



INTERIOR DESIGN / HEIDI CAILLIER,
HEIDI CAILLIER DESIGN
HOME BUILDER / NATE HUHTA,
FORTE CONSTRUCTION ALLIANCE

CHANGING ROOMS

FOR BOTH CLIENTS AND DESIGNER, A SEATTLE HOME PRESENTS AN OPPORTUNITY FOR REINVENTION.

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A change of circumstance often prompts a change in style, something that proved true for designer Heidi Caillier. Moving from San Francisco to Seattle, from working for others to being on her own, she found herself maturing out of the midcentury modern foundation that had defined her career. "I kind of pigeonholed myself," she muses. "A lot of people love that look—and I kept getting hired to do that." But, as her confidence in her work grew, she found her design aesthetic shifting, drawn toward darker, moodier palettes that incorporated traditional pieces and a touch of whimsy. It was around this time that the owners of a Seattle house reached out to her.

Having lived in their home for over a decade, the clients, a couple with a teenage daughter, were ready for a change and asked Caillier's opinion: Should the family move? Given the home's great bones and pleasing layout, the designer was confident that refreshing it would provide the update they craved. She'd also seen something in the wife's collection of magazine tear sheets that alerted her this project would represent a significant shift in her work. The stylistic mix—floral and plaid, modern and traditional, clean lines and ornate flourishes—dovetailed with Caillier's evolution. "I knew my client wasn't going to want anything midcentury," she says.

While Caillier had determined that the home didn't need any major renovations, getting the hard finishes perfect was imperative to making the abode feel new and different. So she called in general contractor Nate Huhta, whom she'd met not long after moving to Seattle. Huhta is justifiably proud of his team's meticulous prep work and attention to detail. With a tight timeline, their mettle would be tested. "When a client moves out and rents a house for a designated period of time, you really have to meet that deadline," Caillier notes. But the designer and contractor continue to work together for a reason: His rigorous execution matches her inspired vision.



For the living room of a Seattle house, designer Heidi Caillier chose Benjamin Moore's Simply White for the walls and Oil Cloth for the trim to set the stage for a selection of compelling pieces, including a vintage chaise replete with fringe details from Jayson Home, a plaster Noir table and a large-scale sconce from Istdibs. Draperies in Pindler fabric dress the windows. The artwork is by Jennifer Arment.



A sofa from Lawson-Fenning, in Osborne & Little fabric from The Dixon Group, and a custom armchair in Casamance fabric from Kelly Forslund form a comfortable seating group in the den. The space is illuminated by a Visual Comfort & Co. floor lamp and a vintage Italian table lamp from Istolbs. At the windows hang shades in a Schumacher fabric.

That seamless collaboration is especially evident in the home's bathrooms and kitchen. Although the cabinets in each area look newly installed, that impression is thanks to some savvy cosmetic interventions—most notably, an impeccable paint job. “You live in a house for 10 or 15 years; it just gets into such rough shape,” says Caillier, adding, “It’s shocking what paint does.” Huhta agrees, explaining, “My painter is an expert. Where he’s just fantastic is in doing the proper prep work. That’s what gives a pristine mirror-like finish that makes an impact.”

While Huhta’s crew continued prepping the house, Caillier set about sourcing the furniture and accessories because, with a few exceptions, the clients envisioned starting from scratch. The designer, keeping true to her evolving eye, knew immediately that she wanted a blend of vintage and new. Central to the design scheme in the living room is a vintage chaise covered in velvet with fringe on the bottom. (“The wife had a bunch of fringe in her tear sheets,” Caillier reports.) Other vintage pieces with intriguing details—the oversize sconce, the plaster table, the Anatolian rug—are balanced by a modern sofa, smooth, pristine walls, and a braided jute rug.

The family room presented Caillier’s biggest design challenge. “They wanted to brighten the room up, so it didn’t feel instinctual to do a dark grass cloth on the walls.” But Caillier convinced the clients that the material’s natural sheen would help bounce light around. “It’s spectacular and totally changed that room. They love it now!” says the designer. Sheepskin-covered chairs, plaid accents and a deep green floral ottoman would also seem antithetical to a buoyant space. But in Caillier’s hands, the result is fresh, modern and dazzling.

Upstairs, rich textiles on the beds—Jasper’s Indian Flower for the master, Tulu textiles for the daughter’s room—coalesce into tranquil yet captivating sanctuaries, a feeling that holds true for the entire home. “We delved into how they lived and worked in the rooms to accommodate that,” says Caillier. And for both the family that resides here and the designer who made it happen, the culmination was transformative. ■

Opposite: Caillier layered a braided jute Stark carpet from George Associates beneath a vintage Anatolian carpet from Jayson Home in the living room. It serves as a foundation for the Interior Define sofa and shield-back chair upholstered in a Kelly Wearstler design from Kravet. The vintage Italian lamp and the coffee table were both Chairish discoveries.

Below: "The grass cloth has an ethereal quality to it, so we wanted to do a bold lamp to add some weight." Caillier says of the Ralph Lauren wallcovering and Currey & Company lamp in the entry. Completing the vignette are an RH mirror, Pottery Barn console and a vintage carpet from Driscoll Robbins Fine Carpets.



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"The bones of the existing kitchen were great," says Callier, who worked on the project with general contractor Nate Huhta. "The client didn't want to do a full remodel, so we repainted the cabinets and updated fixtures and hardware." She added new knobs and pulls from the House of Antique Hardware and a Waterworks faucet. The custom counter chairs are in Holland & Sherry leather. A bamboo shade from The Shade Store is at the window.



For the designer, it was important that the dining room maintain a similar vibe to the adjacent living room. In a small nook in the space, a lamp from Arteriors rests on a carved Noir chest and is joined by a Rejuvenation mirror, reflecting the layered sensibility.

Right: A Jasper wallcovering is in the powder room. "It feels floral without being too sweet," says Caillier. "It also somehow feels both modern and traditional." Flanking the Made Goods mirror are Visual Comfort & Co. sconces. Set into the existing vanity is a Kohler faucet.

Opposite: In the master bedroom, Danielle Mouning photographs hang above the custom bed, which is upholstered in a Jasper floral and finished with Parachute Home linens. The lighting is from Visual Comfort & Co., the bedside table and chest are both by Made Goods. A Stark carpet grounds the space.

