



The calm, well-crafted house is filled with beautiful vignettes. **CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT:** a timber truss on the guest pavilion; potting and herb-growing space in an anteroom; a cozy library corner; the master bath. **OPPOSITE:** The hillside façade of the new home.



# CRAFTSMAN contemporary

CRAFTSMANSHIP AND INTIMATE SPACES DEFINE A NEW HOUSE THAT'S PART MODERN, PART RUSTIC, AND PART NORTH CAROLINA VERNACULAR.

BY REGINA COLE | PHOTOGRAPHS BY ROGER WADE

**A**RCHITECT Shawn Leatherwood does not describe himself as an Arts & Crafts specialist. When asked about his company's direction, the North Carolina designer says that they specialize in high-end custom homes. Yet he is especially proud of a four-year-old house that embodies beloved Arts & Crafts principles and hallmarks. The contemporary dwelling rambles down a steep hillside near Asheville.

The 4,000-square-foot house does not pretend to re-create the past. Main rooms flow in the manner of a 21st-century open floor plan. Dramatic ceiling height and bold fenestration define main rooms; the luxurious amenities and size of the master bath were unheard of when bungalows were new. Wall colors, too, follow today's taste for subtle, grayed tones in a paler palette than was favored 100 years ago.

Still, the house is defined by skilled craftsmanship, the use of local materials, and carefully edited collections. Exterior cladding reflects the area's natural history with cedar (both clapboards and shakes) and native stone. The interior boasts quarter-sawn white oak, black granite, leaded glass, mica, old Navajo rugs, Arts & Crafts-period furniture, and reclaimed old-growth walnut flooring. Inside and out, the house is personal and organic.

"The homeowners knew exactly what they wanted," says Rick Barnard of Rutherford Millwork in nearby Forest City. He created the interior woodwork, including kitchen cabinets, doors, wainscots, staircases, crown molding, and ceiling coffers. "Shawn and I merely executed the owners' thoughts and ideas."

The owner is a landscape designer who was attracted to this forested mountainside with views of the Blue

Skilled artisans, including Rutherford Millwork's Rick Barnard, were sought out by the homeowners. Area stonemason James Rich used local granite for walls and patios, and to create the living room's dramatic fireplace.

The living room is anchored by a 13-foot-tall stone chimney wall. The stonemason found and installed a large piece of local dogwood for the mantel. The dining room and kitchen are through the colonnade.



ABOVE: Stained glass in the entry door is by custom furniture maker Swartzendruber. BELOW: Arts & Crafts columns atop leaded-glass cabinets create a colonnade that divides the living room from kitchen and dining areas. Art lighting is by the Mica Lamp Co.



LEFT: Woodwork and lighting in the kitchen ensure a seamless transition from main rooms to this contemporary space. BELOW: With wings and ells tucked into a hillside, and clad with multiple materials to lend scale, the house is quiet in the landscape. The garage (foreground) has board-and-batten siding.



Ridge. A strong selling point: 3,300 surrounding acres are land-trust-protected. The homeowner explains: “Even while we were in a Bauhaus-inspired building outside Chicago, we kept picking up pieces of Arts & Crafts furniture. We’ve always loved Western art and Navajo rugs. When we planned this house, my husband and I said to each other, “This time, let’s do it exactly how we want.” We wanted an Arts & Crafts house that sits softly in the landscape.

“We insisted on no huge interior spaces,” she adds. “We interviewed ten architects, but chose Shawn because he understood our desire for a house that’s just big enough.”

The couple came to western North Carolina to be close to children and grandchildren. Leatherwood thus faced the challenge of creating a house that would be cozy for two, but also amenable to long visits from 12 or more family members. The round table in the hex-

agonal dining room, for example, is fine for two—but it expands to seat 12. The music room between living room and kitchen is just big enough for the grand piano—but there’s room for a small audience in the window seat.

Early on, the owners recruited interior designer Robert Forga. He augmented their antique collections with reproduction lamps and furniture. “In all their years of planning, the homeowners put an idea book together,” Forga says. For cushions, sofas, and bedspreads, he found soft fabrics with gentle geometric and paisley patterns. “We considered draping the windows,” he continues, but “the view won out.”

To complement original Limbert and Stickley furniture, Linda Le Tard of Atlanta’s Patterson Furniture assembled new and re-issued L. & J.G. Stickley pieces, including counter stools and Morris chairs. To furnish particular spaces, the homeowners turned to custom furniture maker Swartzendruber Hardwood Creations of

Goshen, who created a 9’-long Greene and Greene-inspired hall table, a dining-room corner cabinet, and tables for the living room. Swartzendruber is also responsible for the leaded glass work.

“Although the owners have collected beautiful objects, this is not a house of ‘things,’” Robert Forga says, explaining the harmony in the mix of objects and rooms. “And the design is scaled to how the interior functions. There is not a single ridiculously oversized room.” ■

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