

USA architect, Nina Edwards Anker, founded nea studio in 2006, focusing on architecture and interiors. She is the architect behind the beach house, “Cocoon,” located in Southampton, Long Island, New York. The house is laid out in the shape of an “L,” forming what looks like a co-



Anker set a goal to create an incredibly sustainable house, and now the Cocoon has a Gold LEED-certification to prove that! Not only is the house powered by solar energy, but it is surrounded by native plants, utilizes rainwater recycling, and stores the sun’s heat in the back wall of the house in order for the house to be heated using passive heating. Additionally, there is no structural steel used whatsoever in the house, the house only has timber. Not using structural steel is both helpful for the natural surroundings to reduce carbon emissions as well as for the human lungs.

The back wall, in addition to being the vessel for storing their passive heating, wraps around the house, actually acting as the front of the house facing the rest of the neighborhood. The back wall is where the name “Cocoon” derives from in that this wall curves around the house, forming a cocoon. With the back wall facing the rest of their neighborhood, its cedar shingle cladding that wraps around the house blends in with the architectural material palette of their historical neighborhood beautifully. The house has a relatively small footprint, standing at 16-feet high and just one story, it is dwarfed by the neighboring trees.



coon from the front of the house. The Cocoon's distinct shape was not only meant for aesthetics, though; the house is laid out in the cocoon-like formation in order to maximize daylight and solar energy, something that Anker is passionate about.



Images by Caylon Hackwith

As the back wall faces the rest of their neighborhood, their inner walls face the south, with a view of the beautiful natural wildlife preserve on the wetland. These walls are completely made of glass, filling the house with natural light all year round. This house is always filled with light and color though because of the colored skylights that are installed throughout the floor plan. Across the entire house are colored skylights based on the color theory of Goethe. In this color theory, the importance is put on how sunlight reflects light; Goethe's color wheel is still in rainbow order, but reads "good," underneath yellow, indicating that

this color is a neutral, happy tone. This color theory was used by J.M. Williams Turner in his 19th century paintings of sunlight above water. Edwards Anker used vermilion red skylights over the bedroom to represent sunset and rest and a deep yellow skylight in the living room to represent activity. As you walk from the bedroom to the living room, the skylights slowly transition from red to yellow to symbolize the energy of a new day.

Nina Edwards Anker says that her focus is on creating an alternative to cookie-cutter sameness, the hedges and manicured lawns typical of the Hamptons.