

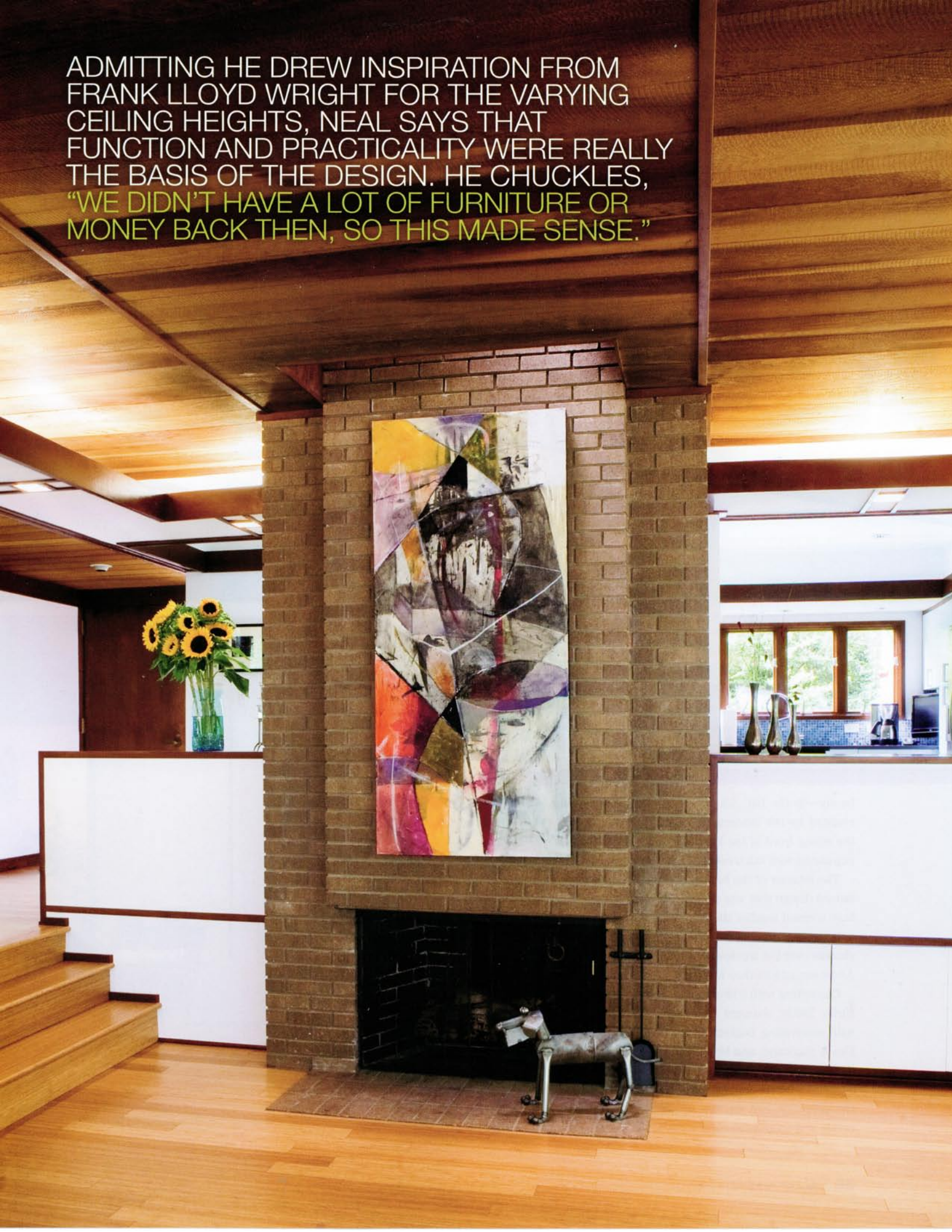


PLAN OF DISTINCTION Texas-based designers Ulrike Zelter and John Maier, friends of the homeowners, were immediately taken with Neal's design. They consulted with the architect throughout the home's renovation, and were sensitive to its original assets. Ultimately, this meeting of designing minds retained the angular and minimalist composure of the spaces, while creating more open areas (above).

Anderson and Tiffany are avid art collectors and have a unique collection which meshes well with the home's colorful design features. A chartreuse counter punches up the wet bar, which is enhanced by a contemporary French advertisement for Perrier water (right). Modern barstools add color and sass to the couple's sleek-lined kitchen, where punchy yellow is a counter to cool blue tones (bottom). A large abstract painting and metal "junkyard dog" lend color and dimension to the living room's floor-to-ceiling brick fireplace (opposite).



ADMITTING HE DREW INSPIRATION FROM FRANK LLOYD WRIGHT FOR THE VARYING CEILING HEIGHTS, NEAL SAYS THAT FUNCTION AND PRACTICALITY WERE REALLY THE BASIS OF THE DESIGN. HE CHUCKLES, "WE DIDN'T HAVE A LOT OF FURNITURE OR MONEY BACK THEN, SO THIS MADE SENSE."





