



# CURTAIN UP

## BEFORE

Alexander Gorlin says he designed his living room, above, as “a stage set, a place to see and be seen.”

## AFTER

White parachute-cloth curtains, right, which open and close with a simple pull wand, frame Gorlin's stage set, but they also insure that people in the room can see more while being seen less.

**The notion that draperies transform a room may be gospel to decorators, but it's heresy to many architects. A rebel makes his case, with history on his side.**

**A**FTER DESIGNING SEVERAL TRADITIONAL HOUSES IN THAT epitome of neo-traditional towns — Seaside, Fla. — the architect Alexander Gorlin designed a house there for himself and his wife, Debra Solomon, a cartoonist and film maker. But Gorlin's own house is a modernist, cubelike structure and, as he says, “the modernist's dream is a wall of glass.” Alas, the dream began to pall slightly. “I felt the room looked a little bare,” Gorlin explains, “and my wife thought it was too cold.”

So Gorlin decided that curtains were the answer, but it was Carl D'Aquino, the New York designer who had originally decorated the house, who suggested white parachute cloth as the fabric. Its light weight is crucial since the windows are nearly 20 feet tall. And its relative sheerness gives the curtains a diaphanous quality that changes the room without compromising its clean lines. For those architects who cringe at the idea of draperies, Gorlin is quick to note that the modernist deity Le Corbusier used them in many of his houses. Case — or should we say curtain — closed. *P.V.*