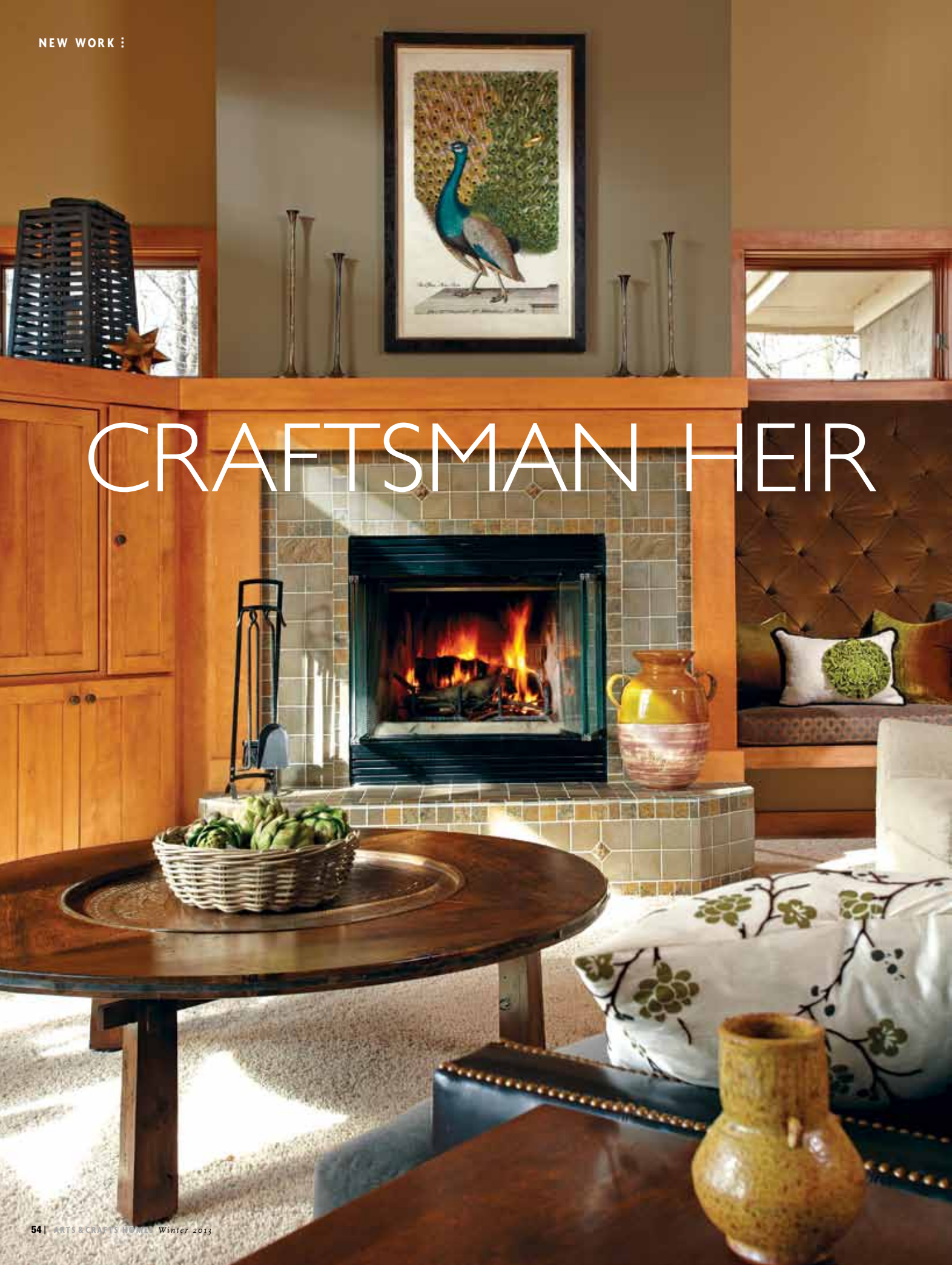


CRAFTSMAN HEIR





OPPOSITE: A hearth is the focal point of the living room. **LEFT:** The luxurious built-in bench is a reminder of earlier inglenooks. **BELOW:** The 12-year-old house is in Minnesota.



This new interior for a recent house is a pleasing example of interpretive design: using the Arts & Crafts philosophy not to re-create the past, but in a contemporary twist on the revival.

BY PATRICIA POORE | PHOTOGRAPHS BY KAREN MELVIN

SUSAN BROWN, an interior designer in St. Paul, Minnesota, knew just what to do in this well-designed space. The initial program was to rework the large, open living room and finish the dining room. “My client already had three reissued Stickley pieces, which I used as a transition between the Craftsman-inspired elements of the architecture and more contemporary new furnish-

ings,” Brown explains.

Neither Brown nor her clients, Jodie Alwin and Wayne Scanlan, were interested in doing a historical recreation: The house is just 12 years old. It was, however, built along bungalow lines (by Bruce Lenzen Design/Build of Hudson, Wisconsin).

