



Modern Comfort

ARCHITECT FRANCES ZOOK AND DESIGNER BETH MEYER TRANSFORMED A FORMER AIRPLANE HANGAR INTO A SURPRISINGLY STYLISH LODGE WITH A MODERN SENSIBILITY.

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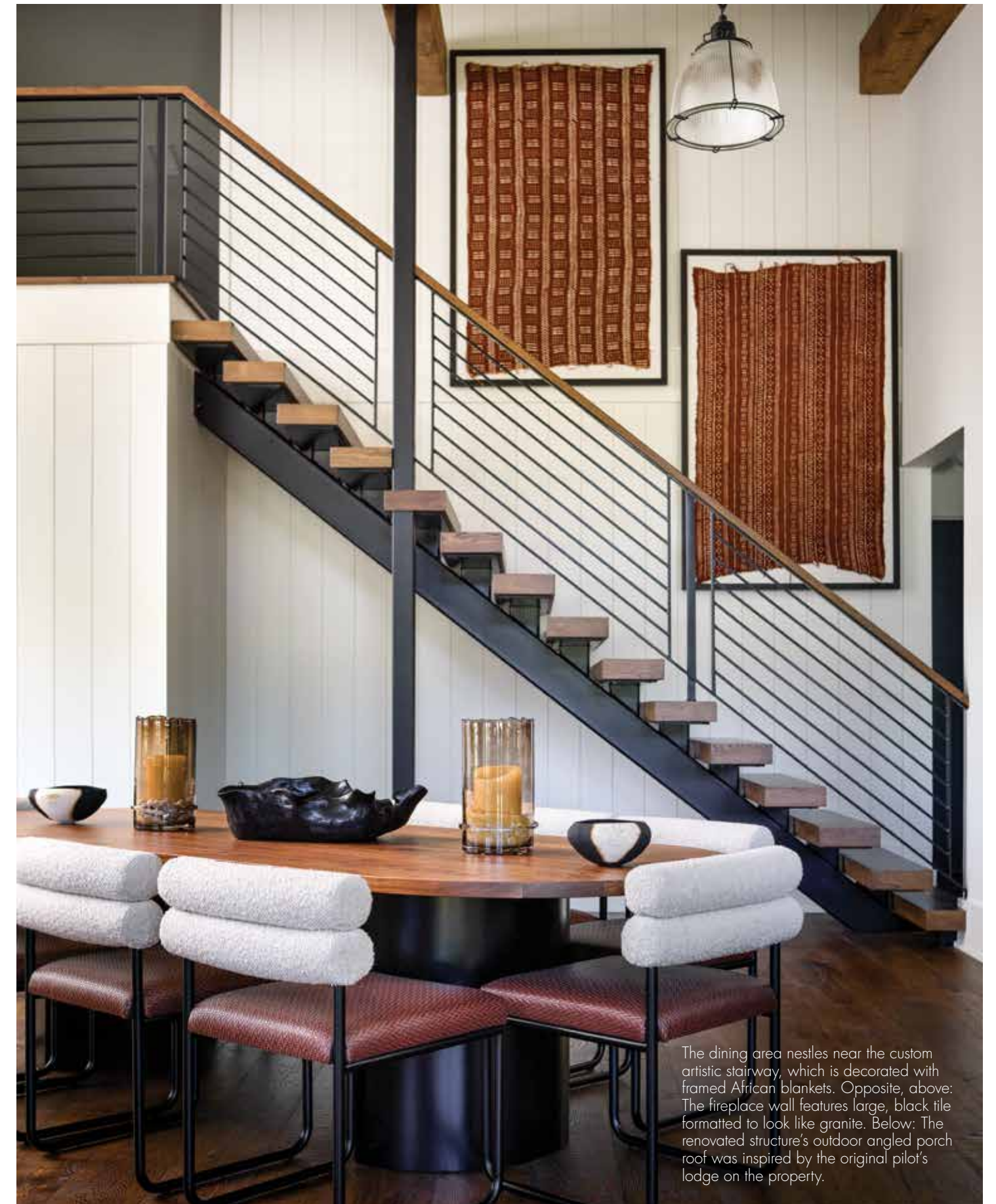
Above: The former airplane hangar, now wrapped in cypress, blends in with the setting, while the front door makes an earthy statement in a terra-cotta hue. Left: Wood beams set off the ceiling and contribute to the room's warmth along with plush, clean-lined furnishings.



