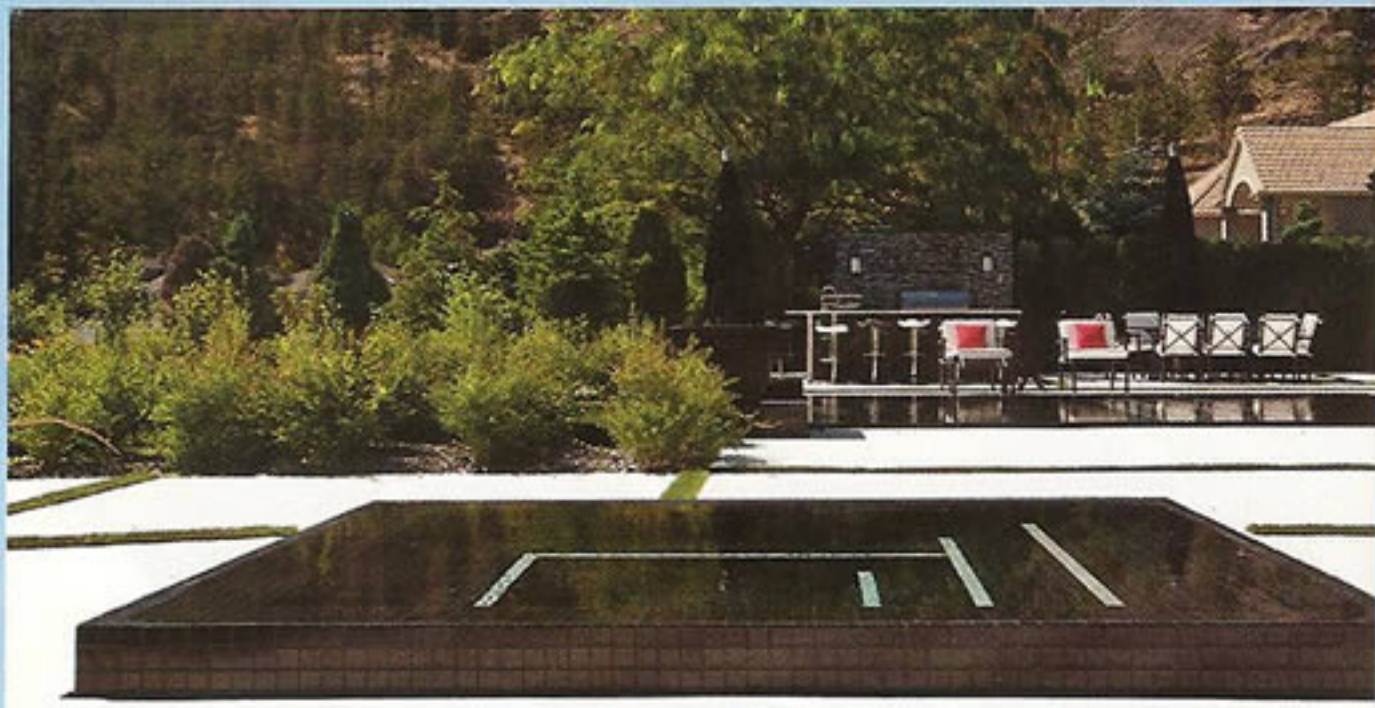
Precise visual balance and sleek lines create a geometric wonderland.

△ The big picture

This Canadian backyard was designed to be a crowd-pleaser. “The homeowner likes to throw big parties,” says Gene Brown, president of Valley Pool & Spa in Kelowna, British Columbia, Canada, a Genesis 3 Gold member. “And this is a vacation home, so it’s all about creating the feel of a luxury getaway.” That’s partly why he and designer Skip Phillips, president of Questar Pools and Spas in Escondido, Calif., and Genesis 3 Design Group co-founder, wanted to capture a contemporary, high-end look for the spa that would fit in at an exclusive resort. One concern was that multiple destinations in the backyard each have separate identities, with plenty of flow between them to prevent a claustrophobic feel. To accomplish this, Phillips and Brown placed the spa inside the angle formed between the pool and house, creating a distinct, sizable space that doesn’t crowd the project’s other features. Additionally, the spa sits directly across the pool from the barbecue area, which also helps to balance the visual weight and create symmetry.

▷ Eye of the beholder

An important element of this design was the need to differentiate the spa area from the pool in the center of the yard. Phillips and Brown raised the lip of the spa about 2 inches above the nearly flush pool to give it what Phillips calls “visual weight.” Without that lift, the spa would blend into the view. “If we had left the spa at the same elevation as the pool, it wouldn’t look right,” Phillips adds. “The spa needs to be higher than that to look proportionally accurate.” The elevation of the spa also adds to the slightly futuristic feel of the yard. “It looks like a shiny cube slowly raising from the deck,” Brown says. “Everyone does a double-take [before they realize it’s a spa].” That attention to detail goes below



deck as well. Even though the spa appears to be separate from the pool, the half-inch slot surrounding the vessel actually flows directly into the pool’s surge tank, so the entire body of water is cared for in one system.



◁ With complements
The vessels in this yard are striking on their own, but the designers also took great care to ensure they harmonized with the look of the house. The perimeter-overflow spa utilizes dark tile and clean lines to form a sort of visual conversation with the rectangular windows of the house and nearby grass-edged squares of patio. The cream-colored porcelain decking material was used inside the home as well, while the standard black tile on the spa matches the roof and creates an ideal palette for the reflections the designers wanted to capture on the water. When aiming for the extremely precise lines achieved on the spa,

Brown had a few tricks up his sleeve. For example, to lay the tile perfectly, he hung a large piece of stainless steel over each flat surface, which every piece of tile was then pushed up against to create a precisely aligned border. ■