

CONTEMPORARY CRAFTSMAN

A 1912 home's traditional facade belies its modernized interiors

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THERE IS A PARADOX in this Kitsilano home. From the outside, it is every inch the Craftsman-style house it was when it was built in 1912. But step inside and it's a different story.

The interiors are sleek and contemporary. And so is the landscaping.

Owners Rochelle and Tim Fletcher were living and working in Hong Kong when they bought the property before they retired and returned to Vancouver. "We decided it was time to change lanes after 25 years as expatriates, and to share our love of Canada with our teenaged children," Rochelle says. "Repatriating came with challenges, but the decision of where to live was an obvious one—Vancouver and near the water. The move was all about lifestyle."

They decided that a small house would meet their needs in the city. "The smaller the house, the closer the family," Rochelle says. ☞

DESIGN



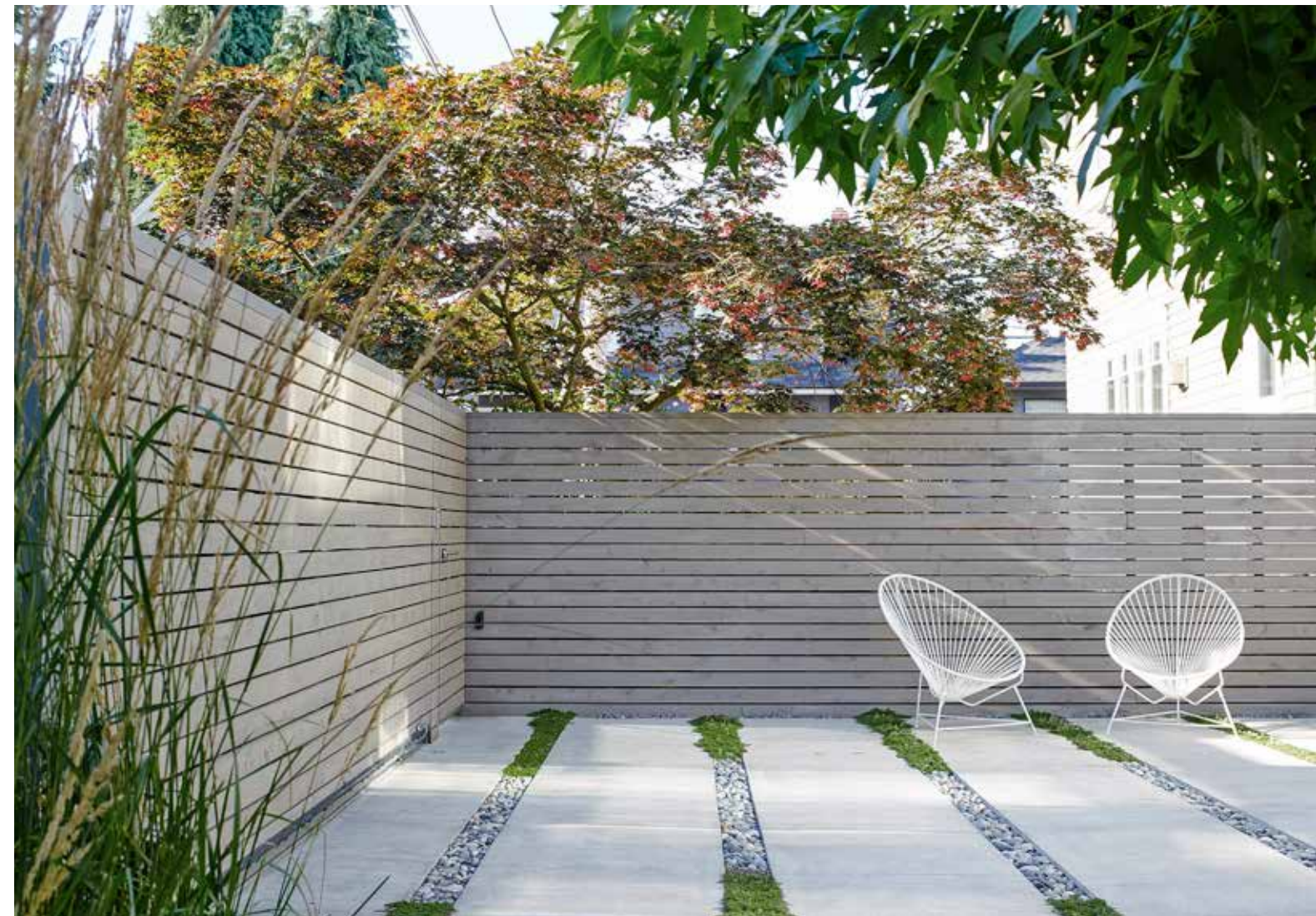
“There is a certain charm in a heritage-looking house.”

