

10<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY ISSUE

# UTAH STYLE & DESIGN

best quarterly magazine 2007  
MAGGIE AWARD WINNER

## HOT PADS Designers at Home

**SCREENING ROOMS**

HIP HOME THEATRES

WOOD'S **NEW** LOOK

**HOLIDAY HOW-TO's**

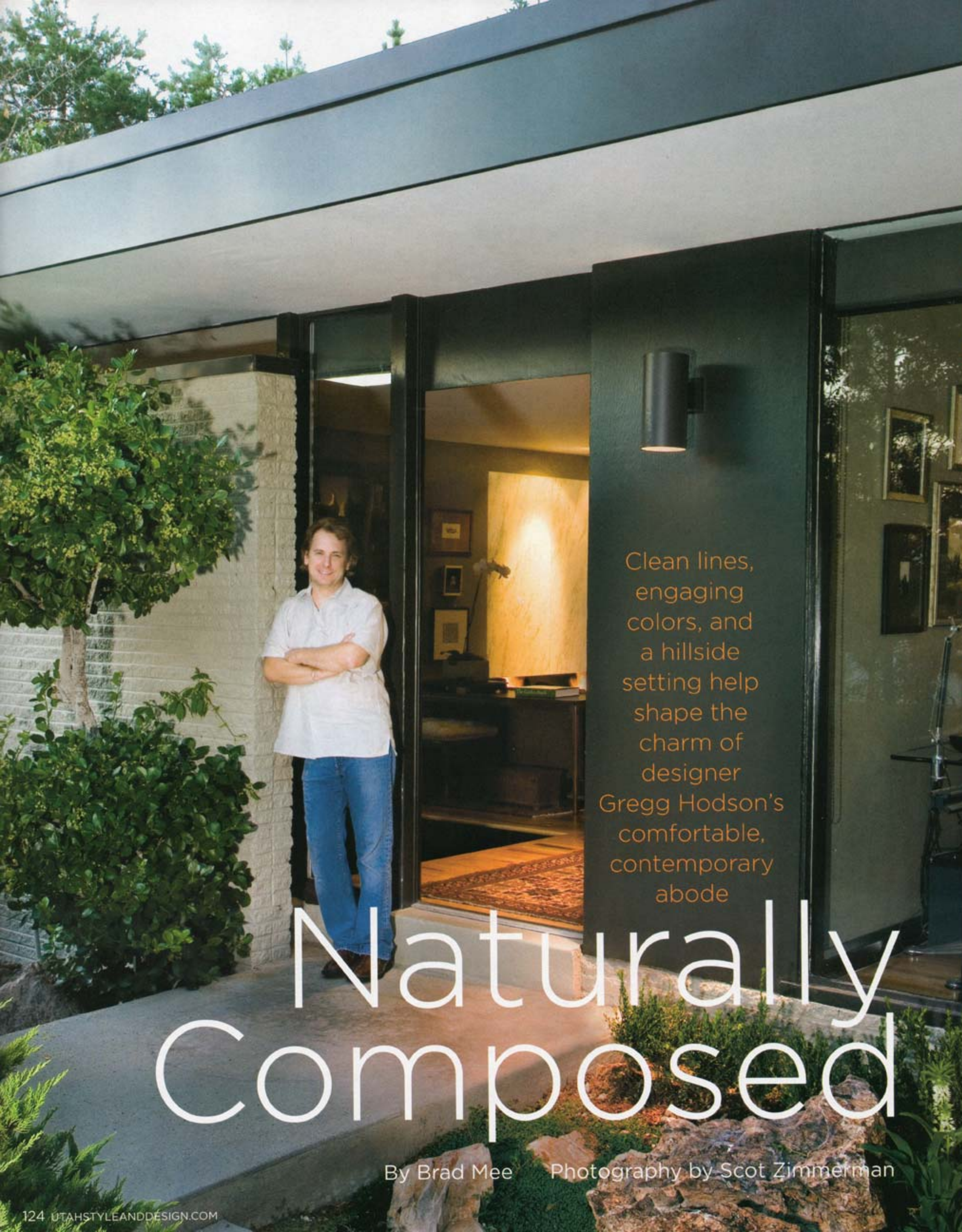
FOOD, FLOWERS & FESTIVITIES

FALL 2007 \$4.95 U.S.



DISPLAY UNTIL JANUARY 1, 2008





Clean lines, engaging colors, and a hillside setting help shape the charm of designer Gregg Hodson's comfortable, contemporary abode

# Naturally Composed

By Brad Mee Photography by Scot Zimmerman



Dressed more casually than the home's main level, this lower level family room features a pair of outdoor armchairs dressed with wide-striped fabrics. Homeowner Gregg Hodson used pillows to add punches of color and pattern.

