

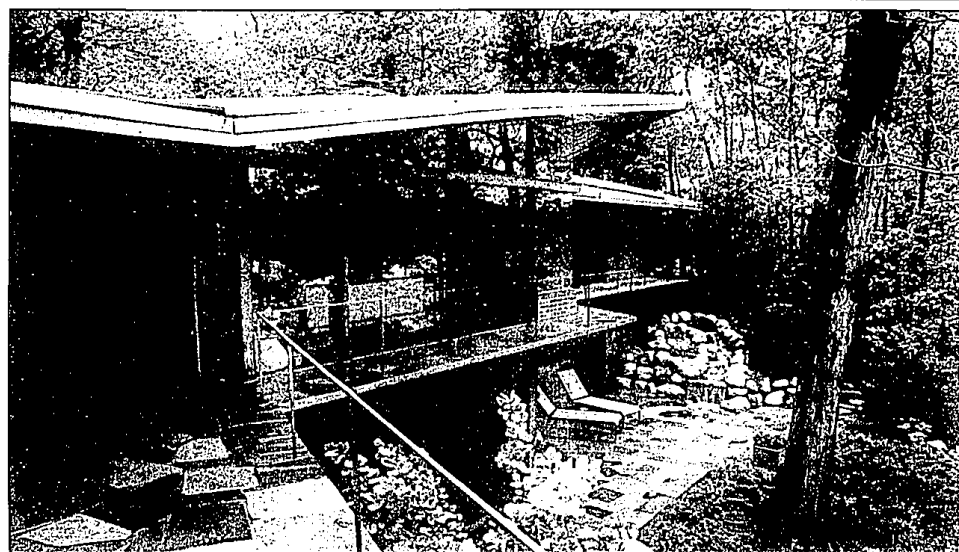
Creative Living

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Staff photos by
Jerry Zolynsky

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Lake Luxury

Updating Turner's design, Wright's influence

By Corinne Abalt
staff writer

BEFORE HE SET ABOUT building beautiful houses in the metropolitan Detroit area some 30 years ago, Harold Turner worked for and with Frank Lloyd Wright for about 15 years.

In fact, Turner was the builder of the house that Wright designed for the Affleck family in Bloomfield Hills, which now belongs to Lawrence Technological University.

So, it's natural that houses designed and built by Turner have a Wright feeling. While Turner put something of himself into these houses and modified the master's designs, the Wright influence is there.

A CASE IN point is Alan Forrester's house on Lower Long Lake. Almost two years' worth of refurbishment, enhancement and several outstanding additions have been completed.

Birmingham-based architect Frank Carnovale, AIA, sighed a bit as he thought back on all the study and the challenges this project demanded, then said quickly, "It was a tremendous amount of fun."

The intent from the beginning for Forrester, Carnovale and interior designer Shirley Maddalena was to maintain the integrity of the house, which is on a rise about 50 above the shoreline.

"It is built on an octagonal grid — everything is a hexagon," Carnovale said.

Most of the angles are either 60 or 120 degrees. The exterior and some interior walls are coal-fired

brick. This firing process gives it a multi-color look, ranging from deep terra cotta to pale lavender, beige and gray green.

Pecky cypress, a favorite Wright material, is used lavishly inside and on the underside of the roof's 4-foot overhang. In true Wright style, the house almost seems to fold itself into the rolling terrain.

THE LIVING room windows and doorwall to the terrace facing the lake go from the ceiling right to the floor.

"That's not code anymore," Forrester said. "The whole purpose was to bring the outdoors right into the house."

