

AN EXPANSIVE
INDUSTRIAL CONVERSION
IS AN INTRIGUINGLY
ARTISTIC HOME BASE FOR
A YOUNG REGINA FAMILY.

TEXT BY SAMANTHA SACKS
PHOTOGRAPHY BY ROBERT LEMERMEYER

OPEN MINDED

Gritty, raw architecture

landlocked by industry, lit by neon signs and lulled to sleep by the soft roar of a train yard. Sound like New York's Meatpacking District? Toronto's Parkdale neighbourhood before the influx of hipster loft dwellers? In fact, this 3,700-square-foot warehouse is a carefully assembled mix of high urban style in the aorta of Canada's heartland — Regina. And best of all, it's home to a busy family of five.

After trying her lot in suburban West Vancouver and never quite feeling like it was home, the owner of this grand, eclectically



LEFT: In the living room, stark white walls let the raw industrial architecture speak for itself. The colours were taken from Regina's natural elements: the mustard sofa was inspired by wheat fields; the leaf-green chair offers contrast. Metal cabinets by fireplace hide electronics. The room is lit by film lights. Sofa, chair, Zanotta; floor lamp, Inform Interiors.

BELOW: On the second level, steel wall frames hold panels of both clear and translucent glass.

BOTTOM: The stairs have perforated-steel steps and a mesh-screen railing. In the office, the wall enclosing the guest quarters is lined with bookshelves. Chair, Red Corner Oriental Art and Antique Furniture.



modern warehouse felt the pull of another life. She had spent her childhood in central Canada, and after four years of living on the West Coast, she found herself leading her partner and children, ages 9, 6 and 3, across two provinces, lured, at least in part, by the untouched integrity of Regina's warehouse district.

A conceptual artist with big dreams, she bought the space with her partner in October 2004 and quickly hired principal Marc Bricault as well as Paul Crowley and Mike Leckie of Vancouver's Bricault Design to help execute an exhaustive list of must-haves that went something like this: "Contemporary, artful, well-designed, Japanese, industrial, hippie, comfortable, unpretentious, kid-friendly, environmentally considerate, uncluttered, minimal-ish, organized, mod-ish, personal, a party pad, beautifully lit, spiritual, sexy, old and new, representative of and integrated with its geography." And somehow, despite the complexity of that task, the team managed to pull it off with remarkable finesse. (Adding to the enormity of the project — but perhaps in the end also allowing them more freedom — was the fact that the space was initially an empty shell, so the designers had to deal with everything from the drawings, mechanical systems and heating to lighting and furniture specification.)

In fact, the owner is so pleased that when she waxes poetic about the space, it's with the lyrical twist of an artist talking about her passion — a fresh departure from the usual designer's shopping list of stainless steel appliances and perfectly on-trend paint swatches. "The light in Saskatchewan is mighty," the





ABOVE: In the kitchen area, the cabinets with flip-up doors, made out of steel and painted white, are reminiscent of school lockers. Cabinet design, Bricault Design; stainless steel counters, Todd Ollenberger.

RIGHT: Modern hippie meets industrial chic in the dining room, where tart apple-green cabinets by Todd Ollenberger pop against an ash-and-steel table designed by Marc Bricault. Eames chairs are paired with vintage finds. The lush metallic wallpaper helps to delineate the space. Silver Kabloom wallpaper, Flavor Paper; stainless steel counters, Todd Ollenberger.



owner says. "I love the sunset through the west windows. It's beautiful ... pink and gold. I love the moon through the skylights, the lines of stainless steel in the kitchen — they're like train tracks. The bath suite with its steam shower and pretty soaker tub. The diversity of materials, the original posts and beams — especially the posts, which are like big, old trees. The wallpaper on the dining room ceiling, how it wraps up and over into the bathroom. It's like a psychedelic silver garden. And, of course, most of all, my beloved yoga space."

