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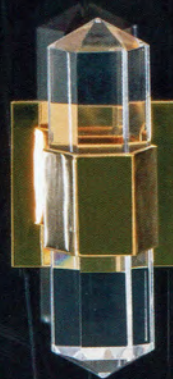
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MOUNTAIN CHIC

A DESIGNER'S FEARLESS APPROACH TRANSFORMS A 1970S DUPLEX INTO A STYLISH GETAWAY PERFECTLY SUITED TO THE LIFESTYLE OF A YOUNG FAMILY.

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INTERIOR DESIGN / ERIN IBA, IBA DESIGN ASSOCIATES
HOME BUILDER / BRIAN GILLETTE, GILLETTE LLC
CONSTRUCTION AND REMODELING

Designer Erin Iba revamped a dated mountain duplex with statement-making pieces. In the living room, she arranged tufted sofas and leather-and-metal chairs, all by High Fashion Home, beneath a light fixture by Apparatus. Artwork by Chloe Hedden from Walker Fine Art hangs on the new steel-clad fireplace. Draperies were made with a Ralph Lauren Home fabric.

To some, selecting tufted green-velvet sofas and a massive marble coffee table for a Colorado mountain getaway—where three of the inhabitants are under the age of 5—might seem like a bold decision. But to designer Erin Iba, it just seems logical. “Cotton-velvet is durable, green doesn’t show dirt and the sofas are comfortable enough to sleep on,” she says. As for the table, “you can sit on it, eat pizza off it, play games on it and even dance on it,” she adds. “Why not go for something you think will be great, rather than playing it safe?”

Clearly, the word “conventional” is not in Iba’s vocabulary, and the designer didn’t hesitate to push the envelope for her clients’ mountain retreat. Although Iba prides herself on introducing elements that are often unexpected, her designs always stay in sync with the homeowner’s style and taste. In this case, she was charged with melding the wife’s desire for texture, pattern and color with the husband’s propensity for a style that was more modern and raw. “It was my goal to make sure neither of them felt like they were giving something up,” says Iba, who had worked previously with the couple on their primary residence.

There was one thing, however, the husband and wife did agree on: While both grew up skiing in the area, “neither of them wanted anything to do with the traditional Western style that once defined the region,” Iba says. Oddly enough, the 1970s duplex the couple purchased—with its antler chandelier still in tact—was exactly that. “My parents have a vacation home in the area, and we wanted our kids to have that up-the-street relationship with their grandparents,” the wife explains. “So when this place in







their neighborhood came on the market, we bought it. It also had a good two-level layout, so the kids could be downstairs and leave the upper level for us."

Although the home's floor plan was a hit, the interiors needed an upgrade. "It had carpet in all of the bedrooms, a moss-rock fireplace in the living room and pickled ceilings that matched the pink tub in the master bathroom," Iba says. To get things moving in the right direction, she first focused on giving the structure some strategic updates—and that meant addressing the floors, ceiling and fireplace.

In conjunction with builder Brian Gillette, Iba introduced new distressed-oak floors throughout to provide consistency. The pink ceilings were painted white, with the beams stained darker for contrast. "Painting the ceiling was a simple thing that made a big difference," Gillette says. As for the rock fireplace, "we tore it out and replaced it with a new masonry firebox and floor-to-ceiling steel-clad panels," he says. The resulting focal point adds drama and places the room squarely in the current decade.

Playing off the sleek new fireplace, Iba found a balance between the husband's and wife's design sensibilities in the living room. To counter the traditional-leaning sofa and marble table—nods to the wife—she added twin metal-and-leather chairs to the mix and suspended an industrial-looking brass-trimmed light fixture above. Just off the central living room, she called on her signature use of inventive wallpaper to transform an irregularly shaped





Left: The designer purchased usage rights to a Slim Aarons photograph of Chicago's Playboy Club, and Flavor Paper in Brooklyn converted it into a wall mural for the study. An iron desk by High Fashion Home sits across from Jonathan Adler's pink Bacharach chair; the window shade fabric is by Kravet Couture.

