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Jim Hansen's penchant for artful details holds true in the living room's custom art glass windows and plant stand, the matching area rug, artist-made vases, and a handmade silk wallhanging. For artist information, see page 172.



A homeowner with vision commissions a masterpiece

BY ALECIA STEVENS | PHOTOS BY KAREN MELVIN

artisan inspired

Jim Hansen is a man full of ideas. He is also the chairman and CEO of a publicly held technology company, Ciprico—a restless man used to making things happen. “I’m never completely satisfied with the way things are,” he admits. “I guess that is good in business, not so good in life.”

But it is that very quality that inspired Hansen to start thinking about how to transform his ordinary, slightly scruffy 1970s split-level home into something special. It had “location” (near the Dellwood Hills Golf Club) and a pool. It even had a little history—located on a stagecoach route between White Bear Lake and Stillwater. The area is still dotted with summer cottages built in the Arts and Crafts style during the first and second decades of the twentieth century.

Hansen had always admired the character of these homes. He appreciates Frank Lloyd Wright’s work and especially respects the artistry that defined this style. Wright and other proponents of the U.S. Arts and Crafts style designed almost every detail of a home, commissioning artists and craftspeople to carry out their vision. Ceramic tiles, hardware, and lighting would be custom made.

Cabinetry, millwork, and furnishings were designed and built with repetitive forms and motifs, creating harmony from room to room. Even fabrics were woven to the specifications of the architect. This romantic idea, a team of artists that build a home, was immensely appealing to Hansen.

So, in 2001, he began to sketch some ideas on photos of his home. As he described his vision to a friend, she said the magic words, "Oh, you want a contemporary craftsman style." Hansen recalls with enthusiasm, "From the moment she said that, the aesthetic was set." He wanted an Arts and Crafts home, similar to those original to the neighborhood but with a

more open, modern layout. And he wanted to work with individual artists.

Hansen kept his eyes and ears open for the right team of players. While visiting a friend's home one day, he noticed copper piping—a material that he loves—used as a railing. He discovered that Jones Design Build was behind that project, and the team shared his appreciation for copper. Brian Jones, founder of the company, and Hansen have worked almost continuously on the Dellwood split-level ever since.

The project has been and continues to be "evolutionary," as Jones describes it. "It is a true collaboration. We don't tell him what we are going to do. We mostly listen



THIS PAGE Artist Michael Pilla's art glass windows tie the new owner's suite bath to the other rooms. OPPOSITE PAGE A wood and copper ceiling design from Restoration Arts complements one of the home's many custom light fixtures.



to Jim's ideas and make them work." Today the home is unrecognizable from the original. Phase One began with the addition of an entry that sets the tone. Jones designed a framing system for a piece of art glass that Hansen had commissioned, which now divides the front door from the living room. A muralist painted the ceilings with clouds.

Phase Two involved moving the owner's suite to take advantage of a view of the golf course. A bath and closet were added to the second-level suite, while an office took up residence in the new room below. A deck off the bedroom tops a screened porch added on the main level. A sunroom was added off the existing kitchen in Phase

Three. In the process a multilevel deck was created, connecting the kitchen to the first-floor hot-tub area and to the pool below.

Hansen wanted a deck at the other end of the pool as well, but one that had a more finished look than the standard wood platform. Working closely with landscape designer Ann Sargeant of Unique Landscapes and with Jones, he conceived a charming "pool house" that echoes the timber gables atop the new entry, owner's suite deck, and sunroom deck.

But for all the major changes, it's the little things that bring a lilt to Hansen's voice. His beloved copper is used as tubing in custom-designed art glass that repeats in

BEFORE



BEFORE

THIS PAGE New timber gables over windows and the entry add the architectural interest that the 1970s split-level sorely needed. A deck flows from the sunroom to the outdoor entertaining area and pool. OPPOSITE PAGE The kitchen blends seamlessly with the sunroom, where Pilla's art glass panels depict the four seasons.



PHOTOS THIS PAGE COURTESY OF MARC SCHOLTES



the entryway, the stairwell, and windows in the sunroom, bedroom, and bathroom. Copper also appears in small squares set in the slate floors, in wood-floor inlays, in door and window trim, along the roof edges, and in the gutters and downspouts. And, of course, copper piping serves as deck railings. Hansen also had custom tiles designed using the name he gave the property, "Tall Oaks." A fiber artist and a lighting designer also have become part of Hansen's creative team.

"The most surprising thing about this project is that it became my hobby. I love working on it," Hansen proclaims. "I have become close friends with the artists who have made this happen, and I continue to commission

them for work." Now he's thinking about commissioning furniture—which is fitting for a true Arts and Crafts home.

Jones is waiting for more "Tall Oaks" tiles to add to a recently updated fireplace surround. And Hansen continues to generate more ideas. "I don't have many clients like Jim. He just keeps going and he is a true patron of the arts," says Jones, adding with a laugh, "but I have told him there are cheaper hobbies." **MH**

ALECIA STEVENS IS A MINNEAPOLIS STYLIST AND INTERIOR DESIGNER AND FREQUENT CONTRIBUTOR TO *MIDWEST HOME*.

FOR MORE INFORMATION ON RESOURCES AND ARTISANS FEATURED IN THIS STORY, PLEASE TURN TO PAGE 172.