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Modern homes spotlighted

PUBLISHED SUN, JUN 13, 2010 02:00 AM
MODIFIED SAT, JUN 12, 2010 10:46 PM

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The Thompson home, part of the Triangle Modernist Houses tour, has a garage/apartment and go-kart track.

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One of the Triangle's modernist architectural gems can be found on a 20-acre tract of land between Garner and Apex overlooking a small lake. You can take a rare look inside during a tour from 1 to 4 p.m. Saturday.

George Smart, founder of Triangle Modernist Houses, says the sleek, white, sculptural design invites comparison to the work of such modernist masters as Richard Meier and Charles Gwathmey.

"Architect David Davenport had the perfect wave of design talent, a sophisticated client, an exceptional site and a premium budget," Smart said in a news release.

In 1999, Diane and Bobby Thompson hired Davenport Architecture + Design in Manteo and Cary. The home was built by Tom Brown of The Splinter Group in Raleigh. The 6,000-square-foot, two-story house was completed in 2001. It's made with heavy steel and wood, covered in stucco. It includes a 3,400-square-foot garage/apartment and a go-kart track modeled after the International Speedway in Bristol, Tenn.

If you like it and have something in the neighborhood of \$2.5 million to spend, it's been on the market since March.

Tickets for the tour - which can be reserved at www.trianglemodernisthouses.com - cost \$5.95. Triangle Modernist Houses is a nonprofit group that promotes modern architecture. It will sponsor nine tours this year with houses from the '50s to 2008.

The Triangle has the third-largest concentration of modernist houses in the U.S., behind Los Angeles and Chicago, influenced by N.C. State University's College of Design.

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