

HOLIDAY HOMES FROM COAST TO COAST

ED DECOR

NOVEMBER 2019

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UNIVERSAL
DESIGN:
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NEW YORK'S
RETAIL
RENAISSANCE

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NO STONE UNTURNED

STEVEN GAMBREL BRINGS CANDY-COLORED
 DRAMA—AND HIS MOST **KILLER KITCHEN** YET—
 TO A REVIVALIST MANSE OUTSIDE CHICAGO.

BY NANCY HASS PHOTOGRAPHS BY ERIC PIASECKI



The fieldstone facade of a suburban Chicago house designed by architect R. Michael Graham, with interiors by Steven Gambrel.

OPPOSITE: In the stair hall, the spiral staircase has a custom walnut handrail with burnished-steel balusters. The vintage amber glass pendant was purchased in Paris.

WHEN THE CHICAGO-BASED architect R. Michael Graham was asked to design a grand, traditional house in the city's suburbs for an aesthetically fearless couple who had together built an esteemed real estate empire, he knew one thing: It could not be a pale period imitation. There were already too many of those around, teardowns replaced with poorly executed, ostentatious mansions—lots of square footage with little soul or taste. From their years in the business, the clients understood what it meant to be respectfully committed to a project of such scale, and they knew what cut corners looked like; they were too sophisticated to



The library's custom banquette is in a leather by Holly Hunt and topped with pillows in Sabina Fay Braxton velvets. The circa-1940s mirror-glass cocktail table is French, the brass ceiling lights are by Charles Edwards, and the curtain is of an Hermes fabric. The painting is by Alan Davie, and the 1930s alabaster amphora is from the End of History. **OPPOSITE, FROM TOP:** In a powder room, the sink and floor are in Onyx Fantastico marble, and the vintage faucet was salvaged from Bunny Mellon's Manhattan townhouse; the sconce is by Blackman Cruz, and the hand-painted wallpaper is by Gracie. In the husband's office, the armchairs, in Romo and Lee Jofa fabrics, and ottoman, in an Edelman leather, are all custom; the brass pendants are by the Urban Electric Co., the 1960s faux-bamboo side table is from Avery & Dash, and the painting is by Albert Irvin.



In the kitchen, the polished nickel, hardwood, and glass cabinetry and island are custom, and the range and hood are by Officine Gullo. Hanging from the ceiling, which is clad in glass tiles by Urban Archaeology, are eight circa-1930 C.F. Otto Müller ceiling lights and a pendant designed by Gambrel for the Urban Electric Co.



accept a compromise. "I was aware from the beginning that I wanted to create something 100 percent real," says Graham, who took his inspiration from the early-20th-century Anglo-American country houses that the architectural firm Mellor, Meigs & Howe designed outside Philadelphia. "Every detail is as it might have been built when houses were made like that."

The couple, who arose from humble beginnings and are now in their 60s, had, over the years, taught themselves a great deal about interior design and art to complement their knowledge of construction. While they wanted the house to have the sort of graciousness,

ABOVE: The Sub-Zero refrigerator (left) has custom panels to match the kitchen's cabinetry. The barstools are by Palecek, and the counter is in Breccia Capraia Verde marble. The custom flooring is oak that has been fumed, ebonized, and waxed.

LEFT: The sink, also made from Breccia Capraia Verde marble, has Kallista fittings, the custom Roman shades are of an Alessandra Branca fabric, and the curtains are of an Osborne & Little sheer. The sconces are by Besselink & Jones.

“Gambrel, who trained as an architect, regards **color** with an almost incantational fervor.”

fine-bore craftsmanship, and proportion one might have found during the era that F. Scott Fitzgerald conjured, the wife did not want the residence to seem like a gilded museum stocked with antiques or to feel like just another safe, neutral-hued estate.

To that end, Graham introduced them to Steven Gambrel, a New York designer and *ED A-Lister* well known for blending classic calm with pulse-racing color and deliciously wild, expressive gestures. “There really couldn’t be a more perfect place to do what I like to do,” says Gambrel, who marveled early on at how far down into the details the homeowners had let Graham drill. “When you have a house like this, where every stone, every corner is honed to perfection, and collaborative clients who have confidence, you can take the interiors to an incredible depth.”