“I chose to use the philosophy of the era—truth in materials, simple forms, and handcraft—as opposed to

mimicking Craftsman ‘style,’” she says. To that end, she specified natural fabrics and reclaimed wood along with such materials as copper, iron, and stone. The resulting rooms are fresh and comfortable, eclectic and personal.

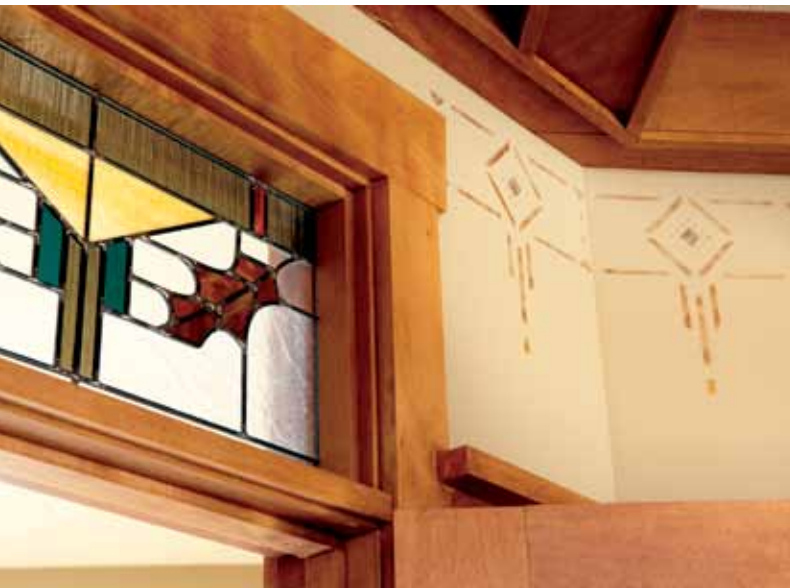
“I’ve always been a fan of Arts & Crafts, but I was in a rut,” says Jodie Alwin. “Susan pushed me, but never out of my comfort zone.”

The project scope included paint



Honoring the House

This Minnesota house was built well in the year 2000, with elements clearly taken from Craftsman bungalow forms: low roof, battered columns on stone piers, flat wood trim with a natural finish. With so much Arts & Crafts evident in the architecture, says designer Susan Brown, “we didn’t want to ignore the precedents. The clients and I chose to embrace the philosophy of the movement, as opposed to using antique and reproduction furniture of the period.” The result: a pleasing evolution of the Craftsman interior.





A typical Arts & Crafts stencil border, not antique furniture, lends style to the piano room.

colors, a built-in seat, fabrics, lighting, and accessories in the living room; drapery and runners in the dining room; and color specs and accessories throughout. In the living room, Brown designed a luxurious banquette with a button-tufted back for an empty space next to the hearth. The cocktail table was designed in a straightforward style and custom-built from reclaimed wood inset with an antique, handmade Turkish copper platter. The plain couch is elegant in leather, faux mohair, and studs; plain linen was used for chairs and

a slipcover; floor lamps are of iron. (Chairs swivel to take advantage of the open plan—facing the kitchen, the hearth, or the view.) A table lamp has a stone shade. Antiques, including a Chinese grain scoop and an antique milking bench, maintain a sense of history and reflect the Arts & Crafts movement.

Susan Brown says that one of her favorite designers is Barry Dixon; about period design, she remembers him saying that you have to “take it out of itself.” With this subtle interior, she accomplished that goal. ■



LEFT: Contemporary furnishings in the open living room are in sympathy with Arts & Crafts philosophy. **OPPOSITE, TOP:** Craftsman influence is most apparent in the cozy dining room, where Brown introduced silk drapery, a custom table runner, and accessories. Wainscot panels are paint ragged with cheesecloth.



福
和
安
祥

恩
美
愛
寧



OPPOSITE: Under a soaring ceiling, the breakfast area adjoins the open-plan kitchen. **INSET:** Decks and a porch open to the view of Horseshoe Lake. **RIGHT:** Light streams into the open space through a shared bank of windows. **BELOW:** Otis stands in the welcoming nook that serves as the foyer.



RIGHT: Homeowner Jodie Alwin is at home with Twin Cities interior designer Susan Brown (on the right).

Susan E. Brown

The designer's specialties include color, and integrating dissimilar elements (things like a favorite piece or a family heirloom) into a designed environment. She studied textile science and applied design; her master's thesis was "Integrative Interruptions In Color Relationships." In this project, she furnished rooms and introduced some custom work in a well-designed house. See in-process photos of this interior as well as other projects on the designer's blog: susanebrowninteriordesign.blogspot.com

■ **SUSAN E. BROWN INTERIOR DESIGN, St. Paul, Minnesota:**
(651) 330-8707, susanebrowninteriordesign.com

