



# A CANVAS FOR CHARACTER

Interior designer Tineke Triggs endows a house with personality



A console by Jay Jeffers for Arteriors sits in the foyer below the Half moon mirror by Ben & Aja Blanc from the Future Perfect. **OPPOSITE PAGE:** The designer made a bold statement outside by painting the front door Benjamin Moore Black, complemented by a brass light by The Urban Electric Co.

By MARY JO BOWLING  
Photos by PAUL DRYER

**M**any remodel tales begin with accounts of homes in bad condition. This story is a bit different. The family who owns this house bought it after it had been freshly remodeled by a contractor and, although everything was serviceable, the character of the Edwardian home had all but been erased. As a result, when they hired San Francisco interior designer Tineke Triggs, principal of Artistic Designs for Living, her task was as much about adding personality as it was improving form and function.

“When my clients purchased the home, it was like a blank canvas,” Triggs says. “They realized that they were spending all of their time in a cramped family room. We reworked the floorplan so they had room to spread out, and so that the house fit the way they live.”

In practical terms, that meant a reorientation on the main floor, which is home to a formal living room, a dining room, a kitchen and a family room. One wall of the dining room was removed, opening the space to the hallway. No square footage was added, but the room—and what had been a long, narrow hallway—feels more open and airy. Perhaps the biggest change occurred at the back of the house, where walls between the kitchen and the family room were removed, and the kitchen pivoted 90 degrees, so it exists along the back and side of the now open space. On the exterior, a new deck and stairs connect the family room to the backyard—which is a winning proposition for a family that includes the owners, their three girls and a puppy.

A fresh look was added to these elements to complete the transformation. As a designer, Triggs is not one



to shy away from bold colors, but that's not what this family sought. "Their friends hired me to design a very traditional Victorian, and it's filled with color," Triggs says. "This owner said to me, 'I love that house, but it's not me—I don't like a lot of color.' We decided to use texture instead."

The designer describes the family as casual and sporty. "These are fun people with a lot of personality," she says. "We wanted to give them a home that reflected their love of travel and their desire to gather friends together." In other words, the living room is more likely to host karaoke parties than formal tea, there are fun pieces from around the globe and interesting art.

"We wanted to fill the walls with great art so we brought in Alex Ray of Alexandra Ray Art Advisory to help curate the spaces," says Triggs. "Art is a very personal thing, and Alex was able to help them purchase pieces they were drawn to."

And for this couple, that means a dramatic painting by Kota Ezawa depicting a stormy ocean scene from the

Bible; a black-and-white photograph by James Porschen, an artist known for leaning out of a small airplane to capture landscape shots that he later abstracts; and a self-portrait by Danielle Nelson Mourning, a part-time San Francisco resident who created a series of photos that had her traveling to sites where her ancestors existed, and then photographing herself in their footsteps, so to speak.

The eclectic collection is set against a high-contrast black-and-white background dotted with design exclamation points. That includes the metal staircase that connects all three levels of the home. Triggs designed the structure with a distinctive geometric pattern and a brass handrail. "When I'm not working with color, I go for high contrast and high interest, and this staircase is one of those things," she says.

Another high-design moment occurs in the kitchen, where small, triangular, white-and-gray tiles designed by Kelly Wearstler for Ann Sacks stretch from the countertop to the ceiling. Triggs designed the row of metal-and-iron cabinets that hang in front of them. "They

In the kitchen, the distinctive tile is by Kelly Wearstler for Ann Sacks.

The iron-and-glass cabinets were custom designed by Tineke Triggs.

**OPPOSITE PAGE:** The Entropy chair is from the Phillips Collection and the lounge chair is by Augusto Bozzi. The rustic coffee table is from Noir, and the chandelier is from Arteriors.

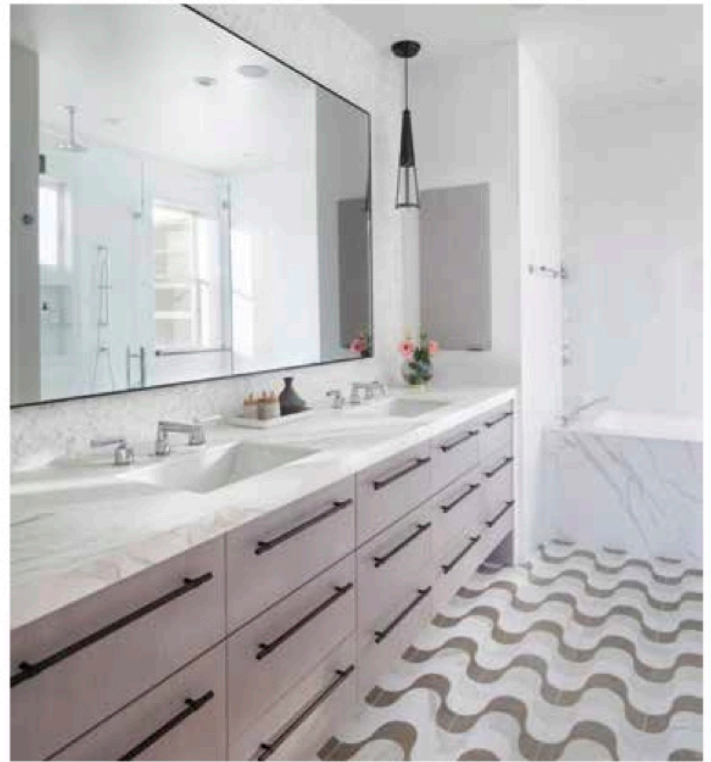


give the room a bit of an industrial edge," she says. "This is a house with layers. I've never been afraid to layer in elements, because you can always backtrack and remove them. The art in design is to know when to pull back, and when to go bold."

Some of the decorative elements have the family speaking their truth. On the stairway headed up to the bedrooms, a series of iron letters by artist Martin Bialas spells out the phrase "A Beginning," but there were some other ideas tossed about. The father in the family jokingly suggested we have it read "Clean up your room," Triggs says with a laugh. "We landed on this phrase, which is what they wanted the girls to think about as they descend the stairs to start their day."

In their rooms, the girls were allowed to select a saying for a personal lighted sign. In an age when the catchphrase "the future is female" is popular, the words have a promising ring. "They could have chosen anything, but they each selected words that perfectly reflect their personalities," says Triggs. "They chose 'imagine,' 'adventure' and 'brave.'"

It's a feeling the designer says permeates the new house. "At the beginning of the project, the house felt impersonal and disjointed," Triggs says. "It works now because there's a common thread of textural elements that runs from the bottom floor to the top. This is a happy family, and their home now reflects their energetic attitude."





**OPPOSITE PAGE:** The dining room table is custom designed by Triggs and the chairs are from McGuire. The abstract art at the end of the table is from Jay Jeffers – The Store.

**THIS PAGE:** Triggs created the chair (covered in fabric from Pindler & Pindler) and the bed (upholstered in Tiger leather). A Rejuvenation light fixture hangs overhead.