The house had been subdivided into three rental units and was a mishmash of renovations and alterations when the Fletchers called in designer Nigel Parish of Splyce Design to overhaul it in 2011. “It was all over the place but there were some remnants of the original house on the inside,” says Parish. “You could almost see what it used to be. But over the years, disregard and neglect muddled most of the original elements.”

Parish and the owners hatched a plan to strip out the interiors and redesign them while maintaining and preserving the original exterior facade. They removed two trees in the front, demolished indoor walls, and overhauled the electrical circuits and plumbing. “There is a certain charm in a heritage-looking house,” says Parish, who maintained the size and style of the windows. *ES*

(Preceding spread) The home’s front exterior was maintained as much as possible in its original style. Designer Nigel Parish widened the front door and added a sidelight for more illumination. (Below and left) Stained white oak floors are from BC Hardwood Flooring.





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make it open.”*




In the back, however, the designer took modern liberties, adding sleek sliding doors and a glass balcony enclosure to give the open-concept interiors plenty of light. And in addition to adding a parking pad, downstairs deck and storage area, he designed a contemporary, modern landscape. Restrained plantings include a screen of lush bamboo plants, ornamental grasses and a Japanese maple. River

rocks and ground cover between pavers confer a tidy and calming ambience.

Parish's design captured what the family loved most about Sydney and Hong Kong: light-filled interiors and a proximity to the ocean, beach and mountains.

The most obvious contemporary design element can be seen just inside the new, flat-slab oak front door, where a modern staircase sets

the tone. Unlike typical Craftsman homes built a century ago, this one boasts an open-concept sitting room, dining room and kitchen on the ground floor. “The goal was to bring in the light, make it open, work for a more contemporary lifestyle, all the while referencing the old,” says Parish. “I think this old-and-new marriage works.”

New windows were designed to mimic the original Craftsman-style panes. 



“We realized that we wanted to have something clean, simple and easy to live in...”

The living room’s contemporary-style fireplace was installed to take advantage of the existing flue. It’s flanked by a storage unit covered in Caesarstone quartz that runs along the length of the wall to the back of the house. Additional storage is featured in a multi-purpose mud room off the kitchen. “Having lived in very small quarters in Hong Kong, we realized that we wanted to have something clean, simple

and easy to live in that we could lock up on the weekends so we could head to Whistler and not have to fuss with it,” says Rochelle.

Whistler is where the family entertains, she explains. The urban property, where the Fletchers raise two teenagers and own two dogs, is for their busy but low-maintenance life in a beachside community that is a 15-minute bike ride to the city. *EF*

(Below) Having the TV room on the top floor ensures that the lower levels are tranquil. The open risers of the staircase are another design feature that allows light to permeate the building. (Opposite) The sightline through dining room to kitchen ends at the sunny backyard.



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It's purpose-built but minimal, allowing lively art and furnishings collected on the couple's travels to stand out. “We wanted the interior to be a quiet and simple backdrop for all the amazing [pieces] she has,” says Parish.

The property – an old house with a new spirit that is sparse, modern and livable – does justice to the paradox. ☛

The cool quiet whiteness of the decor is punctuated with splashes of colour from accessories and the homeowners' collection of artwork. (Opposite, left) The “headboard” in the master bedroom is a freestanding unit backed with closets. (Opposite, right) The master bathroom mirror reflects the honed limestone tile adorning a wall that provides privacy and acts as an anchor in the master bed and bathroom.

