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YIN & YANG

With a base of black and white, a highly customized Buckhead residence reflects the refined tastes of its art-loving owners.

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Interior Design: Shawn Amtower, Amtower Interior + Design Home Builder: Jason Cole, Cole Construction



ne couple seeking a light-filled modern dwelling in Buckhead didn't expect to build their family's new home from the ground up, but sometimes the best things in life are unplanned.

Hoping to write the next chapter for their family of five—plus an English cream golden retriever, Piper—Dan and Martha O'Neill originally had their minds set on real estate that would be both move-in ready and more updated than their previous, traditional-leaning abode. But when a lot in the tony Atlanta enclave caught their attention with its sprawling footprint, abundance of trees and backyard lake, things quickly changed.

Intrigued, the O'Neills met with general contractor Stan Benecki, who had been readying to develop a residence on site. His concept evolved from architectural plans he'd commissioned earlier of residential designer William T. Baker, but with several significant modifications. Besides an expanded floor plan, the home also would feature upscale finishes and details by designer Cydney Mitchell, with general contractor Jason Cole supervising the construction.

Charmed by seemingly infinite opportunities to personalize, the owners happily kept the ball rolling. "We liked the fact that we could tailor the home and really make it our own," Martha notes, adding, "Because Benecki had already gotten permits and graded the lot, it shaved probably six months to a year off the timeline, so when we came in, we just got to pick all the fun stuff."

Details great and small—a more spacious second closet upstairs and statelier roofline, for instance—were carefully adapted to the couple's modern vision. Overseeing a substantial team of subcontractors and craftspeople, Cole's expertise helped make sense of the project's complex amalgam of customizations and tweaks, allowing the family to arrive at something entirely unique. The next step? Seeking the right designer to bring the interiors to life.

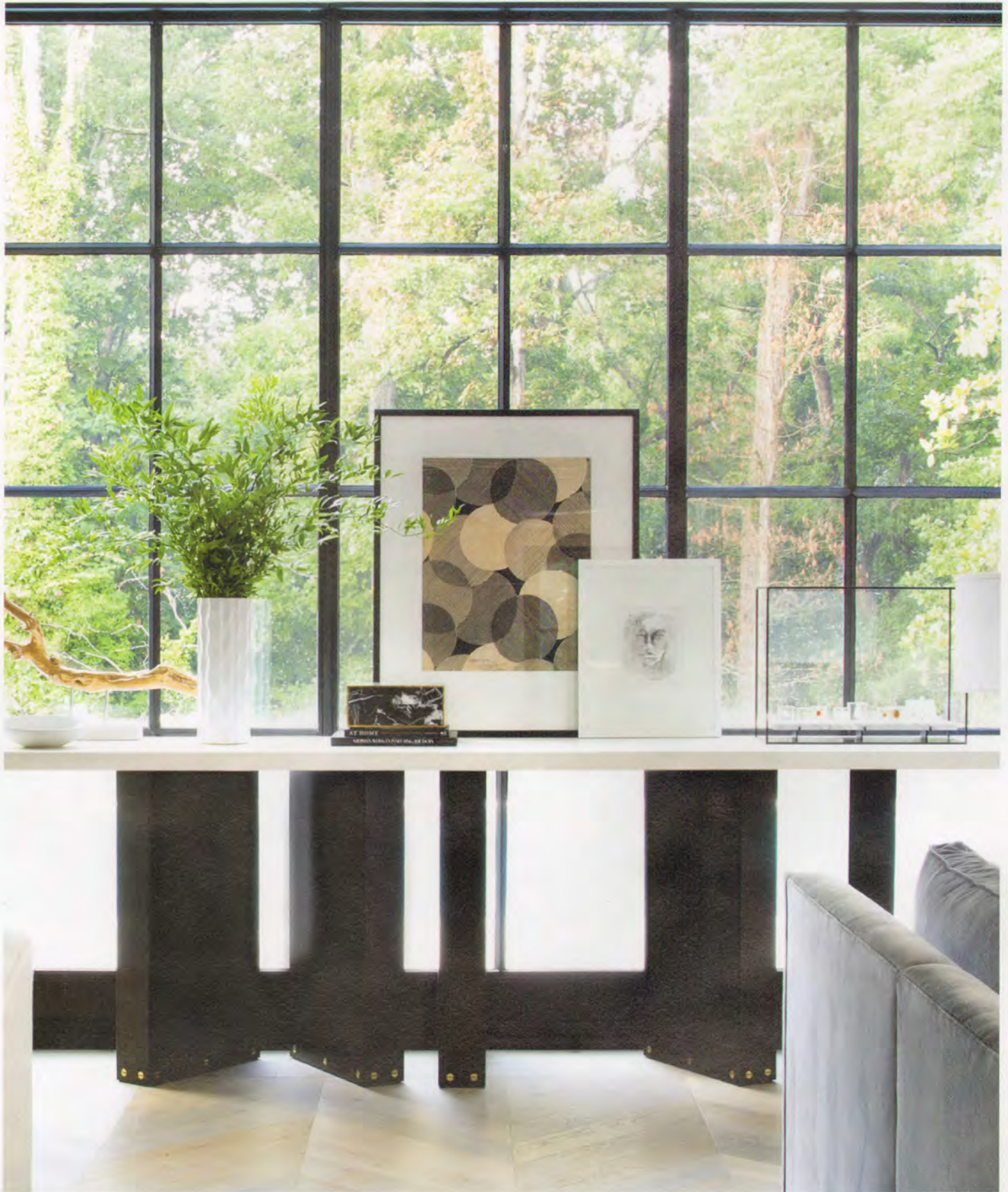
The O'Neills found their perfect match in the sleek, minimalist aesthetic of Shawn Amtower. "Shawn likes clean lines and a lot of white, but at the same time, her rooms are very homey and comfortable," Martha says of the interior designer.

