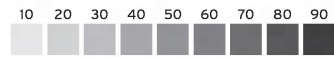




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Designer -EXT -FILM X



SATURDAY, MAY 31, 2008

THE NEWS & OBSERVER

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h o m e o f
t h e m o n t h

May's profile of a well-designed living space

Take a look at a photo gallery at www.newsobserver.com, search **home&garden**.



the kitchen

The unique curved corridor unifies the different zones in the house and also serves as a seating area for the breakfast bar. Susan Tise's cherished stained glass windows were placed as focal points in the corridor.

PHOTOS BY MARC LAMKIN

The Home of the Month series is a collaborative effort with the N.C. State University College of Design through its Home Environments Design Initiative. Featured homes, selected by an expert panel, highlight the benefits of good home design and represent the diversity of homes and home renovations designed by North Carolina architects. The stories, written by faculty, graduate students and alumni of the School of Architecture, bring to light the exemplary attributes of each home. Our goal is to offer inspiration and knowledge that can be applied to your living space.

A sense of space

In designing his own house to fit into a wooded slope, an architect balances containment and openness, efficiency and character.

By BRIAN S. GRANT
CORRESPONDENT

Millie, the longtime canine companion to Don and Susan Tise, has it made. She lounges on the second-floor balcony, her nose pressed between the railings, reveling in the perfume of spring blossoms and relaxed by the burbling of the rocky stream below.

Though it is only a few miles from the hubbub of Chapel Hill's Franklin Street, the Tises' quiet, wooded hillside has a lot to offer in the way of relaxation and solitude.

"It often feels like we are in the mountains," Don Tise says.

Tise, a principal architect in the firm Tise-Kiester Architects, wanted to let the qualities of the site inform the design of his home. The result is a home perfectly suited for the day-to-day lives of its residents.

The design offers not only personal touches, but also creative responses to common topics in residential design: sensitivity to



Viewed from the curving driveway, the home fits into its surroundings. It is built near a natural clearing to let sunlight in. Don Tise designed the house to step up the terrain, creating elevation changes that define interior zones.

the project

tise residence

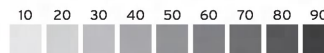
Architect
Don O. Tise Jr.
General Contractor
Krichco Construction, Chapel Hill
Square Footage
2,800 heated
Key Attributes
Sensitivity to its site, openness and containment, efficiency
Mechanical and insulation systems design and installation
Environmental Quality Control, Chapel Hill
Millwork
Aventine Inc., Carrboro
Photographer
Marc Lamkin, Etowah

SEE TISE, PAGE 4E



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4E

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Like the house, the two-tiered deck is designed to accommodate daily use, small groups or occasional parties. The second story balcony off the master bedroom offers a view of the treetops and a place for contemplation.

PHOTOS BY MARC LAMKIN

TISE

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1E

site, openness, efficiency.

The open floor plan is born of the desire to have easy communication between people in different parts of the home. Openness is easy enough to achieve, but how does one achieve openness while maintaining the character of each room? "We wanted the house to function well for everyday life," Tise said. "We need to be able to communicate well between spaces, but we also want to be able to contain activities and not disturb each other."



