



A BUILDER'S HOME

By MAURI ELBEL | Photography by RYANN FORD

When you're an in-demand builder, sometimes the most difficult aspect of creating your own home is finding the time to devote to the project. But as Royce H. Flournoy, owner of Texas Construction Company, proves: when you do, there is no reward quite like it.

urbanhomemagazine.com

Sitting on a small infill lot in East Austin, Flournoy's 2,200-square-foot, three bedroom, two-and-a-half bathroom house blends flawlessly into its surrounding neighborhood while exuding a classic, ageless feel.

"I wanted to create a structure which had a timeless appeal, lots of natural light and was efficient not only with its use of space, but in its function," says Flournoy of his personal home completed less than one year ago.

Flournoy admits his biggest challenge was fitting the project

into his already jam-packed schedule. The builder planned to assign one of his project managers to oversee the construction, but due to the company's larger-than-anticipated work load, Flournoy assumed the primary role himself.

"The benefit was working with our trade base and being part of the process in a more hands-on role than I had intended with the added benefit of being rewarded with the project as my home at the end of the build," says Flournoy who reached out to FAB Architecture to help him fine-tune his vision.

urbanhomemagazine.com



Texas Construction Company and FAB Architecture, one of Austin's leading design firms, were no strangers to begin with, collaborating on various projects in the past including the renovation of Flournoy's previous home in Austin's French Place neighborhood. When Flournoy and his partner decided to sell their home and build another, they began researching houses around Austin. During a local homes tour, they found a home they admired in the colorfully modern Agave neighborhood, coincidentally designed by FAB Architecture.

"We began working with the basic concept of the Agave house and quickly found that Royce and his partner's needs were a bit different," says Patrick Ousey of FAB Architecture. "A whole new home design began. Royce was very open to our vision."

Both the architect and builder agreed on the initial goal: to create a clean, modern environment. But they also wanted to keep the design within the context of its East Austin neighborhood. Due to the postage-stamp-size lot, Ousey says they decided to keep the form simple. Soon the iconic "house" form took shape.

"We chose to use simple materials to reinforce this concept as well as a pure white color palette with bronze tone highlights on the exterior," says Ousey.

Built within the fabric of the existing neighborhood, this modest home remains both contextual and contemporary.

"Timelessness is always something that FAB Architecture strives for," says Ousey. "The simple agrarian form is both traditional and modern at the same time and feels at home in the evolving context of Austin's changing Eastside."

An unmistakable simplicity drives the design from the moment you approach the house, with the landscaping setting the tone with four olive trees that run parallel to the facade and a level carpet of lawn defines the front yard. The oversized wood and glass door welcomes visitors without exposing too much of the home's interior to passersby.



Flournoy's two-story gabled house faces the street with a minimal palette of white HardiePlank siding contrasted with bronze windows with steel detailing and the large front door which provides a warm and welcoming point of entry. Echoing the exterior palette, white walls and ceilings dominate the interior spaces, with thoughtful punches of black, textures and colorful artwork that boldly stand out.

Beautifully grained light pine wood floors finished in a clear seal flow throughout the home, providing a neutral surface

within the home's otherwise black and white scheme. The masonry fireplace with its Leuders stone surround anchors the living area. Black shaker-style cabinets pop against the creamy Carrara marble countertops and white subway tiles in the open kitchen, combining to serve as the dominate focal point of the lower level.

In the master bathroom, a large shower with a skylight above reflects sunlight against the Carrara marble tile and countertops for an elegant look. Nestled into the roofline,

the two bedrooms and flex space are connected by a generous book-lined and light-filled hall overlooking the stairs. The guest bathroom features fabulous, fun contrasts with the black and white re-purposed freestanding tub and well-coordinated patterned flooring.

Integrating ample natural light into the home was a priority; however, the design also pays careful attention to the privacy element.

"Because of the narrow footprint of the house, natural light



is bountiful yet privacy was of utmost importance,” says Ousey. “Window placement was very important. We did not want to expose too much of the house to the street.”

With that in mind, the stairway was placed along the street frontage opposite the kitchen. High windows allow light to fill the stairway and filter light into the upper and lower levels without exposing too much to the street. The staircase is screened with vertical steel slats which allow light to pour

in from above and a low slung steel bookcase engages with the landing, all serving as a backdrop to the dining area. The modern staircase and bookcase were designed by Ousey who had a clear vision from the start on its function and purpose despite Flournoy’s initial hesitation.

“It took a little bit of work for me to get on the same page with him,” says Flournoy. “Of course now, it looks like it should have never been anything else. It is a great example of how



collaboration brings in different perspectives and if the idea is good, it will make it to the build.”

Now the bottom of the stairs adjacent to the kitchen provides an ideal space for storing numerous cookbooks the homeowners often reference at mealtimes. Upstairs, the bookcase connects the television room and master bedroom, facilitating a quick grab of a book to read and relax.

The entire project went smoothly from the beginning thanks





to a seamless collaboration between architect and builder that allowed ideas to flow back and forth freely. Some of the decisions made early in the project were innate, says Ousey, citing the desire to keep the kitchen as the center of focus. But others came later. For example, while browsing an antique shop in Chicago, Flournoy found the perfect piece of furniture to complete the look and functionality of the kitchen — an antique work bench that could be raised and lowered with a gear device which serves the dual function of a work space and dining table.

One of Flournoy's favorite elements of the home is the white color palette which showcases the design's clean lines and modern feel while welcoming well-edited punctuations that

come from statement lighting and colorful artwork strategically placed throughout the space.

"I like seeing how good architecture compliments and creates a back drop for fine furnishings and art," says Flournoy. "My collection is in its infancy, so as I collect, I was hoping the space would change without a need to change the architecture." ❖

ARCHITECT FAB Architecture
512.469.0775 | Fabarchitecture.com

BUILDER Texas Construction Company
512.451.8050 | Txconstruct.com