

INTERIORS.

## The Scape Of Things To Come

### Indoors And Out, Art Dominates A Suburban Home

October 08, 2000 | By Kathy Kaplan. Kathy Kaplan writes frequently about interior design.

In the early 20th Century, wealthy city dwellers summered in unincorporated areas outside the city limits. The Wieboldt family, owners of the department store that bore their name, escaped Chicago's heat by retreating to their estate in what is now a thriving North Shore suburb.

Over the years, the property was subdivided and sold. One parcel fell into the hands of a local developer who built a modern ranch house as a gift for his daughter. Twenty-eight years ago, a businessman and his family bought the house and its 1.5-acre lot and subsequently acquired another 8.5 acres.

"The house appears to be influenced by Frank Lloyd Wright," says the wife. Indeed, Wright's philosophy of architecture as a link between people and the environment is evident throughout. Everywhere, expansive windows provide sweeping vistas of the natural surroundings.

"The house is part of the landscape, and the landscape is part of the house," says the husband. "It is about appreciating the outside as much as anything."

The magnificent views include a vast sculpture garden. "The spectacular grounds make this an ideal context to show sculpture," says art adviser Patti Gilford, owner of Patti Gilford Fine Arts, Chicago. With Gilford's guidance, these collectors of 20th Century art purchased and placed 12 pieces in the natural setting.

Several pieces by George Rickey interact with the environment by moving with the wind. Another that appears to be a giant sundial has slots allowing light to come through at different angles as the sun moves across the sky. One artist's interpretation of nature resembles an enormous, colorful flower pot.

In addition to the art, the grounds contain a tennis court, a putting green and walking paths. The couple also have planted a tree for each of their six grandchildren.

The display of fine art continues throughout the interior, where a collection of modern masters evolved under Gilford's tutelage. "When I first began working with Patti 19 years ago, I knew only that I was interested in 20th Century contemporary art," says the husband. "She showed me a wide variety of artists' works to help me refine my interests. If there was a particular artist I liked, Patti would go on an exhaustive search and cull the perfect piece that embodied the height of that artist's production."

Works by Adolph Gottlieb, Alexander Calder and Jean Dubuffet dominate the living room. A minimum of furnishings with simple, clean lines allows the art to be featured. Neutral colors contribute to the unobtrusive background.

"The art and the outdoors all work together," notes the wife. Adds the husband, "We move art around constantly to make it more interesting and add to the outside views."

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Resources: Living/dining room: Couch, coffee table and dining chairs-personal collection; dining table-fabricated by Rick Chebny, Lake Villa.