

Charlotte

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HOME

DESIGN & DECOR®

KITCHEN ENVY

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MODERN MOVEMENT



The living room features some of designer Susan Hill's impressive design work and collaborations with local artisans such as Stephen Torrence, who fabricated the reclaimed wood shelves that Hill designed. The linear fireplace, also designed by Hill, features a breathtaking cantilevered concrete hearth coupled with a cantilevered marble and reclaimed poplar-wood ledge.



A DILWORTH
FAMILY LEAVES
THEIR ARTS
& CRAFTS HOME
BEHIND FOR
A MODERN
STUNNER DOWN
THE STREET.

TEXT BY
BLAKE MILLER
PHOTOGRAPHY BY
DUSTIN PECK
STYLING BY
KENDRA SURFACE



THE HOMEOWNERS WERE READY FOR A CHANGE. When they bought their Dilworth home in 2010, it was an Arts & Crafts spec home with traditional architectural details and finishes. “At the time, it was perfect for our young family,” the homeowner says. “But because it was a spec home, we never got to pick out any of the finishes, or the floor plan, or anything, really.” As time passed, the couple hit a crossroads. Either they would update their current home with a more modern aesthetic—something they had always dreamed about—or start fresh with a new home and incorporate the more contemporary interior design they desired.

Ironically, about the same time they hit this life junction, a lot just six doors down from their existing home came on the market. And the couple saw the opportunity to build exactly the home they wanted: a modern stunner with clean, minimal lines and finishes, and an open-concept floor plan ideal for everyday living and

entertaining. Working with builder Ram Construction, the homeowners began the design process, looking to achieve a more modern aesthetic than their previous home afforded. “Eventually, Ram realized that we needed more help with the design process, so they introduced us to Susan,” the homeowner says.

Designer Susan Hill’s calling card is programming, as she likes to call it. She and her team assist clients with everything from the architectural details and spatial planning to lighting design and placement and interior work. It was Hill’s eye for details that led Ram to recommend her for the project, which would encompass a large number of custom details. “They had some very specific things they wanted to do, and I was brought on to help facilitate that,” Hill says. “Everything had to have clean lines, everything had to be functional and flow well, and yet everything still needed to feel cozy and comfortable.”

As a family of five with kids ranging in age from six to thirteen, the couple needed the kitchen, the heartbeat of the



The homeowners wanted the powder room to be playful and fun, so Hill added the hexagon tile to the floor, which served as the inspiration for the space. The sconces are by Mitzi. **OPPOSITE:** The stairs serve as a major focal point of the entire downstairs and took eight months to design, fabricate, and install. Hill, stair vendor TLG, and others worked tirelessly to bring to fruition the homeowners' vision of a white-oak stairway with linear shelving and a glass wall.



home, to function perfectly for the way they live. “Because there’s no formal dining area, the kitchen island needed to seat the whole family for casual meals, homework, and daily activities. But there was only so much space for an island to accommodate that,” Hill explains. To expand seating, the designer included a waterfall quartz counter on the side facing the entryway “so that when you walk in, you see this beautiful stone.” On the opposite end, she left an overhang where another counter stool can easily tuck in for a fifth seat. Hill took a function-meets-style approach with the

cabinetry design and floor-to-ceiling storage to maximize space coupled with minimal (or no) hardware. To balance the cool blue tone of the cabinetry, Hill complemented with warm white-oak cabinets flanking the stove and on the island. “I pushed them a bit on color,” says Hill of the Sherwin-Williams Tarragon hue. “This is where clients really need to trust you. It’s a big leap of faith if you’re trying to convince a client to choose a color that’s a bit bolder than they’d do on their own. But they trusted me, and it turned out beautifully.”



ABOVE: Hill pushed the homeowners out of their comfort zone. Instead of gray cabinetry, she opted to use a striking blue hue, Sherwin-Williams Tarragon, for the floor-to-ceiling custom cabinetry.

TOP: Carpenter Stephen Torrence brought Hill's design of a slim, vertical wood-paneled wall stained in Rubio Havana to life in the breezeway from the kitchen to the mudroom. The install serves as a piece of art and is a focal point in the home.

BOTTOM: Hill didn't want to do the traditional mudroom with wainscoting or ship lap, so instead, she added horizontal, wide white-oak planks to complement the custom cabinetry. The flooring is by TVC Flooring.



Though they frequently entertain, the homeowners decided to forgo the traditional formal dining room and opted for a smaller, more casual breakfast area. The light fixture is by Sean Lavin through Circa Lighting. **OPPOSITE:** To keep the counters clean and uncluttered, the butlery houses the family's oft-used small appliances in the same custom-blue cabinetry that appears in the adjacent kitchen. The floating shelves are by Mint Hill Cabinets.





The kitchen's aesthetic, finishes, and color palette laid the foundation for the rest of the home. "It was really important to have that seamless flow from the moment you enter," says Hill, who achieved that by utilizing white oak throughout. The custom staircase features white-oak treads and risers and is one example of why Hill was tasked with helping the homeowners early on. "They wanted a really unique look that included shelving as part of the stair design, as well as a glass wall. It was a lot of work logistically to make this happen. But as the focal point of the home, it was imperative to get it right." After months of tweaking the design and nailing down the fine details, the architectural highlight was brought to fruition, resulting in a stunning modern accent that sets the tone for the home.

Hill continued working her programming magic by designing subtle architectural details throughout, such as the custom vertical wood slat install fabricated by Stephen Torrence. "It functions like a piece of art that you walk

by every day and get to experience," says Hill of the detail between the kitchen and adjacent mudroom. In the living room, Hill worked tirelessly to ensure that the linear fireplace worked logistically and spatially in the room. "As I started sketching, what I ended up designing was the cantilevered concrete hearth coupled with a cantilevered marble surround," she says. A slim piece of reclaimed poplar wood was added as a ledge to soften the modern lines of the concrete and marble. To infuse warmth into the room, Hill included additional wood accents such as the reclaimed wood shelves, also by Torrence, which house some of the couple's collectibles and coffee-table books.

With the help of Hill, the home is exactly what the homeowners envisioned when they began the building process. "We loved our other home, and it worked for our family for a long time," she says. "But this home is what we thought made sense for this stage in our lives. It's the aesthetic we wanted. It turned out exactly as we envisioned." ♦