



RESIDENTIAL PALLADIO WINNER  
RESIDENTIAL NEW DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION—LESS THAN 5,000 SQUARE FEET

## POND FARM

Albert, Righter & Tittmann Architects



**LEFT** The compound is comprised of a main house, a barn, a guest house, and a garage.

**BELOW** The generous eaves feature acorn ornamentation.

**W**hen commissioned to create the Pond Farm compound in Southern New Hampshire, Albert, Righter & Tittmann Architects looked to the site itself and its agrarian roots for inspiration and guidance.

Through many generations, the property had been a farm. The architecture had always been simple, agrarian, and quintessentially New England, with a succession of barns housing cows and other animals built and torn down and rebuilt. Although the active rural farm had slowly faded away and was abandoned, its rural history remained present when the client bought it.

Three structures remained: two small barns still housing farm tools and the last version of the farmhouse. One barn was rebuilt to become the guest house; the other was converted into a storage shed for farm equipment.

“We wanted the new design to bring forth the ghosts, so to speak, of previous generations of farmers who worked the land,” says John B. Tittmann, AIA, NCARB, a principal in the Boston-based architectural firm. “Working with Liz Cahill, the project architect, we created a house that can be seen as a collage of barn forms that come together. The whole composition unites the house with the two existing barns and a new



‘barn’ used as a garage for the modern cars.”

That homage started with the siting of the new house.

“The old house was in terrible shape, so we unfortunately had to remove it,” Tittmann says. “But we put the new house in the same place and positioned its new suite of rooms using what we imagined the original

farmers would have done. The primary north-to-south axis runs parallel to the shore of the lake to take in the water views, and a secondary east-to-west axis runs perpendicular through the main entrance, through a covered porch to an original grid of perfectly placed sugar maples overlooking the lake.

The primary living spaces are contained within the southern-most “barn”

section of the house. This volume is slightly shifted from the majority of the house to be perpendicular to the meridian, an orientation selected to make best use of the sun and its energy, as the pragmatic farmers would have done long before cheap fossil fuels were available.

“We positioned the house so the building faces perfectly south,” Tit-

ttmann says. “The house itself becomes like a solar clock, and you can tell time by the angle of the shadows coming through the south windows.”

Carefully dimensioned, generous eaves, which Tittmann says “are detailed with elements of classical entablatures,” protect the rooms from the high summer sun while allowing low winter rays in to provide heat.

Acorn ornaments, tucked discreetly at corners, reference “the forest and the trees from which these wooden buildings are made; they bring the eye to a critical juncture,” he says. “Although it’s sort of a Doric eave or cornice, the rest is simplified to barn trim.”

The secondary living spaces of the house are carefully oriented and linked to the original grid of sugar maples planted a century ago.

The four clapboard structures of the composition—the house and the three smaller “barns”—are protected under painted-steel roofs.

The siding and trim are painted classic New England barn red to “connect to the history of the place,” Tittmann says. “Traditional ferrous oxide red was used by farmers starting in the 18th and 19th centuries because it was an inexpensive preservative. We used green on the window sashes and doors of the main house because that’s the color that was on the originals.”

In the interior, the agrarian theme comes full circle in the large living room with its piano. This simple large rectangular room is animated by four “saddlebag” bays—two sun-filled bays, a warm fireplace bay and the kitchen bay—that hang on its sides in a pinwheel fashion.

These indoor spaces are balanced by access to two outdoor spaces: the screened porch that overlooks the lake and the main entry.

The high ceiling, which is paneled in red birch, a species native to New England and sourced locally, embraces the room as would an overturned boat, or even an ark.

“The frieze, with its Doric rigor and set at seven feet, holds the room together like a hatband,” Tittmann says. “By bringing the frieze down to seven feet, the otherwise high room has an intimate, human scale. The whole room feels composed and simple, yet the plan slips and slides depending on the uses.”

When designing Pond Farm, which pairs historic precedent with modern amenities such as foot-thick, insulated walls for energy efficiency, “we wanted to walk respectfully on this land,” Tittmann says. “Everything we did makes it new and fresh, but nothing interrupts the connection to place.”



## KEY SUPPLIERS

**ARCHITECT** Albert, Righter & Tittmann Architects; Principal In Charge, John Tittmann; Project Architect, Liz Cahill

**GENERAL CONTRACTOR** Dean Anderson Construction

**LANDSCAPE ARCHITECT** Cummin Associates

**CUSTOM CABINETRY** Daniel Cherneff Woodworking, Belmont, Massachusetts

**WINDOWS AND DOORS** Loewen Windows

**WOOD FLOORING AND PANELING** A.E. Sampson and Son, Waldoboro, Maine

**TOP** The window trim and doors on the main house were painted green, the same color as the originals.

**MIDDLE** The back of the main house has a screened-in porch that faces the lake.

**ABOVE** The back of the house was oriented by a grid of sugar maples that were planted a century ago.