



5

This house for an architect and his family manifests common sense as well as talent, clear-sightedness as well as imagination, practicality as well as dreams. The result is modest, clear and memorable—though it may take some readjustment of our expectations to perceive it, for what we are likely to remember is not an elegant architectural effect here or a striking detail there, or indeed even some dazzling form of the whole. What we will remember is a place made simply of simple materials, well-formed around the needs of the people who live there and attentive to the land on which it is built.

These qualities are not uncommon ideals in house design, and in fact most

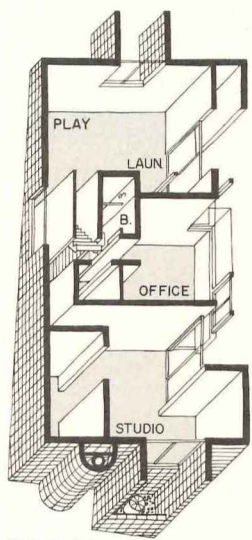
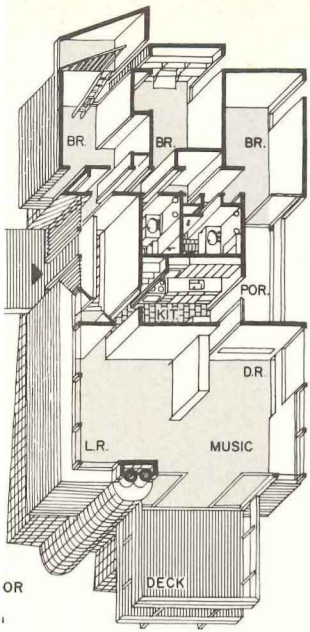
people would call them downright basic. In practice, though, they can easily get lost in the rush to achieve other dazzling goals.

The main floor (drawing opposite) is a series of rooms clustered around a central mechanical core that contains the kitchen and two baths. At one end of the plan are three bedrooms and at the other a large living and dining room that opens onto a cantilevered deck (large photo above); in front of the mechanical core is the entrance hall and behind a small porch reached from either the master bedroom or the kitchen. On the lower level are an office (photo opposite), a studio and a playroom.

The configuration of the suburban site and the placement of the buildings next

door suggested that the house be relatively closed and viewless on the front and on one end (left photo above); accordingly the living room is lit on the front by a narrow band of windows just above eye level and by a sloping skylight in the ceiling (large photo opposite). At the back of the house (right photo above) the walls open up to provide a view down a wooded hill, both from the back porch and the living and dining room and from the office below.

WHISNANT RESIDENCE, Charlotte, North Carolina. Architect and owner: *Murray Whisnant*. Engineers: *R.V. Wasdell & Associates* (structural); *J.M. McDowell & Associates* (mechanical); *S.T. Hocsak & Associates* (electrical). Contractor: *G.E. Vinroot Construction Company*.



GROUND FLOOR



Gordon Schenk photos