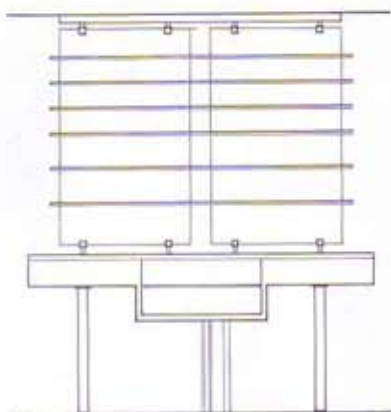


Work Abroad 2: **London Terrace**

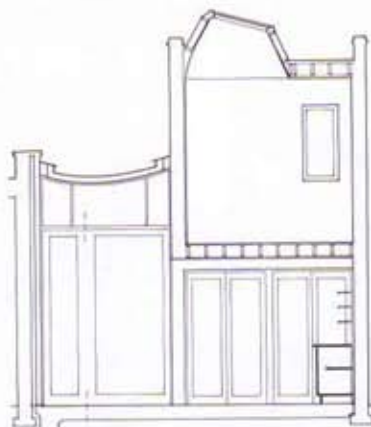
Rice Residence, Shepherd's Bush, London, England; John McMinn

This page: a curved concrete roof floats over the dining room addition of this terrace house for renowned engineer Peter Rice. Facing page: a shelving unit which divides the dining room from the kitchen features steel shelves cantilevered off a glass screen. Inset: view back to the garden through a large glass pivot door.

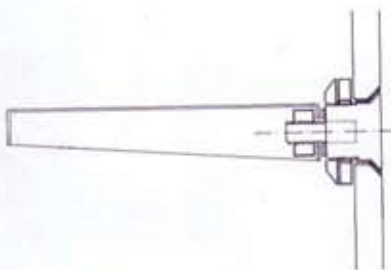




Shelving unit detail



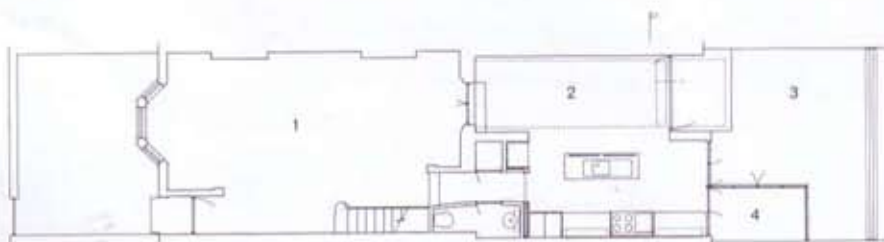
Section a-a



Steel shelf detail



Concrete roof detail



Ground floor plan

- | | |
|---------------|----------------|
| 1 living room | 3 garden |
| 2 dining room | 4 conservatory |

Upon graduating from London's Architectural Association in 1990, Victoria native John McMinn was offered a remarkable commission: the design of a house addition for one of the finest engineers in the world. Peter Rice, seeing a bridge installation produced by McMinn while at the AA, was so impressed by the work that he entrusted the recent graduate to renovate and add to his Victorian terrace house in London, England. The main floor addition was completed a year before Peter Rice's untimely death in October 1992. (Following this project McMinn worked as a consultant for Ove Arup Engineering in Paris, then after winning the Prix de Rome in 1993, returned to Canada where he teaches at the University of Toronto, as well as doing furniture, installation and set design.)

The project involved the rethinking of the entire back of the house, while the front of the house remained untouched. The typically com-

partmentalized terrace house plan was given a fluid, modern spaciousness through the addition of a lofty dining room parallel to the kitchen at the back.

The dining room addition addresses that classic problem of the Victorian house, the bringing of light into the deep interior, through an unusual experiment with glass block-peppered cast concrete. The curved concrete roof over the dining area incorporates a pattern of glass blocks, the placement of which is based on sun studies which maximize daylight penetration. The white concrete is made from a custom mix of white portland cement with white sand and aggregate to maximize luminosity. The convex inner surface of the concrete is softened by the use of a coarsely textured fabric on the formwork. The structure is virtually invisible, concealed by glazing frames.

A glass shelving unit separates the dining area from the renovated kitchen, incorporating



Top: detail, base of shelf unit between the dining room and kitchen.

Above: the new dining room fills in the open corner behind the Victorian terrace house, creating an intimate back garden while maintaining the scale of adjoining terraces.



a structural glass wall which supports cantilevered steel shelves, a detail inspired by Rice's "serres" at the Science and Technology Museum in Paris. The material palette includes reclaimed York stone floors, as well as maple millwork, stainless steel, along with Indian and Italian marble in the kitchen.

The intimate garden is conceived as an extension of the interior. The transparent rear walls of the home give on to a high walled garden whose ground plane is in part a continuation of the interior floor treatment. A large pivot door under the new concrete roof opens the entire width of the dining room, while from the kitchen, four folding glazed panels open onto the exterior and a new conservatory. **BK**

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Photography: Laure Thorel