

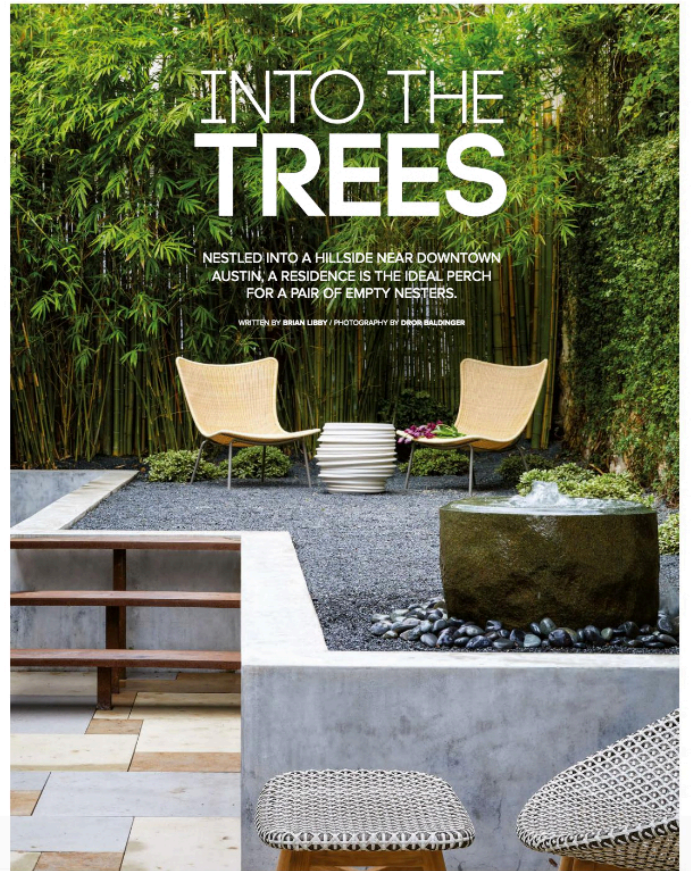
INTERIOR DESIGN / VICKIE BYRUM, YELLOW DOOR DESIGN



INTO THE TREES

NESTLED INTO A HILLSIDE NEAR DOWNTOWN
AUSTIN, A RESIDENCE IS THE IDEAL PERCH
FOR A PAIR OF EMPTY NESTERS.

WRITTEN BY BRIAN LIBBY / PHOTOGRAPHY BY DION BALZINGER



Designer Vickee Byrum had a good head start in helping her clients reimagine their three-story abode near downtown Austin. She had teamed up twice before with the owners, empty nesters who relocated from outside the city to enjoy downtown views and a walk-to-dinner lifestyle. In reuniting to collaborate on this project, Byrum sought to enhance the structure's architecture while conjuring evocative and inviting interiors. "The first time I saw the home with my clients, we christened it a jewel box among the trees," the designer recalls. "Every piece selected for the home was to be standalone beautiful, and we're grateful every artisan with whom we shared our vision embraced our goals."

A contemporary gem with expansive windows, sumptuous surfaces and a three-floor master bedroom, the residence captures views of heritage-oak treetops. "We decided to make only a few changes to soften the structure, because it was so well done," Byrum says. In recent years, the previous homeowners had initiated a total renovation carried out by a Dick Clark + Associates team that included architects Mark Vormberg and Kevin Gallagher and residential designer Matt Garcia, who has since founded his own eponymous firm, along with structural engineering firm StructuresPE. For this project, Gallagher returned to the residence with architect Kim Power, also with Dick Clark + Associates, to install handrails on the flat roof, add exterior stairs leading to the new rooftop deck and ensure code compliance for the new owners, construction manager Monty Jacobs of Jacobs General Contracting also heaped with the new rooftop deck. "Adding a rooftop perch provided unobstructed views of downtown and allows the couple to enjoy sunsets and cocktails," Byrum says.

The scenery of the neighboring trees is also visible through floor-to-ceiling windows in the combined living, dining and kitchen area on the second floor, above

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the garage. The open space exudes warmth with an abundance of wood features, including walnut-clad cabinetry, a fireplace wall and mahogany window frames. To mitigate, if ever desired, the brightness of the natural light streaming through the windows, Byrum and the homeowners incorporated sheer off-white linen draperies. "We tried to work with color, sheen and texture to bring a sort of glow to the space," the wife says. Similar window treatments help conjure a luxuriously tranquil and soft feeling in the master bedroom, alongside elegant silk bedding, a Moroccan rug and a brass chandelier.

