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# Detroit Home

HOW WE LIVE, WHERE WE LIVE

February - March 2016



IN LOVE  
WITH HOME

A NOVELIST'S POTTERY PASSION  
FLOWERS FOR SWEETHEART  
THE NEST'S BEST SPACE  
CRAZY FOR KITCHENS & BATHS  
FALLING FOR DETROIT DESIGN  
WHITE-HOT STYLE  
AND MORE!



**COMPLETE  
WHITE OUT**

"You can never have too much white, even on the walls," says designer Janice Steinhardt. "Think of it like a white-on-white shirt — you have to mix the materials. It's the same in a home — big fluffy pillows, matte, and glossy. It's how you mix it all up."



# WHITE ON WHITE

An art-loving Birmingham couple and their designer put the accent on minimalism

By Lynne Konstantin | Photographs by Martin Vecchio



**W**alk through the front door of this Birmingham condo, and the world feels a bit different. It's reminiscent of a bristling, sparkling land somewhere between Miami Beach and Soho, completely and inherently shimmering in layers of white.

Even though the couple who lives there knows how special it is, it's also "just home" — which is exactly what the wife, along with interior designer Janice Steinhardt, intended. When the homeowners moved into their new condo 10 years ago, they immediately called interior designer Brian Killian, who died soon after he completed the project. The prominent designer created a serene and classic contemporary environment that suited the couple well.

Around the same time, the homeowners — serious travelers who spend half the year in Florida — also became serious art lovers. Picking up pieces from galleries in New York City's Soho; Miami, where they visit the annual Art Basel, the esteemed and influential modern and contemporary art fairs; and metro Detroit's Robert Kidd Gallery, the Hill Gallery, and the Wasserman Projects, the pair filled their home with pieces that caught their eye.

"There's no central theme," the homeowner says, "except each is something we love. We look at the overall impact of a piece rather than its specific elements." Among their favorites: a photograph by Helmut Newton, a painting (their first) by Franceska Kirke, and an edgy-ethereal piece by Cathleen Naundorf. "(Detroit photographer) Bill Rauhauser's *Saluting Soldier* (of a World War I veteran in front of Detroit's J.L. Hudson's building, taken in the



**WELCOME HOME**

*Opposite page:* An acrylic portrait of Marilyn Monroe by Kfir Moyal is dusted with layers of Swarovski crystals, lending an ethereal welcome to the foyer. *This page:* In the husband's office, where an aluminum bookcase is finished with white lacquer shelves, designer Steinhardt made the mustard yellow settee pop by adding red pillows.



1970s) reminds me of my father, who was a proud World War II vet,” the homeowner says. As their collection developed, their personal style evolved, too. “In time, our ‘accumulation’ felt out of context with the original design of the home,” the homeowner explains. “We needed to rebalance the landscape in a more minimal format, with more emphasis on the art itself. We wanted our home (to be) a little lighter, a little airier.”

So she called Steinhardt, a longtime friend and owner of MDG Design in Birmingham.

“It started out that we just wanted to freshen things up,” the homeowner says, “but we ended up changing everything. Janice is very architectural and very unique. I knew what I wanted, but I had no idea how to get it.”

Steinhardt ran with the homeowners’ ideas, creating a clean and cutting-edge world of white, layered with textures and tones to create interest — yet also giving way to the works of art.

“(The couple has) a wonderful eye for art and design,”

Steinhardt says. “She is glamorous and elegant, very sophisticated in her art choices, but she likes to be comfortable. And they really enjoy the process. They didn’t want me to just do it for them. They wanted it to be theirs; they just needed help interpreting it. So I wanted the space to reflect their love for beautiful items — and make it a home for them.”

Steinhardt created a series of galleries throughout the home, with walls covered in paintings, photographs, and a soon-to-arrive mixed-media installation in the foyer. She gave equal attention to the details that make the home livable, functional, unexpected, and always fantastic. The result is that art lives organically with furniture and cabinetry — in this home, those items are stand-on-their-own works of art. A spectacular console made of resin by Martha Sturdy is centered between the dining room and the living area, making the space two separate but connected rooms. Although the console is solid, it emanates airiness. In the dining room, Steinhardt designed an intimate



**THE SHAPE OF THINGS**

Both pages, clockwise from photo on wall: Greg Lotus' *Dry Swim* and a sculpture made by the husband grace the den. A photo by David Benoliel was picked up at Miami's Art Basel. This glass-shelved-and-backed bar, designed by Janice Steinhardt and executed by Gary Fried, is fronted in stainless steel. In the powder room, a rectangular toilet by Duravit and a floating vanity underlit with LED lights look like sculpture.



FEATURE | *in love with white*





#### IN BLACK AND WHITE

*Opposite page:* Various textures adorn the kitchen, where a Gaggenau oven blends with cabinetry. A gold-dipped tea service by Tom Dixon sits on a Saarinen table circled with Barcelona chairs. A no-profile stovetop is flush with the counters. *This page:* A furniture-like work station stands on stainless legs. In the dining room are Simon Procter's *Portrait of Astrid Bergès-Frisbey No. 7* and a horse painting from Birmingham's Robert Kidd Gallery.

round table that can easily seat 10 or more. Resting on a stainless base crafted by sculptor and furniture designer Richard Bennett, of Richard Bennett & Associates in midtown Detroit, the table is topped with beveled-edge glass by Joel Cothery of Southfield's Reid Glass and circled by white leather chairs from Arkitektura In-Situ in Birmingham. With the help of design consultant Gary Fried and EuroCraft Interiors in Sterling Heights, Steinhardt created a mirrored and steel-gray-toned bar topped with white glass from CIOT in Troy.

The kitchen update snowballed into a wall being removed, a workspace added, and the integration of a system for organization.

"She doesn't like clutter," Steinhardt says of the wife, "so we created a customized space to put every item." Calling on colleagues, sisters Alisha and Niki Serras, co-owners of Scavolini by Cucina Moda in Birmingham (and Chicago), Steinhardt fashioned a sleek, streamlined kitchen — her subspecialty — layered with texture and light. Two facing walls of white — one matte and one high gloss — are devoid of handles, with finger-pulls opening cabinets upward and every detail flush and underlit by LED sensors, divided by a glass-topped central workspace that's like a gorgeous footed console fit for chopping on.

"Janice made it all happen," the homeowner says. "Now, I won't buy a pillow without her blessing. People say never work with a friend, but I'm so lucky. Janice was already a friend, and during this process she became family." ■