

CHICAGO

# luxe.

interiors + design®



\$ 9.95 A SANDOW PUBLICATION | LUXE SOURCE®



VOLUME 13, ISSUE 4 | DISPLAY UNTIL 11/09/15



INTERIOR DESIGN / MICHELLE WILLIAMS, MICHELLE WILLIAMS INTERIORS  
ARCHITECTURE / MICHAEL HERSHENSON AND LOUIS BANKS, MICHAEL HERSHENSON ARCHITECTS, LTD.  
HOME BUILDER / MATTHEW L. POLLACK AND JOSH ACKERMAN, REDROCK CUSTOM HOMES INC.  
LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE / DAVID HELLER, HELLER & ASSOCIATES, LLC

# HAPPY MEDIUM

THANKS TO BOTH COMPROMISE AND COLLABORATION, MODERN  
AND CLASSIC ELEMENTS COME TOGETHER BEAUTIFULLY IN A HOME  
ON CHICAGO'S NORTH SHORE. WRITTEN BY ERIN MARVIN / PHOTOGRAPHY BY MICHAEL ROBINSON







The welcoming family room of this North Shore home designed by Michelle Williams invites lounging on custom Barclay Butera sofas, which are covered in dark gray Brentano and light gray Pollack fabrics, and chairs, also by Barclay Butera, featuring an Osborne & Little textile. A mix of patterns, materials and accessories—including barrel lids repurposed as art from Accessory Preview in Los Angeles—adds both interest and warmth.

When a North Shore homeowner decided to surprise his wife with a nearby lot where they could build a new residence, she had the perfect vision in mind. “Our old house was a little more traditional than I wanted,” says the wife. “I envisioned a home that had an open concept and was modern yet still warm with comfortable, family-friendly spaces.” Up to the challenge was interior designer Michelle Williams, who had worked on the couple’s previous home and was familiar with their needs. “They really wanted more of a casual, hands-on house,” she says.

To begin, the couple enlisted the help of architect Michael Hershenson and builder Matthew L. Pollack to collaborate on a design that would best suit the needs of their family. The wife favors a modern look, while the husband leans toward a more traditional aesthetic, so Hershenson worked closely with the couple to find a balance. They eventually settled on a Prairie-style exterior with a mountain-area feel: a low-pitched sloped roof, horizontal bands of windows and a smart orientation to maximize natural light. “Prairie-style is the perfect concept for two people with different tastes because it can be both contemporary and traditional at the same time,” says Hershenson, who worked alongside project architect Louis Banks on the home’s design. “It’s a very streamlined home but doesn’t feel cold due to the natural woods,” adds Pollack, who teamed up with project manager Josh Ackerman. “It has a really warm feeling inside.”





**This page:** In the entry, a wood mirror from Anna's Mostly Mahogany hangs above an Oly console made of silvered resin. Sculptural objects—such as the circular piece from Judith Racht Gallery in Harbert, Michigan—share the space with a Turkish rug and vintage ottomans clad in Schumacher's chevron-patterned fabric; the ottomans were reupholstered by Covers Unlimited.

**Opposite:** A ledge near the family room fireplace stores wood for burning. Made Goods stools make it easy to move extra seating. A vintage coffee table rests on a Stanton Carpet Corporation rug from Carpet Central & Hardwood Flooring. Moroccan lanterns and gilt-accented accessories decorate the entry.





A dark brown hue from Benjamin Moore cloaks the dining room walls and coordinates with the barbed-wire chandelier from Mike Bell & Westwater Patterson. Beneath the fixture is a modern wood table that seats up to 12. An Oly armchair commands the head of the table, while side chairs from Artesia in Coral Gables, Florida, pull up along either side.



Jack Pooker's large oil-on-canvas hangs above the dining room's vintage Ello sideboard from Redefined Décor; the sideboard's travertine finish boasts a herringbone pattern that's echoed in the flooring from Chicago's Finest Floors and reminiscent of fabrics throughout the house. Embroidered burlap window treatments featuring a Schumacher textile hang on custom iron rods.

Outside, Wisconsin-based landscape architect David Heller took his cues from Hershenson's design. "The house's aesthetic drove much of the decisions for the outdoors," says Heller, who favored a linear contemporary design with ornamental grasses, boxwoods and perennials along the front of the home. "It's a nice, clean design that's consistent with the style and lines of the house," Hershenson says of the landscaping.

