

STANDARD

(eco)sophistiqué



**CLASSIC VS
MODERN**
the great debate

SPRING 2012

A large black banner with white text is the central focus. The banner is supported by a dark metal post on the right. The background is a photograph of a modern building with large windows and a wooden facade, surrounded by a landscaped area with tall, thin evergreen trees and a paved walkway. A large, bare tree branch is visible in the upper left corner. The sky is overcast with light clouds.

urbanrese

MODERN ARCHITECTURE FALLS IN LOVE WITH NATURE

ARCHITECTURE BY DSGN ASSOCIATES
INTERIOR DESIGN BY WENDY KONRADI
STORY BY MALLORY HAMEL

erve

A tall, slender, dark green cypress tree stands in the foreground, partially obscuring a sign that reads "erve". The background features a line of bare trees and a clear blue sky.

Tucked away in seclusion, yet still within the arms of the city, a peaceful community is thriving on the outskirts of Dallas, Texas. Driving past a pond near the perimeter and heading on down the road, one takes in the scenic atmosphere, dotted with uniquely constructed homes and finds that it is somewhat surreal. This surrounding natural connection is the foundation for continuous design throughout the property.

Harmonious in its modern symmetry and style, Urban Reserve is the site for 50 residential lots, spanning a 14-acre nature preserve. Each home is built to the preset standards necessary to satisfy their collective presence as a fully sustainable development—the houses must be built to agree with one another, yet have their own characters. Generally speaking, a project from start to finish usually takes anywhere between six months and one year—but that time is well spent laying out the best plans for the best place.

Equally as important as the architecture, is the framework provided by the greenery on the property. The road is tilted slightly to one side, allowing rain water to run down into french drains, feeding gardens full of reeds and trees, and eventually flowing into the many ponds that irrigate front yards and common areas. This has resulted in a net positive water system. Only natural or adaptive plants are introduced to the base vegetation, and thanks to the rain catching system, a minimal amount of water needs to be contributed to supplement.

This modern retreat provides solace to those residents who, after a day immersed in the hustle and bustle of the city, call this community home. Some of the projects are built ahead of time, waiting for the right person (or persons) to come along and fall in love. But the best way to become a part of Urban Reserve is to claim one of several entirely undeveloped lots—which lends future homeowners the opportunity to work closely with their chosen build team.

urbanreserve.net



One of the many realizations
of modern architecture in the
neighborhood.



Home of Ann Marie Meyer and Richard Anderson with their two dogs, Lizzie and Ollie. All happy members of the Urban Reserve community.





A pair of vintage 60s walnut Eames chairs, that spent their previous life in a school library, flank the custom wall hung buffet in the dining area. A large globe sits on top from Ann Marie's father's collection, who once was a geologist.

The home of Ann Marie Meyer and Richard Anderson is quintessential Urban Reserve. Exceptional in an edgy, modern body, the house is also LEED platinum certified (quite an impressive achievement). DSGN Associates are responsible for the architectural aspects of the residence, and Wendy Konradi designed the interiors. To marry the home to its surroundings, Design on a Shovel took care of the landscaping.

Ann Marie relates that working closely with the design team helped to bring her original inspirations into reality.

"Being actively involved in the decisions of the building process allowed us to know and grow to love our home—stage by stage."

Most important to the couple was efficient use of space, an open floor plan, and an abundance of natural light. Wendy notes that an elemental aspect of the plan was to create an inviting, well-edited, modern space. Given the limited size of the home, Ann Marie explains that this layout helped them to really analyze and discern between those things that they needed, and those things that were just hanging around without an identifiable destiny.

"Over a period of several months, we went through the decluttering process four or five times, and once again after we moved in. With each clearing out, we


realized just how little we needed or truly used. We both feel liberated to be rid of 'stuff.' "

It is in that spirit that the home presents a rare simplicity, exuding an aura of both organized intellect and modern comfort. Ann Marie and Richard have a great love for boats and the ocean, so Wendy worked closely with the couple to bring a homey yet nautical feel to the interior. When questioned of her muses for this concept, Wendy replies,

"The architecture and furnishings of California architect R.M. Shindler, (circa 1920s and 30s); beach houses— particularly those at Sea Ranch in California; yacht design and details... It was important for the spaces, like boats, to have multiple functions. Therefore, the furniture also had to do so. In the living room, the low walnut console was needed to ground the space, and provide visual contrast—but it was also highly customized to house the clients' surround sound system and Wii."

