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Environmental Modernism Meets Miami Minimalism

Inside STRANG's Timeless Cossu Residence

TEXT Emilie Kress

In a world increasingly seeking solace through simplicity, the notion of modern minimalism has evolved beyond mere aesthetic austerity. Today's most compelling minimalist designs strive for a delicate balance: clean lines and sophisticated restraint, infused with an undeniable sense of warmth and an innate connection to place. Few firms articulate this modern design philosophy with the rigor and grace of STRANG, the Miami-based practice renowned for advancing its self-described "Environmental Modernism." To wit, the firm's latest residential design Cossu stands as a luminous case study in this architectural principle, demonstrating how a commitment to context and detail can transform a luxury residence into a sanctuary of timeless design.

Located on the shores of Biscayne Bay in Miami Beach, FL, the residence was conceived as a holistic design exercise, encompassing architecture, interior design and décor, and landscape architecture. STRANG's approach was driven by the desire for a modern, yet timeless home defined by interconnected spaces and indoor-outdoor synergy. The ultimate goal was to deliver a contemporary residence that, despite its minimalist aesthetic, would feel

inherently warm and inviting.

Central to this vision was a calculated balance of textures. The design intentionally juxtaposes both the raw and the refined to create a dynamic harmony. This is evident in the carefully curated material palette, where cool, anchoring elements meet natural, vibrant warmth. The foundational cool tones are established with sophisticated materials like Dekton stone, concrete, and sleek grey/black marble. This modern shell is then beautifully contrasted and softened by the rich, organic texture of walnut wood, which introduces an immediate sense of warmth and domesticity. Further enhancing the tactile experience is the use of silver travertine, applied for its distinctive texture and ability to add depth across the 6,000 square-foot residence. This interplay of materials ensures the home is not merely seen, but felt.

The elevated selection of interior furnishings and fixtures complements this direction, with pieces ranging from Flexform, Poliform, Tribu, and Paola Lenti to Miele and LG appliances in the kitchen and CEA Design plumbing fixtures throughout–each selected to underscore the overarching theme of luxury, longevity, and design precision.

STRANG's dedication to a cohesive and intentional design is perhaps most evident in how the team utilized clean architectural lines and natural materials, but paired them with advanced lighting solutions and sophisticated smart home systems for enhanced comfort and efficiency. Notably, the selection of high-performance materials was non-negotiable, as they were chosen specifically for their durability and ability to maintain warmth against the demands of the residence's setting.

Beyond the material selection, the project faced a significant architectural conundrum that required a truly inventive solution. According to STRANG founder, Max Strang, FAIA, "The design called for an extended cantilever, a dramatic structural feat that necessitated accommodating substantial structural beams. This, in turn, severely limited the plenum space, the area between the structural ceiling and the finished ceiling, making traditional integrated lighting a challenge while simultaneously needing to maximize ceiling height."

STRANG's solution transformed the constraint into a defining architectural feature. In the primary gathering area and dining space, the team eschewed typical recessed lighting in favour of a bespoke, constellation-like lighting feature using numerous tiny, carefully positioned fixtures. This masterful intervention not only navigated the limited structural space, but also created a captivating, celestial ambiance. Complementing this, sleek pendant lights from Vibia were selected for the kitchen, maintaining the clean lines and visual lightness required by the design concept. This commitment to practical, yet beautiful, problem-solving is a hallmark of the firm's approach.

STRANG's foundational philosophy of "Environmental Modernism" holds that architecture must maintain an acute awareness of its surrounding environment. For the Cossu residence, this meant creating a home that is both aesthetically modern and climatically responsible. Therefore, the strategic flow

between indoor and outdoor areas, facilitated by large expanses of glass and intentional spatial planning, ensures the subtropical climate is not a barrier but an extension of the living space.

Under the direction of founder Max Strang, a respected voice in Florida architecture, the firm has consistently demonstrated a thoughtful integration with the region's unique climate concerns. As noted in the firm's monograph, "Subtropic: The Architecture of [STRANG]," Strang and his team deeply consider the long-term impact of climate change on residential design. Cossu, through its use of durable, high-performance materials, and intelligent yet intimate, light-filled design, stands ready to embrace the region's coastal future. The design is also a powerful testament to the idea that true minimalism is not about having less, but about designing with more intention.

STRANG

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THE WINDOW COMPANY
EXPERIENCE & CREATIVITY

TEXT Krista Deverson

When it comes to aesthetics, all of the components of a house work together to create that overall appearance that a designer or homeowner is hoping for. Therefore, selecting all of the right elements for a certain design are essential to create the look that is just perfect. The Window Company's extensive experience in windows and doors means that homeowners are assured the product will be perfect for their desired aesthetic.

Rob Morgan founded The Window Company in 2020, when he saw that there was an opportunity to provide more to the industry than was currently available. He wanted to offer a superior experience with different high-quality products that weren't available at the time. He also recognized that he could use his creativity to develop solutions that would contribute to the overall look and feel of the home and make it a cohesive design. To him, the details mattered and he wanted to ensure that from design to deliverables, an elevated solution could be executed for the windows and doors to enhance the appeal of each property. He took his over eighteen years experience in the industry and built something unique that could offer clients another option that didn't exist in the market.

He began by supplying and installing his distinctive products to custom home residential clients, at the architecture and design level, the builder level, and the client level. His creative approach to window and door solutions meant that his business quickly grew to service clients across the Greater Toronto Area, to Muskoka, and now beyond to outlying