The look plays to the vision Byrum and the homeowners had for the project: "a sophisticated, elegant home reminiscent of a New York City pied-à-terre overlooking Central Park," she explains. This inspired the residence's overall color scheme, which leans heavily on blues and grays. While the kitchen's aqua tile backsplash was already in place, the rest of the palette reveals itself through pieces such as a blue velvet Holly Hunt sofa and light gray wool Herman Miller armchairs in the living room, a blue Ligne Roset sofa in the study and a gray granite tub in the master bathroom.

Byrum and the homeowners also prioritized standout lighting throughout the project, including custom pieces by lighting designer Mark Figueredo. Above the dining table hangs a stunning chandelier he created with vertical stainless-steel tubes embedded with xenon bulbs. "I had this image in my mind of the chandelier resembling twinkling lights—like stars—to anyone viewing the house from outside at night," Byrum explains. Another hanging light Figueredo designed, this one for the study, features Mitsumata branches delicately and artfully assembled around a blown-glass orb. "It creates this fractured effect that is unbelievable," Byrum says.

Turning her attention to the outdoor areas—an especially critical component for the husband, who prioritizes spending time outside—Byrum enlisted the expertise of landscape designer Bill Roberts of 3 Phase Design Studio. "When my clients purchased the house," she recalls, "the only usable and accessible outdoor spaces were the decks on the second and third floors." In response, Roberts created an outdoor living space in a previously unusable area behind the home, where a Brazilian ipé wood wall now gives way to tricolored limestone paving, a fountain and Fibonacci lounge chairs. The husband now enjoys strumming his guitar in this space on Austin's many warm days.

Whether relaxing together at home or entertaining friends and family, the homeowners relish being nestled among the trees, cocooned in the serenity of their bespoke and inviting home—with all the offerings of downtown Austin just steps away. "The house is really an oasis," the wife says. "It's modern without coldness and has a feeling of calm. It's wonderful to have someplace so serene to call home." ■



Designer Vickee Byrum furnished the entry of this Austin home with a Nathan Yong chandelier from Design Within Reach, a Jan Showers lamp and mirror, a rug from Black Sheep Union and an Ivy bench from Stockton Hicks Laffey. The Mexican glass walls by Zita Art lead up the stairs to a Joyce Howell painting from Wally Workman Gallery.



D'Nova Design fabricated draperies using Holly Hunt Great Plains sheer linen to soften the natural light streaming into the living room. A Holly Hunt cocktail table and sofa—white holds throw pillows D'Nova Design created with Hermès fabric from George Camargo. Nash—beam with a Hammer Mill Eames walnut stool and walnut lounge chairs from Design Within Reach. The rug is Kyle Burting.



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Opposite: In the kitchen, Brink's Viet bamboo from Phase Design in Los Angeles line Stoneite quartz countertops and custom walnut cabinetry by Hennigbault. The faucet is Rohl, and the range and hood are Wolf. Art by Natasha Styfus is from Austin Galleries.

Below: The dining area between the kitchen and living room showcases a stunning custom chandelier by Mark Figueroa Studio. Holly Hunt chairs surround the City table from Stockton Hicks Laffey.





In the back of the house, landscape designer Bill Roberts of 3 Phase Design Studio created an outdoor living area marked by an ice wood wall. A pair of chairs and a footstool from Dedon's Morace collection sit atop McGonigle limestone paving.



Above: Interlude Home's Laurent drink table from Objects, Ltd. sits next to the master bathroom's Stone Forest tub, situated on honed sandstone Sanstone flooring. A Bella Figure pendant from Fennel Mitten hangs above, while Tech Lighting sconces from Lights Fantastic are affixed to the wall. Art is by Kate Breakley from Stephen L. Clark Gallery, the medicine cabinets are Bidpan, and the faucets are Kohler.

Right: The master bedroom's custom A. Rudin bed from EC Dikken holds an SDH silken Laguna quilt from Willowflower Organics. Shelby Skips fabricated the throw pillows. The hanging shade is Avesa Hampton for Circa Lighting. The stools' sheer fabric and Christian Fischbacher navy drapery material, both from David Sutherland, complement a rug from Black Sheep Unique. Lamps from Trees Two Design by Lauren Bennett top custom DTC nightstands.

