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

DESIGN AND INTERIOR: KIMBLE & BERNHARDT PHOTOGRAPHY: JAMES WILSON



Frank Lloyd Wright may not be the first thing that comes to mind when someone looks at Judy and Art Nare'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 Nares 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 1½ feet of frontage, so it's no surprise that the Nares wanted a dramatic home to complement the dramatic site. Seventeen-foot windows in 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 trim," Young says. "Ultimately, we kept things simple and unadorned because we believe in letting Mother Nature be our decoration."

Like many custom projects, the Nares' 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, wooded 1990s 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," Art says.

They spent page after page of hours they admitted from magazines, and eventually noticed that Young had

sent them a series of plans and a 3-D rendering that he had created. "The house felt like it was made for us," says Judy. "The house was just what we needed. It was a sense of ownership and it was exactly the ground-

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 10-foot-high ceiling, while transparent pendant lights further the open, airy first impression.



MAKE YOUR FIREPLACE FIT

Let your fireplace help define your home's style. Natural materials such as limestone tiles are a hallmark of Frank's architecture. Their horizontal shape, repeated in the profile of the art nooks, 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," Anne 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 Naxos have three children: Nicolette, 12; Paul, 10; and Trevor, 6. "Reconciling the Naxos' 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

garage, and more. The living room, with its glass-fronted fireplace, serves as the family lounge and is where the Naxos spend a large portion of their time. And on the dining room and components the custom table. The one table was hand-crafted in Italy



ENJOY SUNLIGHT AND PRIVACY

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



garage, kitchen, pantry, breakfast area, and a pass off to 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 areas as possible," Young says. This 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 at the other.

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

elements. It's not about having a lot of things, but about having a few things that are really important. It's not about having a lot of things, but about having a few things that are really important. It's not about having a lot of things, but about having a few things that are really important."





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

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 classic-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," Amir says. "For me, that's the ultimate success." ■

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For more window ideas, visit bit.ly/windowideas

above: The home's simple yet sophisticated style extends to the serene master bedroom, where sleek modern furniture and a deep section of the contrasting gray palette reinforce the room as a haven for adults. **LEFT:** White porcelain sinks in the master bath illustrate the home's deep green, timeless and sophisticated 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

UNFURNISHED SQ. FT. 3,985
UPPER LEVEL SQ. FT. 3,000
BEDROOMS: 4
BATHROOMS: 4 MA, 2 half



Architect: Don Paul Young
Interior designers: Jeffrey S. King and Amy Wernick
Builder: Don Nelson