"She makes it all look so luxurious." Stylistically, the two women felt an instant click. "We agreed it would be an all-white house, then we would layer in all the things Martha loves," Amtower recalls. "I very quickly got her vibe and what she's attracted to, which are feminine details and color."

When crafting the palette, Amtower took her cues from a stag artwork by the late Todd Murphy, now presiding over the living room, which inspired her to pepper shades of charcoal, green and pink throughout. She complemented this scheme with ample textures, apparent in the residence's numerous lush textiles and rugs. On the ground floor, for instance, inky upholstery is forgiving when it comes to children and pets while adding dimension and depth. "This is the first time I've done a house with almost all dark velvet seating on the main floor," Amtower reveals. "It creates a cozy, warm environment that begs you to lounge on the sofa, or the kids to lay on the chaise and watch movies at the foot of the bed."

That casualness was tempered by elevated touches: brass and glass detailing, drippy chandeliers and pops of pink—namely in Martha's closet. To fine-tune finishes and foundational materials in the chic dressing space, as well as the home's bathrooms and kitchen, Amtower worked hand-in-glove with Mitchell. In the latter room, the luminosity created by Mitchell's suggestions of blackened steel windows and a ceiling clad in handmade ceramic tiles allowed for appealing juxtaposition with the deep gray-green cabinetry. Here, Amtower followed the thread with framed artworks and alabaster lamps as complements. Adds Martha: "Shawn achieved the right amount of feminine in places where it makes sense; it's a harmony she carried all the way through."

Solidifying this balance is the abode's impressive art collection. "That's actually my favorite part of being a designer: when I get to source the artwork," discloses Amtower, noting acquisitions authored by Dawne Raulet, Tracy Sharp and Baltazar C. Martinez, to name a few. "There are many black-and-white pieces, but enough pops of color that it doesn't feel monochromatic by any means. It's the final touches that come together to make it read as refined and polished," Amtower concludes. "The big picture is what grabs you, but the details are what make the home." ■



A custom Grey Furniture console divides this salon into two zones: one for entertaining and the other for lounging. Artworks by Bianchini-Férier and Windell Dobson complement the clean lines of floor-to-ceiling Womack Iron windows installed by general contractor Jason Cole.



Designer Shawn Amtower placed pairs of custom velvet Bjork Studio sofas and Mr. & Mrs. Howard for Sherrill Furniture swivel chairs around two acrylic-and-steel coffee tables by Grey Furniture. A Rosecore silk-look rug anchors the gathering area. The Trover scones are by Mr. Brown London.



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Above: Framed works by Greenville, South Carolina, artist Katie Walker mingle with Crate & Barrel glassware at the wet bar, for which designer Cydney Mitchell selected Arabescato Corchia marble from Source. On cabinetry and shelving, Farrow & Ball's Studio Green gives contrast.

Right: Mitchell extended glossy Soho Studio ceramic tiles to the barrel-vaulted ceiling specified by general contractor Stan Benecki and drawn by residential designer William T. Baker. An Apparatus chandelier from R Hughes lends dynamism near the La Cornue range.







Right: Homeowner Martha O'Neill's closet is an ode to her favorite color: pink. The walls, shelving and custom vanity brandish Farrow & Ball's Calamine, color-matched to panels of satiny Romo linen with Samuel & Sons trim.

Opposite: In the primary bedroom, a Ralph Lauren for Visual Comfort chandelier converses with custom Romo linen draperies. A velvet-and-brass RH bench, Ryan Studio pillows and alpaca rug by The Rug Company add softness.





Right: Mitchell's suggestion of Nero Marquina marble for the primary shower got Amtower's stamp of approval. Floor-to-ceiling Womack Iron windows mimic the lines of the metal shower door. The fixtures are by Waterworks.

Opposite: Sherwin-Williams' Caviar coats the primary bathroom cabinetry in concert with Nero Marquina marble-and-Dolomite floor tiles. Metallic touches include the stainless-steel soaking tub from Source and Kelly Wearstler for Visual Comfort sconces.

