

The architects created a dramatic floating Lueders limestone and granite fireplace in the living room that stands out as a sculptural statement in the room. It's capped with a black Paint Grip chimney surround. Opposite page: Quarter-sawn white oak floors in both the living and dining rooms unite the spaces. The dining table is also oak and is accompanied by Walter Knoll cognac leather dining chairs.



ALL THE RIGHT **moves**

ARCHITECTS PATRICK OUSEY AND PAM CHANDLER
WIELDED BOTH DRAMATIC AND SUBTLE CHANGES
TO BIG EFFECT IN AN AUSTIN RENOVATION.

BY HELEN THOMPSON || PHOTOGRAPHY BY DROR BALDINGER

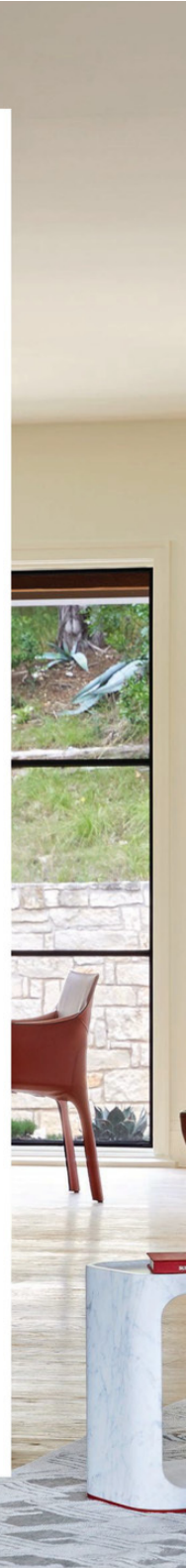




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here is one specialty of the architect's craft that rarely gets the respect it deserves. Renovation is a pet topic of DIY shows, but the rip-roaring redos briskly skip past the process of understanding dilemmas that the original builder left behind. To Patrick Ousey and Pam Chandler of FAB Architecture, problems are just the thing they've been waiting for. In fact, they kind of love them. "It's the grit that makes the pearl," says Chandler. The husband-and-wife team hasn't intentionally made renovations their niche, but the two architects have worked their magic on many unlovable houses, such as a clunky 3,200-square-foot Hill Country-style residence in Austin.

The clients are a Houston couple who spent most weekends in the fieldstone-and-wood-sided building they've owned for seven years. While they loved its sturdiness and the



New steel and glass windows throughout open up the house to the outdoors. The living room sofa is a custom creation by FAB Architecture; the puzzle-shaped Minotti coffee table allows for various seating options. Opposite page, from top: The homeowners love a real wood fire and use the freestanding fireplace on the seasonal porch as often as possible, even if it means sliding the glass doors open and letting cool air into the room; a painting by George Zupp in the master bedroom is from Scott + Cooner—its rich brown tones echo the natural wood and leather pieces Pam Chandler chose for the house.



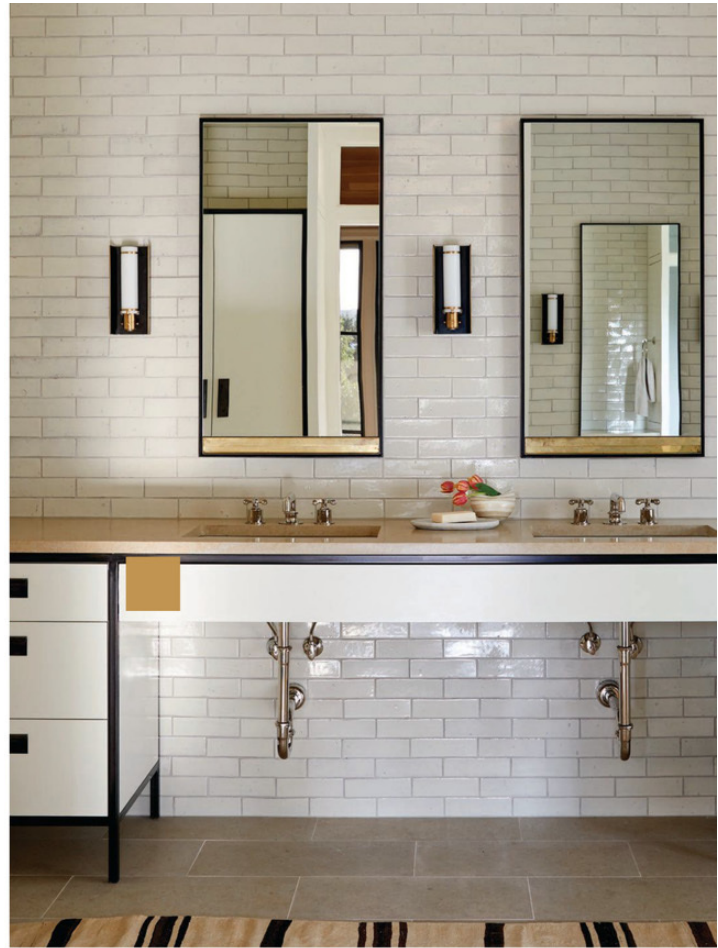


Chandler and Ousey like to contrast high and low styles, a strategy they used in the highly articulated kitchen to great effect. The Saarinen table is paired with teal rattan chairs from Home Goods. The lower cabinets are covered in Black Point Grip, referencing the same material that's found elsewhere in the house. It's a "live" material and the architects expect its surface to change with age.

verdant 4-acre site, they were also aware of the dwelling's shortcomings. Their late-1990s ranch house was sited in natural splendor, but the engineer-designed four-bedroom, three-bath structure ignored its surroundings. That flaw was particularly irksome for one of the homeowners, an avid gardener.

