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Greener Pastures

Clean furnishings live side by side with nature in this dramatic bunker.

On Austin's outskirts, where urban, industrial, and rural collide, lawyer and science-fiction author Chris Brown's bunker-style home redefines modern city living. Designed by architect Thomas Bercy, the glass walls and living roof give the public spaces, particularly the home's open living room, a direct line to the outdoors.

The concrete, steel, and glass house is divided into two distinct public and private halves with the help of massive glass walls. Furnishings in the space are kept simple to retain focus on the incredible mole's-eye view. Brown didn't want any wood in the house, as a matter of personal preference, but some did find its way inside in the form of modern backless stools by local furniture maker Ryan Anderson. Other regional finds

include a pieced-together area rug by University of Texas professor Igor Siddiqui. Agustina Rodriguez of Agi Miagi, also Brown's girlfriend, fabricated the mezzanine stairs and most of the lighting in the living room. Other pieces include an Extra Wall modular sofa by Piero Lissoni for Living Divani and Jens Risom's webbed side chair for Knoll Studio.

A veritable theater of the natural world is visible from nearly every room in the house through the glass-and-steel curtain wall, a proprietary steel tube framing system that Bercy Chen fitted with one-inch, insulated, low-E glass. "We move between rooms and treat the natural environment around us as a very big part of our home," Brown says. See more from the glassy, grassy knoll at dwell.com/country-bunker



Problem Giving a nature-loving family a living space that communes with its formerly industrial lot.

Solution Bury the house under a hill; clad the rooms in walls of glass; and landscape with native plantings.



Project: Edgeland House
 Architect: Bercy Chen Studio,
bcarc.com
 Location: Austin, Texas
 Photography: Dave Mead
 Published: April 2013

How Does Your Garden Reboot?

Thanks to the ubiquity of smartphones, the connected home now can apply even to plant life. Try these tools to help bring the outdoors in, suggested by PSFK cofounder Piers Fawkes, who launched the company's first smart home exhibition in 2013. "We've seen the rise of growing herbs and produce at home for a while now, but it's always been difficult for an urban or suburban dweller to care for their crop," says Fawkes. psfk.com/home

Home Aquaponics Kit, \$60. In this symbiotic system, a fish's excrement in the tank feeds plants; the roots, in turn, clean the water. backtotheroots.com

The Bitponics System, \$500 plus \$9 per month. This app-controlled system manages pumps and lights that help spring growth or autumn harvest behavior. bitponics.com

Koubachi Plant Sensor, from \$118. Stick the wi-fi-connected sensor into soil to manage its growth with an interactive "assistant." store.koubachi.com