New on the street: HN Homes opens models in Bridlewood

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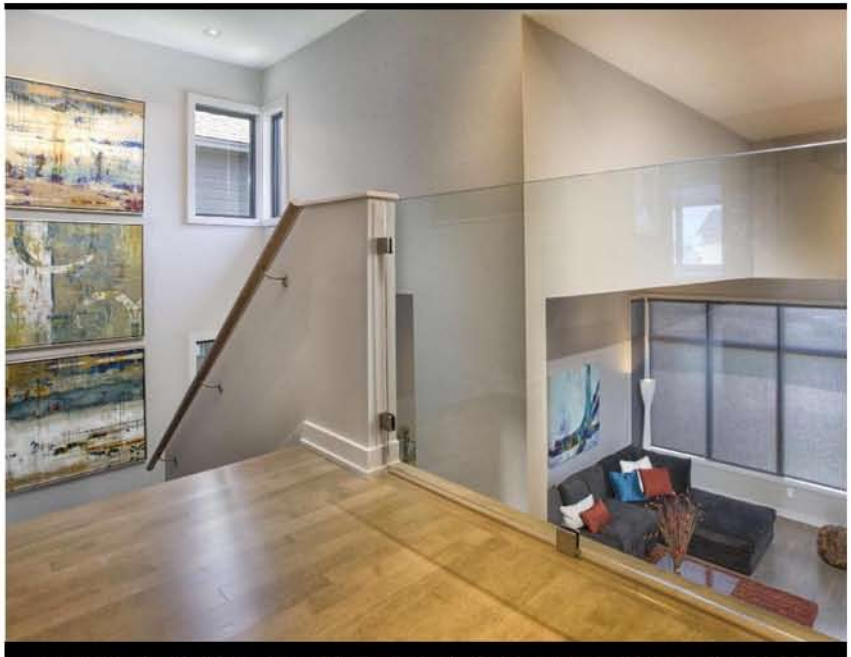

Tempered glass panels on the second-floor landing maintain the feeling of openness while maximizing the use of natural light.

Chris Mikula / Ottawa Citizen

Photos: HN Homes opens models in Bridlewood

Award-winning architect Christopher Simmonds and designer Leonhard Vogt team up to offer something new in suburban living for HN Homes in Bridlewood.

By Sheila Brady

An architect with a modern soul and a designer packing a unique flair for blending colours and textures have combined talents to ban bland from a corner of west-end suburbia.

Christopher Simmonds, an award-winning architect with a reputation for designing custom homes with large sheets of glass that blur the lines between flowing interiors and the garden and Leonhard Vogt, a former jewelry maker who now crafts interiors with an artist's eye for detailing, were hired by the Nadolny family to launch HN Homes' four new model homes off Stonehaven Drive in Bridlewood.

Architect and designer have worked their magic on two of the models that opened late last month. A third is set to open in mid-June and the fourth and largest home will show off a traditional vibe when it opens at the end of the month.

All four bear the distinctive Simmonds stamp: clean, angular exteriors with a blend of brick, wood, stone and glass, lots of glass. There isn't a piece of vinyl on the site.

Inside these energy-wise homes, Simmonds has pared back the unnecessary, pushing up the ceilings to 12 and 18 feet, maximizing natural light, often eliminating formal dining rooms for informal, large dining areas off kitchens that boast insanely long bars certain to become family central for cooking and homework duties. Simmonds' collection of 10 designs are about family living and bringing customized, contemporary living to the 'burbs.

These are not starter homes. Prices start at $449,800 for the 2,173-square-foot Rockway on a 35-foot lot, going up to the sumptuous Winfield, a 3,637-square-foot design featuring a spacious garden room stretching across the rear of the home. The $666,600 home is designed for a 50-foot lot.

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There are a scattering of 60-foot lots in the mature community, which is served by schools, shops and is edged by the Greenbelt and National Capital Commission lands.

The quartet of model homes have distinct personalities, starting with the 2,790-square-foot Walden, which is an ultrasophisticated sales centre, thanks to large corner windows, an oversized glass front door and a glass office for staff.

The Walden has a distinctive gallery feel: spare, sophisticated, white and light. A modernist would feel completely at home.

Next door, the 2,908-square-foot Kenson has an equally modern pedigree, yet Vogt has softened the edges, giving the home a contemporary feel with blocks of colour, a deep paprika red on a raised wall in the dining room and a bluish grey on the fireplace wall.

Vogt designed the slick fireplace, which is actually a cube, framed by black honed stone and insets of tile resembling braille. There are cube motifs throughout the Kenson, from the floating mirrors in sophisticated bathrooms to the white marble and travertine tile in the kitchen.

"I wanted to show the versatility of the space, how it can be manipulated to feel more traditional or transitional, depending on your taste," says Vogt, who works with iconic designer Michael Courdin and also has his own practice (vogtdesign.ca).

The four-bedroom Kenson sparkles, from the oversized charcoal grey sectional sofa in the living room to the staircase with tempered glass panels on the second-floor landing.

"It's the details that set these houses apart," says HN Homes president George Georgaras, an industry veteran who helped guide the Nadolny family through the launch last year of a home building division, which is named after family patriarch and real estate icon Herb Nadolny.

The senior Nadolny was co-founder of Urbandale Corporation in the mid-1950s. A funky graphic display in the sales centre explains the company mandate: "The New HN Homes. Modern vision based on a family tradition."

The Nadolny vision is set to expand to Riverside South next year, with a series of modern townhomes from Christopher Simmonds. Then buyers with slimmer bank accounts but an equally large love for modern designs may find a place to call home in the 'burbs.

HN Homes in Bridlewood

What: Single-family homes on lots ranging from 35 to 60 feet in a mature community shared with Urbandale.

Where: Stonehaven Drive at Stonemeadow Drive in Bridlewood.

Prices: Starting at $449,800 for the 2,173-square-foot Rockway, going up to $666,600 for the 3,637-square-foot Winfield.

Sales centre: Stonemeadow Drive at Stonehaven Drive

Hours: Monday to Thursday, noon to 7 p.m. Friday to Sunday and holidays, noon to 5 p.m.

Information: 613-435-8848 or HNhomes.com.