



Real Estate

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Wall-to-Wall Ingenuity

The rooms in an Altadena home are transformed at the push of a button.

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Rex Beasley, who calls himself "the mad inventor," has come up with some ideas in home design that literally "turn architecture around," as he describes it.

Using the Altadena home of a friend, Beasley, president of Venice-based FutureSpace Corp., created an 8-foot-wide wall that can be rotated between the master bedroom and the living room.

On one side of the wall is a home entertainment center with a big-screen TV. On the other side is a food service counter and a wet bar. One side could have a waterfall, an art gallery or shelves for a collection. Or perhaps a fireplace.

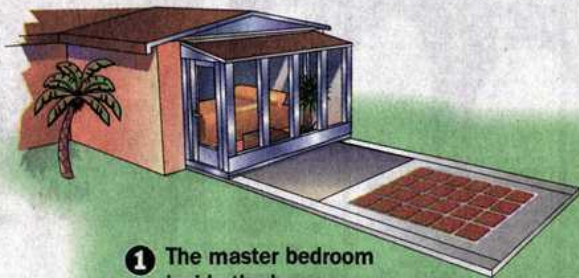
With the push of a remote control, the wall in the Altadena home pivots so that the entertainment center is in the living room. With another push, the entertainment center is in the bedroom. The homeowner sometimes leaves the wall open during parties

Please see Ingenuity, K5

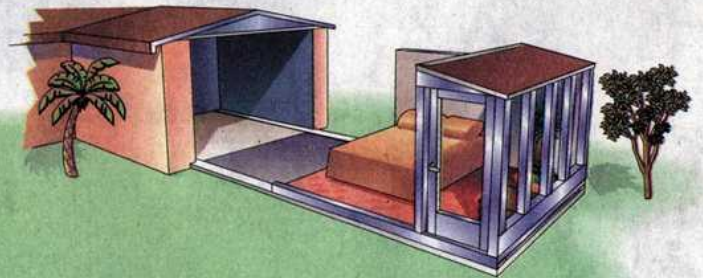


"This really makes architecture more functional," FutureSpace inventor Rex Beasley says.

KEN HIVELY / Los Angeles Times

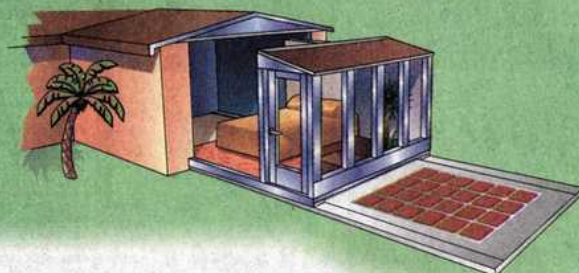


1 The master bedroom inside the house.



3 When fully extended, the room is practically an island in the backyard.

2 Push a button and the room glides out, open to the sky and now twice its original size.



ROBERT HERNANDEZ / Los Angeles Times

Ingenuity: New Technology Creates Rooms That Change, Expand

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so guests can use it as a walk-through.

On top of that, the bedroom can move into the backyard for sleeping under the stars. Push a button and the room glides out, becoming almost twice its original size. Push again, and the room extends beyond the roof line to become an island in the garden.

Beasley's system can be controlled by remotes, as it is in the Altadena house, or by phone, allowing a move from a different location.

If there is a rolling blackout, "you can push the wall or the room by hand," Beasley said.

"This really makes architecture more functional," he said. "Indoor-outdoor houses usually mean lots of glass but not really outdoors."

Should it rain when the bedroom is outside, a moisture detector can serve as a trigger for the room to retreat, he said.

If a snake or a rodent approaches, a motion detector can work the same way. An electronic box, attached under the floor, emits a vibration that snakes don't like but people can't hear, he said.

"And if there's no activity in a room, a motion sensor can automatically close the room after a specified amount of time."

Once the room is back in the house, it "seals all the way around," he added.

"The hardware to do these things is only a few dollars if the system is set up for it," Beasley said.

Cost varies to set up a bedroom or a wall like this, but Beasley estimated the price for a 12-by-14-foot bedroom like the one in Altadena starting at \$45,000. He figures a living room 22 feet in diameter would be closer to \$150,000. The 8-foot-wide wall, which is the same size as most sliding glass doors, would cost about \$11,500, depending on what is on it. Home-entertainment centers can run up costs significantly.

So far, the only house in which Beasley has built his trademarked

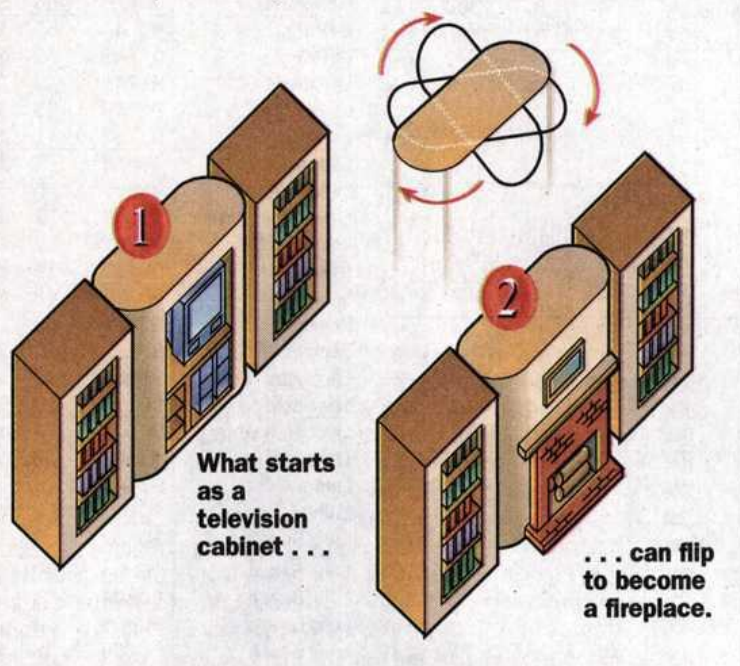


KEN HIVELEY/Los Angeles Times

Inventor Rex Beasley moves a wall he designed in an Altadena home.

Turn, Turn, Turn

In a FutureSpace home, a center console is reversible:



Los Angeles Times

Fluid Architecture "products," as he refers to them, is in Altadena, but he has been in discussions to include them in a new home in Manhattan Beach.

The concept particularly makes sense at the beach, where land is at a premium, or for remodels where there is no room to add on.

Although Beasley just started marketing the idea, he has worked on it for a decade.

During that time, he also created what he calls the Transformation Platform, which is a turntable or a lazy susan.

It can be used in such places as the dining room. The turntable can

be swung around so the dining room table faces an indoor fireplace, a city view or a garden. The turntable might be swiveled even farther so that the table is in the garden.

The Surface Transformer, another Beasley invention, enables food to be swung out to a table from the kitchen and dirty dishes to be returned from the table to be washed.

Fluid Architecture also has applications in commercial space, he said. "These are products that can be mass-produced and used in apartment buildings, home offices, boardrooms, you name it."

He has already created a couple of boardrooms. "Boardrooms are notorious for sitting empty, but with mine," he said, "you push a button, and the room splits in half to create two smaller rooms."

The underlying concept behind all his inventions is simple and practical, Beasley said.

So why hasn't the approach become commonplace before now?

Beasley, who was educated and practiced in engineering and environmental design and holds a number of patents for his products.