The homeowners liked much about their house, including the new Paint Grip roof and solar panels they had recently installed. Because they were also concerned about sustainability, they opted to keep the facade. Ousey and Chandler softened the exterior with a German slurry technique, raking mortar across the limestone surface to make the building look more monolithic. Other of the house's problems seemed subtle in comparison. "Nothing lined up," says Ousey. The front-facing kitchen window wasn't aligned with the three columns on the front porch; the entry was off-center, as was the fireplace. "Things like that drive me bonkers," he says. Because the architects were preserving the facade, the misalignments couldn't be eliminated, either. Or could they? The solution Ousey and Chandler dreamed up is one of those remedies that resolves more than one problem and does it with flair.

The pair opted to open the house to the outside with steel-gridded windows placed at strategic points throughout. Working with builder Royce Flournoy, the team gutted the interior of the house, rearranging rooms to amend functionality: The kitchen was repositioned from the front to the middle of the house, merging with the living room.



From top: The brass and steel master bathroom mirrors are custom from FAB. The glazed brick tile is a glossy backdrop; the outdoor kitchen is connected to the main kitchen visually but separated by a glass wall. The space is lined with Paint Grip siding.

The architects moved the fireplace—now with limestone hearth, plaster box and Paint Grip flue—5 feet to the right, centered on the Paint Grip-covered stove hood on the opposite wall. "They act as bookends in the room," says Ousey, satisfied that order reigns. The dining room is where the kitchen once was. The light-filled room features wood windows painted to emulate the steel and glass doors at the entry. "It allows things to settle down visually," says Chandler.

Ousey and Chandler kept the furnishings quiet too, mixing high and low design such as the breakfast nook's Saarinen table accompanied by four teal chairs from a big-box store. They are a counterpoint to the dining room's high-style oak dining table and leather chairs. Chandler prefers natural materials, using chocolate leather Ib Kofod-Larsen chairs in the living room and a marble-topped coffee table. Textural rugs in the living room and bedrooms contrast with the structural suavity

of the house's interiors. "We love taking something that's modern and pairing it with something else that's less refined," she says.

As far as refinement goes, the ceiling epitomizes how far that concept can reach. "FAB's design was so precise," says Flournoy, "that we had to replumb the ceiling joists and existing walls throughout the entire house." Without walls, moulding and orange peel texture, there was nothing to distract from imperfections. The now-flawless ceiling directs the eye to the prize:

the seasonal porch, a screened-in, steel-gridded glass box anchored by a wood-burning stove. It's also air-conditioned, so that when the glass doors slide back, the size of the interior living area is doubled. "It's the ultimate flex space," says Chandler. The multitasking room adroitly addresses the homeowners' desire for an environmentally friendly house. "The homeowners chose not to take this house down," says Ousey, "but to bring it around to better uses. It's the most sustainable thing you can do." ■



From left: Quiet moments can be had in the study, outfitted with vintage Saarinen chairs and table; the master bathroom is an exercise in spolie peacefulness with a sleek porcelain tub offset by an earthy Turkish rug and walnut side table.



DESIGN DETAILS

TYPE

Single-family home

LOCATION

Austin

ARCHITECTURE

Patrick Ousey and Pam Chandler
Jonathan Davies, project manager
FAB Architecture
fabarchitecture.com

BUILDER

Royce Flournoy
Tom Warena, project manager
Texas Construction Company
txconstruct.com

LANDSCAPING

Southern Landscape
southernlandscape.com

RESOURCES

ALEXANDER MARCHANT

Fulton bronze and brass lanterns by
Hinkley Lighting, sconces in master
bath, Waterworks faucets and
fittings in bathrooms
alexandermarchant.com

CAROL PIPER RUGS

Turkish flat-weave rugs in master bath
and office, Tibetan rug in living room
carolpiperrugs.com

DURANGO DOORS

Front entry doors
durangodoors.com

GRAND OPENINGS INC.

Doors by Western Window Systems on
seasonal porch
grandopenings.com

KOHLER

Plumbing fixtures in master bath
kohler.com

LAMBERT & FILS

Pendant in dining room
lambertetfils.com

ROHL

Faucets in kitchen
rohlhome.com

SCOTT + COONER

Table and chairs in dining room, sofa
and Minotti marble-topped coffee table
in living room, chairs in master bedroom
scottcooner.com

VISUAL COMFORT

Pendant in dressing room and over tub
in master bath
visualcomfort.com

WOLF

Stove in kitchen, oven on outdoor porch
subzero-wolf.com