

Metropolitan Home

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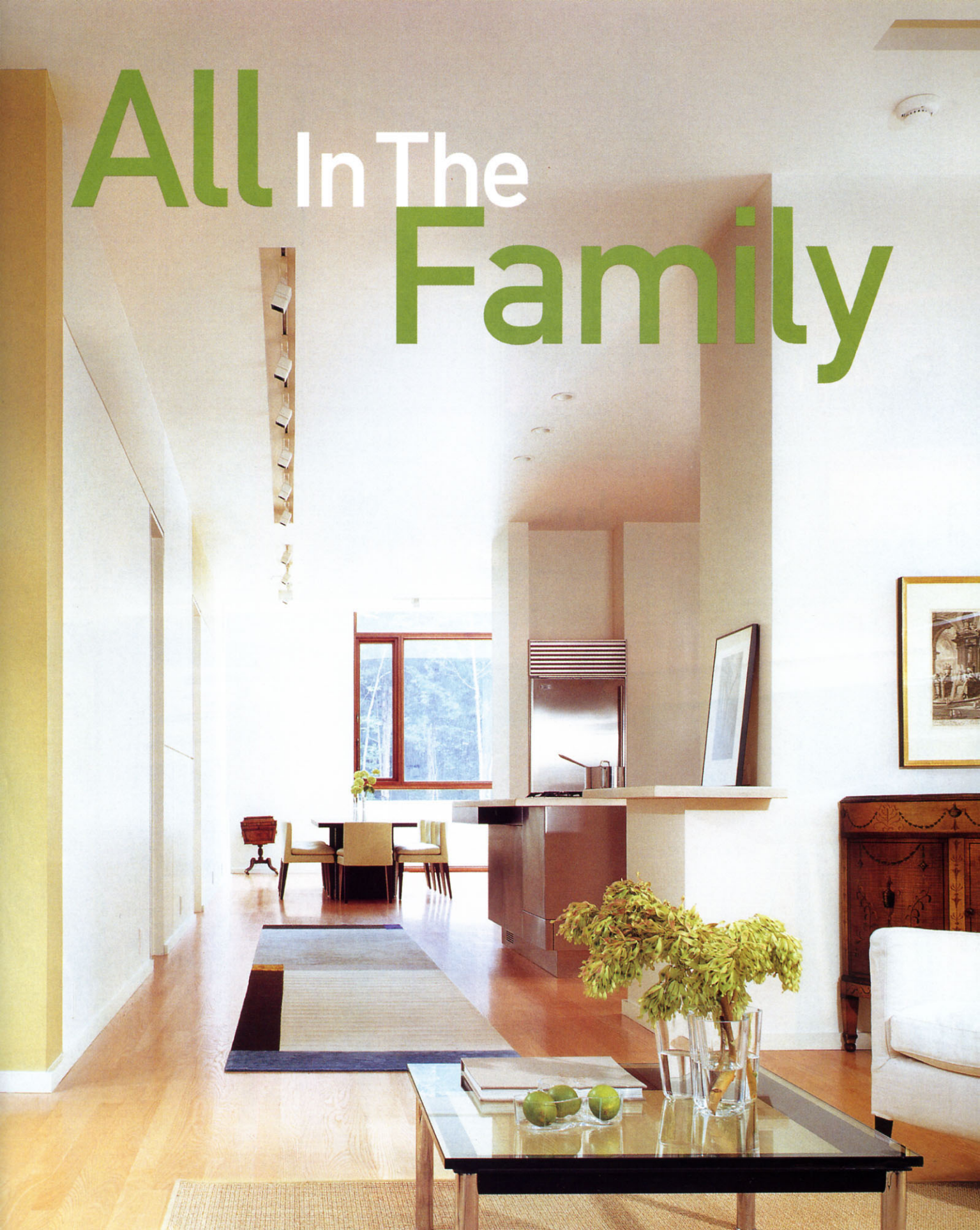
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All In The Family



A DESIGNING
MOTHER AND SON
COLLABORATED
TO CREATE A
MODERN HOME IN
THE WOODS—
JUST TEN MILES
FROM DOWNTOWN
NASHVILLE.

