

state of mind

/ by Allison Walsh / photography by Rebecca Ledhe

A renovation-turned-reclamation from Tindall Architecture and CarsonSpeer makes for a roomy, refined family home space.





Mid-century furniture sits low and wide creating comfort in rooms that appear naturally grounded.

The whimsical, graphic wallpaper from Brewster Home Fashions was selected by the homeowner because it resembled the work of Mary Blair, a Walt Disney Company artist and animator.



Layers upon layers of new epoxy flooring create a terrazzo-like look at a fraction of the cost. →

“How are we going to feel if we drive past and somebody’s torn it down?”

This was the question retold to Tindall Architecture Workshop by a client about an ailing mid-century property in the Stone Lake neighborhood. The couple had been considering an addition to their existing North Main home, but the lure of a MidMod was about to change their future address.

They had recently attended an open house, where they were met with a room full of shell-shocked potential buyers lured by a low asking price and equally stunned by the extent of the disrepair. In fact, the listing realtor was handing out disclosures wanting to be upfront about the physical state of the home.

But, Tindall’s client only saw what could be described as “possibly a really fun project.” They had watched architecturally significant homes be torn down while living in the Pacific Northwest and didn’t want it to happen here in Greenville’s established neighborhoods.

The home was designed and built in the late 1950s by a young architect who lived there for only a short time before selling it to a Greenville family who maintained ownership until the matriarch passed away in November of 2016.

After making an offer, the couple learned they were in competition with several real estate developers, so they wrote directly to the family stating their intention to preserve the home and raise their own family there.

From most any architect’s perspective, it’s refreshing to come across clients who are willing to save houses and invest time and money into them. But the reality in Greenville’s market is that in a lot of instances, depending on the house, it is less costly to knock down and build new.

blended beauty

The overarching goal of the renovation was to preserve the mid-century character of the home while adapting it to meet the expectations of a 21st century family. This was achieved through the collaborative efforts of the architect; the builder, CarsonSpeer Builders; the interior designer, ID Studio Interiors; and the homeowners.

The homeowner says he and his wife did have a fairly clear idea of the look they were going for, but credits ID Studio with helping them narrow down the abundance of mid-century lighting



Reproduction pendant lights, inspired by laboratory design, light the large working island



Slab cabinetry doors in two different tones help keep the kitchen up to date yet period appropriate



Modern elements and appliances feel right at home in a period MidMod kitchen; waterfall granite countertops did not exist in the post-war economy, nor did sub-zero refrigeration.

options on the market and with selecting paint colors and finishes to seamlessly blend the different woods throughout the home.

The home's footprint remains intact and exterior doors and windows were replaced within the existing openings. A funky flow issue between the kitchen and main living area was resolved by eliminating interior doors and walls here and there, but all the structural changes happened within the existing floor plan.

A large cabinet between the dining area and mudroom does double duty as room divider and additional storage. Much of the basement was reclaimed for additional living space, so every opportunity for storage was capitalized upon.

Most of the floor and subfloor had suffered extensive water damage, but the brick entryway was saved after substantial cleanup. The wood floor in the main living area was replaced with epoxy, a suggestion from Tindall at which the homeowners first balked (as their thoughts immediately went to the material's most common application as a garage floor coating) but are now glad they heeded. It's ten layers of epoxy 3/8 of an inch thick, amazingly beautiful, basically indestructible, and best of all drastically less expensive than terrazzo.

Upstairs from the main floor are three bedrooms, one of which holds a bit of a hidden secret; a staircase leading to the attic was tucked into the closet with shelves built-out on either side.

down below

The basement is where most of the structural changes took place, courtesy of a large crack in the foundation that required lifting the house from the front corner and tearing out and repouring the slab.

What was once largely unfinished space is now home to shared office space, laundry room, an ingenious ventilated cat bathroom and the master suite. Americraft built all the cabinetry in the house, including a lovely set of built-ins that create an entryway between the sitting and sleeping areas of the master, providing a perfect framework for a stunning tableau of wallpaper the homeowners chose for an accent wall.

The finished home gives kids plenty of elbow room upstairs, plenty of privacy for the parents down below and an elegant, open space for everyone to meet in the middle. [ah](#)



Materials in new exterior combinations — like brick paired with vertically clad wood siding and geometrically shaped windows — stood out in the traditional neighborhoods but remains fresh with its distinct architectural point of view.

The homeowners insisted on not painting the original exterior brick facade.



← The home's restoration relied on historically accurate white painted walls paired with natural wood ceilings and cabinetry built-ins.

Graphic rugs create high impact in transitional spaces.



Larger round elements above mimic new penny tile on the bathroom floor.

← A pair of mirror image bathrooms serve the kids quarters upstairs. The parity with its rounded elements is set off with identical linear, navy matte sink bases.

New Modernism
Unarguably, Mid-Century Modern design occurred between 1945 through the 1960s though some experts note the architectural style as early as 1931 and trailing into the early 1980s.

The crux of MidMod was simplicity, in structure, in function, in style. Sleek lines whether organic in form or geometric in nature, ruled the day and trumped ornamentation.

It is sometimes forgotten that MidMod interiors embraced a graphic use of white often juxtaposed with black or waxed wood. Many of the movement's pioneers were Scandinavian, where white walls and large windows brought light into homes during long winters.

The west coast especially embraced this notion of integrating nature into interiors often with oversized windows creating framed portraits of exterior scenes. We see the advent of sliding glass doors during this period and multiple points of exit from a single room. Split-level spaces surged in popularity especially in the south where builders capitalized on rolling terrain.

Texture became central to design and materials were paired in unique combinations from wood and brick to concrete, glass, resin and concrete and the advent of plastic as a home material, especially in furnishing.