Opposite, top: Iba worked with builder Brian Gillette to update the home, including adding steel-and-glass barn doors to separate the study from the living room. The black Crawford cabinet is by Jonathan Adler, and the marble coffee table is by RH. Leather stools by Cisco Home rest on Flor carpet tiles.

Opposite, bottom: Against the gray walls of the powder room, a strip of geometric Waterworks tile frames a suspended Duravit sink, paired with fittings by Watermark Designs as well as a mirror and a light fixture, both by RH. The artwork by Patricia J. Finley is from Walker Fine Art.

In the kitchen, Iba established a sense of history using midcentury French factory pendants with green enamel shades from Chicago-based Jayson Home. An MGS faucet from Ultra Design Center pairs with the space's existing cabinetry and countertops. Old-growth-white-oak flooring by Europa Woods flows here and throughout.





Below, left: A small balcony offers a scenic spot to dine alfresco. Here, pots brimming with flowers surround a table draped with cloths from Crate & Barrel and Cost Plus World Market. A throw pillow, also from Crate & Barrel, rests on the owners' existing chair.

Below, right: To mask the uneven heights of the kitchen's window headers, Iba introduced Roman shades made with a C&C Milano green-and-white stripe from John Brooks Incorporated. A Lucien chandelier by Currey & Company caps off the space.



Opposite: Painted wood barn doors by Schacht Mill Works slide open to reveal the childrens' sleeping quarters, adjacent to the playroom. Beds from the homeowners' collection rest on a hair-on-hide rug by Edelman. The window shade was made with a Kravet textile.

Below: A custom graffiti wall mural lends a graphic jolt of color to the lower-level playroom. The generous sofa by Room & Board is positioned next to Blu Dot's Strut table in navy.





room into a stylish study with a mural depicting a 1970s image of Chicago's Playboy Club. "We bought the usage rights to a Slim Aarons photograph, converted it to black and white and sent it to Flavor Paper in Brooklyn to turn it into wallpaper," Iba says. The end result, she describes, is a look that "screams softly," interesting without being too loud.

That same tone continues in the compact master bedroom, where Iba ignored the conventional wisdom commonly associated with designing for small spaces, such as avoiding dark walls and selecting space-saving furniture. Here, she chose a black matte four-poster metal bed that commands the space and plays off a moody black-backed wallpaper by Ellie Cashman Design marked by a large-scale floral print. The look may be unexpected, but it responds to her client's diverse décor aesthetics. "My husband and I have an interesting blend of styles, and this is one of our

favorite rooms in the house," the wife says. "When Erin brings in a concept, it's always just right."

And while screaming softly might be the preferred approach in most instances, Iba knows when to turn up the volume. In the kids' domain on the lower level, for example, a graffiti mural dominates the playroom. "The owners discovered a high school artist and turned him loose in the room," she says of the playful image depicting a snowboarder that spans a wall.

On both levels, sliding barn doors are space-saving solutions. Downstairs, blue-painted wood doors underscore the space's lively color scheme, while upstairs a steel frame set with opaque glass goes beyond functionality. "They are works of art that make those walls look interesting," Iba says. "When people walk in here, I want them to say to my clients, 'You have great taste and style.' If it looks like me, I've failed." ■





Above: New inset Shaker-style cabinets establish clean lines in the remodeled master bathroom. The Dorado Soapstone countertops and slate flooring by Daltile were both installed by Stone Concepts, and the Native Trails sink is from Ultra Design Center.

Left: A metal nightstand by RH provides a perch for accessories and a place to stow books in the master bedroom. The bed is dressed with linens by RH, and the lamp is by Arteriors.

Opposite: Similar to other rooms in the house, the master bedroom ceiling was painted a bright white for a contemporary look. A CB2 canopy bed, accented with a bolster made with velvet by Kravet Couture, makes a dramatic statement, as does the large-scale floral wallpaper by Ellie Cashman Design.