“I love the idea of taking something existing in the land and making something wonderful out of it,” says architect Frances Zook, referring to a former airplane hangar turned gathering place for outdoor sporting activities along Georgia’s Etowah River. The 350-acre property, only 45 minutes from the client’s primary home in Marietta, was the initial draw, but soon the idea of a place for short overnight stays started to take hold.

Instead of building a new house, the longtime clients of interior designer Beth Meyer looked for other options. “This property was a former pilots’ club where they could land on the grass runway, service their planes, and then spend the night in the lodge,” explains Meyer. “Our first thought was to rework that lodge, but flood plain issues prevented that from happening; so, we landed on one of many of the outbuildings—an airplane hangar.”

The typical metal building lacked any charm, but Zook and Meyer were not deterred. “When I looked at it, I thought, let’s



The dining area nestles near the custom artistic stairway, which is decorated with framed African blankets. Opposite, above: The fireplace wall features large, black tile formatted to look like granite. Below: The renovated structure’s outdoor angled porch roof was inspired by the original pilot’s lodge on the property.



wrap this whole structure in cypress and express the columns of the building,” says the architect. “Let’s take a metal structure seen along any country road in American farmland and turn into something meaningful and unique.” Adds builder Evan Crowe, “While cypress is not a material we get to use often, it has so much character. We stained it very dark, so you can really see a lot of its graining and flaking that feels reflected in the wooded setting.”

The property’s setting and the precedent of the original pilot’s house inspired the architect and provided some freedom to do something a little surprising. As she explains, “I didn’t want a typical low-ceiling covered porch. Instead, I took references from the old lodge and fashioned a roof that feels like bird wings soaring into the sky.” The outdoor space also includes a limestone fireplace and pavers that extend to connecting breezeways. While the original footprint did not expand, Zook notes, “We punched a lot of holes in it.” One of those resulted in an outstanding, floating staircase that feels fully a part of the setting and brings a modern artistic flair to the home.

When it came to the interiors, Meyer found joy stepping out and tackling such an unusual space. “The client’s Marietta home was more traditional with some bold colors; this called for something else completely. I threw myself into the more contemporary and organic side of things,” she says. Naturally,

Left: The Macha Vecchia marble makes a striking addition to the vent hood in the kitchen, complementing other textures such as soapstone and brick. The marble also encapsulates the nature-inspired palette throughout the home. Lee Industries barstools and Visual Comfort & Co. pendant lights complete the look.



the decorator looked to the riverside setting for inspiration, choosing the earthy colors of the river, the red Georgia clay, foliage, blooming sunflowers, and the cypress itself. “The marble we chose for the kitchen island and vent hood expresses most of the palette in one place, and it really draws you in,” adds the designer.

The fact that it is a sporting camp didn’t stop Meyer from using some of her signature moves, albeit perhaps on the quieter side. “I love wallpaper for the texture it brings, even if it’s in a neutral, and this house needed some warming up to keep it from feeling too modern or stark,” she explains. Meyer employed forgiving nubby grasscloth that’s deceptive in its beauty for several spaces. “We had to think about grandchildren’s sticky hands, so we also used a lot of durable performance fabrics as well,” she says. The designer also appreciates a wallpaper that dazzles. The powder room walls are dressed in a Pierre Frey covering that resembles the interiors of a rocky cavern in a cool, moody way.

The plush fabrics, tribal rugs, and contemporary lighting morph the lodge into more of a home, but it’s still focused on the outdoor activities, so it includes a hardworking mudroom for storing outdoor gear and two washer/dryers for taking care of the clothes before returning to Marietta. But thanks to the talented team, with a place like this—rustic beauty captured in a well-appointed shell with the sounds of cicada, wildlife stirring, and sunsets along the river—makes leaving up for debate.

Above: A loft/bedroom space upstairs, decorated with Palacek mirrors and Arteriors lamps, provides the perfect hangout for grandchildren with plenty of lounging and sleeping options. Below: The porch, with a weathered granite fireplace and filled with outdoor furnishings from Kolo Collective, offers the ideal place to perch after a day spent outdoors. Opposite, above: The hotel suite-inspired primary bedroom includes a wall upholstered in velvet from Yarn Collective. Below: The primary bathroom walls are wrapped in a Phillip Jeffries grasscloth and accented with art by Raoul Morren.

