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# Artist's Abode

How timeless materials and a neutral palette transformed this house into a work of art.

By Lauren Hofer | Photography by Nate Sheets

PRIOR TO THE RENOVATION, THE LIVING ROOM'S FIREPLACE WAS COVERED UP WITH DRYWALL. "I WAS THRILLED WITH THE SCALE AND PROPORTION OF ALL THE ELEMENTS ON THE FIREPLACE WALL," CARLY SAYS. "THE NEW DESIGN CELEBRATES THE HEART OF THE HOME BY GIVING NEW LIFE TO THE FIREPLACE AND MAKING IT A CENTERPIECE." USA AND CARLY DECIDED TO ADD THE VERTICAL WINDOW NEXT TO THE FIREPLACE MIDWAY THROUGH THE CONSTRUCTION PROCESS. "WE NOTICED THAT MANY, IF NOT ALL, OF THE NEIGHBORING DRUMMOND HOMES HAD THIS SKINNY WINDOW NEXT TO THE FIREPLACE, SO IT WAS A NO-BRAINER THAT IT SHOULD LIVE THERE," CARLY SAYS.



THE HOMEOWNER SPECIFICALLY REQUESTED THE ADDITION OF A WHITE EAMES CHAIR, AND LISA AND CARLY WERE HAPPY TO OBLIGE. "USING JUST A FEW CLASSIC VINTAGE FURNITURE PIECES LIKE THE SAARINEN TABLES AND CHAIRS AND THE EAMES LOUNGE CHAIR COMPLEMENT NEW PIECES THAT WE CHOSE FOR THEIR CLEAN LINES AND TEXTURES," LISA SAYS.

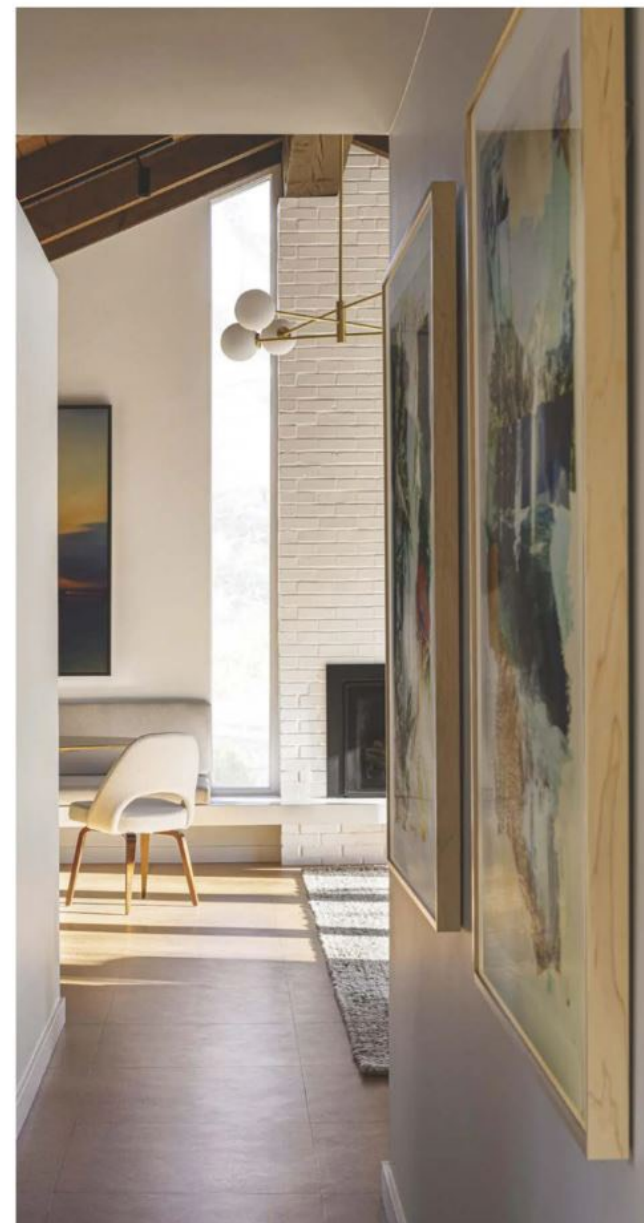
**N**eutral yet dynamic is the best way to describe this renovated home, originally built in 1956 by local builder Donald Drummond. Similar to Eichlers in style but built on a much smaller scale, Drummond homes are highly sought after in the Kansas City, Kansas, community. Located in the Prairie Village neighborhood, this house is imbued with irresistible class, but that wasn't the case until interior designer Lisa Schmitz joined the project. "Our first impression was that the home was dark and dated," Lisa says. "The updates seemed to be from a different time frame and not complementary to the original design."