The open plan of the McMackin home flows from a glass entry hall (which also provides access to the pool) into the living room, kitchen and dining area. Marilyn McMackin mixed cherished antiques, like the 19th-century English painted commode, with pieces from B&B Italia and Cassina.





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uild, don't buy! That was Price Harrison's plea to his mother and stepfather when he learned that they had had enough of condominium living and were house-hunting. "My son made the recommendation strongly," laughs Marilyn McMackin. And naturally, Harrison wanted to design it.

It wasn't an outrageous idea. Harrison, a Yale-trained architect, has a blue-chip résumé, having worked for such top modern architects as Paul Rudolph, Richard Meier and I.M. Pei. The family working relationship had been proven in a dozen projects Harrison had completed with his mother, an interior designer, including the law offices of his stepfather, David Wilson McMackin. Furthermore, Marilyn McMackin was ready for a contemporary house.

She wanted something that was spacious, light and easy to maintain. "Here in Nashville," she says, "everything is so Georgian, and everything looks the same."

The McMackins bought a woody three-acre lot just off a main road and only ten miles from downtown. Because they wanted to keep as many trees as possible, they hired a forester to help them with the siting.

"The house fits in between the trees," Harrison explains. And it's pulled as far back from the street as possible. And Marilyn McMackin reports that though traffic is nearby, they never hear it.

PRODUCED BY DORETTA SPERDUTO. PHOTOGRAPHS BY CATHERINE TIGHE. WRITTEN BY ARLENE HIRST.



Simplicity equals drama in the open dining area, furnished with clean-lined table and chairs by Antonio Citterio. Opposite page: Two different shades of green accent the asymmetrically positioned fireplace. The paintings in both rooms are by Perle Fine, a mid-century New York artist.

The original design consisted of a simple two-story house. It was David McMackin, a stranger to the world of architecture and design ("My husband knows what he doesn't know," says Marilyn McMackin), who insisted they make it larger. Because of his urging, the now 3,500-square-foot house has a master suite in a separate wing on the first floor as well as a swimming pool.

The house, with its subtle play of geometric forms, is unapologetically contemporary. But, points out Harrison, "It's not clinical; it has the warmth you'd expect from a '50s house." He achieved the drama by using a limited number of materials: white stucco made from Portland cement and local river sand, along with mahogany and

bronze. The front of the house is almost entirely glass, providing a satisfying view of the wooded landscape.

Throughout the interiors, the number of materials is also limited. The same Portuguese limestone used for the kitchen countertop is repeated in the bathrooms; the floors are all ash. "No one thing demands your attention," says Marilyn. "It has a very calming effect." She chose a soothing palette of greens, browns and whites, selecting Benjamin Moore #967 White because it had some of the tones of the stucco. For accents she decided on two greens: Benjamin Moore's HC2 Beacon Hill Damask and HC16 Guilford Green. "Ironically," she laughs, "my modern colors are from their Historic Collection."

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other and son collaborated on the interiors. "It's wonderful to have a young son," McMackin says. "He educates you to things that are new and different." When she couldn't find kitchen cabinets she liked, she gave in to Harrison's request that he design the cabinetry himself. The furniture is mostly from B&B Italia because, as McMackin puts it, "Price is very impressed by the work of Antonio Citterio [creative director for B&B]. But he did let me pick the pieces I wanted, except for the dining chairs. He insisted on those," she says, but points out that she got to choose the upholstery fabrics.

Over the years McMackin had accumulated a sizable collection of fine American antiques. Except for a few

choice pieces that provide rich accents, like the pair of French Directoire tables in the master bedroom, these are now all gone: sold or put into storage. "I really don't miss the old furniture," she says. "I had a hard time parting with it at first, but now I have no regrets whatsoever. It's refreshing to live in this environment with not a lot of stuff." And the house is indeed uncluttered. "Price is very adamant about that," claims McMackin. "I won some golf trophies—little Herend porcelain animals. Price came in one day and said, 'How much larger is this farm going to grow?'" The menagerie is now banished. "I told him, 'I'm probably going to be the best client you'll ever have.'" mh
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Harrison designed the kitchen's stainless-steel cabinets, opposite. The bathroom floor, bottom, is the same Portuguese limestone as the kitchen countertop. In the master bedroom (left), two French Directoire tables flank the simple bed.

