



FRESH START

WRITTEN BY **THOMAS CONNORS**
PHOTOGRAPHY BY **TONY SOLURI**

THE OLD ADAGE, "ONE THING LEADS TO ANOTHER," MAY WELL HAVE BEEN FIRST UTTERED BY AN INTERIOR DESIGNER. A plan to take out a wall for a breakfast nook, for example, can often result in a full-scale renovation, and before you know it, you're knee-deep in sawdust and eating take-out for weeks. It's a scenario one Chicago couple—whose redo of their 120-year-old row house started simply—finds familiar.

The initial plan was to bring more natural light into their kitchen and family room, located at the rear of the house, by removing an exterior staircase that ran from the basement to the top floor. Instead, "We took out the back wall in its entirety," notes Chicago-based architect Gary Beyerl, AIA, of Burns + Beyerl. "That extended the house 10 feet, and with almost no masonry in the new fenestration, we achieved a pavilion-like lightness."

Once that task was underway, the couple availed themselves of Beyerl's expertise—as well as that of his team, Michael Ryan, AIA, and Erica Blawat.

INTERIOR DESIGN Shelly Handman, ASID, Handman Associates, Interior Consultants
ARCHITECTURE Gary Beyerl, AIA, Burns + Beyerl
HOME BUILDER Frank Koronkiewicz, Renovation Resources, Inc.
BEDROOMS 5 BATHROOMS 6 SQUARE FEET 6,200



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AIA—to address other aspects of the house they didn't like, such as an awkwardly placed interior staircase that interrupted the flow of the living room, making it more of a passageway to the rear of the house than a usable entertaining area. One thing led to another, and in the end, the entire first floor and most of the second floor were gutted; the bathrooms on the third floor were updated; and the basement was excavated to provide higher ceilings for a guest suite, exercise room, playroom, wine cellar and kitchenette. In addition, Beyerl added a sun porch off the master bedroom and rebuilt the garage, topping it with a deck and linking it to the lower level of the house via a new mudroom.

Construction for the most part ran smoothly—but there was a nail-biter or two. "We've encountered a lot of unusual things on our jobs and so has Gary," relates builder Frank Koronkiewicz, of Renovation

QUIET TIME

In the library, the clients' existing furniture—a desk and sofa—are paired with new Elana armchairs in oiled walnut with dark wheat wool flannel upholstery to create a restful spot to read or catch up on the day's activities.



OPEN BAR

The arched doorway and the impressive plaster cornice that conceals the range hood in the kitchen are typical of the architectural details found throughout the house. The range, available at abt.com, is Viking.



BLACK AND WHITE
 In a hallway, the dark finish of this antique Asian console and its companion stools, along with the large calligraphic painting, form a striking tableau against the pristine trim from Ashland Millwork.



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Resources in Willimbrook. "Here, we had to hoist a beam via a crane in the alley to the third floor, and with a greenhouse next door and a lot only 25 feet wide, getting it up there made for some tense moments. But it worked."

Looking toward the interiors, "We brought Shelly in early on," says the homeowner. "I needed somebody to point me in the right direction, and he helped us with so many things." High on that list was reconfiguring the home's interiors, and blending much-loved pieces from the couple's former life with others specific to the new space. "The homeowner has a very good eye and really trusted our guidance," says Shelly Handman, ASID, principal of Handman Associates, Interior Consultants in Chicago. "She said, 'Just show me your best with an alternate or two. I don't need to see everything in the world.'"

GUEST APPEARANCE

A black cabinet from Primitive, inviting bedding from Restoration Hardware and 1940s deco chrome lamps from Handman Associates, Interior Consultants make this guestroom unmistakably chic in a fine, unfussy way.

ON DECK

With its ipe floor, pergola, lattice-topped brickwork and handsome plantings, this deck atop the garage—designed by Botanical Concepts Chicago—is an utterly elegant oasis in the city.



PHOTOGRAPH BY BIANCA BOSENELODM

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Outfitting the new rooms, Handman created a simple, tailored look—contemporary but convivial—achieving his greatest effects in the living room and master suite. “Living rooms should beckon, but that doesn’t mean you have to have an oversized sofa to plop on and watch TV,” says Handman, who worked on the home with project designer Veronica Riley Martens and stylist Shu-Yi Tsou. “They should be elegant, a touch more adult than a family room.” He managed the large space by fashioning two distinct seating areas united by an extra-deep, open-sided chaise he designed himself. “This way,” explains Handman, “you’re not looking at the back of a chair or the back of a sofa no matter where you sit. It’s a



FAMILY THERAPY

Relaxed pieces and kid-friendly fabrics—including Misotti Geisha chairs and a vinyl-covered ottoman from Estudio Furruslings—make the casually chic family room the heart of the house. The dining table and chairs are accompanied by a deep, down-filled banquette with a comfortable pinch.

STYLE SELECTION

A part of Boca do Lobo's first collection, Soho, this table features a contemporary shape made of handcrafted solid wood and a mirrored top. 58", \$960; demoraissid.com/bocadolobo



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great way to marry the two areas of a room." As for the master suite, "It wasn't very functional and it wasn't at all interesting," says the homeowner. "Shelly installed a fabric-padded wall that adds a special warmth and makes the room so much more cocoonish, and we added a fireplace, too. Now it's a sanctuary."

But whether it's the sophisticated living room, the kick-back-and-relax family room or the seductively inviting master bedroom suite, what's so striking about this home is its perfect balance of program, architecture and interior design. "Everything is cohesive," observes the homeowner. "We couldn't be happier." **L**



PUT TO BED

With woven silk from Arabel Fabrics covering one wall, alabaster lamps from Baker, Knapp & Tubbs, and the jazzy profile of the 1940s-style lounge chairs, the master suite is a study in sensuous sophistication. The adjacent sunroom adds an unexpected dimension to this welcoming space.