

Shutter Island



Lowering the shutters on this small writer's retreat completely exposes the interior to the site's impressive island views.



Project: False Bay Writer's Cabin
Location: San Juan Islands, Washington
Architect: Olson Kundig Architects
olsonkundigarchitects.com

Architect Tom Kundig's assignment was simple enough: Build a tiny, Thoreau-like getaway for an Atlanta-based writer who owned ten acres on San Juan Island in Puget Sound. "The idea was not to clutter anybody's thinking, especially a writer's," he said. So he designed a 500-square-foot retreat that's both womblike and open to its surroundings.

When raised via wire rope and hydraulic winch, the floor-to-ceiling shutters protect the interior. When lowered, they add 600 square feet of deck—and sweeping views of the landscape. "It's edited and clear," he said. "Parts of it are intentionally exposed, and others are protected, enclosed, and intimate."

—J. Michael Welton