The homeowner, a local artist, wanted to create a timeless oasis that highlighted the best of mid-century design while keeping it modern. "It was important to keep mid-century themes and materials while not making it feel like a time warp," Lisa explains. "Keeping the palette neutral doesn't give a specific time stamp like olive greens or bright mod colors do. Instead, it lets the textures, patinas and art shine."


#### FUNCTION FIRST

One of the first things for the design team to tackle was the lack of a primary suite. "The primary bedroom had an odd half bath inside the room and an undersized closet," Lisa says. "We took this space as well as the adjacent bedroom and reconfigured it to be a proper primary suite with a walk-in closet and bath." While doing so transitioned the home from three bedrooms down to two, the result was worth it.

Another necessary update was the addition of storage space. "The home had a severe storage problem for the client and no spaces that could be 'messy' and hidden behind closed doors," says Carly Pumphrey, another interior designer who worked on the project. To solve this issue, the team designed custom cabinetry for almost every room in the house. "This was a great opportunity for us to design smart storage solutions that were highly functional with an elevated look and finish," Carly says.



YOU CAN SEE HOW THE DINING NOOK BENCH FLOATS JUST ABOVE THE HEARTH, CREATING SEAMLESS LINES.



THE BREAKFAST NOOK FEATURES A CUSTOM BANQUETTE. "THIS DESIGN MOMENT BECAME AN IMPORTANT PART OF THE ENTIRE MAIN LIVING SPACE," LISA SAYS. "WE DESIGNED AND ENLISTED A LOCAL VENDOR TO CREATE THE CUSTOM BANQUETTE, WHICH EXTENDS ALL THE WAY ACROSS THE FIREPLACE AND SLIGHTLY ABOVE THE HEARTH, MAKING IT THE PERFECT DINING HEIGHT." ABOVE, THE ORIGINAL TONGUE-AND-GROOVE CEILING GROUNDS THE ENTIRE SPACE.

THE DESIGN TEAM OPTED FOR OPEN SHELVING IN THE KITCHEN. "UPPER CABINETS AT THE SINK SEEMED TOO HEAVY, SO OPEN SHELVING PROVIDES JUST ENOUGH STORAGE WHILE KEEPING IT LIGHT," LISA SAYS. "THIS ALSO CREATES A BEAUTIFUL VIGNETTE FROM THE STUDIO SPACE." THEY CALL THIS VIGNETTE "THE PORTAL," WHICH FEATURES A CUSTOM WALNUT COFFEE NOOK ALONG WITH ADDITIONAL STORAGE SPACE TO RELIEVE THE SMALL KITCHEN.

### CONNECTING THE LINES

With every detail of the project, Lisa and her team kept immaculate design as their chief goal. In the living room, lines from the fireplace, shelving and dining banquette interplay to create a stunning picture. They also added a vertical window next to the fireplace—an element frequently seen in other Drummond homes. "The approach for the main living space was to improve visual connections, function and flow, so adding this window was right in line with the design concept," Carly explains. "It also added a welcome amount of natural light into the dining and kitchen areas while making the fireplace even more special."

### THE PERFECT FINISHES

To simplify the space, Lisa and Carly conducted extensive research on flooring materials that met all of their requirements: beautiful to look at, true to the mid-century era, durable and environmentally friendly. They landed with two options they used throughout the space: solid cork and terrazzo tile. "Ultimately, our client decided she really wanted the warmth and softness of the cork underfoot, but recognized that the durability of the terrazzo would be best for the bathrooms and studio," Carly explains.