Creating a home with this much soul — not to mention one that could house so many souls — took an entire year and a half of collaboration, but the end result is nothing short of spectacular. The building, which was once a creamery, is in its first conversion and consists of six units centred on a courtyard with a pool and another three-unit building across the courtyard. This home's 2,200-square-foot main floor features a playroom, mudroom, dining area, kitchen, living room, office and library, which are all open to one another save for gentle designators like the wallpapered ceiling over the dining room and the subtle screens. A drywalled guest room and a bath — the only truly private rooms here — round out the main floor.

At the top of the perforated-steel staircase sits another



LEFT: The dining room wallpaper wraps upstairs over the railing and into the principal bathroom, where a tall, sleek freestanding tub strikes a Japanese note. Ove tub, Weststyle.

ABOVE: The original creamery door leads to the main-floor guest bedroom, the only truly private space in the loft. The bedside table was made by Todd Ollenberger. Bedside lamp, EQ3; bedding, Linens 'n Things.

BELOW: But for its porthole window, which looks out under the stairs toward the west windows, the main-floor powder room is a study in right angles thanks to its swaths of mosaic tiles and square sink and mirror.

luxurious 1,500 square feet of living space, which encompasses the principal bedroom with its ensuite and steam shower, the yoga space and soon-to-be-planted in-floor meditation garden, plus two children's bedrooms (the two girls, 3 and 6, share one) divided by a bathroom between the rooms and a laundry room. (The garden was made by dropping five big stainless steel planters into the floor; the owner plans to put in grasses, sage and a fig tree.) A secret corridor runs the length behind the two kids' rooms, doubling as a closet and a sort of kid highway that facilitates musical beds and other childhood hijinks.

Ample square-footage aside, if this sounds like a remarkable number of rooms, it's due entirely to Bricault's use of screens. "I realize thinking back that the project's success is all about screens," says Bricault. "Screens as the initial design framework allowed for a lightness of definition and a blurring of boundaries." A rolling tile wall delineates the principal bath, a felt-and-cedar screen mitigates sound in the kids' play area, and plantings will separate the yoga room. In the principal bedroom, a closet system divides sleeping and laundry areas, and a bookcase wall helps soundproof the guest room.

Living with noise is part and parcel of life in a warehouse district, but while the neighbourhood is authentically industrial, the closest neighbours definitely aren't. Unlike

CONTINUED ON PAGE 322



CONTEST RULES

HOW TO ENTER: You can enter your entire home or cottage, or just a single room — kitchen, family room, home office — any space you have decorated or renovated yourself. To enter, photograph every angle of each room, including close-ups of special details. If you're submitting your whole house, take exterior shots as well as interiors. Include "before" shots if you have them.

- Send clear colour photos, maximum five shots per room, or 25 shots for an entire house. We suggest you submit photographs in an 8-1/2" x 11" soft-cover binder, or enter on-line. Please do not send DVDs, CD-ROMs, videos or slides.
- Include a letter (max. 500 words) telling us what you set out to accomplish and any interesting details about your entry, particularly any creative or budget-conscious solutions you came up with. Please include a picture of yourself.
- You must include your name, address, occupation, daytime and evening phone numbers, the amount of money you spent on the project and a listing of anyone who assisted with the project.
- The winners agree to permit House & Home to photograph their homes for publication in a future issue and film them for future broadcast on www.houseandhome.com. Only one entry per person. All entries become the property of Canadian Home Publishers. We regret that we cannot return any photographs or other materials.

WHO IS ELIGIBLE: Any resident of Canada, with the exception of employees of Canadian Home Publishers, and their families, may enter their own work. Unfortunately, due to specific provincial regulations, we are unable to extend this contest to residents of Quebec. We regret this and apologize to our Quebec readers. The contest is not open to professional designers and decorators, architects or design firms. Entry cannot be a business (i.e., a bed & breakfast) and cannot have been awarded a prize in another design contest, photographed for another publication or featured on television.

PRIZES: There are no substitutions for prizes, unless a prize becomes unavailable, in which case we reserve the right to substitute prizes of equal value. Prizes are not redeemable for cash. Installation and delivery charges are extra where applicable.

Send your entry by October 15, 2007 to:
Design Contest
Canadian House & Home
511 King St. W., Suite 120
Toronto, Ontario, M5V 2Z4
or enter on-line at www.houseandhome.com.

