



SIMPLY ICONIC
Furniture pieces like the red woven lounge chair by Jens Risom (foreground) and Eero Saarinen's iconic Womb chair (background) break from the strict architectural aesthetic.

Ravenswood Revision

A blank interior slate is transformed with custom cabinetry, an airy staircase and a made-over modern kitchen.

By Rhys Hunding | Photography by Hedrich Blessing

Remember staring at that blank piece of paper come term paper or thesis time and feeling overwhelmed? Take that feeling and multiply it by a few thousand (square feet), and it will give you an idea of what interior designer Mitchell Channon, of Mitchell Channon Designs (mitchellchannondesign.com), faced during the transformation of a 1920s **CONTINUED...**

...CONTINUED Ravenswood two-flat into a single-family home.

When the client-couple approached Channon, they had one main concept—accompanied by a file full of clippings—for what they wanted from their new space. “They had a desire to have the openness associated with modern spaces, but still have defined function areas,” says Channon. “We had to work to make the space feel contained in a nontraditional way, but not to feel completely enclosed by walls.”

While the clients didn’t want a “great room” feel, they also didn’t want to feel like they were living in a bento box. This compelled Channon to let his background in fine art show, and get creative with solutions. “I found inspiration compositionally in the work of the artist Mondrian,” he says, “in the way that things are not symmetrical, but they are always balanced.” Some of the ways that Channon accomplished this were through built-in floor-to-ceiling shelving units that double as dividing columns, a gradient plane ceiling and horizontal cabinetry that extends through multiple spaces to create a seamless

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flow between programmatic elements. Channon credits his ability to operate imaginatively in part to his relationship with his clients. “I sat down with them to figure out how they live, how they anticipate using the space, how they want it to feel... There was a lot of good conversation.”

As well as drawing inspiration from the clients, the Ravenswood surroundings also influenced the project. The autumnal color scheme of the interior is reminiscent of the neighboring brick bungalow and two-flat facades that are so prominent in the area. When it came to the furnishings, Channon’s tendency was to stick with classic midcentury pieces. His go-to? Design Within Reach. “How we furnished the space was really inspired



by the interior architectural scheme we created, not the other way around,” says Channon. Certain pieces did break away from the right angles found in the interior—the red woven lounge chair by Jens Risom, the iconic Eero Saarinen Womb chair and a Noguchi lamp (a staple of Channon’s designs) for instance.

One of Channon’s most innovative design solutions was also one of the smallest—a recessed niche located in a half-wall in the living area that currently houses family photos. Emblematic of the entire project, this niche is not only clever from a design perspective, but is also deeply personal. “The homeowners were very intimately engaged in the process,” cites Channon as the reason for the individualized moments that he helped create within the interior architecture and design. “It was basically a perfect match.” ■

FUNCTION FIX
Shelving and other storage acts as transitions between function areas in the home. Adding these segues helps to maintain visual consistency, while also loosely defining the living spaces. Left: Channon used design elements such as built-in floor-to-ceiling shelving units that function as dividing columns, a gradient plane ceiling and horizontal cabinetry that extends through multiple spaces to help steer clear of the “great room” feel.