



This open prairie-style home combines great detail with natural materials for a stunning effect. Photo by John Bishop.

Smuckler Architecture Designs, Builds Works of Art

By Lori Welle

Even as a young boy, Jack Smuckler knew that he wanted to design buildings. While his medium has progressed from Lincoln Logs and Erector Sets to trusses and custom millwork, he has maintained a keen ability to visualize structures in three-dimensional forms and uses those skills to design and build one-of-a-kind pieces of art that people call home.

Jack is a registered architect and licensed builder, one of only a few

area builders that offers both of these services via his companies, Smuckler Architecture, Inc. and Smuckler Custom Builders, Inc. He says this unique combination enables him to truly understand a client's lifestyle, design a structure that is both artistic and functional, and then rely on experience, creativity and quality workmanship to sculpt a home that precisely meets everyone's expectations.

"Jack doesn't just build homes –

he creates masterpieces," said Jim Reynolds, whose 8,000-square-foot home is currently being built by Smuckler Custom Builders and overlooks the 12th hole of Rush Creek Golf Course in Maple Grove. He and his wife visited Smuckler Custom Builders' model in the 2005 Fall Parade of Homes and were so impressed with Jack and his design that they scrapped plans to build a home designed by someone else. They quickly hired Jack, who com-

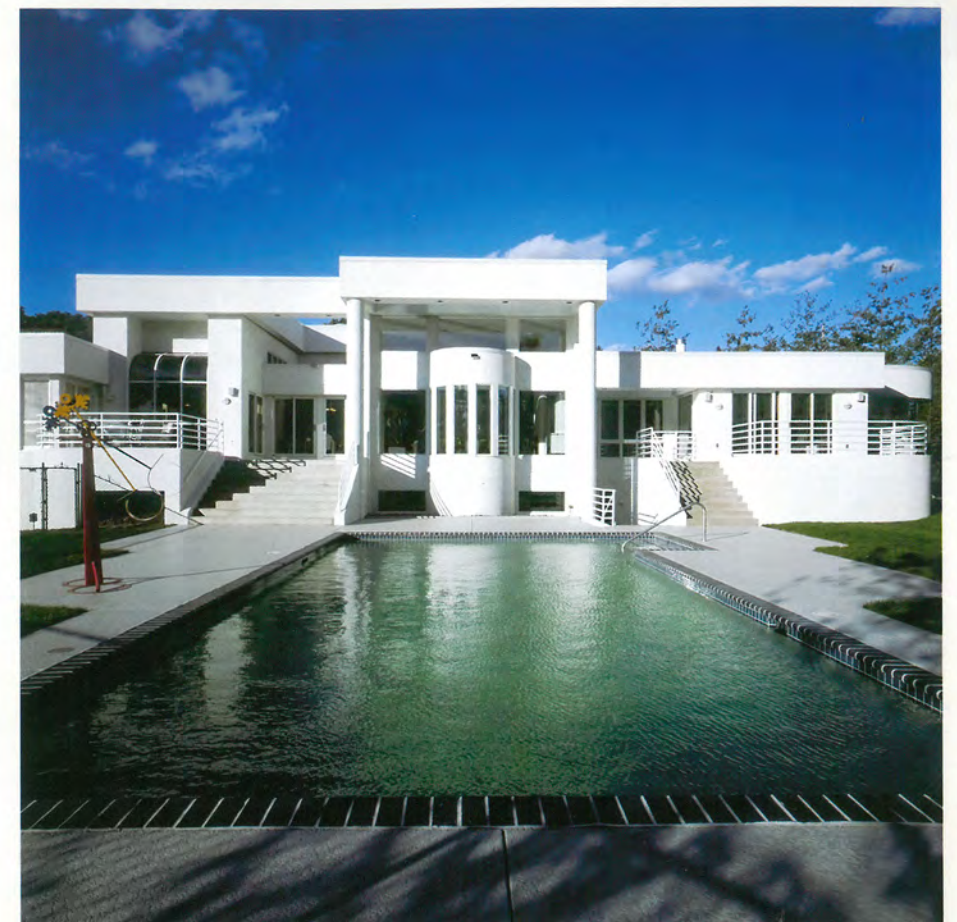
pletely redesigned the home to better capture the magnificent views of the golf course, and then hired Smuckler Custom Builders to build Jack's vision.

Jack began his architectural career designing commercial buildings, but soon moved into the residential market because he enjoyed the personal interactions with homeowners. However, he often became frustrated when the structures he meticulously designed were misinterpreted and built incorrectly. "Hiring an architect is like commissioning an artist or sculptor to create a unique work of art for you to live in," he said. "So in order to ensure that my designs were correctly translated into reality, I knew I needed to be part of the building process." Jack soon added the title "licensed building contractor" to his growing list of accomplishments and created the building company. "Our architectural style and ability to fully bring our designs to life is what sets us apart," he said.

And the results are stunning. A "portfolio" of sorts greets prospective clients who visit the company's Edina office. Photos of about 35 of the 300 masterpieces he has designed and built over the past 25 years grace the conference room walls, providing a small glimpse of what this artist can create and build.

Designing from Scratch

Before Jack even puts pencil to paper, he spends considerable time meeting with clients to understand their needs, likes and dislikes. Do they entertain a lot? Do they work out of their home? Do they have several children or are they empty nesters? He uses this information, along with pictures clients have torn out of magazines, to sketch an original design that will meet their specific lifestyle. He even draws fur-



Whether traditional, contemporary or anything in between, Smuckler Architecture designs and builds fabulous homes. Photo by Smuckler Architecture.



Photo by Saari & Forrai Photography.

niture into the floor plans so homeowners can get a sense of scale and how their items will fit into the final design.

By communicating closely with

clients and being involved every step of the way, Jack said he can truly customize the home from start to finish. Some of that customization includes over-the-top extras that

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Spectacular arched windows and a stone floor-to-ceiling fireplace create a great room masterpiece. Photo by Saari & Forrai Photography.

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locals might not expect to find in a Minnesota home. One customer wanted a two-story closet with a central spiral staircase similar to the one in singer Maria Carey's mansion. Another requested an indoor shooting range. Still others want his and her dens, catering kitchens that supplement the main cooking hub, and multiple level changes throughout their homes.

These are just some of the features Smuckler clients have come to expect when building upper-bracket homes ranging from \$1 million to \$5 million. And sure, the homes are large, but it's not all about size. It's about quality and uniqueness, as well, Jack says. He is adamant about using the best subcontractors and materials for the best prices available via competitive bidding. And, Jack

personally visits the building sites each week to make sure the home is being built according to his design vision and plans. "Since I've designed the house, it's simple for me to quickly revise a design element here or there without degrading the home's overall look or structure."

Award Winning

By combining exceptional design with technical craftsmanship, it's no surprise that Smuckler Architecture and Smuckler Custom Builders have won numerous awards and been featured in a variety of publications. Jack's most recent accolade was being published in a new nationally distributed book titled "Leading Residential Architects." The book features one architect from each of the 50 states, along with a profile and several pho-

tos of completed homes. In addition, Smuckler Custom Builders received the 2005 Reggie Award of Excellence from the Builders Association of the Twin Cities.

The photos of Jack's homes in the book, on his office walls and on his Web site represent his diverse style in building everything from contemporary to traditional, and from European to prairie style homes. "Some people say they can recognize my homes, but I really don't have a set style because every home is unique and an extension of the homeowner's personality and my design ability," he said.

For more information about Smuckler Architecture and Smuckler Custom Builders, call 952-828-1908 or visit www.smucklerarchitects.com.

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