Architect
Don Tise

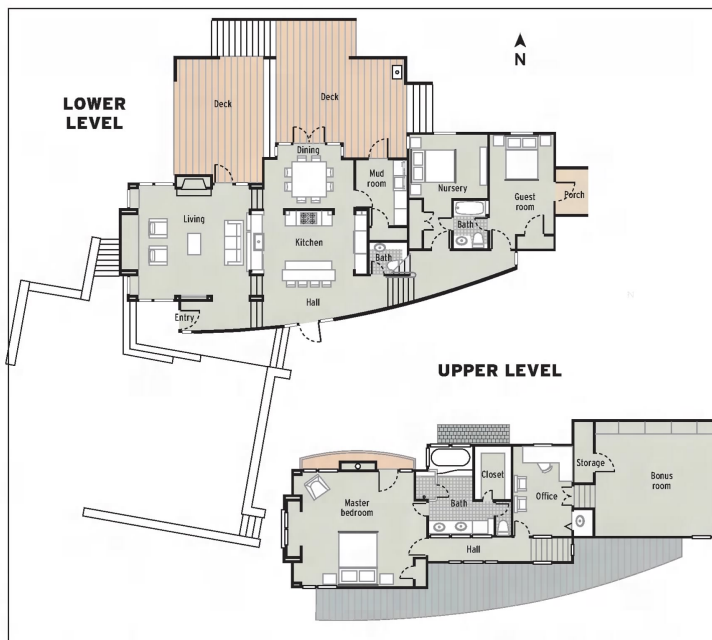
Eyes on the site

Tise designed the main spaces to be open to one another by minimizing walls. He then used one of the site's most compelling features, its steep slope, to divide the home into distinct zones.

Instead of moving enough earth to create a level building pad or excavating a large hole for a walk-out basement, Tise designed the home to step up the terrain.

The slight elevation changes inside the house define three main sections: the living room, the kitchen/dining areas and the guest rooms.

Tise designed the house to



step horizontally, too. A boldly painted corridor curves along one side of the house, connecting the sections and serving as a unifying element.

In addition to the changes in floor level, the rooms are defined by variations in the ceiling planes.

In the living room and kitchen, individual beams were wrapped in drywall to serve as implied boundaries between the spaces. The sloped ceiling and curved

walls in the corridor help define the hall as a unique element even though it also serves as the main entry and seating space for the breakfast nook.

Tise used wall thickness and the spaces between the structural columns to create display niches, window seats and recessed cabinetry, each of which lends a sense of scale and character to the spaces.

As one of the Home of the Month selection panelists com-

mented, "The use of cabinetry enhances how the living spaces work."

No space for waste

One of the couple's main objectives was efficient use of space and materials.

"There is not a bit of wasted space in the house," Tise said.

In order to create a sense of spaciousness without increasing the square footage, the architect



The airy master bathroom has views to the outside, but the windows were placed to provide privacy without blinds.



The beams in the living room ceiling were wrapped in dry-wall to help distinguish this area from adjacent zones.

again looked to the site's natural features.

The home was next to an area where a wind storm had thinned the trees. Consequently, the house gets sunlight from the south and east.

The narrow floor plan allows natural light to penetrate the whole interior regardless of the time of day. This natural light creates a sense of spaciousness even though the actual dimensions of the spaces are intimate and cozy.

In such a beautiful setting, it could be tempting to add large expanses of glass all around the house. To avoid compromising the budget or energy efficiency, Tise used fewer windows but placed them to enhance light, views and privacy.

Several rooms have windows directly opposite the door, providing an immediate connection to the outside when you enter the room.

Energy efficiency was also important to the Tises.

Sunlight provides most of daytime lighting, while dimmable low-voltage halogen lighting provides energy savings and the ability to control lighting levels.

The home features a sealed crawl space, a relatively new energy saving method. The crawl space is sealed and insulated, and the air is tempered, creating a dry, semi-conditioned space under the house.

This prevents the growth of mold and reduces demand on the home's heating and cooling system.

The Tise home offers an example of how to creatively address the issues of site-sensitive design, material and energy efficiency, as well as openness versus containment.

Making it personal

The home also boasts a few personal touches. As an architect, Tise is accustomed to tailoring home design to a client's needs. He did the same in his own home.

Two treasured stained-glass windows from Susan Tise's native England were placed as focal points at each level of the curved corridor. The design of a window seat in the master bedroom mimics Don's favorite project from his days as an architecture student at NCSU.

Don said Susan had a very specific request. She wanted a bedroom that felt like a treehouse. Don, who said he always viewed Susan as his client during the process, made sure his wife got her tree house.

The master bedroom is high above the ground, with commanding views of the stream below and calming views into the treetops. Furthermore, the balcony provides a perfect spot to drink morning coffee and appreciate the beauty of the site.

Just ask Millie.

Brian S. Grant received his Master of Architecture degree from the NCSU School of Design and is a project architect with Bizio Architect in Durham.