The neutral color palette below also helps the original beams above to shine. "The wood tongue-and-groove ceiling and beams were untouched," Carly says. In the kitchen, walnut cabinets make a more dramatic statement. "Walnut seemed to be the best cabinet material, but instead of adding ornamentation, we concentrated on precision in the details and transitions," Lisa explains. Open shelving and a bright backsplash keep the space feeling light yet grounded.



## THE BUILDER'S BIO

Mid-century enthusiasts in Kansas City love Drummond homes, but who was Donald Drummond?

Drawing on inspiration from Bay Area builder Earl W. "Flat Top" Smith, Donald Drummond built around 1,100 homes in Kansas City between 1946 and 1964. Educated as an engineer in California where he met his wife, Francie, the Drummonds moved to Kansas City and started building modern homes known for their flat tops (flatties) and straightforward structures with their lack of basements and storage space, an oddity in the area.

Later, Francie encouraged Drummond to hire an architect, so he called on David B. Runnells to further his building ventures. "Drummond homes are highly sought after among Kansas City's Mid-Century Modern-loving residents," Carly says. "They are prized possessions." Today, the tight-knit community of Drummond homeowners even hold home showcases to share their simplicity and beauty.

PREVIOUSLY A STORAGE SPACE, THE STUDIO IS A LAUNDRY ROOM, STORAGE ROOM, ART STUDIO AND WORKING DESK SPACE ALL IN ONE. "THE WALL OF WALNUT CABINETRY CONTINUES ACROSS THE ENTIRE LENGTH OF THE ROOM AND TEXTURED KNOLL FABRIC WRAPS HOMASOTE PANELS FOR A TACKABLE SURFACE," LISA SAYS.



LEFT: THE PRIMARY BATHROOM WAS REIMAGINED AND RECONFIGURED BY THE DESIGNERS. "THE CUSTOM TERRAZZO MIX WAS SELECTED TO COORDINATE WITH THE CORK FLOORING, BLACK ACCENTS AND THE TERRACOTTA-COLORED VANITY," CARLY SAYS.

BELOW: THE DESIGNERS RECONFIGURED THE PRIMARY SUITE FROM THE ORIGINAL LAYOUT TO CREATE A MORE FUNCTIONAL SPACE IN A SIMPLE YET ELEGANT WAY. "OUR DESIGN ALSO ALLEVIATED THE NEED TO HAVE DOORS INTO THE BATHROOM AND CLOSET, WHICH NOT ONLY SAVED ON FLOOR SPACE BUT ALSO CREATED A VISUALLY ELEGANT SOLUTION," CARLY SAYS.



### THE ART OF DESIGN

The reimagined, redesigned house feels warm, cohesive and interesting, while the lines and design choices draw your eye to the unique details everywhere. "I really loved working with the client to curate the living room furniture," Carly says, "we took the same approach to the furniture as we did the rest of the house—inspired by the mid-century era but designed for today and personalized for our client."

The neutral tones and textures of the furnishings create space for the curated artwork to breathe. "The client, who is an artist herself, wanted to integrate locally sourced materials, furniture, artwork and accessories as much as possible," Carly says. "This added depth and personalization to the project." A stunning painting by local artist Rich Bowman hangs above the dining nook, creating an alluring vignette—another notable moment in a home full of eye-catching features and perfectly curated details. 🌿

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RIGHT: EXTENDING THE SAME PATTERN ON THE FLOOR UP THE WALLS AND INTO THE SHOWER MAKES THE PRIMARY BATHROOM FEEL LARGER WITHOUT COMPLICATING IT. "INSTEAD OF USING THE TILE FLOORING, WHICH WAS MADE WITH A CEMENT BASE, WE USED AN EPOXY-BASED MATERIAL FOR THE WALLS AND SHOWER SO WE COULD MINIMIZE GROUT LINES AND MAXIMIZE CLEANABILITY," CARLY SAYS.

