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mixes pieces
from our
High room
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Red accents warm up the contemporary lines of Craig and Linda Fiebig's Seattle living room, where a Chris Lehrecke daybed from Ralph Pucci separates two sitting areas. Other pieces include Brent Comber's sculptural *Alder Saddle* bench, as well as a De Sousa Hughes sofa, a Ted Boerner slipper chair and an Antoine Proulx coffee table. Eric Fischl's *Maria's Corner* hangs over a ventless fireplace powered by denatured ethanol (the "flues" actually conceal the home's wiring). Other art pieces include a painting by Will Cotton and a figurative sculpture by Nicholas Africano.





The Art of the Family

A Seattle
couple with four
children and a
growing interest
in art asked
Vandeventer +
Carlander
Architects for a
contemporary
home tailored
to the demands
of kids and
collecting.



Another

couple might have given up, but not Craig and Linda Fiebig. After a botched remodel left their Seattle home nearly uninhabitable, the intrepid duo decided to build a new house on the same property. “If I hadn’t had three kids at the time, I would have chosen a loft downtown,” says Linda, now a stay-at-home mother of four. With that urban archetype in mind, the Fiebiggs asked the noted firm Vandeventer + Carlander Architects to design a colorful contemporary house that could accommodate the couple’s burgeoning art collection and the demands of a growing family.

Perched on a rambling corner lot just minutes from downtown, the new home consists of two parallel boxes linked by a narrow atrium. Support functions such as the kitchen, laundry, stairs and bathrooms are wrapped in ruddy Cor-Ten steel, while living spaces reside inside a cedar block set atop a glass plinth. “We used different materials to code the public and private spaces and to meet Linda’s desire for color and variety,” says design principal

Tim Carlander, who collaborated on the project with his firm’s managing partner, Bill Vandeventer, and SBI Construction.

The home’s artistic aspirations are evident from the entry, where storefront windows frame a compelling canvas by Chinese American artist Hung Liu. To the left sits Linda’s office, an ocher command center with expansive glass doors. Steel stairs on the opposite side of the entry lead to the atrium, which divides the house into public and private realms. “This house is laid out very functionally,” Linda says. “There’s no wasted space.”

Outside the front door, an auto court doubles as a play area for the neighborhood children. Upstairs bedrooms are clad in Alaskan yellow cedar, while the utility wing is wrapped in Cor-Ten steel; Linda’s office, which projects out at left, is finished in ocher stucco. Opposite: Hung Liu’s *Yellow River* dominates the entry, seen here through Linda’s office door. The exterior Cor-Ten siding wraps inside the atrium wall, forming a backdrop for a hanging sculpture by Ann Gardner.

PRODUCED BY LINDA O’KEEFFE AND LINDA HUMPHREY. PHOTOGRAPHS BY JOHN GRANEN. WRITTEN BY FRED ALBERT.



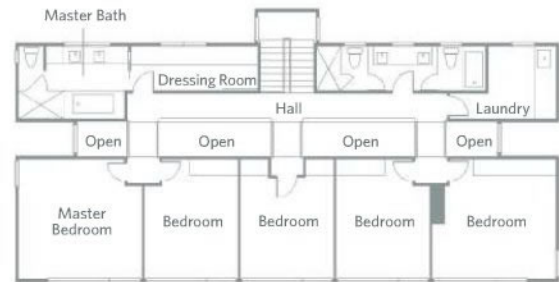


What the **Pros** Know

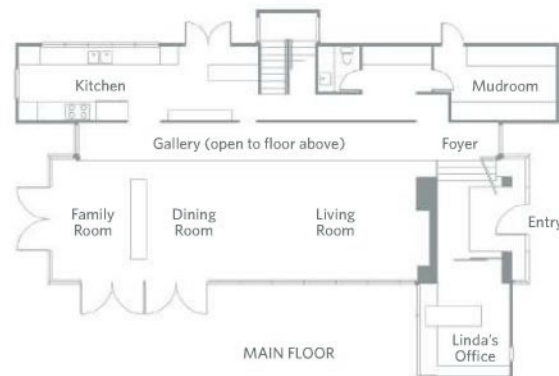
The living room fireplace and Linda's office look as though they're covered in Venetian plaster, but the material is actually Milestone, a hybridized Portland cement developed in the 1980s by Seattle craftsman Don Miles. Milestone contains an acrylic binder, making it water resistant and nearly impervious to cracking and fading. The material adheres to almost any surface, so it's ideal for walls, floors, countertops and showers, and it accepts the same universal tints used at paint

