

beyond the bath

# Outside the square

Fancy a private sitting room, library or study? Today's master suites are likely to embrace more than just the traditional bedroom with attached bathroom and closet



# Ghosts in the attic

The quirky and irrational roof lines of an old Victorian attic have yielded enough space for a generous-sized master bedroom suite

**There's a surprising amount of space in the attic of an old house, but the sloping roof lines can mean it's not particularly easy to utilise.**

Architect Olle Lundberg was offered the challenge of converting the attic of an old Victorian house into a master suite.

"We started by gutting the whole attic to find out what space was available. Once the original roof lines were uncovered, the flamboyant shapes of the room became visible," says Lundberg.

"It quickly became clear that the quirky

and irrational roof lines we had discovered should be celebrated, rather than hidden away. Our object then became to keep the character of the attic and preserve the sense of drama we had uncovered."

At its highest point the attic roof vaults to an apex of about 15ft, then slopes steeply away to within a few feet of the floor level. The whole area needed structural strengthening, and to avoid spoiling the space with cross-bracing, steel beams were inserted along existing wood beams. Interior surfaces – walls and the underside

**Preceding pages:** An old Victorian attic was gutted but its original ceiling lines were retained when it was converted into the bathroom and closet of a master suite.

**Facing page:** Translucent panels supported by slim, vertical steel bars separate the bathroom and closet. Space for cupboards and hanging clothes was allocated separately, to take account of the varying ceiling heights.

**Above:** The bathroom is on the other side of the partition. Backlighting at the base of the panels allows the mood of the space to be altered easily.



**Above:** In this bathroom, honed, black granite tiles create a subtle, non-reflective surface. The oak cabinetry and floor are stained black, and teamed with stainless steel hardware and faucets. The effect of this monochromatic color scheme is to create a calm and peaceful atmosphere.

**Facing page:** French doors open off the bedroom, giving spectacular views towards the Golden Gate Bridge. The bedroom, a post-Victorian addition to the house, has conventional flat ceilings. To limit sound and light transmission, doors from the bedroom to the bathroom and closet can be closed.

of the roofs – were plastered.

“Our next decision was how to divide the space without losing the effect of the ceilings or a sense of the volume of the space,” says Lundberg.

Translucent panels subtly divide the attic into a bathroom and closet, while still allowing light to flow through the whole area and connect the spaces visually.

“Because the master suite fills the whole attic, privacy isn’t really a big issue,” says the designer.

None of the panels touches the ceiling

or floor. Rather, each one appears to float between the two, supported on thin, flat, vertical steel bars.

To create a simple background for the space, the color scheme is black and white, with brighter accents provided by clothing and other objects. The oak floor and bathroom cabinetry are stained black and countertops are made from honed, non-reflective black granite. Mirrors and stainless steel hardware, along with the translucent panels, bathtub and walls in white complete the monochromatic look.

Lighting adds a dramatic element to the master suite, with ghostly images of clothing hanging in the closet visible through the translucent panels, lit from below by fiber-optic lamps. This enhances the spaciousness of the master suite, while altering the settings of lights in the closet can change the mood in the bathroom. Mirrors in the bathroom have additional lighting for brighter illumination.

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**Architect:** Ollie Lundberg, Michelle Kriebel, Lundberg Design (San Francisco, CA)  
**Interior designer:** Glenda Martin  
**Builder:** O’Neill Construction  
**Bathtub:** IBC, Bath & Beyond  
**Vanity:** Custom black granite from Fox Marble  
**Cabinetry:** Clear sealed wenge from Phoenix Woodworking  
**Basin:** Just Sinks  
**Faucets:** Kroin, Vola Tubfiller  
**Shower fittings:** Kroin  
**Shower stall:** Custom-honed Absolute Black granite tiles, glass door  
**Flooring:** Existing, stained black

**Tiles:** Honed Absolute Black granite from Fox Marble  
**Toilet:** Toto  
**Lighting:** Artemide, Architectural, Tech Lighting  
**Cabinet pulls:** Forms & Surfaces  
**Closet system:** Customized by Lundberg Design  
**Closet walls:** Translucent glass wall panels designed, fabricated and installed by Lundberg Design

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