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Charm**

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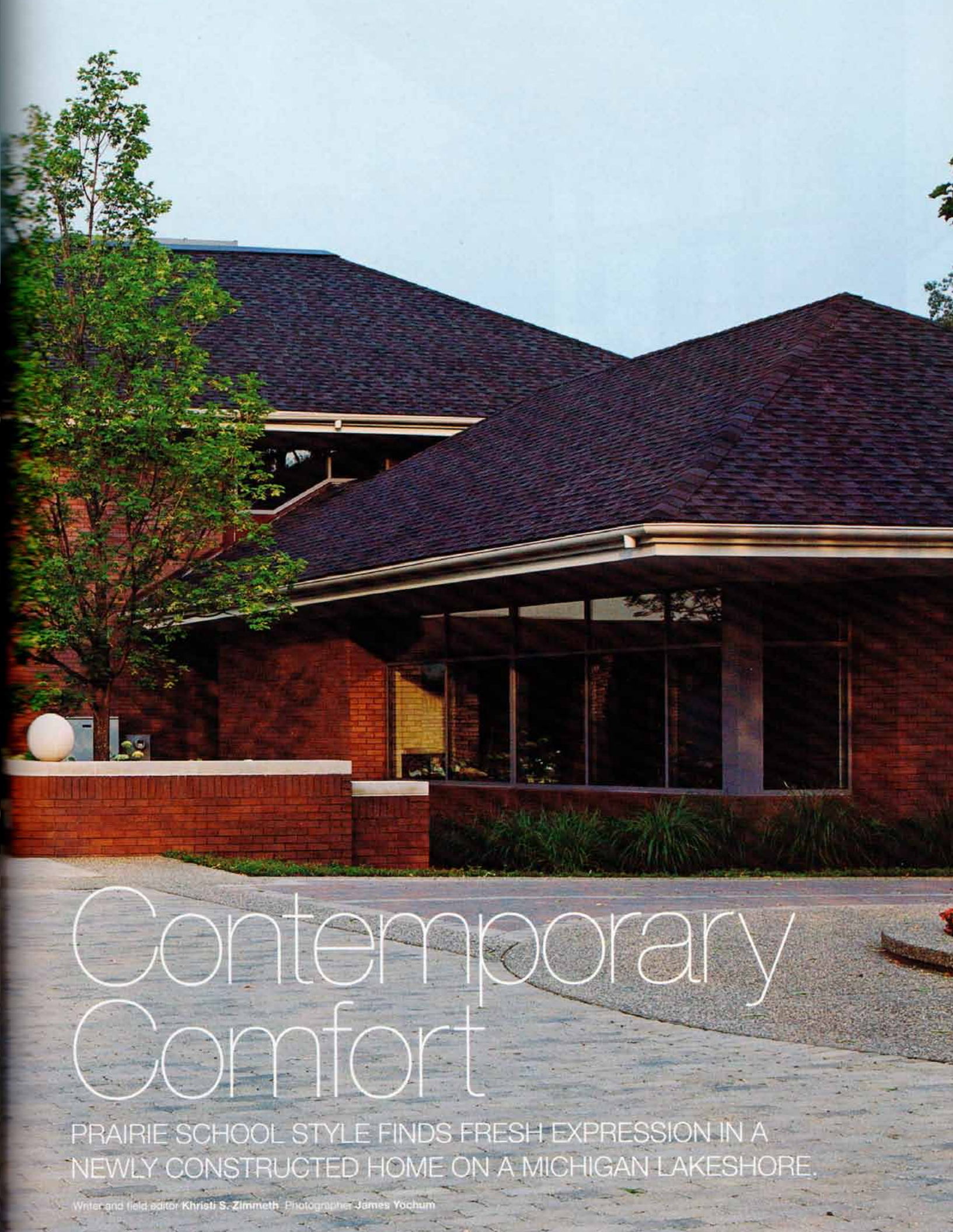
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**Add Custom Touches:
Windows, Lighting & Floors**



Contemporary Comfort

PRAIRIE SCHOOL STYLE FINDS FRESH EXPRESSION IN A
NEWLY CONSTRUCTED HOME ON A MICHIGAN LAKESHORE.

Writer and field editor Khristi S. Zimmeth Photographer James Yochum



ADD DRAMA AT THE ENTRY

To fill an entryway with light, try an entire wall of windows. Glass doors leave the view unimpeded from the floor to the 19-foot-high ceiling, while transparent pendant lights further the open, airy first impression.

Frank Lloyd Wright may not be the first thing that comes to mind when someone looks at Judy and Aziz Naser's Michigan home. Look closely, however, and the master architect's Prairie School influences are unmistakable.

That's no accident, says architect Don Paul Young, who worked with the Nasers on their new home on Walnut Lake in the Detroit suburb of West Bloomfield. "It's definitely a modern expression of the Prairie School style," Young says. "Like Wright, we took our cues from nature. Because the lake is clearly the focal point, we designed it so every room has a strong visual connection with the outdoors."

