

A man in a white button-down shirt and blue jeans stands in a modern, glass-walled room. The room has large windows and a dark frame. The text 'STROM ARCHITECTS' is overlaid in a dotted font across the center of the image.

STROM ARCHITECTS

Strom Architects is a new practice specialising in bespoke and beautiful contemporary homes. This practice is not just about providing a design to fit a brief, it is about getting to the core of the client's desires and creating a home that is timeless and inherent to its environment.



Watson House is the most recently completed house that Magnus designed whilst he was a director John Pardey Architects, and it embodies his ideas and principles. It grew out of a client brief that did not stipulate an architectural style, but was more about how they wanted to live as a family and in relation to the site, and out of this, the design evolved.



Magnus Strom was five years old when he realised he wanted to be an architect. He was fascinated by houses, rooms and spaces even at this tender age, and this passion has endured and grown for over 30 years. Setting up his own practice in May of this year, was the realisation of one dream, but will now allow him to specialise in the kind of architecture of which he has always dreamed.

"We spend so much of our lives inside buildings - public or private - but our homes are our castles, our sanctuaries. It is the area in our lives on which we spend the most money, lavish the most love and on which we hang the highest expectations, but all too often, the architecture of these spaces does not do justice to the wealth within. Our homes should reflect our personalities, show our histories, highlight our desires and provide us with our own familiar comforting embrace, but within intrinsic architecture that improves our quality of life."

Homes are living organisms that change and grow with ideas and time

to evolve gracefully. He hugely favours natural materials, and tries very hard to utilise materials found within the surrounding environment, so as to give the impression of the house being born into and belonging to the landscape. He says this also enables the design to be completely tailored to its particular site, as every site, like a fingerprint, is different.

"A house should always sit within the context of its environment, and should address all the elements of it - be it views, prevailing weather, microclimate etc. But more than this, it should complement its owners, and the landscape."

Magnus has worked for renowned architects' practices both in the UK and abroad, but now relishes the fact that as a small independent outfit, he can really focus on his relationships with clients and hands-on involvement at all stages of a project. Large practices can at times be impersonal, and more about a brand than the client, but Magnus believes that a

better home will emerge from a harmonious working relationship with his clients. Building these relationships means that the houses he designs become more tailored, more exclusive and more bespoke to the people with whom he is working. He feels it is much easier to design a house for someone when you have an understanding of who they are and the way that they want to live. "For true success, clients and architects should choose each other, based on a professional and personal understanding."

"Homes are living organisms that change and grow with ideas and time. They co-exist with their owners and the environment and the materials from which they have been created. A true testament to a good home is that it does more than merely provide shelter from the elements, it should initially evoke a sense of wonder and then enfold you in a haven of peace and belonging".

Magnus runs his practice from Lymington, and he is also a part-time lecturer at the Architecture Course at Portsmouth University.

— *Strom Architects*

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The Hurst House is a contemporary family house located on the edge of the village of Bourne End in Buckinghamshire that Magnus designed whilst working at John Pardey Architects. The site enjoys unobstructed views across the Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

The clients' brief was to build a very sustainable and contemporary family home that will have the flexibility to successfully cope with changing family conditions as their children grow up. Magnus is currently completing the working drawings package and it is scheduled to commence on site in early 2011.

