

# Mixing the Old With the New

A 1920s bungalow gets a fresh new look while keeping its old-school charm

BY CARLA AVOLIO



While the original brick facade of the house (above) stayed intact during the renovation, the interior was completely changed. What once was an unused attic (left) has become a loft apartment with a screened-in porch.

**H**istoric home renovators fall into two groups, according to architect James Murff. “It’s like people who restore vintage cars,” says the head of design firm B.A.D.A. “You’ve got those who want every part to be original, and those who want the coolness of an old car, plus a decent stereo.”

Judging from Murff’s recent remodel of a 1938 bungalow near the University of Texas, the architect and his clients, Stephanie and David Garza, belong definitively to the latter camp. The 2,837-square-foot dwelling, set on a street lined with older homes just off Dean Keaton Street, exudes vintage charm with its original brick facade, sashed windows and glorious peaked roof reminiscent of Tudor times. Inside, though, the house is all about the modern gifts of open flow, abundant light and impeccable energy efficiency.

But rewind to the beginning of the project, and things were different. The plan to transform the single-story home—which suffered from a rabbit warren layout and hodgepodge additions—took a far more conservative approach. In addition to a small reconfiguration of the attic, “we were basically going to update the master bath and kitchen,

put on a fresh coat of paint and call it a day,” recalls Murff. But when Texas Construction Company and Royce Flournoy were brought on for the build, they provided game-changing advice. “They showed us that instead of staying loyal to the old systems, like plumbing and electricity, we would save money by replacing it all and starting fresh.”

With carte blanche, Murff overhauled the design, stripping the interiors back to studs and positioning rooms based on where they made the most sense, not where they had always been. The most dramatic element was converting the staggeringly large attic—which sat empty, except for air-conditioning ducts and a few Christmas decorations—into a loft apartment complete with guest room, full bathroom and pleasant screened porch. Now, the happy homeowners love nothing more than to climb their elegant steel-and-wood staircase (in lieu of the pull-down ladder formerly used to access the attic) to enjoy a morning coffee while taking in the bungalow-dotted neighborhood.

Throughout the sun-filled house, the decor harmoniously accompanies the new architecture, thanks to the collective work of

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BRIAN MIHEALSCK (2)

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Salvaged shiplap siding adorns both the alcove bathroom (opposite) and the staircase (right) while the house's color palette of gray and white is carried out in the kitchen.



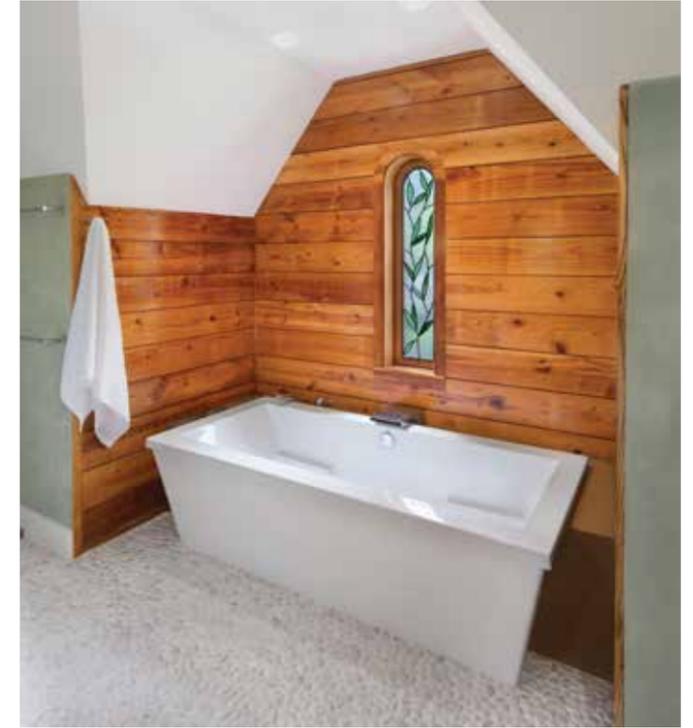
BRIAN MIHEALSICK (3)

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Tracey Overbeck Stead Interior Design and Malachy McGettrick of Sitric House and Home. “[Homeowners] David and Stephanie aren’t afraid to experiment with daring design,” says McGettrick, who has worked with the couple for years. “But they also want their home to be comfortable.” To bring life to the bare vanilla walls, McGettrick used Farrow & Ball paint to create a refined backdrop of gray and fresh white, punctuated with teal, mint and purple accents inspired by the couple’s art collection. The furnishings—such as a pair of charcoal wingback chairs selected by McGettrick’s daughter, Paula Campbell—similarly combine contemporary cool with functionality.

Although the revamped interiors feel undeniably modern, the team pays loving tribute to the home’s historic heritage—from the salvaged shiplap siding that embellishes the alcove bath and staircase to window frames that were painstakingly rehabilitated and reinstalled. “We felt that we had tightened up the house so much energy-wise, we could afford to keep this lovely feature,” says Murff of the frames. Even a discreet extension—built on the side of the house to bring in extra light to the bottom floor—is flawlessly executed, clad with found brick that matched the existing brick.

The result is a home that’s in tune with its neighbors, yet fit for a modern family. “Pre-renovation [the house] felt awkward and cramped,” says Stephanie Garza. “Now, it has ambient light, low utility bills and a welcoming feel.” ▲



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