

ARTFUL REJUVENATION

STORY **DIANE SAWCHUK**
PHOTOGRAPHY
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In its previous entity, the interior was cluttered with furniture and the atmosphere severe, with oversized dark baseboards. But a recent major overhaul, from the studs to new furnishings, resulted in a transformation where light and colour are now the main themes artfully carried out throughout the main floor.

When your home is almost as old as Canada, there are two ways to take your reno.

The first is to go the traditional route and preserve the home's history.

The second is what Carol Morgan chose to do with her 120-year-old home – revitalize it by pulling it into the 21st century.

So while its exterior looks traditional and conforms with the rest of the homes in this area of the Glebe, the interior is anything but. The sturdy brick exterior gives way to all things light and airy inside, light walls and floors accented with bright colours splashed here and there.

Although the physical work started last summer, the journey began when both homeowners agreed they essentially liked their house and neighbourhood – agreeing, at the same time, they were tired of their old furniture and cluttered surroundings. But with Carol overseeing 35 properties through her management company as well as teaching private clients and classes as a certified personal trainer, and husband Tom employed by the federal government, neither had time to spare to oversee a major renovation.

“The ‘before’ house was very cluttered and, I have to say, was a huge source of anxiety,” Carol says. “The chatter in my head was focused on how to get this done and when was the best timing.” The time to devote to transforming her home finally came after winding down her property management business.

The project was launched last January, beginning with the design process. Carol says one of the best decisions she made was choosing to work with **Michele Villeneuve Design**, which was the catalyst to the project and the key to making her reno dream come true. It was Michele, she says, who came up with a plan to counteract Carol's dislike for shopping, incorporate new furnishings into the design itself and then shop for them piecemeal. This resulted in the space being more or less furnished as the renovation planning and work was in progress. Carol says the first purchase was the Katie pendant light in the kitchen from **Astro Design Centre**, and after that, all the pieces fell into place. *Continued on page 49*



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Along one wall of the custom made coat closet, a waterfall of walnut boards pools into a handy bench for either sitting or setting things on in the entry area. Owner Carol Morgan says Frank Prendergast of Neoform Art Cabinetry surprised her one day during the renovation with the custom made wall that combines function with artsy flair.



The work was far from just cosmetic; walls were insulated and a new furnace and ductwork installed by **Francis Plumbing and Heating**. And then there were the baseboards. Original to the house, the thick, dark ribbons of wood trim conflicted with the clean, light and minimalist aesthetic that was the goal. “It was a major decision to paint the baseboard,” she says. “Our generation saw wood as a natural element, it was never painted. I cringed, remembering the previous owners saying how they spent seven years of weekends stripping the paint off the wood trim. And here we were, painting it over.”

Adrian Sunter of **Sunter Carpentry**, who had worked with Carol on several previous projects, was general contractor on this job with the exception of the kitchen, which he gutted before **Frank Prendergast** of **Neoform Art Cabinetry** worked his magic there, as well as on the custom furniture and finishings. It was Adrian who removed all the baseboards before numbering and storing them in the basement while the work progressed through the various stages, then reinstalled and painted them. In their completed state, the look of the 14-inch baseboards has been softened by using the same paint colour as the walls, with a matte finish to highlight their definition. *Continued on page 50*



A plum coloured cabinet custom created by Frank Prendergast of Neoform Art Cabinetry displays artful glassware.

RIGHT: A glass shelf created by glass artist **Delfina Falcão** intercepts two pillars standing between the kitchen and the dining area.



General contractor Adrian Sunter, left, had worked with owner Carol Morgan on several previous projects. It was Adrian who removed all the 14-inch wood baseboards, numbered and stored them while the renovations were underway, then painted and reinstalled them.



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Details like this can be found in abundance throughout the house, from the moment you step into the front entry. There, tiles from **Euro Tile & Stone** have been elevated to another level by inserting a single decorative terrazzo tile that was custom ordered from Italy. A seasonal area rug, one corner of which is inset with a decorative glass embellishment created by glass artist **Delfina Falcão**, adds a finishing touch.

Inside, the combination living and dining room has been decluttered. Carol says all the old main-floor furnishings were sold or given away, with the exception of the upright piano. She describes the new furniture, purchased at **Alteriors, The Modern Shop** and West Elm, as “all pieces of art” that are still comfortable and cosy. The ambience created is similar to the reverent hush found in an art gallery. *Continued on page 52*



Cheery dabs of colour appear brighter in this all-white kitchen by Frank Prendergast of Neoform Art Cabinetry. Storage lines two walls from floor-to-ceiling, while a white quartz island from Solid Decorum Inc. takes centre stage. Bar stools from BoConcept are tucked under the island. The all-white appliances were selected at Universal Appliance.

A glass mural by local artist **Delfina Falcão** covers the wall to one side of the kitchen sink. Dotted with images of dainty flowers, it brings to mind the advent of spring, adding colour in the sea of white.





An art lover who studied art and visited some of the great art museums of the world, Carol wanted to create an art theme in her home to pay homage to local artists. A large and colourful pentptych by artist **Natalie Bruvels** becomes the focal point of a room, while several works by **Mary Ann Camps** are found throughout the main floor. Anchoring it all are ash floors in a matte finish from **Barwood Flooring Ltd.**

At the rear of the house, the kitchen is a blank canvas for the meals prepared and enjoyed. White custom kitchen cabinets created by Neoform Cabinetry camouflage white appliances from **Universal Appliances**, while a large white quartz island from **Solid Decorum Inc.** takes centre stage. Adding hints of colour are a stainless steel coffee station with its plum drawer along one wall and a large glass mural (another of several contributions by glass artist **Delfina Falcão**) depicting flowers on the wall beside the sink. *Continued on page 54*

LEFT: A coffee station with a stainless steel counter is punctuated by a plum drawer containing all the necessities for an early morning start. The Katie pendant light from Astro Design was the first purchase made during the renovations.

Herb and spice jars nestle into their own tidy inserts within handy reach under the stove top.



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Suspended at the top of the stairs, this Fabula pendant light by Slamp from Arevco Lighting Ottawa adds an artistic glow.



“My goal was to be able to walk into my house and feel an overall sense of peace and calmness that comes from the natural light and happy colours,” Carol says.

“I believe I have achieved that.” **OH**

ABOVE: Having renovated this second floor main bath a few years ago, Adrian Sunter of Sunter Carpentry was somewhat familiar with the house before taking on the main floor renovation as general contractor. **LEFT:** The side entrance contains a mudroom with storage by Solutions and ample space to hang coats and clothing. Neoform Art Cabinetry created unique flourishes for this room, including a curvy steel bench and a bright red sliding door. Another area rug with a decorative glass insert by **Delfina Falcão** can be found on the floor.