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B + U architects' glowing canopy in Pasadena

August 16, 2011 | 6:00 am

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Uncommon L.A.: B+U Architects' lighted entryway

When architects Herwig Baumgartner and Scott Uriu took on a remodeling project in Pasadena, their goal was to unify the hillside house. After several renovations over a few decades, it was a “mishmash,” said Baumgartner, a principal in firm B+U.

It soon became apparent the house needed a new entryway. The [B+U architects](#), both alums of Frank Gehry's practice, are fans of unconventional forms and were fortunate enough to find a client in John

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Frank and Diann Kim willing to let them experiment.

“We feel strongly that if you hire creative people, you need to let them actually be creative,” said Frank, an investment manager.

The result is a striking, sculptural entryway meant to double as a gathering space for entertaining. The 60-foot-long cantilevered steel structure is clad with a white translucent fabric and lighted by LEDs from within, casting a soft, scarlet glow at night. The canopy is wind and weather resistant, made of fabric sourced from Venice, Italy, that proved less expensive than glass and other materials that could deliver a similar effect. Yet cost wasn’t the only consideration. “We like the ephemeral quality of fabric,” Baumgartner said.

-- Marissa Gluck

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