



The painted steel screen at the entry, fabricated by Stan Gisler of Gisler Metal Works, is a custom design by Bodron+Fruit.

DALLAS

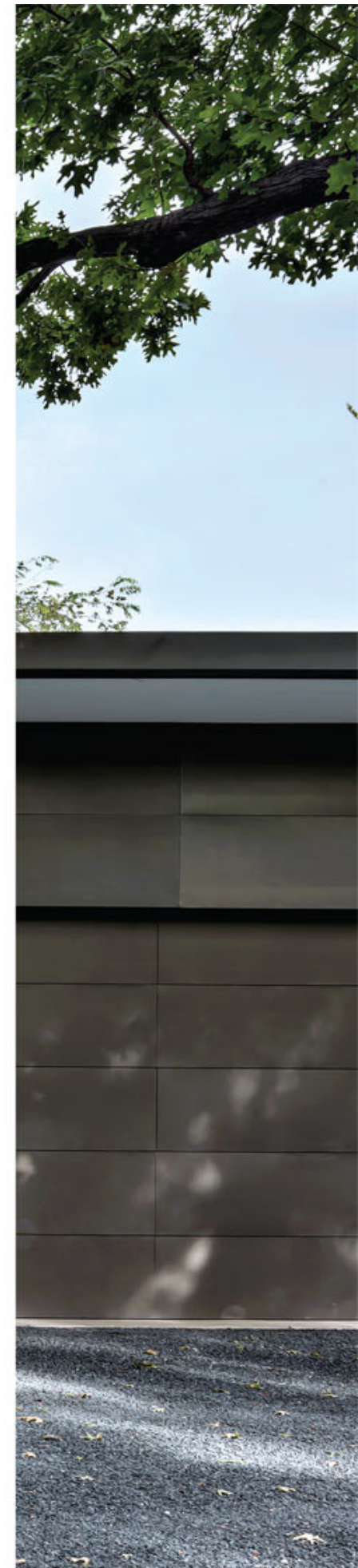
W what a feeling

Like all houses designed by Bodron+Fruit, this art-filled home in Bluffview offers a special experience for all who enter.

*By Helen Thompson
Photography by Charles Davis Smith*

For Dallas architect Svend Christian Fruit, great buildings can't just rely on their looks. "They have to feel right too," says the co-principal in the renowned architecture and interior design firm Bodron+Fruit. "They have to feel right when you are walking through, when you are sitting down in a chair, when you are having a conversation with another person." The firm, which also includes business partner and architecture-trained interior designer Mil Bodron, seems to exceed its own high standards with every house it designs. Bodron+Fruit has also carved a niche for itself renovating midcentury houses designed by some of the country's greatest architects, including Frank Lloyd Wright, Edward Larrabee Barnes, Philip Johnson and Howard Meyer.

As a recently completed residence for downsizing repeat clients quietly testifies, the duo's signature is a virtuosic attention to detail, nuance and restraint. The 3,400-square-



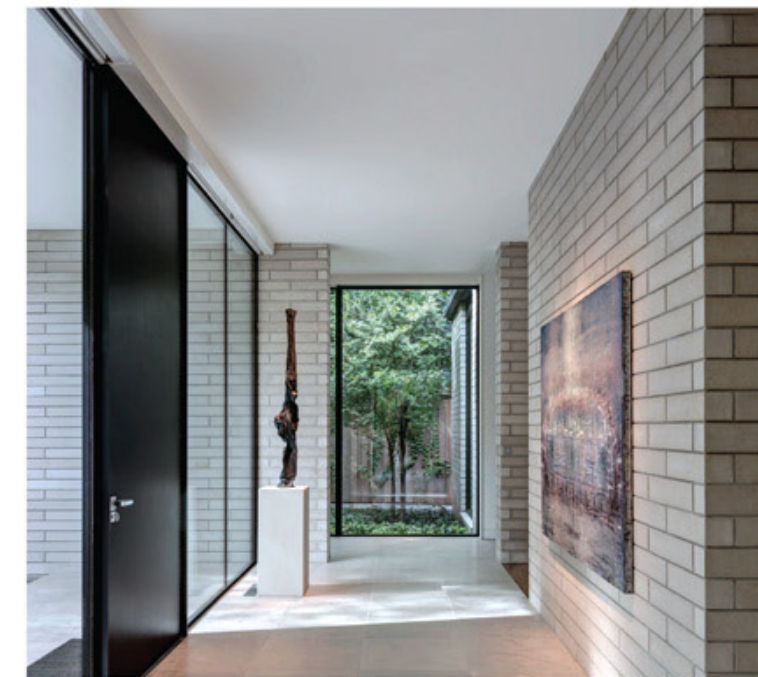
Bodron+Fruit made sure that continuity was a palpable element in the personality of the house by extending the tongue-and-groove walnut hardwood flooring throughout the living area. Opposite page, from top: Custom teak millwork in the kitchen and over the living room fireplace unites the spaces; Joseph Havel's bronze sculpture "Single Black Shirt" is a focus of the entry hall.



foot limestone and glass structure in Dallas' Bluffview neighborhood sits on the far side of a black crushed-granite driveway. It demarcates the separation between the street and the discreet building, which is anchored by a dramatic two-story-tall chimney. The chimney is a statement piece that's positioned midhouse and looks like it might be the missing segment folded up and back from the open-air entry courtyard. The chimney, though, is an architectural exception. "This is a low house," says Fruit. "I wanted to emphasize the horizontality."