Gambrel, who trained as an architect, regards color with an almost incantational fervor, an instinct that is on vivid display in the 16,000-square-foot residence. A master of blues especially, he combines shades and intensities in ways that seem utterly fresh; among his signatures are upholstered pieces with as many as three or four different fabrics, each adding dimension. From the vast formal dining room, with its glossy Dutch-blue walls and custom Louis XV-style chairs with backs upholstered in a lime-green ikat, to the violet-lacquered bookshelves of the wife’s office, his palette adds levity and light to the opulent surroundings.

But Gambrel also understands that the eye needs to rest. And thus, the rooms alternate between richly stimulating and airily tranquil. The calm living room, for example, has paneled walls striated with pale blue-gray tones, the family dining room is in shades of silver, and the master bedroom is awash with variations of taupe, frost, and wheat.

Conversely, below ground there is a vast entertainment area with a private bowling alley—a nod to the couple’s sense of fun—where the walls are upholstered in a bloodred velvet. “I wanted there to be a feeling of transformation as you go through the house,” the wife says. “I think design can evoke emotions, and I wanted to have the full range here.”

Like many significant early-20th-century houses (as well as the Irish and English castles that inspired

In the dining room, the custom rosewood table and chairs are by Dune, the Irish consoles are George II, and the custom chain-link mirrors are from Harbinger. The gilt-wood chandeliers are vintage, the rug is by Stark, and the curtains are of a Jim Thompson silk with Zuber trim.





The master bath's Waterworks bathtub is encased in Breccia Capraia marble. The polished-nickel vanities are custom, the sinks are by Kohler, the fittings are by Lefroy Brooks, and the Art Deco chandelier is French.



them), this one is configured around a long gallery—painted in a vigorous teal—to showcase a lifetime of art collecting. The couple favors midcentury British painters, but they also treasure the works they bought as art neophytes in the early years of their marriage, mostly in Paris's Clignancourt flea market. Gambrel urged them to mix the more modest works with the distinguished ones.

ABOVE: In the master bedroom, the custom bed is upholstered in an Edelman leather with trim from Lee Jofa and dressed with Leontine Linens sheets and a Garnet Hill silk coverlet. The oak bench, François Daneck nightstand, and Griff sofa, in a de Le Cuona velvet, are all custom. The chandelier is by Niermann Weeks, the 1950s lamps are from the End of History, and the silk wallcovering is by Phillip Jeffries. The curtains are of a Zinc Textile print, and the painting is by Ivon Hitchens. For details, see Resources.

Every house has one room that embodies its spirit most essentially, and while that is often a living area or a bedroom, in this case it is the kitchen. For many elaborate homes with bold decor, such spaces are the Rubicon that owners cannot cross. But here, the couple dove in joyously and with abandon: Their kitchen could stand as Gambrel's dernier cri. Its ceiling and walls are covered in handmade glass tiles in shades from aquamarine to jade; fumed, ebonized, and waxed oak floors are custom cut in an Escher-like pattern; and the centerpiece is a vast exhaust hood enameled in forest green. Even Jay Gatsby might have balked at such daring, but the effect is monumental and intoxicating. "I'm not going to say it didn't take some convincing," recalls the husband, "but every day I'm glad we said yes." ■

RESOURCES

Items pictured but not listed are from private collections.

TRUTH IN DECORATING

PAGES 66-68: India Hicks, *indiahicks.com*. Martin Brudnizki, *Martin Brudnizki Design Studio, mbd.com*.

SHOWCASE

PAGE 71: Fabric: Amior Libre in Orient, *dedar.com*. **PAGE 72:** Wallpaper: Levante in Bianco, *flatvernacular.com*. **PAGE 74:** Wallpaper: Avant in green/black by Kelly Wearstler, *leejofoa.com*. **Wallpaper:** Turritella in Bathyal, *flatvernacular.com*.

