

DOUBLE TAKE



A SLEEK CALGARY HOME IS REIMAGINED AS A WARM RETREAT FOR TWO EMPTY-NESTERS.



IN SOME HOMES, it's the framed family portraits that tell a story, but at the Calgary home of physicians Jacinthe Kassab and André Ferland, it was the scuffed-up walls and worn-out hardwood that said it all. After raising two boys and sending them off to university and college, the couple's contemporary home was showing signs of wear and tear.

The newly minted empty-nesters turned to longtime friend and designer James McIntyre of McIntyre Bills to create a refreshed, adult space to suit their new lifestyle. "We weren't the same people as when the house was first built," says Jacinthe. "It had been more than 10 years since we moved in, and the boys weren't at home anymore. We wanted something both homey and functional."

The couple have relied on James' design expertise in various homes since 1991. ("Jacinthe doesn't even buy towels without calling me!" he jokes.) Located in one of Calgary's older neighbourhoods, this home was originally designed in 2004 for Jacinthe and André by McIntyre Bills, with DeJong Design Associates.

"The home's architecture was inspired by the De Stijl movement, specifically the works of Dutch architect J.J.P. Oud," says Ronald Bills, James' design partner at McIntyre Bills. The aesthetic, which emphasized a palette of black and white

with pops of primary colours and a focus on vertical and horizontal lines, announced itself in the home's double-height industrial windows and a dramatic steel-and-glass staircase that sliced through the main floor. "The house was '90s-style contemporary, with high-contrast black, white and steel," says James. "With the kids gone, Jacinthe and André were ready for something warmer and more eclectic, with pieces that felt like stylish collectibles."

The refresh included an update of the main dining area on the first floor, the principal bedroom upstairs and a total overhaul of the ensuite. To soften the open-concept living room's soaring 32-foot-high windows and streamlined staircase, James selected pieces in a caramel-based palette and a mixture of textures — fur-covered ottomans, a velvet sofa and leather and suede armchairs — to add much needed warmth.

Designed by Ronald Bills, an optical art-style hide rug in copper, teal and yellow provides a hit of colour. The centrepiece of the room is an angular Holly Hunt table, which influenced the decorative elements and custom furnishings

throughout the home. "Holly Hunt has been a mentor and an inspiration to me for many years," says James. "When we fell in love with her new coffee table, it wasn't difficult to let it inspire the angles and finishes in the home."

The home has never had a formal dining room; Jacinthe knew it wouldn't be used very often. Instead, they regularly dine at the bar-height table, which doubles as a

ABOVE: Designer James McIntyre selected a warm palette with lots of earth tones and caramel hues to play off the white, gallery-like walls in the main living area. **Counter stools** by Omar De Biaggio, *Design Within Reach*; **pendants**, *Lambert & Fils*; **custom sofa**, *Red Eight Workshop*; **table**, *Holly Hunt*.

OPPOSITE: Homeowner Jacinthe Kassab in the multipurpose room off the kitchen.

console behind the sofa. “We spend a lot of time at the bar table, chatting or watching the news,” says Jacinthe.

Upstairs in the principal suite, James echoed Jacinthe’s love of opulent design with a smoky bronzed-mirror feature wall. A sculptural, ’70s-inspired ceramic lamp, wood flooring and burnt orange trim on the linens warm up the room even more.

A room off the kitchen was also made over to suit Jacinthe and André’s new lifestyle. Opening to the outdoor terrace, the former office was home to a clunky desk and an unsightly elliptical machine and stationary bike. James repurposed the area, moving the gym equipment downstairs and jettisoning the desk, and added a round table with a pop-up charging station. Now an elegant enclave, the room is an ideal place to polish off work or host the occasional dinner party.

Jacinthe’s Steinway is next to a small sitting area, a spot where André likes to listen to her play. “Somehow, with her busy schedule, Jacinthe finds time to take piano lessons,” says James. “Now they have a cosy yet grown-up space to play, entertain and really embrace this new stage in their lives.” **H&H**



ABOVE: Sheer linen drapery filters light and adds texture in front of the floor-to-ceiling windows. “The drapes are motorized and create a real sense of theatre while still adding that cosy element,” says James. “They’re one of the first things people remark on when they come into the house,” adds Jacinthe. **Drapery fabric,** Fabricut; **drapery sewing,** DraperyWorks.



ABOVE: All of the kitchen’s appliances — except the full-height fridge — are contained within the two large islands. With no upper cabinets, the room boasts an unobstructed view of the city through a wall of windows. **Red and blue artwork** by Marie Lannoo, Newzones; **sculpture (on wall)** by Jeremy Thomas, Reyes Contemporary Art.

LEFT: In the repurposed home office, a multifunctional table is great for dinner parties and can double as a workspace. “Our son was recently home to study for the MCATs and spent all his time working at this table,” says Jacinthe. A gold-leaf feature wall elevates the space and makes it feel more “adult.” **Gold-leaf wall, table design,** McIntyre Bills; **table fabrication,** Attractive Woodwork; **chairs,** Red Eight Workshop; **light,** Lambert & Fils; **artwork** by Carl White, Christine Klassen Gallery.



The original staircase was refurbished with wood treads and re-stained to work with the updated space.

An airy breakfast nook is located just off the kitchen. Mirrors on facing walls reflect light and give the illusion of depth. **Banquette fabrication,** Red Eight Workshop; **pendant,** Niche Modern.

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A pair of classic suede armchairs by Jorge Zalszupin and two tufted-leather chairs with swooping retro arms by Jean de Merry are striking additions to the living room. The wood-burning fireplace was left untouched, and the clean, minimalist lines work well with the new decorative elements. **Ottomans**, Holly Hunt; **leather armchairs**, John Brooks Incorporated; **suede armchairs**, Espasso; **rug fabrication**, Kyle Bunting; **black floor lamp**, Lambert & Fils; **column floor lamp** (by mirror) by Leucos, Luminart.



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— James McIntyre



LEFT: The couple had wanted a larger bed for years, so James removed the built-in queen-size bed and wall unit to allow for a luxurious, leather-upholstered king frame. **Mirror, bed,** Red Eight Workshop; **lamp** by Porta Romana, John Brooks Incorporated; **nightstands,** Attractive Woodwork; **artwork** by Cathy Daley, Newzones.
RIGHT: Nestled to the side of the bedroom is a comfy dressing area. "It's a Moorish-style sitting area with simple bench seating where Jacinthe can get dressed or just relax," says James. **Built-in bench,** Waterford Homes; **artwork** by Lisa Matthias, Christine Klassen Gallery.



Jacinthe and André have never been "bath" people — the original ensuite was built with just a glass shower — but when the bathroom was remodelled, James convinced the couple to install an elegant stand-alone tub between two walnut vanities along the window wall. **Tub,** The Royal Flush Boutique; **vanities,** Waterford Homes.