COMFORT COUTURE (Above) The master bedroom's sliding glass opens to a back deck of chic Bulgari furniture and a chiminea the couple collected from a farmers' market in Dallas. The transparent wall has a dual-effect of adding space, allowing for an uninterrupted vantage point, and introduces natural elements which balance the room's colorful, stylized characteristics; (right) the master bath is playfully constructed with opposing his-and-hers sinks made of custom-designed concrete, separated by a floating mirror.

family—fit the bill. Anderson and Tiffany were immediately enchanted by the landscaping. Set into the side of a gentle knoll, the sunny front of the house gave way to the shady back portion populated with tall trees clustered around a small creek.

The interior of the house, however, retained the compartmentalized design that was popular forty years ago. The rooms somehow seemed smaller than they actually were; a fact that Tiffany notes was emphasized by the trees, now mature, casting a deeper shadow over the windows than they had when the home was built. Anderson admits they almost walked away.

Consulting with friends from Austin, architects John Maier and Ulrike Zelter, changed their minds. John's extensive experience with renovating contemporary homes landed him a feature in *Dwell* magazine, and his design work has been included in Sarah Susanka's book, *Outside the Not So Big House*.

He and Ulrike saw potential right away. John says, "We loved the property, and we saw in general that the house had good bones and an architectural style which could be exploited to cre-





COLOR WHEEL (Left) Neal incorporated plenty of built-in storage and seating to accommodate his young family in 1966, and the home's renovation retains many of his original inclusions, such as the dark-wood shelving and drawers in Henry's room; (below) a detailed view of a sink in the master bath boasts a Danze faucet and knock-out mosaic-glass Hakatai tiling for the backsplash. The tile is repeated in the walk-in shower (background) and throughout the home.



ate the more generous feel which I think Anderson and Tiffany were unable to imagine initially."

With the trust established over the course of fifteen years of friendship, the four brainstormed ideas and Ulrike set to work, literally napkin-sketch style. John admits the process was easy because he and Ulrike didn't approach it as a challenge. "It was more about unlocking and amplifying the latent potential of what was there."

Though there was a large amount of glass in the house, he and Ulrike wanted to add additional sliders to bring the outdoors even closer. Indoors, he says, "We made it even more open by removing the walls enclosing the kitchen, which let in more light and created even greater connection to the woods."

Jim Neal's original design also facilitated the process, even though he pronounced it an "architect's lot" when he first saw it

in the 1960s. "The road in the neighborhood was not even paved yet, and the slopes presented all sorts of challenges," he notes.

It may have been one of his early projects, but Neal's contemporary design caught the eye of the editors at *Southern Living* who featured the house, and some of its more clever elements, in several issues in 1971.

To live there with his wife and their daughter, Neal says he designed spaces to be flexible. He employed folding doors throughout to conceal some areas when not in use. Mrs. Neal's sewing alcove, cleverly tucked away in one corner of the study, was one; another was the slender broom closet.

Neal was brought in to consult on the renovations. He notes, "John and Ulrike had a great respect for what I had done. I was so pleased that they immediately understood the house and did things to enhance it. It is a good feeling to an architect to have their work modified some, but continued to be used for the purpose it was designed. They improved on what was already there."

John and Ulrike tweaked the original sketch several times before it had everything the couple wanted. "I got my kitchen and Tiffany got her master bath, so we were happy," says Anderson. Indeed, the professional couple needed work and play spaces of a slightly different sort. So part of the study redesign created a flexible room that could accommodate both Anderson's legal work and a small wet bar, while the back room is a TV room and play space for fifteen-month-old Henry.

Eager to preserve and repurpose as much as possible, Anderson and Tiffany made careful use of existing materials. They recycled casement windows, rough-hewed plywood ceiling panels, and a dining-room buffet. The latter is now flanked by custom-made cabinets to harmonize with the other built-ins.

Anderson says it took just over a year to complete the work, which also included extending the back decks, adding eighty feet of glass, redoing the kitchen, and simplifying an earlier addition.

A walk through the front door today reveals refined interior spaces filled with natural light that are open to each other and the outdoors. Each room is spacious and bathed in cool colors, with plenty of wood accents. Carefully chosen furnishings are one-part stylish, one-part whimsical, and all-parts welcoming.

Momentarily distracted by her schnauzer, Scarlett, now snuffling around her ankles, Tiffany pauses to pat the dog before shooping her into the custom doggy tunnel that leads from the hall to the backyard. When she straightens up, she looks at her husband and considers the whole project.

"It's the right house for us now. I can see us living comfortably here for a long time." Anderson just smiles and gives her shoulders an affectionate squeeze. 