stores, meaning that color choices are infinite. The cost depends on the project but is comparable to quality tile or stone. Milestone can be purchased only from Artisan Finishes in Seattle (ArtisanFinishes.com), but company president Don Latimer is happy to help homeowners locate qualified installers in their area or to provide instruction to experienced do-it-yourselfers. "It's a fairly forgiving medium," Latimer says. "If you have a failure, it'll be artistic, not structural."





SECOND FLOOR



MAIN FLOOR

Steel

armatures frame the living area and support the second floor, freeing the surrounding curtain wall to embrace the sylvan setting (the landscape architect was Portland's Samuel Williamson). Glass doors open onto a pair of terraces and the lawn beyond, inviting an easy indoor-outdoor flow that's ideal for parties. Since Linda doesn't like having company in the kitchen when she entertains, the architects shunted the room to the side and chose a narrow gallery layout, so there's nowhere for guests to linger.

Linda kept her color cravings in check when it came time to decorate. "I really had to fight my impulses, because I didn't want to steal the thunder from the architecture or the art," she says. The living room (furnished by Michael J. Skelton of MJS Interiors in Los Angeles) is divided into two seating areas, each of which is anchored by a red Tai Ping carpet. A red zebra-patterned Chris Lehrecke daybed from Ralph Pucci serves both groupings, its color repeated in the dining chairs. By limiting the accents to a single hue, Skelton was able to satisfy the owner's desire for color without upstaging the surroundings.

Artwork adorns every wall, making the pieces more approachable but also more vulnerable to the exploits of the family's youngsters: Alec, 17, Tommy, 13, Ingrid, 11, and Rhys, 5. "There's going to be a certain rate of attrition, and you just deal with it," shrugs Craig, an IT marketing manager. "The two of us have damaged more art than the kids have," Linda confesses.

This page (from top): Linda's office features fanciful *Mademoiselle* chairs by Philippe Starck for Kartell and art by Robin Lowe; in the basement, Craig works at a desk surrounded by books and a painting of books by Xiaoze Xie. Opposite (from top): In the dining room, Roberto Barbieri's *Lea* chairs from Zanotta pull up to a walnut and steel *Planked* table from Gulassa; *Eclipse* all-weather wicker chairs from Gloster provide seating on the patio outside the family room.





Linda,

a Midwesterner by birth, asked for plenty of light to combat Seattle's often gloomy weather. The architects obliged, lining the atrium's walls and ceiling with a nearly unbroken band of windows. Even the atrium floor is glass, so light can illuminate the basement during the day.

Glass bridges span the void above, linking the staircase to the colorful, treetop-hugging bedrooms. (Deena Rauén supervised the upstairs decor.) Although they have to cross a bridge to get to the master bath, Linda and Craig don't seem to mind. "My husband gets up at five in the morning, so while he's getting ready, I can still be over in the bedroom sleeping," Linda says.

Owing to a variety of unforeseen circumstances, the house took six years from concept to completion. During that time, the Fiebigs lived in a succession of rental houses and dispersed their art to friends. (Attending a party one evening, Craig raved about one of his host's paintings, only to be reminded that the piece was his.) When they were finally reunited with their art, Linda was overcome. "It was like a kid coming home from college," she says.

All those years of planning paid off, though. Light and greenery greet the Fiebigs at every turn, enshrining family and art in a setting that is worthy of both. "The house suits our lifestyle to a tee," Linda says. "People often ask us what we would change. We're still hard-pressed to come up with an answer." ▣

See Resources, last pages.

This page (from top): Honed limestone sets a mellow mood in the master bath, where cabinets clad in padauk (a tropical red wood) flank a marble vanity; the home's second floor seems to float above stands of bamboo surrounding the backyard's elevated patio (the *Lolah* seating at left is from Janus et Cie, orange *Maia* chairs are from Kettal). Opposite: Glass bridges span the atrium, connecting the stairwell and bedrooms. The sculpture is by Viola Frey.