The sweeping 2-acre lakefront lot boasts more than 150 feet of frontage, so it's no surprise that the Nasers wanted a dramatic home to complement the dramatic site. Seventeen-foot windows on the home's eastern side provide lake views from the living room, dining room, and kitchen. Other Prairie School influences include low-slung rooflines, the repetition of horizontal shapes, and matching indoor and outdoor materials for visual continuity.

Ornamentation is minimal both inside and out. "There are very few moldings or trims," Young says. "Ultimately, we kept things simple and unadorned because we believe in letting Mother Nature be our decoration."

Like many custom projects, the Nasers' lakeside home was a dream long before it became a reality. The family purchased the land in 1997, but took more than five years building resources; clearing a small, nondescript 1950s ranch that originally sat on the lot; and thinking about what they wanted before they began interviewing architects. "We plan on spending the rest of our lives here, so we really wanted to get it right," Aziz says.

They ripped page after page of homes they admired from magazines, and eventually noticed that Young had

ABOVE A striking bank of glass and a 12-foot roof overhang mark the front entrance to the home, which integrates architecture with nature. OPPOSITE Architect Don Paul Young lowered the entrance hall ceiling to create a sense of expectation and to allow room for the upstairs hall.

MAKE YOUR FIREPLACE FIT

Let your fireplace help define your home's style. Natural materials such as limestone tiles are a hallmark of Prairie architecture. Their horizontal shape, repeated in the profile of the art niches, reinforces the look.



designed most of them. Even then, they took their time before picking up the phone. "Young & Young is known for contemporary homes, but at first we weren't convinced that we wanted a contemporary," Aziz says. "We knew we wanted our home to be warm and welcoming. The longer we worked with Don, however, the more he convinced us that a contemporary style could give us what we wanted."

While he had plenty of experience in taking advantage of sweeping lake vistas, Young was less experienced in building a lakeside home to accommodate a busy family—the Nasers have three children: Nicollette, 12; Fuad, 10; and Trevor, 6. "Reconciling the Nasers' two priorities provided us with an interesting challenge," Young says.

His solution was to craft a home with two distinct zones: one designed for active family living, the other for entertaining and quiet adult pursuits. The family zone includes the main-level laundry, family entrance from the



OPPOSITE AND ABOVE The living room's subtle silver gray-green paint scheme echoes colors in the limestone fireplace and lets artwork shine. RIGHT A large painting of evergreen trees anchors the dining room and complements the custom table. The chandelier was hand-blown in Italy.

ENJOY SUNLIGHT AND PRIVACY

If other homes are close enough that neighbors can see into your rooms, consider clerestory windows. They allow natural light inside—without putting you on display—and save wall space for artwork or cabinetry.



garage, kitchen, pantry, breakfast area, and a patio off the kitchen. The living room, dining area, formal entrance hall, and home office are on the other end. "We purposely put as much space between the two zones as possible," Young says. That sense of separation extends to the upper level, with the master suite at one end of a long hall and the children's bedrooms and media area/playroom on the other.

The combination of open and private spaces suits the family, who wanted a floor plan that would maximize sunlight and aid circulation. To ensure continuity and comfortable flow, Young brought in Jeffrey King and Amy Weinstein, interior designers known for their flair with contemporary spaces. The design philosophy seen in the home's simplified exterior extends to the interiors, says King, who describes the house's style as classic modernism. "My philosophy is that a house should have very few

OPPOSITE A row of clerestory windows brightens the breakfast area.
ABOVE The kitchen features rift-cut oak cabinets, honed black absolute granite countertops, and a multipurpose island with seating for the kids.
RIGHT Stainless-steel mosaic backsplash tiles set off the professional-grade range and contrast with the java-color stained cabinetry.





building material changes," he says. "I usually opt for just a few main materials, including one stone, one wood, and one paint color to ensure cohesiveness."

The soothing palette provides a fitting backdrop for the family's modern art, as well as quietly elegant furniture that complements rather than detracts from lake views.

A decade after buying the land, the Naser family has a dream home that blends clean-lined contemporary design with comfortable family spaces. "The living room is a wonderful place for adult entertaining, but the kids also use it as a hangout when they want to read," Aziz says. "For me, that's the ultimate success." **BH**

RESOURCES ON PAGE 120

For more window ideas: www.bhg.com/sipwindows

ABOVE The home's simple yet sophisticated style extends to the serene master bedroom, where sleek modern furniture and a deep version of the overarching gray palette reinforce the room as a haven for adults. **LEFT** White porcelain sinks in the master bath balance the hues of deep green limestone and dark-stained wood seen throughout the house.



Architectural Highlights

- Walls of windows angled to maximize views
- Large wine vault and butler's pantry
- Easy access to five outdoor spaces
- Laundry rooms on both levels
- Four spacious upper-level bedroom suites

MAIN LEVEL SQ. FT.: 3,565

UPPER LEVEL SQ. FT.: 3,033

BEDROOMS: 4

BATHROOMS: 4 full, 2 half



Architect **Don Paul Young**
Interior designers **Jeffrey G. King** and **Amy Weinstein**
Builder **Dan Sebold**