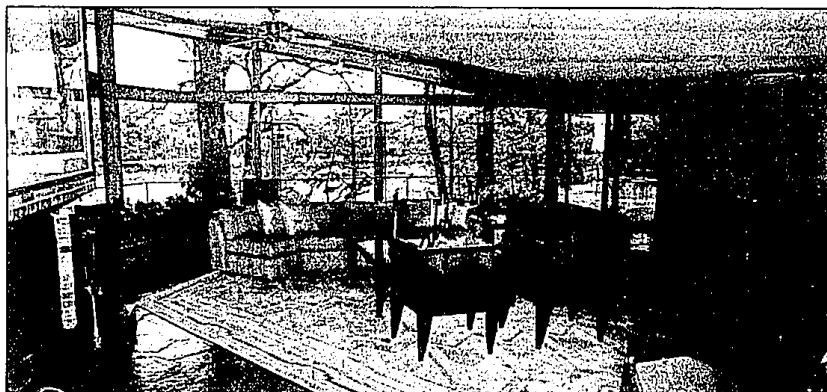
There is no weight on the glass where it comes together at shallow angles across the front or the glass would break, he said. And since the roof goes four feet beyond the glass, the weight had to be trussed back to keep it off the glass.

FOR THE furniture and accessories, Maddalena, whose firm is also based in Birmingham, chose furniture designed by Wright, Elicl Saarinen (a contemporary of Wright) and Josef Hoffmann. Many pieces are covered in Wright-designed fabrics. The living room rug is a copy of one at Cranbrook/Kingswood School, designed by Loja Saarinen.

"It was my goal to put in all of these wonderful pieces and not detract from the house," Maddalena said.

The original house, built in 1960, had a small kitchen and a carport.

The previous owners had enlarged the kitchen to more than double the original size and added a garage. Forrester added two



Shirley Maddalena chose furniture and fabrics in designs by Frank Lloyd Wright, Elicl Saarinen, Loja Saarinen (the rug) and Josef Hoffmann to compliment the architecture of the home.

more garage spaces and a hobby room on the far side in the same style as the original.

"One thing Turner did was put a rush mat on the ceiling," Forrester said. "I didn't feel bad about taking that out and putting up dry wall."

The mat was impractical, he said.

One of Turner's signatures is a low ceiling at the entrance to a room that explodes into a high ceiling inside. This creates a sense of drama and a feeling of awe; he

used that very successfully throughout the house.

THE INTERIOR RENOVATION included every room but the kitchen. Walls were moved, the pecky cypress replaced and stained in many areas. It's not an easy commodity to find. They finally had it milled and kiln dried in Arkansas and shipped here, Carnovale said.

Carnovale said that as he and Maddalena worked together, "We

used Wright's vocabulary and brought it into this century."

The new master bathroom is an example of that. It has the odd angles expected in a Wright room, but it is larger and far more gracious than its predecessor.

"We took every single thing out and redid it completely," Maddalena said.

The walls and floor are a buff marble, a match to the bleached pecky cypress. The counter tops are

like warm apricot, and the sinks are a jade marble with gold fittings.

The open shower, 6 by 6 feet with two shower heads, has a half marble wall and a recessed step into it. A Wright-like block design is inlaid in the marble on the back shower wall and repeated on the half-wall. A large recessed skylight gives the master bath a soft, luminous look.

BECAUSE FORRESTER so admires Wright's famous house in Pennsylvania, Falling Water, he has created what he calls "Falling Water II."

In addition to all new decking and improved and enlarged terraces down to the lake, two hydro spas have been added, an indoor one off the master bedroom and an outdoor one off the lower level family room.

Streams that fall to ponds below and ripple over rocks and dams have been built on both sides of the house. They are maintained by two pumps on a recirculating system, so no water goes into the lake.

"The water comes up against the house in a number of different places," Carnovale said.

"That's what Wright did at Falling Water and that's what we tried to do here," Forrester said.

Forrester has commissioned works for his house. One marble sculpture in the living room by David Saharoff is titled "Falling Water." Another imposing marble sculpture by Jay LeKrowitz, a local artist, stands like a graceful sentinel near the front door.



New indoor hydro spa has a private view of "falling water."



The newly created waterfall is in a picturesque setting.