DANIEL'S KITCHENS

PAGES 92-94: Daniel Boulud of Restaurant Daniel, *danielnyc.com*. **Plates:** Richard Ginori, *richardginori1735.com*; Mottahedeh, *mottahedeh.com*. **Cup:** Mottahedeh. **Marble bowl:** Terrain, *shopterrain.com*. **Silver tray:** Match, *match1995.com*. **Glass:** Ralph Lauren Home, *ralphlaurenhome.com*. **Phone case:** Louis Vuitton, *louisvuitton.com*. **Tall glass:** Baccarat, *baccarat.com*. **Butter dish and sugar bowl:** Royal Copenhagen, *royalcopenhagen.com*. **Udded jar:** Frontgate, *frontgate.com*. **Fabric:** Dedar, *dedar.com*.



NO STONE UNTURNED

Interior design: Steven Gambrel, S.R. Gambrel, *sgambrel.com*. **Architecture:** R. Michael Graham, *Liederbach & Graham, Architects, liederbachandgraham.com*. **General contracting:** Timm T. Martin Company, *ttmcompany.com*. **Landscaping:** Craig Bergmann, *Craig Bergmann Landscape Design, Inc., craigbergmann.com*. **Lighting consultant:** Nathan Orsman, *Orsman Design, Inc., orsmandesign.com*. **Upholstery:** Dune, *dune-ny.com*. **Window treatment:** Mark David Interiors, *markdavidinteriors.com*. **PAGES 98-99:** Banquette fabric: Holly Hunt, *hollyhunt.com*. **Pillow fabrics:** Sabina Fay Braxton, *sabinafaybraxton.com*. **Light fixture:** Charles Edwards, *charlesedwards.com*. **Curtain fabric:** Hermès, *hermes.com*. **Lamp:** The End of History, *theendofhistoryshop.blogspot.com*. **Sconce:** Blackman Cruz, *blackmancruz.com*. **Wallpaper:** Gracie, *graciestudio.com*. **Armchairs fabric:** Romo, *romo.com*; Lee Jofoa, *krauel.com*. **Ottoman fabric:** Edelman Leather, *edelmanleather.com*. **Pendants:** The Urban Electric Co., *urbanelectric.com*. **Side table:** Avery & Dash, *averydash.com*. **Artwork:** Albert Irvin, *albert-irvin.com*. **PAGES 100-101:** Range and hood: Officine Gullo, *officinegullo.com*. **Glass tiles:** Urban Archaeology, *urbanarchaeology.com*. **Pendant:** The Urban Electric Co. Refrigerator: Sub-Zero, *subzero-wolf.com*. **Bar stools:** Palecek, *palecek.com*. **Sink fittings:** Kallista, *kallista.com*. **Shades**

fabric: Alessandra Branca, *branca.com*. **Curtains fabric:** Osborne & Little, *osborneandlittle.com*. **Sconces:** Besselink & Jones, *besselink.com*. **PAGES 102-103:** Dining table and chairs: Dune, *dune-ny.com*. **Mirrors:** Harbinger, *harbingerla.com*. **Curtains fabric:** Jim Thompson Fabrics, *jimthompsonfabrics.com*. **Curtains trim:** Zuber, *zuber.fr*. **Rug:** Stark, *starkcarpet.com*. **PAGES 104-105:** Bathroom: Waterworks, *waterworks.com*. **Sinks:** Kohler, *us.kohler.com*. **Fittings:** Lefroy Brooks, *lefroymirrors.com*. **Headboard fabric:** Edelman Leather, *edelmanleather.com*. **Headboard trim:** Lee Jofoa, *leejofoa.com*. **Sheets:** Leontine Linens, *leontinelinens.com*. **Coverlet:** Garnet Hill, *garnethill.com*. **Nightstand:** François Daneck, *francoisdaneck.com*. **Sofa fabric:** De Le Cuona, *delecuona.com*. **Chandelier:** Niermann Weeks, *niermannweeks.com*. **Lamps:** The End of History, *theendofhistoryshop.blogspot.com*. **Wallcovering:** Phillip Jeffries, *phillipjeffries.com*. **Curtains fabric:** Zinc Textile, *zinc textile.com*.



