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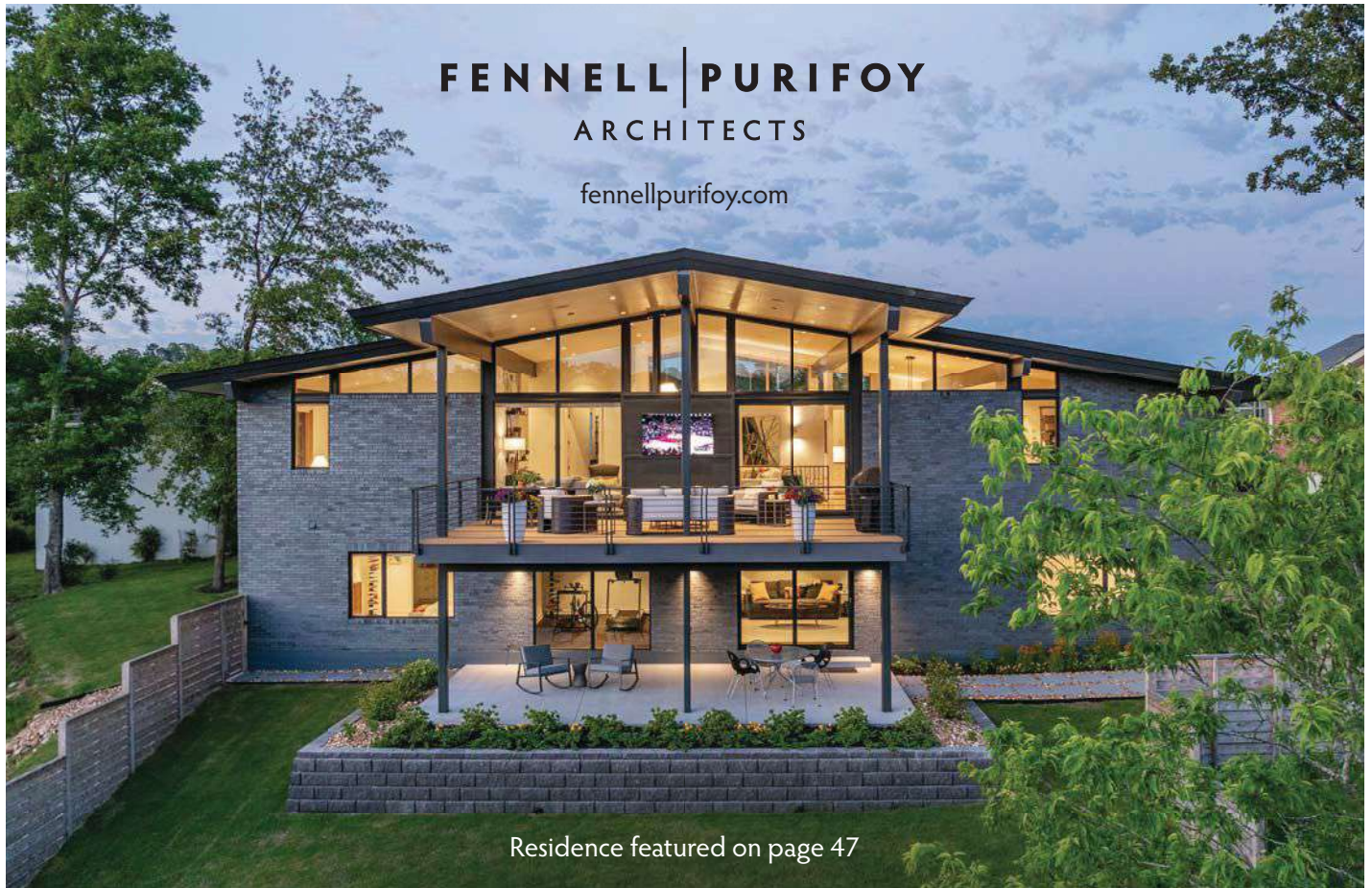
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Home

AT HOME WITH THE PROS

Here Comes the Sun

Architect Phil Purifoy calls on decades of experience and trusted partners to create a clean-lined, light-filled sanctuary in Little Rock



WRITER & STYLIST STEPHANIE MAXWELL NEWTON PHOTOGRAPHER RETT PEEK



FIRST IMPRESSION

The roofline starts at a center ridge over the front door and gently slopes to create a shallow A-frame with exposed beams. “Midcentury design is all about daylight, high windows, and large overhangs to protect the windows,” Phil says. Dark gray brick with a silvery metallic coating gives the home’s exterior a shimmer in the light.



In the aftermath of the 2023 tornado that wreaked havoc on central Arkansas, Michele and Phil Purifoy were among thousands of people left with homes that had been heavily damaged or destroyed. Located in a cul de sac high on a ridge in the middle of Little Rock, their house received the brunt of the tornado’s impact; after sheltering in the home’s lowest level, Phil ascended the stairs to find windows blown out, the roof missing, and debris everywhere. “My initial thought was, *I’m going to rebuild this house,*” Phil recalls. “I called the contractor the next day.”

