

SUNDAY

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CINCINNATI.COM, SEARCH: HOME

MARKET MARVELS

A periodic series detailing historic, unique, interesting homes for sale in Greater Cincinnati and Northern Kentucky



Photos by Leigh Patton / The Enquirer

Leigh and Linda Miller's living room features an oak hearth, silvery faux painted walls and ceiling and two picture windows that flood the warmly decorated room with lots of natural light.

A lot of thinking inside the box

Natural materials warm up Fort Thomas contemporary

By Jenny Callison
Enquirer contributor

Perched high on a bluff with sweeping views of the Ohio River is a custom-designed contemporary one might justifiably call a "window box." From the outside, it looks like a box, but expansive windows on many walls of this home give the interior a multi-dimensional feel. The shape and elevation of the home's design take advantage of every attribute of its private, wooded 1.5 acre lot.

Leigh and Linda Miller contracted with the architectural firm of Jones & Speer to design a home on a challenging site in Fort Thomas.

The home's design was by Jose Garcia, then a rising commercial architect, working with Jones & Speer. The Millers' home, completed in 1989, was Garcia's first residential assignment.

Simple lines and geometrical shapes in the home are balanced with rich textures and an abundance of natural materials. Wall and ceiling treatments are rich and bold. Most floors – and some walls – are oak, with strips of inlaid walnut.

"The extensive use of wood really warms up the house," says Ellen Epstein, who listed the home for Huff Realty.



In a town of many early 1900s-houses, the Millers' contemporary home stands out in Fort Thomas.

COVER STORY

Contemporary with a view

By Jenny Callison
Enquirer contributor

A sense of balance pervades the design and furnishings of Leigh and Linda Miller's Fort Thomas home. Its box-like exterior is balanced by an open-plan, a free-form interior characterized by partial walls, asymmetry and sleek lines.

Thanks to enormous expanses of windows, indoor and outdoor elements are balanced so that the views of woods and river are as much a part of the interior décor as are the wood paneling, faux-finished walls and ceilings and painted surfaces.

"This is an unusual home for Fort Thomas because it's so contemporary," says Susan Rissover, who's serving as an architectural consultant for Ellen Epstein of Huff Realty on this listing.

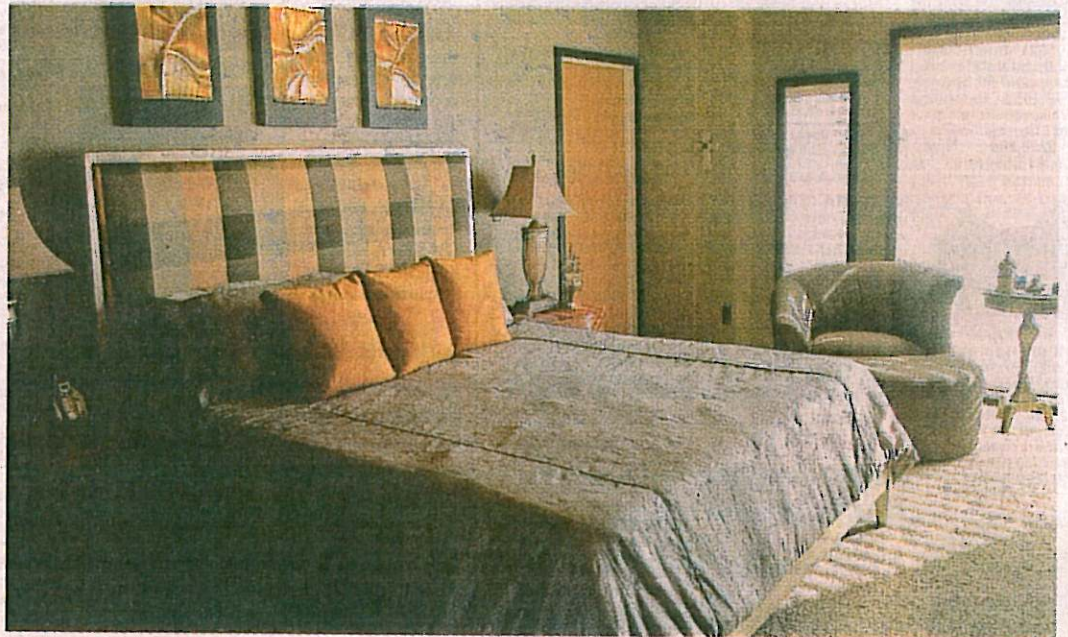
The front door opens on an oak-paneled entry. An open stairway, built of the same oak but with ship-like metal railings, leads to the second floor. A staircase treatment on the ceiling mimics the staircase, but upside down.

