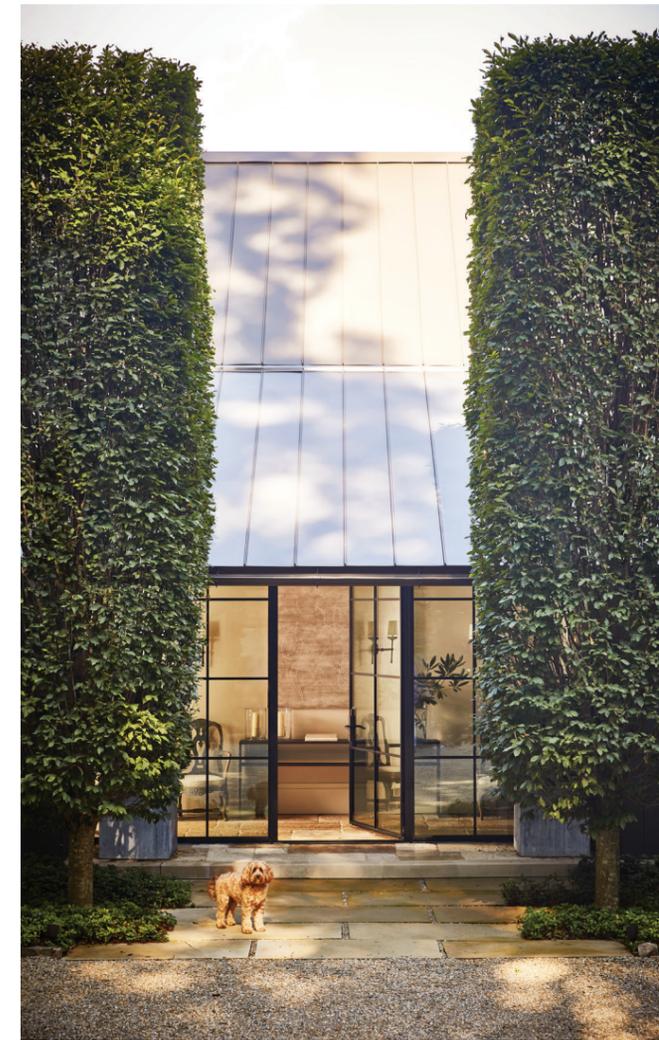


HALCYON HEIGHTS

High in the western North Carolina mountains, *Timothy Whealon* and *Stan Dixon* create a glassy, nature-inspired summer house that merges classicism, modernism, and the raw textures of the wilderness.



A board-formed concrete fireplace hung with artwork by Caio Fonseca commands the living room. Floor lamps, Holly Hunt. OPPOSITE: Mature hornbeams frame the steel-and-glass entrance.



INTERIOR DESIGN BY **TIMOTHY WHEALON**
ARCHITECTURE BY **STAN DIXON**
PHOTOGRAPHY BY **BRIE WILLIAMS**
PRODUCED BY **CAROLYN ENGLEFIELD**
WRITTEN BY **CELIA BARBOUR**



The vaulted observatory was inspired by Yves Saint Laurent's Menzeh Room in Morocco. Sofa fabric, Robert Kime. OPPOSITE, CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: Brubeck, the owners' Ganaraskan, greets guests in the limestone entry. Artwork, Elliott Puckette. • Random-width boards with board-and-batten detailing give the observatory a "carpenter chic" sensibility, says Dixon. • A petite dining and game table tucks in around the corner from the bar. • Sugar maples and natural locust fencing line the driveway.

As every couple knows, falling in love does not necessarily mean falling in love with *each other's tastes*.

When Betty Hulse met Don Leslie, she was living in a minimally decorated postmodern home, he in a Georgian-style house filled with antiques. After they married they merged their furniture and lived in a French townhouse. But when they built a home on a historic golf course in Highlands, North Carolina, they decided to start fresh. "It was exciting and challenging to try and find a balance between his taste and hers," says designer Timothy Whealon, whom the couple hired, along with architect Stan Dixon, to create their new home.

The result is a house that melds modernism's clean lines, capacious volumes, and uncluttered spaces with the rich, evocative materials and textures of traditional craftsmanship—then brings in notes of pure fantasy and rustic charm. "It's not all polished marble and chrome," says Dixon. "The house is more organic, with rough-sawn timber, reclaimed limestone, and plaster walls."