LIFE OF THE PARTY

Interior design: Bronson Van Wyck, Van Wyck & Van Wyck, *vanwyck.net*. **Contributing interior designer:** Celerie Kemble, *Kemble Interiors, kembleinteriors.com*. **Architecture and general contracting:** Made Design/Build, *designbuildmade.com*. **PAGES 106-107:** Sofa fabric: Claremont, *claremontfurnishing.com*. **Cocktail table:** Rose Tarlow Melrose House, *rosetarlow.com*. **Pendant:** Jamb, *jamb.co.uk*. **Photograph:** Chris Levine, *chrislevine.com*. **PAGES 108-109:** Chandelier: High Style Deco, *highstyledeco.com*. **PAGES 110-111:** Sconces: High Style Deco. **Range and hood:** Electrolux, *electroluxappliances.com*. **Pot rack:** Urban Archaeology, *urbanarchaeology.com*. **Ladder:** Putnam Rolling Ladder Co., *putnamrollingladder.com*. **High Style Deco:** PAGES 112-113: Marble: Walker Zanger, *walkertzanger.com*. **Wall paint:** Benjamin Moore, *benjaminmoore.com*. **Wall tiles:** Mosaic House, *mosaichse.com*. **Shower fittings:** Newport Brass, *newportbrass.com*. **Headboard:** Kemble Interiors, *kembleinteriors.com*. **Bed linens:** Dea, *deafinlinens.com*. **Bedside table:** David Linley, *davidlinley.com*.



OUTSIDE CHANCE

Kelly Wearstler: *kellywearstler.com*. **PAGES 114-115:** Table and chair: Kelly

Wearstler: *kellywearstler.com*. **Bowls, teacup, and dessert plate:** Christiane Perrochon, *christianeperrochon.com*. **Catchall:** Kelly Wearstler. **Vases:** Morgan Peck, *morganpeck.net*; Kelly Wearstler, *christianeperrochon.com*. **Cup:** Heath Ceramics, *heathceramics.com*. **Highball glass, flatware, and napkin:** TableArt, *tableartonline.com*. **Plates:** Morgan Peck, *alexmarshallstudios.com*. **Serving tray:** Michael Verheyden, *michaelverheyden.com*.



WORLD CLASS

Interior design: Patricia Greene Isen. **Architecture:** Daniel Romualdez, *Daniel Romualdez Architects, 212-989-8429*. **PAGES 116-117:** Sofas: RH, Restoration Hardware, *rh.com*. **Cocktail table:** Matthews & Parker, *matthews andparker.com*. **Side tables:** Roost, *roostco.com*. **Rug:** Tita Flying Carpet, *titaacarpets.com*. **PAGES 118-119:** Range: Wolf, *subzero-wolf.com*. **Dishes on table:** Tory Burch, *toryburch.com*. **Tiles:** Mosaic House, *mosaichse.com*. **Pendants and dishes on shelves:** BDDW, *bddw.com*. **Dining chairs slipcover fabric:** Jasper, *michaelsmithinc.com*. **Tablecloth fabric:** Lisa Fine Textiles, *lisafinetextiles.com*. **Chandelier and sconces:** Robert Ogden, *rtolighting.com*. **Photograph:** Jackie Nickerson, *jackienickerson.com*. **Wallcovering:** Christopher Hyland, *christopherhyland.com*. **Wainscoting paint:** Benjamin Moore, *benjaminmoore.com*. **PAGES 120-121:** Armchairs fabric:



GLOBAL ENTRY

Cheval Blanc St-Barth Isle de France, chevalblanc.com. **Interior design:** Jacques Grange, *Landscaping: Madison Cox, Madison Cox Associates, madisoncox.com*. **PAGES 124-125:** Ottomans: Walker Zabriske, *walkertzabriske.com*. **Chairs:** Serena & Lily, *serenaandlily.com*. **Cocktail table:** Delphine Messmer, *delphinemessmermosaïque.com*.

CORRECTIONS

In the "Elle Decor 30 Rules to Live By" story in the October 2019 issue (page 80), decorative painter Mark Giglio's contact information and location were incorrect. He is based in New York City and can be reached at 212-431-8926.

In the Toolbox story in the October 2019 issue (page 114), the price for the Ressource Peintures paint was misstated. The correct price is \$100 for one liter of Yves Klein undercoat and one liter of Yves Klein paint.

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