To the left is the living room, with gold carpet and neutral gray/green furniture, and a silvery faux finish on its ceiling and walls. Two large windows that overlook the Ohio River flank a shorter, narrow window panel – an artistic composition in itself.

The wood-burning fireplace is off center on the far wall, framed by an oak hearth, which contains below-floor compartments for firewood storage. The opposing oak paneled interior wall doubles as a media center.

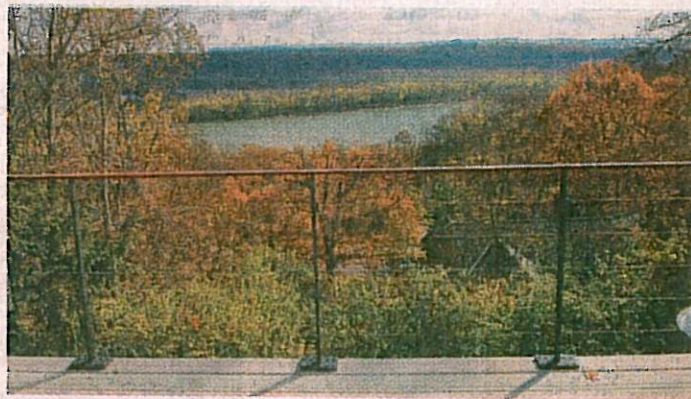
To the right of the stairway is a formal dining room with a subtle Asian flair in its décor. The silvery-gold faux finish on two opposing walls and ceiling creates a shimmering effect, which is embellished with a rectangular "tray" design overhead. The other two walls are finished with the same oak paneling used in the living room.

Adjacent to the dining room is a bright galley kitchen, open at



Photos by Leigh Taylor / The Enquirer

The master bedroom of Leigh and Linda Miller's Fort Thomas home is done in various tones of green.



A deck with a hot tub offers a view of the Ohio River at Leigh and Linda Miller's contemporary Fort Thomas home in the Windsong subdivision.

The same oak paneling, with geometric patterns of inlaid walnut, is used on the floor, on accent walls, and forms a bar surface between kitchen and breakfast room. Kitchen countertops are white-on-white solid surface material with one simple inlaid green stripe; cabinets are contemporary design white laminate. All the appliances are black.

The exterior breakfast room wall has been painted white, with hand-painted colorful geometric patterns over the surface.

All three bedrooms are on the upper level. The center bedroom (which doubles as a study) boasts a striking window-wall that looks into the hallway and through an exterior window out

Walls paneled with the same light oak used downstairs are accented by walls painted a deep eggplant. Off-white carpeting, plus the light from two walls of windows, keeps the room bright.

The adjacent bathroom borrows its color scheme from the kitchen, using the same flecked white-on-white solid surface countertops, the white cabinets, and white-painted walls with hand-painted geometric accents.

More extensive use of the eggplant shade in a second bedroom gives it a masculine feel, which is reinforced by a massive wood headboard with mirror and cabinets. Windows on two outer walls let in plenty of light and view.

A spacious master bedroom is

Online

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ed sage color of a large swath of wall surface. The interior wall is paneled with the same walnut planks used in the dining room. Two large walk-in closets provide abundant storage.

Bright white and dark green are used in the master bath, with its whirlpool tub, glassed-in shower with bench, toilet alcove and hand-painted wall accents.

The home's lower level provides a cozy retreat, with its corner bar and an unbroken expanse of oak-paneling, which frames a gas log fireplace and hides an entertainment center.

Exterior features include a deck with hot tub overlooking the river. A patio is nestled into the far end of the home. A two-car garage is at ground level at the opposite end.

The Millers' home on a 1.5 acre site in the Windsong subdivision in Fort Thomas, is listed for \$799,000. For information, call 513-304-6703.

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