



For the principals of Hariri & Hariri Architecture, sisters Gisue Hariri and Mojgan Hariri, the professional and the personal are deeply intertwined. A strong familial bond and a shared design philosophy have been essential in the growth of their practice, and have helped garner increased recognition for the firm, including a 2005 American Academy of Arts & Letters Award in Architecture and high-profile projects such as a competition-winning design for a mixed-use development in Salzburg.

Sharing a sculptural design aesthetic, the Iranian-born principals founded their New York-based firm in 1986, after coming to the U.S. to study at Cornell (Mojgan also studied at RISD). Now ten members strong, Hariri & Hariri has tackled a range of residential, commercial, and institutional projects, as well as designing products and artworks. A keen eye for contextuality and a love of elegant lines and bold geometries pervades their architecture, from craggy contours to sinuous curves. Experimentation also fuels their practice, and one of their most beloved early projects was a bit ahead of its time—the Digital House, a foray into now ubiquitous computing that appeared in MoMA's 1999 exhibition *The Un-Private House*. (Gisue remains hopeful that its day will come.)

Especially in their early years, being female meant it was harder to get respect, but it also “gives us, in a way, an advantage of being different, and being different gives you a new point of view,” Gisue said. **LISA DELGADO**



1 **PAINTING STUDIO**  
EAST HAMPTON, NEW YORK

2 **STERNBRAUEREI**  
SALZBURG, AUSTRIA

3 **MADISON AVENUE PRIVATE EQUITY OFFICE**  
NEW YORK

A few years after the firm designed one of the Houses at Sagaponac, the owner asked the architects to design a new painting studio on the same property. The process of choosing a location morphed into a larger focus on creating a structure that's highly attuned to its context along various facades. The northwest side facing the main house and pool focuses on water, with walls of aqua tile and travertine forming an outdoor shower area. The layers of materials also evoke the flat canvases used by a painter. The northeast facade adjacent to a tennis court features a built-in bench for watching matches, and the southeast side facing away from the house focuses on the natural surroundings, with a terrace where the painter can gaze out at the woods.

This competition-winning design for a mixed-use development keeps a low profile so as not to block views of soaring cliffs that inspired the project's dramatic angular forms. “What we have proposed is that luxury and landmark status does not necessarily come in a form of a tower or an iconic building. We believe that ultimate luxury comes in the form of experience,” Gisue said. The development's seven buildings include apartments, an architecture center, a spa, and other facilities; bountiful windows offer views of the cliffs. The surrounding grounds feature paths, waterfalls, and courtyards, providing spaces for meditation, and reflection. LEDs will illuminate the rock and other parts of the landscape to highlight their beauty at night.

For a practice that prides itself on its experimental nature, working for a relatively conservative financial company caused the sisters some trepidation. But in fact, the client embraced Hariri & Hariri's office renovation design, which focuses on sustainability, boosting collaboration, and maximizing views. The architects raised the floor of the 10,000-square-foot space and placed the cooling and heating systems underneath, reducing materials by using the cavity between the slab and the raised floor as ducts, as well as improving flexibility for future rewiring. The system also gives workers greater control of the temperature in their immediate work area, through manually controlled diffusers. Raising the floor and nearly eliminating the knee wall also allowed for impressive views through huge windows in the 24th-floor office, giving a feeling of “floating and hovering over Madison Avenue,” Gisue said.



PHOTOGRAPH: PAUL MARCHOL

4 **POOL HOUSE**  
WILTON, CONNECTICUT

5 **TWO ARTS PLAZA**  
DALLAS, TEXAS

Some pool houses are humble structures, tucked out of sight as if they were afterthoughts to the main house, but this client requested one with a sculptural quality because it would be positioned on a prominent site. For the Hariri sisters, inspiration came from their homeland of Iran, which has pedestrian bridges that double as social spaces where people chat and take in views of the water. Like a bridge, this structure sits over the pool. A long ipé-paneled roof serves as shelter for a mostly transparent house, as well as for semi-outdoor areas on either side for dining and showering. From the main house, the overall effect is one of multiple rectangular frames that focus the eye not so much on the house itself as on the water, stone, and greenery in the surrounding landscape.

Dallas is known for its love of the large, but Hariri & Hariri is bringing a striking low-scale building to the city's Arts District. Adjoining a mixed-use tower, the curved building of lofts was designed to relate to the plaza on the ground plane, unlike its neighbor. “We designed this building almost as a piece of sculpture, which peels away from the [tower] and becomes its own entity,” Gisue said. Landscape architects MESA Design Group proposed an undulating ribbon of greenery in the plaza that complements the building's geometry. Hariri & Hariri also designed interiors of the tower's top-floor condos, as well as its lobby, which features gentle curves joining the ceiling and walls, imparting a fluid feel to a space that will be used to display art.