To weave the boat-loving elements into the house in a subtle manner, various facets of the building fall into this theme— such as the galley-style kitchen, and the ocean-colored glass tile in the master bathroom (designed by Ann Sacks). This incorporation has resulted in a seaside nature within modern architecture.





Chantilly Lace by Benjamin Moore colors the walls in this open floor plan. Two vintage swivel chairs from Sputnik Modern rest on the concrete floors in front of a Minotti sectional, and custom ottoman.

The interior floors are polished concrete, giving a cool feel to a strong base and leaving plenty of room for shuffling feet. Throughout the house, chestnut-colored, wooden barn-style doors slide open and closed via a track with inline skate wheels, creating a smooth transition from one space to the next, without needing room for the swinging of doors. Wendy did a beautiful job of turning a smaller space into a larger space.

"I love the way that the kitchen/dining/living space flows so elegantly. Despite its smaller footprint, it

maintains beautiful proportions that feel nice to be in. It may sound hard to believe that the clients could entertain 20 people comfortably in this space, but it is just what they did at their annual Christmas Eve dinner party!"

Outfitted with low and linear furniture and fixtures, each area feels warm and comfortable, critical for gatherings of any size—whether a dinner party or movie night. Clever storage solutions (such as the Murphy bed that is tucked away secretly within the guest bedroom) hide many of their belongings.





Above:
The long wall of windows opens up this combination space, shedding light into three separate areas that flow as one without interruption.

Opposite:
A large hunk of fluorite from Ann Marie's collection. In the kitchen, Ann Marie shows off her smart storage solution.



Opposite Page: Ann Sicks glass tile covers the master bath walls, floor to ceiling. Sliding barn doors by Constructive Modern make for a clean and tidy appearance where swinging would ordinarily take place.

Above: Ollie and Lizzie lounge on the master bed, designed by Wendy and covered in a wool sateen from Maharana bordered by two LED bedside lamps.



Also endearing to the design, is the thoughtfulness put into the needs of the two canine residents. These pups have the first LEED approved doggie door for coming and going as they please.

Building a truly efficient home is a feat in itself when calculating all of the factors that brought this one into existence. At 1,200 square feet, the house is almost an independent organism in its ability to sustain itself, as well as its occupants, with thoughtful practices and exciting new techniques. Most of the materials used in construction were sourced within 500 miles of the build site. The foundation is made of SlabTek, and

exterior siding by Eco Shell doubles as a rain shield in addition to strengthening the framework. From the outside view, the sharp geometry of the house's form, with its blonde and auburn tones juxtaposed against solid concrete blocks and glistening glass, makes it seem as if each section snaps into another.

Wendy was (and is) inspired by Urban Reserve's principles, which mesh with her own design ethics. She conveys this through her passionate understanding of those things which create the environments that she envisions.

"I love the challenge of working with living, natural materials such as the cement floors, because in an industry where we tend to want to control every element to perfection, these are imperfect materials that just can't be controlled. Those imperfections are what make them beautiful."

Ann Marie and Richard put several classic, as well as cutting-edge, techniques to work. This ensures that the residents can get plenty of sunshine (inside from the Texas heat), or relax while watching one of the terrific North Prairie thunderstorms from the comfort of a snuggly spot. When asked what the couple enjoyed the most about their home, Ann Marie fondly refers to one of the common spaces—

"The great room flooded with natural light."

And Richard?

"Reading, drinking wine and watching sunsets on the back deck."

These two, along with their precious doggies, are enjoying the sweet life in their dream home—but most importantly, they chose to be at Urban Reserve because, according to Ann Marie,

"Their values are our values." ♦

dsgn.com
wendykonradi.com

On the back patio, a table made from old grapevine has been with Ann Marie and Richard for years. Ollie poses for the camera in this favorite spot of his.

