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HOME BUILDER / JONAS DICAPRIO AND DAN MARTELL, DESIGN PLATFORM LLC







# Transformative MATTER

WITH A MIX OF CLEAN LINES, FLOWING SPACES AND GLAMOROUS TOUCHES, A DENVER HOME IS REMADE INTO A SLEEK AND FUNCTIONAL SPACE FOR A YOUNG FAMILY.

WRITTEN BY BRITTANY MCGUIRE / PHOTOGRAPHY BY EMILY MINTON REDFIELD



Architect Caroline Wilding updated and reorganized a family's Denver house to create an open feel. In the dining room, designer Joanne Brusch accented the owners' chairs and table with wall sculptures by Phillips Collection in High Point, North Carolina, custom drapery sheers and Jonathan Adler vases. Mile Hi Hardwood executed the ebony-stained Brazilian-cherrywood flooring.





In the kitchen's breakfast area, the couple's existing pieces—including a table from Design Within Reach and Kartell chairs—rest on tile from Cercan Tile in Troy, Michigan, installed by Modern Design Tile & Marble. Schumacher's Queen of Spain wallpaper defines an office nook appointed with a Tulip chair by Knoll and lamps by Schoolhouse Electric & Supply Co. in Portland, Oregon.







Although they knew it needed some work, Adam and Stephanie Donner couldn't resist a ranch-style house they found in Denver's Hilltop neighborhood. "We wanted a project," says Stephanie, "and to lend our creativity and style to our next home." The brick-and-stucco structure they found presented the perfect opportunity. The location was ideal and the size would easily accommodate the couple and their two children, but a series of renovations over the years had left the residence with a disjointed layout and a mix of aesthetics. The redesign would require some effort, but the couple were eager for the challenge. "The house had a personality conflict of eras and styles," says Stephanie. "We envisioned a modern home with a blend of midcentury and Hollywood-glam styles. It also had to be comfortable for adults and kids." To move things in that direction, the couple turned to architect Caroline Wilding of the design-build firm Design Platform. Builder

Jonas DiCaprio, the company's founder—along with technical director Dan Martell—handled the construction side of the remodel. "The entry was cramped; small, subdivided rooms were painted with rich colors; and walls were textured in Venetian plaster," Wilding says of the existing building. "It was about simplifying the house and editing the palette."

The architect began the renovation by first reorganizing the floor plan. "I moved the entry to create a sense of arrival as you walk in, with an open sequence into the kitchen and dining room," she says. Because the kitchen was so cavernous with tall ceilings and short cabinets, Wilding transformed the space with a freestanding floor-to-ceiling pantry as a focal point. "We wanted the pantry to be the main element because you can see it from the entry and dining room," the architect says of the marble-wrapped volume, which stands between the entry and kitchen, and offers plenty of storage. LED wall washers

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In the remodel, sections of the stucco exterior were replaced with a machiche rainscreen, and the stair tower and fasciae were covered with dark powder-coated aluminum, installed by Z Craft. The Western Window Systems entry door and new windows were purchased from Front Range Window & Door.



Brusch covered one wall of the office with a marble-like Schumacher wallpaper to create an organic backdrop for an existing desk, which was refinished by Baltazars Artistic Touchups in Sherwin-Williams' Obstinate Orange. Precision Interiors fabricated the geometric built-ins.



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Portraits by Melinda Buie hang in the kitchen, where Wilding designed oak cabinetry—fabricated by Walnut Street Woodworks—to encase Thermador appliances from Mountain High Appliance. The kitchen's pantry volume, including the backsplash, is clad with marble from Earth Anatomy in Wadsworth, Ohio, and the quartz countertops are from Saddleback Design. Wilding hung Stonegate Designs pendants from Fusion Light and Design to illuminate the space.



Wilding laid the master bathroom wall tiles by Emser Tile in a graphic herringbone pattern. An existing wood armchair, a side table from Columbine Showroom and a Tyrrell & Laing International freestanding tub all rest on Cebu Silver matte floor tiles from Arizona Tile.







**Above:** In the master bedroom, nightstands from Plantation in Los Angeles hold Mitchell Gold + Bob Williams lamps and flank an existing custom bed dressed with Matouk linens and shams made with Kravet velvet. An ottoman upholstered with a Highland Court textile rests on a rug by Dash & Albert.