It's a design language Whealon speaks fluently. "My work has always been about bringing the outside in," he says. "I could never create anything as beautiful as nature can, but I find inspiration there." Throughout the interiors Whealon's design choices channel

nature's influence in a variety of ways, from organic shapes and motifs to pieces that simply express the integrity of their materials. The console in the entry hall, for example, is a pared-down statement in blackened steel. In the living space, bentwood and rattan chairs are upholstered in a chunky alpaca bouclé; they face off over a limestone-slab coffee table atop a vintage Swedish flatweave layered over a textured abaca rug.

Floor-to-ceiling steel doors allow the rolling woodlands to infuse the interiors and can be slid aside to create a continuous flow between living room and covered porch, where the couple spend much of their time. In the primary bathroom, a door to a balcony accesses his-and-hers outdoor showers. Whealon's neutral, natural palette—a warmer take on the all-white rooms of a decade ago—helps usher nature inside.

Whealon also injects movement into the interiors via biomorphic pieces such as a Saarinen tulip table, a sculpture by Swedish artist Eva Hild, and a pair of Gio Ponti for Bonacina chairs. "They have a great sensuous pitch to them," he says of the chairs.

Other objects convey the hand of their maker, whether fine artist or



artisan. “Craftsmanship is a big part of what attracts me to what I do,” says Whealon. The Elliott Puckette painting hanging in the entry hall consists of a sinuous white line scratched in gray-washed gesso; it is flanked by handcrafted plaster sconces by artisan Stephen Antonson and a pair of Gustavian chairs—a nod to Don’s love of antiques. The wool rug in the living room is signed A.W. (Alice Walleback), circa 1960. The backsplash tiles in the kitchen were made by hand in Morocco.

The mountainous country of western North Africa also inspired the observatory, a small, lush room on the second floor that recalls the Menzeh Room at Yves Saint Laurent and Pierre Bergé’s home in Marrakech. Says Betty, “For 20 years I kept a picture of Jardin Majorelle. My previous architect would say, ‘Betty, you need to drop this.’ So when I showed it to Stan Dixon, I told him, ‘If you say no, we’ll understand.’ Instead he looked at me and said, ‘You can have that.’”

“It’s a bit of an outlier,” admits Dixon of the room, which he calls “a whimsy and a folly.” He adds, “The walls are random-width boards with board-and-batten detailing. We wanted it to look ‘carpenter chic’—simple in its massing and materials but very sophisticated in its taste.” Whealon painted and patinaed the walls to match the inspiration, upholstered wicker furniture in a Robert Kime fabric,



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—DESIGNER TIMOTHY WHEALON

and introduced a Berber rug and bamboo shades into the space. “Bamboo and straw I’m just addicted to,” says Betty, who confesses that Dixon’s plans for the house brought tears to her eyes. “I felt so validated!”

Don also requested a centrally located bar for easy access while entertaining in the living area. Dixon situated it opposite the fireplace, backed by a tall window overlooking a courtyard, and Whealon covered its surface in hammered zinc finished with brass nailheads.

Don and Betty first met in 2009 because he was her late husband’s doctor. Their marriage, therefore, is a celebration of renewal—and so is their house. “It was a brand-new marriage and a brand-new beginning,” says Betty. “Isn’t that amazing?”

For Dixon the project was also a new adventure. “This house is much more contemporary than our typical work,” he says, “though we’ve always found beauty in simplicity.” And what better touchstone for a project like this? After all, as wise couples discover, the smartest solution to any dilemma, aesthetic or otherwise, is usually the simplest. ♦

Find more of this residence—along with additional projects by Dixon—in the architect’s forthcoming book, *HOME: The Residential Architecture of D. Stanley Dixon* (Rizzoli), out this September.



BATHROOM AND OUTDOOR SHOWER, ERIC PIASECKI/OTTO.

OPPOSITE: The open-air porch is furnished for morning coffee (sofa, Janus et Cie) and summer suppers (wicker chairs, Bonacina). **CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT:** The primary bedroom’s headboard, duvet, and armchairs are covered in an Ottoman-inspired paisley print by Teyssier. ♦ Sleek Calacatta Oro marble (Marmi) encases vanities and a tub in the owners’ bath. Artwork, Giuseppe Penone. ♦ Slender library lights (Ann-Morris) illuminate the butler’s pantry (painted Classic Gray, Benjamin Moore). ♦ An outdoor shower’s horizontal plank screen blends with the house and surrounding woodlands.