By submitting any material ("Material") to any of our publications or operations, including without limitation, House & Home magazine and House & Home on-line, you grant Canadian Home Publishers ("CHP") a worldwide, non-exclusive, unrestricted, royalty-free, perpetual, irrevocable, assignable right and license to use, reproduce, modify, publish, create derivative works from, translate, license, publicly perform and display the Material (in whole or in part) and/or to incorporate it in other works in any form, media or technology now known or later developed, without your prior approval, and you further waive any "moral rights" that you may have in the Material. In addition, by submitting the Material to CHP, you represent and warrant that you own and control all rights in and to the Material and that you have the right to grant the foregoing rights to CHP.

CONTINUED FROM

A GOOD YARN

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 251

Cup Cosy



MATERIALS & TOOLS

- 2 50 g balls (90 metres) kid mohair/wool blend yarn (makes six to eight cosies)
- 9 mm straight knitting needles
- Scissors

Test gauge: 3" = 10 stitches and 12 rows. To make a test swatch, cast on 10 stitches, knit 12 rows and cast off. Lay swatch on a flat surface to measure. If the size of the test swatch is not 3" x 3", visit a knitting store for guidance.

1. For the desired thickness, double up the yarn by pairing a thread of mohair from each ball of wool.
2. Leaving a 10" double-thread strand, cast on 10 stitches.
3. Work a basic stocking stitch (K1, P1) until the piece measures 9" long or the circumference of a particular cup.
4. Cast off leaving a second 10" double-thread strand.
5. Tie the cosy onto the cup with the two 10" strands at the top of the piece. Cut another 10" thread from a ball of yarn, loop it through the end stitches at the bottom of the cosy and tie. Trim loose ends.

Pillowcase



MATERIALS & TOOLS

- 3 50 g balls (90 metres) kid mohair/wool blend yarn (makes two pillowcases)
- 10 mm straight knitting needles
- Large darning needle
- Ribbon
- Scissors

Test gauge: 4" = 10 stitches; 10 rows = 3". To make a test swatch, cast on 10 stitches, knit 10 rows and cast off. Lay swatch on a flat surface to measure. If the size of the test swatch is not 4" x 3", visit a knitting store for guidance.

The size of this pillowcase will depend on the size of the pillow being covered. Our case is 16" w. x 12" l.

1. For the desired thickness, double up the yarn by pairing a thread of mohair from each

ball of wool.

2. Cast on 40 stitches.
3. Work a basic stocking stitch (K1, P1) until the piece measures 12" long (about 40 rows). Cast off. This completes one side of one pillowcase.
4. To make the second side of the case, repeat Step 3.
5. Put the wrong side of each piece together. Using a long length of double-stranded mohair (about 40") and a large darning needle, whipstitch the two pieces together leaving one 12" end open. To secure, tie yarn with remaining ends from casting off and trim.
6. Slide the pillow into the open end, then thread a piece of ribbon about 13" long through a knitted stitch on both sides about 2-1/2" in from the end of the pillowcase.
7. Tie each ribbon into a bow to close the top of the pillowcase. **H&H**

DESIGN

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 144

the usual mix of artists and trades found in the average warehouse unit, there are two other families with children in the conversion, as well as an NHL player and a handful of thirtysomethings.

But despite the nice neighbours and the community pool, there's no question that life in the Vancouver suburbs was more child-friendly than here, and so the owners and their kids have made a few concessions for their loft lifestyle. Bike rides mean loading the bikes into the car and driving them to the park, and there's no running down the street to a friend's house. But the warehouse's rubber floors are great for scooters, in-line skates and small bikes, and the openness of the space has provided a good opportunity for the kids to learn how, when and where to be quiet.

And a quiet beauty is exactly what this owner has found in her off-beat haven. "Our friends and family were skeptical about the feasibility of our life here, but I pushed for it," she says. "I love the aesthetic: the beautiful brick, the great signage. It's all so untouched and pristine ... I love the junk, the metal, the organization of materials, the trains. I like being among people who work with their hands. And I'm glad to be out of the sameness of the suburbs. I love living among industry — it's infinitely more interesting to me." **H&H**