**Left:** A Phillip Jeffries statement-making grass cloth, purchased from Town, creates a bold backdrop for the master bedroom's sitting area. Bernhardt chairs covered with Pindler faux leather pair with a West Elm side table. Pillows featuring a Mary McDonald for Schumacher fabric enliven the area.







above the cabinets provide ambient lighting and highlight the space's crisp new lines. While the kitchen was adjacent to the backyard, it didn't allow for easy access. To remedy this, new sliding doors were installed to create an indoor-outdoor connection. "The back patio was raised up to become flush with the interior floor, so there's no threshold," says DiCaprio. "We aimed to create a cohesive home that connected to the outside."

Adding to that cohesive feel was the material selection. "The owners wanted a limited palette," Wilding says. So, various finishes throughout the home were streamlined. The kitchen's dark ebony-stained oak and high-gloss white cabinetry, for example, also show up in the powder rooms and the master bathroom, respectively. Gray tones were then used throughout, as in the large ceramic floor tiles in the kitchen and the master bathroom's wall of vein-cut marble tiles, laid out in a herringbone pattern for interest.

Wilding, who designed the millwork and selected all of the interior finishes, also stained the existing Brazilian-cherrywood floors with a dark ebony finish.

Outside, the stucco sections of the exterior were revitalized, as well. "We created a whole new look for the house," DiCaprio says. A machiche-wood rainscreen installed in a horizontal pattern lends richness to the façade, and dark powder-coated aluminum clads the stair tower and fasciae. "It all ties together without having to redo every piece of stucco," says Wilding. "We modernized the exterior and gave it some richness and dimension." Keeping in step with the new look, the architect revamped the existing landscape, as well. "We used built-in step planters filled with grasses on either side of the stairs leading up to the entry," explains Wilding, who also used the same dark-stained concrete for the site walls in the back to pick up the home's metal elements.





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**Opposite:** To create a seamless transition between the indoors and out, Wilding raised the back patio and connected it to the kitchen area with sliding glass doors by Western Window Systems. New concrete site walls define the outdoor area and echo the dark metal used on the house.

**Below:** Wilding updated the landscape with new site walls and a patio paved with the same large-format tile by Cercan Tile used in the kitchen. Brusch appointed the comfortable space with sofas and swivel chairs from Room & Board and a Crate & Barrel coffee table. Planters by Jonathan Adler lend color.











Jonathan Adler table lamps and chairs, covered with a tangerine Duralee textile, enliven a guest bedroom. A Lee Industries ottoman stands at the foot of the bed, which is accented with custom shams made with Kravet Couture fabric and Designers Guild trim.

Inside, designer Joanne Brutsch was tasked with curating the furnishings for the new spaces. "They already had this beautiful backdrop of white and gray," Brutsch says. "My goal was to bring in color and texture to balance those surfaces." The use of different wallcoverings was one way she provided that balance. In the master bedroom, for instance, a Phillip Jeffries grass cloth lends depth, while the husband's office showcases an accent wall with a Schumacher design resembling marble. "The key was keeping things simple and elegant while adding in elements that don't compete with the architecture yet still lend personality," Brutsch says. "It's a high-traffic home, but the owners wanted it to have a glamorous feel."

In finding that mix, the designer integrated statement-making pieces the Donners already had with sleek new finds. For example, she brought in a hair-on-hide rug to mingle with a vintage-style chandelier in the entry and hung sheers in the dining room to complement the couple's existing table and chairs. In the master bedroom, Brutsch upholstered Bernhardt chairs with a metallic faux leather. "Nothing is too delicate that the children can't be running around," Brutsch says.

The resulting house—from the carefully planned layout and material selection to the sleek yet functional furnishings—merges the glamorous yet family-friendly lifestyle the Donners were after. "The most impressive part of this project is that we turned it around in eight months," Martell says. Despite the quick turnaround, the design is destined to serve the family for years to come. "The team was able to create just what we wanted," says Stephanie. "It has a mixture of old and new but also feels really warm and livable. I'm elated every time I walk into the house." **L**