When it came to the interiors, Williams translated the couple's wants and needs into the perfect family space. "We had to find a happy medium that would please them both," Williams says. Adds the wife, "Michelle had outfitted our old house and was familiar with our

tastes. So she knew how to split the difference between my husband's style and mine: It had to be modern enough for me yet classic enough for him." To achieve this balance, Williams mixed a variety of elements and clever furniture combinations that work well together. In the dining room, for instance, the table's structured silhouette is juxtaposed with a chandelier made of barbed wire, while the entry marries a wood mirror with vintage ottomans, covered in a lively chevron pattern, and a minimalist, industrial-like console. "I love to pair unexpected elements together; I believe it elevates the design," Williams says. "Any space I design will always have a little edge for interest."





In the kitchen, Specialty Woodworking cabinets in an earthy taupe feature hardware from Studio41 and abut a cool marble backsplash from The Tile Shop and countertops from Terrazzo & Marble Supply Companies. Exposed-wood beams lend a rustic feel, as do Arteriors barstools from Creative Visions. Philippe Stark chairs surround a West Elm table in the nearby breakfast area; a Ralph Lauren Home chandelier from Circa Lighting illuminates the scene.

“I LOVE TO PAIR  
UNEXPECTED  
ELEMENTS  
TOGETHER;  
I BELIEVE  
IT ELEVATES  
THE DESIGN.”

—MICHELLE WILLIAMS



**Right:** Windows from Marvin and a large Oly chandelier made of seashells shed light on creamy Carrara marble from The Tile Shop, which covers the wall and tub surround in the spa-like master bathroom. The tub and its fixtures are both from Banner Plumbing Supply; a white cabinet designed by Williams features agate knobs from Anthropologie.

**Opposite, top:** The master bedroom's existing furnishings—such as the bed from Room & Board—received new life with pillows made from Osborne & Little and Donghia textiles. A bench, also re-covered in an Osborne & Little material; table lamps from Currey & Company and a custom Masland Carpets & Rug carpet complete the setting.

**Opposite, bottom:** A wool runner from Carpet Central & Hardwood Flooring and a railing fabricated by Signature Stairs leads one up the stairway to the home's private spaces. Just outside the dining room, a chrome-and-glass bar cart from Worlds Away in Memphis stands under another work by Pooker.



In addition, Williams used neutral shades in varying textures, giving the home a contemporary feel without being too cold, while an assortment of materials and patterns add contrast. Modern but warm elements drove many of the design decisions, which Williams executed with a soft tone-on-tone color palette of earthy taupes and creamy whites accented by a liberal mix of textures and shapes. Circular and chevron patterns proved to be the perfect complement to bold stripes, while materials such as wood, steel, mohair, velvet and burlap cozy up together in easy harmony. Bold works of art and accessories picked up during both the couple's and designer's world travels add depth.

Furniture and accessories from the owners' old home were also cleverly recycled into the new space. "We'd just finished designing the previous house, so we were trying to save a lot of what we'd just done," Williams says. "We repurposed pieces to make them new and fresh but didn't reinvent the wheel too much." For example, a living room sofa from their old house was re-covered and moved into the master suite, and what was once a big coffee table in their old family room is now a side table in their new family room. Beds were repainted or reupholstered, lamps found new tables, and accessories that were in the couple's



Outdoor living spaces are both comfy and welcoming for family and friends and include Restoration Hardware furnishings that surround a fire pit, which coordinates with the exterior stone from Halquist Stone Co. in Sussex, Wisconsin. Landscape architect David Heller worked on the plans for the lush outdoors, which Mariani Landscape currently maintains.



previous home now reside in fresh locations throughout this house. Guest room accessories, for instance, made their way into the daughter's bedroom, and a console originally near the old staircase landing found a new home in the screened-in porch. In addition, sentimental pieces, such as crystal decanters that belonged to the husband's grandparents and a coffee table that resided in the wife's childhood home, are on display. There was also two children to consider. So, the kitchen barstools are spill-proof with no fabric, and textiles throughout, such as mohair, are luxurious to the touch yet very forgiving. While ensuring that the interiors were a beautiful compromise of different design aesthetics, Williams never lost sight of the family's need for a comfortable, livable space. "It was really meant to be a lived-in house," Williams says.

This welcoming feel continues into the open family room and large kitchen—a necessity for the couple's new home. "I love to cook, bake and entertain," says the wife. "Having an open kitchen off the family room makes you feel like you're always part of the party." Additionally, a generous screened-in porch off the kitchen, as well as an outdoor living room, extends the living space and brings the outdoors in. "When the weather allows, we love hanging out on the sofas and reading or watching television in the screened-in porch," adds the wife, who, in the end, thinks that the design of the home is the perfect compromise. "I feel like this was always meant to be our house. The second I walked through the door, it felt like home." ■