As an architect—Phil is a partner at Fennell Purifoy Architects—the opportunity for a redesign was a silver lining amid the destruction. “I love midcentury modern design and the houses of that era, so I wanted to use pieces of that philosophy in the rebuild of the house,” he says. Having lived in the home about a decade prior to the storm, the couple liked the layout of the 1955 structure. However, as empty nesters, they had the opportunity to take square footage formerly designated for two beds and two baths upstairs to create one primary suite that flows into a walk-

in closet and laundry space. “Between us, we have four boys,” Phil says. “When we have guests they can have their domain downstairs, and we were able to keep the same basic arrangement of the living spaces on the upper level.”

While Phil consulted with Michele and support staff in his office on the plans, he also reached out to interior designer Krista Lewis, a frequent collaborator, to join the project. “I think he appreciated what we did with the interiors at other projects we’d worked on together; he has said it just takes it to the next level when the interiors are as cohesive as the plan,” Krista says. The designer and her team worked with the Purifoy family to nail down finishes, lighting, and fabric and furniture selections, all with their existing art collection and goals for the house in mind.

The end result is a tribute to the original house and its owners while better encompassing the style and needs of the family at this stage of life. “We didn’t increase the square footage of the house whatsoever. We wanted something we could build affordably but create amazing spaces on the inside,” Phil says. **AH**



ARTFUL INSTALLATION

The living room was designed to take in the view of the valley below in comfort and style. The central point of interest is a custom stained glass designed as a tribute to Michele's late brother, Brent Renaud, who was the first American journalist killed by Russian forces in Ukraine. "I had worked with my brothers-in-law to design an office/studio to use as documentary filmmakers," Phil says. "Brent wanted some stained glass in the style of Frank Lloyd Wright, so we worked with Jonathan Soos to develop one." That version had an American flag; the team repeated elements of the original design here, but also added the Ukraine flag in honor of Brent.



NEW MEETS OLD

Behind the living room's large sectional, a sofa table houses stools that offer more seating configurations when the Purifoyos host a crowd. The couple salvaged a decorative wooden grille original to the house and had it re-installed, then drew inspiration from its shape for the stair rail, which is wrapped in steel to mimic the color of the beams. Fellow architect and artist Jeff Horton created the piece seen at the top of the stairs.



STAYING POWER

While most of the Purifoy's furniture had to be replaced following the tornado, the dining table stood its ground during the storm. The art, a piece by former Arkansan David Bailen painted on cardboard, also survived. Krista's team had it reframed and selected a light fixture that plays off the shape and sturdiness of the beams overhead.





While larger groups can be seated at the nearby dining table, a peninsula with three stools is the perfect perch for Phil and Michele when dining alone or eating a quick bite.

A PLACE FOR EVERYTHING

The kitchen design was all about creating balance. The sink and cooktop are centered under two windows, and open shelving creates opportunities for display and accessibility. Countertops in Cosentino's Dekton material provide durability while an abundance of drawers makes for convenient storage. In the entry, a piece by George Dombek plays perfectly into the home's accent color of yellow, which also makes appearances in the kitchen lighting and accessories.



IN THE TREES

The home's clean lines and high windows continue into the primary suite. "I wanted to have the view of the sky in pretty much every room of the house," Phil says. "I think it's what makes living here so special. My wife and I backpack quite a bit, and it's like living in a large tent," he adds. Krista and her team sourced furnishings that fall in line with the Purifoy's midcentury leanings and reframed two more pieces of art the couple already owned for display over the bed. In the bath, a mix of fluted and flat tiles bring interest to the vanity wall and shower's interior, and rift-sawn white oak cabinetry adds warmth to the space.



Wallpaper punctuated with yellow strokes enlivens the powder bath, a space new to the footprint in the rebuild.



Design Resources

ARCHITECT Phil Purifoy, AIA, Fennell Purifoy Architects **BUILDER** Jacob White Construction **INTERIOR DESIGN** Krista Lewis, K. Lewis Interior Design **LANDSCAPE DESIGN** Tanner Weeks, PLA, ASLA, Ecological Design Group **ACCESSORIES, BEDDING, FABRICS, FURNITURE, LIGHTING, MIRRORS, AND RUGS** K. Lewis Interior Design **APPLIANCES** Metro Appliances & More **BRICK** Antique Brick & Block **CABINETRY AND HARDWARE** Duke Custom Cabinets **CARPET, FLOORING, AND TILE** ProSource of Little Rock **COUNTERTOPS** Stone World Designs **FIREPLACE** Ballard Fireplace **FIXTURES** Falk Plumbing Supply **FRAMING** BK Moulding **GLASS (SPECIALTY)** Soos Stained Glass **IRONWORK** Iron World Designs **PAINTING** J&F Painting **WINDOW COVERINGS** Arkansas Shades, Blinds & Shutters **WINDOWS AND DOORS** Pella