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A STUDY IN LUXURY

By M.J. Van Deventer

Take an unfettered look inside some of the state's most beautiful and alluring homes. From pleasing pools to enviable interior design, charming kitchens and eye-catching art, these dwellings are the epitome of luxury living.

SEE MORE OF THIS LAKESIDE RETREAT, DESIGNED BY BRIAN FRESE, ON THE FOLLOWING PAGE. PHOTO BY CHARLES DAVIS SMITH, FAIA



MIDWEST MODERN

Photography by Charles Davis Smith, FAIA

How do you define luxury in a home? For Tulsa architect Brian Freese of Freese Architecture, the answer was easy when describing a new dwelling he designed, which he calls 'Lakeside,' on a bluff overlooking Skiatook Lake.

Luxury comes to Freese's design table in many forms. This assignment, over three years in the making, was the perfect match for his interests.

Freese's plan for this lakeside setting features materials suited to the area: large scale structural timber, wood siding, metal roofs and rough-cut stone.

"There is a lot of exposed timber in the exterior," says Freese. "In addition to the structural timber frames, I designed the knife plate steel connections, that slice unseen into the ends of the timbers, secured with exposed bolts."

This project catered to Freese's love of Oklahoma's diverse landscapes, and to his ability to match a variety of architectural projects to their surrounding environments.

"This 10,200-square-foot home is a good example of my approach I call Midwest Modern," says Freese. "The home is reflective of rural farmhouses and outbuildings of the Midwest – yet modernized with expansive glass walls and clean-lined, careful detailing to make it authentic to this era. The result is a home that is, despite its large size, at once inviting and comfortable."

Above: This home on the shores of Skiatook Lake utilizes exposed timber and knife plate steel connections for a unique first impression. Mature trees and landscaping welcome guests.

Below left to right: Expansive glass walls and windows provide beautiful views of the exterior patio, firepit and pool.

The exterior porch is a perfect gathering place for family and friends.

Landscape designer Steven Williams crafted stunning aesthetics around the exterior, including the back patio and porch, bringing bits of greenery into every area.



Despite its large size of 10,200 square feet, the overall design of the home facilitates an inviting and comfortable ambiance, replete with clean lines, mixtures of rural and modern, and careful detailing that Freese dubs 'Midwest Modern.'





The owners had specific wishes and substantial input for their lakeside residence.

"She is a retired computer systems analyst and has a keen eye for color and proportion," says Freese. "Her second career as an artist is really taking off; most of the artwork in the home is hers. Her husband, a geologist, directed the location and orientation of the home with a surveyor's precision. He was also the deciding vote for the exterior stone, the geological history of which he can expound in scientific detail at the slightest urging!"

Freese continues: "We dig deep to find the core idea of a project. As the inspiration was rural structures from generations back, the overall idea is a series of 'homesteads,' arranged according to their function and joined with small, flat-roofed connectors. Each connector is like an opportunity - a 'moment' - to capture and view the landscapes," he says. "The overall floor plan, with its integrated angles, embraces the lakeside views and surrounding woods from each of the individual homesteads."

Freese designed the central living/dining/kitchen homestead as a self-supporting timber structure, allowing for extra-large windows to connect directly to the timber frame on the lake side. Solid timber posts are also used throughout the home to support generous covered porches.



Top to bottom: Embracing lakeside views, the living and dining areas seamlessly blend together with their modern amenities, unique lighting fixtures and eye-catching art.

The central living/dining/kitchen homestead offers dramatic high ceilings, a distinct kitchen island and easy access to the back patio and porch.

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Top to bottom: Interior designer Susan Eddings Perez worked closely with the clients to create a calming atmosphere within the home, utilizing unexpected materials like reclaimed Oklahoma barnwood.

Simplicity of materials and color, as well as subdued lighting, add to the pristine look of the open and airy master bathroom.

Equally instrumental to the home's success was the extended design and construction team. Susan Eddings Perez worked closely with the homeowners to create interiors that utilize modern, unexpected materials, such as reclaimed Oklahoma barnwood, resulting in open, airy spaces. Steven Williams, working with Kerry Blankenship, deftly crafted the surrounding landscapes with natural forms and compositions of color and texture. West Construction, with general contractor Dean West

and site superintendent Todd Conley, matched the high level of design with an equally exceptional level of solidity, fit and finish.

Freese and Williams collaborated to wed the home to the natural slope of the land.

"We wanted to make sure the homeowners and guests had every opportunity to easily step out from their home to the various outdoor zones to soak in the compelling views of the lake and surrounding woods," says Freese. "In

addition to the primary porches and patios, the main wing and guest wing are connected by a community breezeway, with a commanding view of the lake. Every one of the three guest bedrooms has its own covered balcony."

Lakeside living does indeed have its very special treasured moments, from sunrise to sunset.