


Globe Magazine

THE BOSTON GLOBE SEPTEMBER 8, 2019



Perspective
Time for the
primary
debate
follies again

Cooking
Tacos,
tacos, tacos

Connections
A teacher's
back-to-
school
memories

Classic furnishings
and colorful
accents help
transform a family
room in Brookline.

YOUR HOME

DESIGN REFRESHERS

From a fixer-upper in Eastie to an Arts & Crafts-style showpiece in Harvard Square, stylish updates turn up the charm.

Plus: A blueprint for avoiding your own contractor horror story.



BREATHING ROOM

In and around a Mission Hill brownstone, opening up more space makes for a welcoming feel. **BY MARNI ELYSE KATZ**

PHOTOGRAPHS BY JESSICA DELANEY

THE OWNERS of this Mission Hill brownstone concentrated on upgrading the exterior of the house before the interior, but not with the usual paint and plantings. They amassed outdoor space, purchasing the building on one side and convincing friends to move in on the other. “They decided to stay in the city once they combined lots for a large backyard,” says designer Christina Wikman, who is the homeowners’ niece. “Now they wanted to make the house feel inviting and comfortable.”

The couple, who have two teenagers, asked that the decor skew classic to resonate with the existing architectural details, such as crown moldings and the circa 1900 original marble mantelpiece. To make the rooms feel more youthful, Wikman injected subtle color and pattern. She played with scale, replacing bulky pieces with more streamlined ones and amping up lighting and mirrors for drama. Efficiency and function were also major considerations.

A leopard-print stair runner enlivens the entry, as does a chandelier with an oversize drum shade. Over the console, which holds baskets for storing shoes, a large wall mirror bounces around light. To take advantage of the tall ceilings, Wikman installed custom panels with oil-rubbed bronze hooks behind the original wood doors for coats and bags.

To make the most of the narrow living room, Wikman tucked a settee into the underutilized bay window and opted for storage ottomans instead of a coffee table. The expandable dining table works as well for family dinners as for large gatherings. An airy distressed-wood chandelier makes a statement above, while a triptych by local artist Bruce Herman adds a splash of color at the center of the room.

At the back of the house, a pair of hand-rubbed antiqued brass and seeded glass pendant lights infuse period-appropriate glamour. Acrylic bar stools provide casual seating without taking up visual space. The result is a serene space with a smooth flow that meets the needs of a busy family. Wikman says, “It’s a timeless look in keeping with the character of the home.” ■

RESOURCES

Interior Design

Christina Wikman Interiors,
christinawikmaninteriors.com

Drapery

Makkas Drapery Workroom,
makkasdrapery.com



Facing page: In the parlor, designer Christina Wikman added Visual Comfort sconces on either side of a nine-panel mirror from Ethan Allen. The top of the vintage card table, from Ramble Market in Waltham, flips open. The wing chair is upholstered in a lively patterned linen by Kelly Wearstler. **Above:** The Leighton dining table from Arhaus extends to 85 inches. The chairs, from Hooker Furniture, are upholstered in leather for durability.