

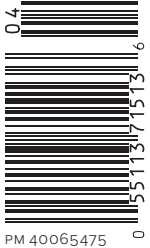
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COLLECTOR'S PEACE

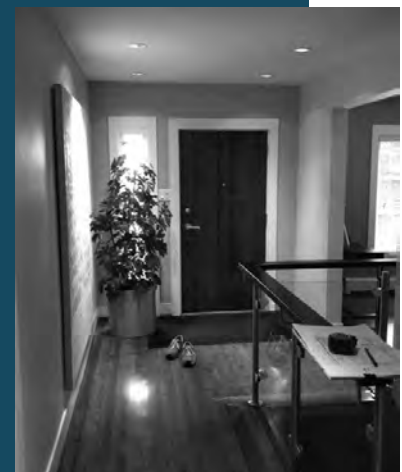
Once a closed-off, 1940s bungalow, this Vancouver home now soars—and has plenty of room for its owners' quirky collections.

by ANICKA QUIN // photographs by SAMI JIM CANZIAN



Modern Remake

The original 1940s bungalow featured a traditional, closed-off interior with no real connection to the landscape (below and right). Nigel Parish of Splyce Design converted the space into the lofted design it is now (above left and opposite), complete with a cantilevered living room (left) and new upper level, with open-tread stairs (above right).





Cook's Corner

The couple's daughter, Kelly, sits in the newly renovated kitchen. In any modern design, good storage is essential. "It goes all the way up to the ceiling," says homeowner Sara McCracken, "and it's not even full yet. We actually look like we're organized."

B

rian Cunningham and Sara McCracken might be modernists, but they're not minimalists. "We do have a life-sized stormtrooper in our media room," laughs McCracken. The couple had lived in their 1940s West Vancouver bungalow for about 12 years, but as their two children started to grow, the pair began talking about a need for more elbow room—and space for Cunningham's film memorabilia. (He's a concept illustrator for the industry, she's in the collectibles-free field of tax law.) It was either find a new place or renovate—and they opted for plan B, with the help of their old high-school acquaintance, Nigel Parish of Splyce Design. "I told Nigel we need a media room where we can put movie collectibles and not have them in my living

“It’s that natural flow between the spaces, the connection to the outdoors.”



Open Flow

“That sloped ceiling creates a huge vaulted space now,” says Parish of the living room (above) and kitchen (left). “That subtle tip of the roof creates so much volume.”



room anymore,” says McCracken. Cunningham nods along. “Nigel asked me, ‘I can’t tell if you’re serious or if you’re kidding about this stuff,’ and I said, ‘It just has to have a place somewhere!’”

The couple had long tracked Parish’s career and admired his work. “It was exactly our style—clean lines, very purposeful design,” says McCracken. The designer showed the pair how they could keep the original footprint of the home, but go up a half-storey to create room for a master suite and a home office. On the main floor, they’d open up the warren of rooms that was so common to ‘40s design to create better flow between the living room and kitchen, and cantilever the living room out a couple of feet over the front yard to gain a little more square footage. And they’d create better access to the surrounding landscape with multi-slide doors that open the kitchen to the backyard. (In another high-school throwback for this home, the couple hired a second former classmate to help out as their builder: Dave Adair from Blackfish Homes.)

The addition of the half-storey results in a dramatic new roofline for the home, and a vaulted ceiling for the entry and main floor. “That subtle tip of the roof creates



Bathing Beauty

Parish opted for a simple palette of black porcelain flooring paired with white lacquer cabinets in the master bath. "It's really hearty and functional," he says. "Nothing is overly trendy or overly fussy." There's a bit of a glow on the floor—that's from a skylight that was added in the reno.



so much volume,” notes Parish. A new stairway up to the master suite is free of risers, allowing more light to penetrate down through the stairs to the lower level. A simple materials palette throughout—white oak millwork and flooring, white lacquer cabinetry—keeps the rest of the space light and bright, too. Nothing is overly fussy, yet it’s perfectly designed for this family of four. “The improvement, you can really see it looking from the living room to the kitchen,” says Parish. “It’s that natural flow between the spaces, the connection to the outdoors.”

“One of the great things about designing with Nigel,” says Cunningham, “is that our kids are now at the age where it’s great for them to have their own space, and he worked with that.” Dylan and Kelly, now 13 and 11 respectively, have their bedrooms on the lower level with that much-needed

media room for their toys (and for dad’s). And the parents have their own spaces, too. The top-floor office is Cunningham’s favourite room in the house. “It’s a little purpose-built office for my work, when I need to be in kind of a dark area,” he explains. “It’s a little oasis up there when everything is chaotic and the kids have friends in.” For McCracken, her personal retreat is the command central that Parish set up for her in the kitchen—a little nook where she can sit with her laptop as the kids cruise in and out or study at the nearby island. “In the summer, you can open the doors out to the backyard—I love it.”

“I think that’s what has worked so well with the design we settled on,” continues Cunningham. “We do have that big, open entertaining space, yet designed into the house is everyone’s retreat area. It just works.” *ML*

Light and Bright

Millwork throughout the home is lightly stained, rift-cut white oak: a consistent palette that’s a trademark of modern design. The couple had chosen Parish after tracking his body of work over several years. “It was exactly our style—clean lines, very purposeful design,” says McCracken.