Never one to belabor a point, Fruit offers a way for arriving guests to experience the width of the house subtly, via a horizontal entry that extends from one side of the house to the other. Each end looks out onto its own courtyard with a floor-to-ceiling window. "They add scale," he says of the windows, "and make the space seem a lot bigger." A contributing factor: Architect and designer chose to use the same materials on both the exterior and interior walls. "It's important to pull the outside surfaces inside," Fruit says, "to have that relationship between inside and out."

Considerations such as these go further than just paying homage to detail; they venture into the realm of nuance, where the effects of scale, proportion and composition become the "feeling" that the architect so values. Because interior designer Bodron is involved with every residential design the minute it begins, the furniture, finishes and hardware—elements



often dismissed as mere accessories in the design of a house—are critical to the architectural composition. "We start with a generic furniture plan from day one," says Fruit. "There is nothing worse than seeing really great architecture and the furniture doesn't fit." The Bluffview house fits together with the refined composure of a couture garment.

"I select everything for the proper balance of the room," says Bodron. For this two-bedroom house, plus study, with an open living area at its heart, that meant choosing a neutral palette that answers to the soft-white tonality of the limestone slabs on the floors and the limestone bricks on the walls. Most of the furniture shapes—such as the living room's two swivel chairs—are rounded or slightly off-kilter. The irregularly six-sided coffee table affords an antidote to the rectilinear lines of the modern house. Bodron's plan for the sofa, which floats midroom, was just as well thought out. "The back is low and disappears," he says about the piece that owes its loungelike heritage to the sectional sofa.

Bodron insists that his interiors should

Designer Mil Bodron is a firm believer in wall-to-wall carpeting for bedrooms and uses Bloomsburg's Caravan to make a luxurious understatement in the master suite. Opposite page: In the master bath, a Blu Bathworks tub from TKO Associates is an architectural statement against the Daltile wall.



not draw attention. "My work is all about the architecture and the art," he says. The homeowners have worked with Dallas art adviser Michael E. Thomas for years to build an impressive collection, which Bodron prominently displayed throughout the house. Fruit and Bodron allowed for expansive walls for display, situated furniture away from walls to provide the best views of the art and made room in the middle of the back terrace for Richard Long's 12-foot-in-diameter cut-slate inset "Funfair Circle." Occasionally, though, the designer treats some pieces of furniture as if they are art. The oblong Knoll dining table

takes on sculptural clarity in its post in front of Danby statuary marble slabs that define, as well as disguise, the kitchen beyond. In the master bedroom, Arthur Ou's gray-toned "View 10" could be an extension of the bed's gray upholstered headboard; Linda Ridgway's delicately tangled bronze swirl hangs on the bedroom wall just above a John Saladino chair—the curve of its back a perfect counterpoint to the arc of the swirl. Don't think for a second that those matching curves just happened that way. It's no accident that a Bodron+Fruit room feels good to be in. It was all part of the plan from the very beginning. ■



DESIGN DETAILS

TYPE
Single-family home

LOCATION
Dallas

ARCHITECTURE
Svend Fruit and Kevin Mut
Bodron+Fruit

INTERIOR DESIGN
Mil Bodron and Dustin Penney
Bodron+Fruit
bodronfruit.com

CONSTRUCTION
S.H. McCombs Company
214.319.7036

LANDSCAPE DESIGN
Mary Ellen Cowan
MESA
mesadesigngroup.com

METALWORK
Gisler Metal Works
214.507.6474

VENDORS

CULP ASSOCIATES
Porta Romana lamps in master
bedroom
culpassociates.com

HOLLY HUNT
Tables in master bedroom
hollyhunt.com

JOHN SALADINO
Side chair in master bedroom
saladinostyle.com

ROMAN THOMAS
Bed in master bedroom
romanthomas.com

SCOTT+COONER
Mario Bellini Tentazione chairs in
dining room
scottcooner.com

SMINK
Piero Lissoni sofa in living room,
Kettal chairs and Bruno Fattorini
table on terrace
sminkinc.com

TAI PING
Rug in living room
houseoftaiping.com

U.S. STONE
Flooring and masonry throughout
usstoneindustries.com

VIVIAN WATSON
Cedric Hartman reading lamps in
living room
vivianwatsonassoc.com