OPPOSITE: A flat roof and linear architecture first attracted Hodson to his Salt Lake City home. The home's lush, verdant setting allowed him to forego window coverings, filling the home with natural light.





## “It was hideous,

and I knew I wanted it from the moment I saw it,” says designer Gregg Hodson of his Salt Lake City home located on the hillside of Olympus Cove. In 2003, the tired house sat vacant behind a for-sale sign and a neglected, snow-covered landscape, doing little to intrigue most drive-by shoppers looking for a new residence. But the instant Hodson caught sight of the dwelling’s flat roof and linear architecture, he was smitten. Inside, a broad, marble-faced fireplace, original to the 1959 abode, clinched the deal for the designer. “Where do I sign?” he immediately asked the realtor.

Four years later, this same 3,300-square-foot home—once host to a choppy floor plan, vivid blue walls, and other design detriments characteristic of late '50s living—serves as a stylishly remodeled haven for the busy professional. While the home retains many of its hip period features, including a ribbon of clerestory windows and “floating” staircase once encased in shag carpeting, it also boasts fresh design elements that reflect Hodson’s taste and style perfectly.

From the get-go, the designer reconfigured the floor plan, freeing the main level’s public areas of unnecessary walls, thus opening the kitchen, dining room, and living areas to one another. “I needed the house to feel open and airy,” says Hodson. By eliminating these superfluous barriers he also allowed the home’s prized quality, its views of a scrub oak-covered landscape, to permeate the living quarters.

“The home’s connection to the outdoors is by far its best feature,” says Hodson. Providing privacy from neighboring homes, the lush setting permitted the de-

ABOVE LEFT: Throughout the home, Hodson created strong focal points with grouped art. He chose dark, weighty frames to unify these pieces into a single collection. Vintage teak chairs encircle a glass-topped dining table that contributes to the area’s open ambience.

BELOW LEFT: Hodson enlisted the help of Clint Call of Call Design in Salt Lake City to create his contemporary kitchen. The duo topped the wengé cabinetry with Caesar-Stone countertops and designed the long island low and horizontal, preventing it from impeding the room’s views. A tiered bar keeps the countertops, sink, and cooktop out of sight from the living room.



Three slabs of marble face the living room’s 8-foot-long fireplace, original to the 1959 abode. To create a sense of warmth and openness, Hodson dressed the room in a textured wall covering, a wheat-toned area rug, and vintage chairs partnered with a leather wingback chair by Donghia.





ABOVE: Dark trim dramatizes the dimensions of the interior spaces and frames the glass walls overlooking the back deck and tree-covered lot beyond. Hodson purposefully chose white for the ceiling, kitchen countertops, and varied lampshades to advance the contrast central to his design.

ABOVE LEFT: Hodson relaxes in a glass-walled sitting room located off the kitchen. The end of an exterior brick wall juts into the space and joins the wall covering, rug, and assorted fabrics in creating a palette of contrasting textures.

BELOW LEFT: A Persian rug from Adib's Rug Gallery and a large canvas by artist Jennifer Rasmussen perform as bold focal points in Hodson's study. The low, horizontal bookshelf provides storage and display area while not absorbing too much visual space in the room.

## DESIGN TIPS FROM THE PRO...

Hodson's formula for creating a contemporary, comfortable interior

- Feature the big five in every room—glass, wood, metal, stone, and textiles. According to Hodson, this fail-safe formula helps to create a comfortable ambience that perfectly suits Western décors.
- Avoid using strong patterns on large furnishings. Save their eye-catching power for easily changed pieces like pillows, rugs, and accessories. Also restrict the number of patterns in a single space.
- Create a sense of spaciousness by choosing furnishings that allow light and air to circulate around their forms. Glass-topped tables, unskirted upholstery, and clean-lined accent pieces all perform to create open, roomy-feeling interiors.
- Choose warm colors but limit the number of hues you introduce into your interior's palette.
- Develop interest by creating contrast. Varied colors, textures, finishes, and shapes all contribute.
- Select furniture pieces for their silhouettes. Fabrics and finishes can always be changed, but the lines and shape of a piece are permanent.
- Consider commercial grade fabrics and flooring. Not only are they durable, but their understated, utilitarian characteristics add simplicity.
- Limit architectural detailing. For example, Hodson incorporates dark baseboards and door casings but stops short of featuring moldings near the ceiling.
- Personalize a space with favorite collectibles, artifacts, and art, but keep the displays uncluttered and edited.





signer to avoid using window coverings, allowing the broad expanse of glass at the home's rear to flood the interior with verdant views. He skillfully selected and positioned the furniture in the living and dining areas so that none of the pieces interfere with the enviable vistas. Visually unobstructed passageways, open-legged chairs, glass-topped tables, and low-back chairs allow these views to flow freely inside. "It's a wonderful effect," says Hodson. "I never feel closed in, and the house feels much larger than it is."

