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n the great house-hunting journey, sometimes the most unexpected perks are the ones that seal the deal. This stately brick-faced Roscoe Village residence's unusual double lot and expansive side yard instantly tipped the scales for a couple with two children seeking "room to flex," notes their

longtime designer, Jennie Bishop. Here, hedged in by mature trees and lush landscaping, was the best of all worlds: an oasis smack dab in the city, one brimming with breathing space and possibility.

While the home had great bones—notably, a thoughtful flow, tidy trim package and beautiful walnut hardwoods throughout—the interiors felt cumbersome and dated, their potential muted by dark finishes and heavy decor. Stripping everything back allowed Bishop, alongside architect Jordan Wankel and builder Kirk Bacastow, to begin a series of renovations aimed at tailoring the abode to their clients' great taste and casual lifestyle. "We studied several options for reworking the floor plan," Wankel says. "The final approach builds on the strengths of the existing layout, refining it rather than reinventing it, while introducing a few new moments the house previously lacked."

A fresh window program sharpened sight lines while dramatically increasing natural light. Bedroom layouts were tweaked to create larger primary closets and a dual bedroom and game room for their teenage son. Bathrooms were given amenity-heavy facelifts ("Water closets and double vanities keep marriages together!" Bishop quips), and the kitchen, while maintaining its original footprint, was reconfigured to live larger and with more ease. "When there is space for double islands, we push for them," the designer shares, pointing to the separate surfaces for meal prep and homework that comprise the kitchen core. "You get more counter space and better circulation," she adds. "In reality, it compartmentalizes functionality and is just a really luxe way to do things."

But the most substantial structural change entailed the creation of two additions devised to take full advantage of the verdant lot. At the back of the residence, amid gardens refreshed by landscape designer Marisa Gora, a covered porch fit with a fireplace, heat lamps and

comfortable seating allows for true three-season alfresco living. Meanwhile, extending from the front façade, a sun-drenched reading room with vaulted ceilings and panoramic windows caters to quietude and entertaining alike while flooding the adjoining living and dining spaces with light. "It's civilized and cozy," Bishop notes. "There's no television, yet the family members are always fighting to spend alone time in there. That should tell you it's a pretty remarkable room!"

Equally remarkable is how the team articulated the transition to the addition from the original structure. "We were trying to convey the idea of peeling the house open," explains Bishop, who clad what was formerly an exterior wall in creamy plaster, finishing the edge with a dramatic bullnose curve. The team also worked tirelessly to reconceive said wall's existing chimney stack as a double-sided fireplace rendered in richly veined fluted marble. The statement feature perfectly synthesizes the home's ensuing decoration language, wherein a clean, neutral framework is emboldened by dramatic materials, expressive forms and artistic touches.

While the trusted, time-tested client-designer relationship allowed Bishop to flex her creative muscle, the wife did request a farmhouse-inspired foundation, which the designer translated as light finishes, exposed beams, contrast and some industrial rusticity, all tempered with a refined, cosmopolitan assembly of finishes, textiles, furnishings and accessories. Taken together, the milieu marries warm familiarity with an edge. "They wanted a relaxed, cool, unostentatious house, which is the best programming for me ever," sums Bishop.

In a stroke of good fortune befitting the spirit of the home, the family was traveling in the weeks leading up to the finish line, which allowed for a surprise unveiling replete with candles, music, wine and cheese—and the entire project team in attendance. "To have a grand reveal like what you see on TV—where the clients enter a completely transformed house—that almost never happens, and it's so much fun," Bishop says. "When they walked in, I think they literally screamed for five minutes straight. There were no words." ■

Architecture: Jordan Wankel, Deconstruct Architecture
Interior Design: Jennie Bishop, Bishop Studio
Home Builder: Kirk Bacastow, LG Group
Landscape Architecture: Marisa Gora, Kemora Landscapes

FINDING THE EDGE

A CLASSIC CHICAGO HOME GETS A BOLD NEW LEASE ON LIFE THANKS TO DESIGNER JENNIE BISHOP AND TEAM.

WRITTEN BY GRACE BEULEY HUNT | PHOTOGRAPHY BY MIKE SCHWARTZ | STYLING BY PAIGE WASSSEL

Striking shapes distinguish the entry, from the Parts + Assembly mirror to the bespoke console to the Porter Teleo wallpaper. The sconce is by Riloh.





Above: Artwork by Louise Pappageorge hangs above a double-sided fireplace in the living area, flanked by Lindsey Adelman Studio sconces. A Mansour Modern rug grounds Wendelbo coffee tables from Haute Living and a Verel de Belval-covered sofa from Jayson Home.



Opposite: Neutral tones across the vintage Bellini sofa from Circa Modern, Piet Boon chair from Haute Living, Project 213A coffee table and Makrosha rug create a cozy atmosphere in the reading room. A Jeffrey Sanderson painting provides a burst of color.



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—JENNIE BISHOP

Above: Textured materials elevate the kitchen, from the zellige ceramic field tile on the walls to the Macchia Vecchia marble via Marble & Granite Supply of Illinois that clads the counters, backsplash and hood. The range is by Wolf.

Opposite: Below an Ochre chandelier, chairs from Casa Spazio upholstered in an Old World Weavers fabric and Garrett Leather encircle a custom table in the dining area. The bar features leathered Calais quartzite from Marble & Granite Supply of Illinois.



Dual islands crafted by Burmeister Woodwork maximize space and functionality in the reconfigured kitchen. The counter stools are by Mark Albrecht Studio, and the pendants are by Roll & Hill.



Above: The primary bathroom includes a Hydrology soaking tub fit with a Watermark filler. A rug from Mehraban softens the flooring from Artistic Tile.

Opposite: Shades of gray establish a restful mood in the primary bedroom, where window treatments made with Casamance fabric join an Opuzen-upholstered bed. Suspended above the Faithful Roots nightstand is a Ladies & Gentlemen Studio pendant from A+R.



HERE, HEDGED IN BY MATURE TREES AND LUSH LANDSCAPING, WAS THE BEST OF ALL WORLDS: AN OASIS SMACK DAB IN THE CITY.

Above: Sofas and a coffee table by RH join a Four Hands side table and CB2 chair atop a rug from Lulu and Georgia on the covered porch. The outdoor fireplace provides nearly year-round comfort.

Opposite: Architect Jordan Wankel conceived the home's striking covered porch addition, which is clad in wood paneling by Delta Millworks. The standing-seam metal roof is an homage to classic farmhouse style.