To strengthen the interior's connection with the outdoors, Hodson installed oak floors throughout the main level's living areas. He specifically chose standard-quality oak flooring for its varied colors and imperfect finish. "It feels very natural and looks a lot like the outdoor deck," he says. The treatment creates a seamless transition from the interior to the exterior.

The floors also provide the perfect foundation for the designer's choice of colors, materials, and patterns, which reflect his modern sensibility. "I love contemporary design, but put me in a glass box with cool grays and steel, and I'm not happy," says Hodson. "Fortunately, contemporary design has evolved to include beautiful woods, warm colors, and rich textures." These elements, along with clean lines and surfaces devoid of superfluous detail and decoration, flow throughout Hodson's home, as does his intentional use of contrasting hues.

"My starting point was the golden floors and the blackish brown baseboards and casings," says the designer. By creating instant contrast, these elements, along with the dark cabinetry, enhance the natural feel of the space and give the interior instant character and comfort. Hodson then "layered" assorted colors and textures, using fabrics, finishes, and wall coverings. "I recommend wall coverings to everyone," he says. "They give more bang for the buck than most anything else." His choice in the home's main living area, a textured paper, adds depth to the walls and warms

**TOP LEFT:** To make the small master bath feel larger, Hodson installed a suspended marble vanity with open storage below. He continued the marble on the backsplash wall, where he incorporated two mirrored-front medicine cabinets. The clean-lined, commercial-grade plumbing fixtures are by Kohler.

**BOTTOM LEFT:** Light streams into the bathroom from a clerestory window original to the home. A group of art pieces, a mirror, and a TV add character and convenience to the bathtub's alcove.



Unlike the rest of the interior, the master bedroom features limited patterns and a restricted color palette of white, cream, and brown. "Solid surfaces and fewer colors make the room feel more serene and peaceful," says Hodson. A teak, glass-front chest from India serves as a storage-rich bedside table.





Hodson chose oak floors to match the back deck, seamlessly uniting the interior with the outdoor living areas. Walls of glass and dark brown trim are all that separate the areas, further accentuating the indoor/outdoor design.

the window-laden interior without distracting from the décor. It also complements the home's exterior brickwork, which recurs on interior walls. "I couldn't ignore the craggy brickwork that comes in from the exterior of the house, so I used the wall covering's subtle texture to soften and enrich the feature," says Hodson. He also replicated the brick in the lower-level stairwell and an adjoining planter box by covering both with stacking tiles cut from 12-inch square pieces. "This helped tie the exterior brickwork inside," he adds.

While the floors, trim, and cabinetry provide contrasting color statements, many of Hodson's decorative treatments are purposefully understated. "The structural surfaces and larger furniture pieces are fairly neutral, enabling me to add or change colors whenever I want," he says. Bringing home the latest fabrics and finishes is an occupational hazard for most designers, and Hodson is no exception. Fortunately, his interior's neutral backdrop allows him to do so without turning the existing décor upside down. From room to room, flashy pillows, deep-hued armchairs, richly colored rugs, and bold artwork add punch and pattern to the otherwise low-key palette. Intentionally, the master bedroom and bath offer the only respite from strong accents. "The master suite is much more subtle, providing an escape from the business and colors of design and my work," says Hodson. Mellow hues soften and subdue the bedroom, where brown accents offer the only departure from the space's serene color scheme.

From its public to private areas, the home features a casual elegance Hodson believes complements his lifestyle perfectly. "Whether I'm rushing around in the morning or relaxing with guests in front of a fire at night, this place has a personality that is just right for me," he says. "I can dress it up or dress it down." He adds, "It's like a great, black cashmere jacket that's as comfortable with jeans as it is with a starched white shirt and cuff links. It suits me perfectly no matter what I'm doing." ■

ABOVE RIGHT: The stairwell's original smoked mirror visually enlarges the space. To replicate the exterior's brick, Hodson cut 12-inch-square tiles in half and stacked the pieces in a brick pattern on the lower level's walls.

BELOW RIGHT: With the exception of two black and white accent pillows, the fabrics of this tailored guestroom rely on texture and a punch of red to bring character and interest to this lower level bedroom.

