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DECORATION

MIRROR OF THE SOUL:

INTERIORS THAT
TURN A HOUSE
INTO A HOME



HOMES

New Chapter, New Nest (PAGE 46) A couple with European roots left the Montreal suburbs and settled in Little Italy. Take a tour of the new home that architecture firm yh2 designed for them. — **Quiet Time** (PAGE 60) Overlooking the historic Ontario village of Creemore, a second home serves as a refuge from the bustling world. — **Hiding in Plain Sight** (PAGE 72) A house is a reflection of the soul, an extension of oneself. Mexican firm HW Studio is taking that concept to new extremes. — **Not Your Basic Bungalow** (PAGE 86) In Victoria, a 1970s bungalow more than meets the minimalist needs of a design-savvy B.C. couple. And the garden completes the picture.

When their children left home, two empty-nesters with European roots decided to leave the Montreal suburbs and settle in Little Italy. Enter ARCHITECTURE FIRM YH2, who designed a home with an eye on the sky, giving the couple a wide horizon on their latest journey.

Text and styling by Muriel Françoise — Text adapted by Christopher Korchin —
Photographs by Maxime Brouillet



A double-height ceiling, numerous windows and thoughtful use of wood make the third floor a pleasant place to inhabit. The smoked-glass Art, Art Wood dining room table (bonaldo.com) is surrounded by Amelie chairs by Hoffmann Kahleyss (freifrau.com); it sits under Illan wood lamps by Zsuzsanna Horvath (luceplan.com). The floral arrangement is a Studio Sveja creation (studiosveja.com). The sculptural ceramic side table is by Zeynep Boyan (zeynepboyan.com).



New Chapter, New Nest



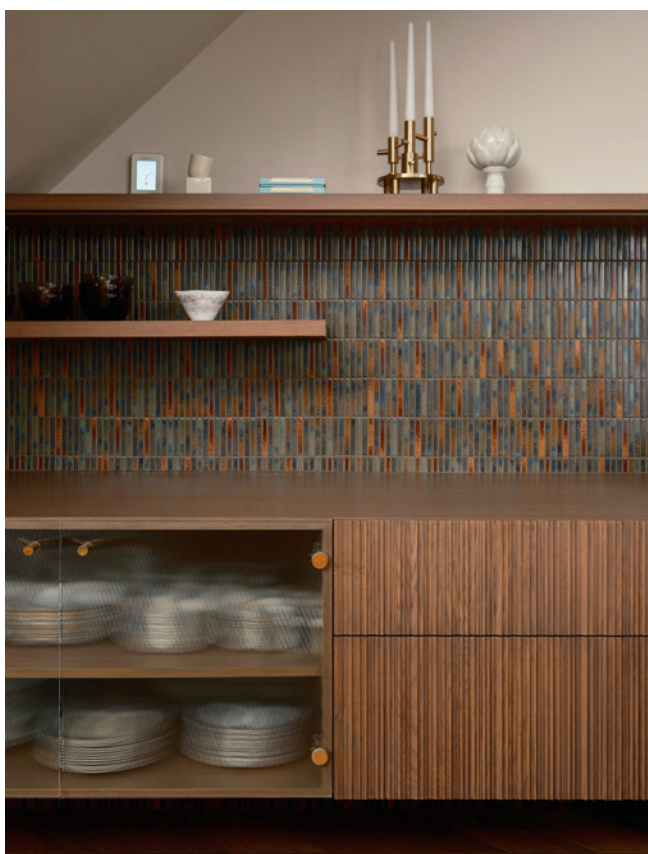
Opposite page — Maison Carlier, seen here from the courtyard, blends seamlessly into the neighbourhood thanks to delicate brickwork and generous use of glass.

The fluted surfaces of the kitchen cupboards add a touch of elegance on the living floor. Brass candle holder by Jaime Hayon for Fritz Hansen (goodeeworld.com).

They had a house in a peaceful neighbourhood, with a swimming pool, plenty of space, a tasteful interior—but they were getting restless. With their children grown up and on the verge of setting out on their own, a Montreal couple had plenty of exciting projects, both professionally and personally, but their suburban family home had lost its lustre. They felt an urgent need to be closer to the city's vibrant core. The family's Italian origins made it a natural for them to invest in the Marché Jean-Talon neighbourhood, in Little Italy. It was the perfect base for grabbing a coffee or running a few errands between two meetings without having to hop in the car.

The two fortysomethings already owned a building there with six apartments and a large parking lot. It was on this asphalted lot that they chose to build a fresh setting for this new chapter in their lives as empty-nesters. Better still, their property was located right in front of yh2, the architecture studio of Marie-Claude Hamelin and Loukas Yiakovakis, and they soon found themselves knocking on their door out of curiosity. This turned out to be a win-win for the architects, because with their soon-to-be new clients, not only were they getting a chance to take on an exceptional project, they would also be getting rid of an eyesore across the street into the bargain. But they were also faced with a difficult task: finding a harmonious way to blend the styles of very different buildings. "We integrated the square forms of the surrounding multi-dwellings with alternating rear and forward volumes. It was this fragmentation of the shape of the house that allowed us to create a link with the various facades," explains yh2 co-founder Marie-Claude Hamelin. The brickwork at the front and back of the house took on a weave-like appearance, and the harsh square lines were softened with curves at the base and the top of the house. This was a nod to the Bauhaus architectural language that yh2 had previously employed when renovating the Maison Kirsch, in nearby Outremont.

Curves prevail streetside on the frosted-glass ground floor, where an office and living area (easily convertible to a separate lodging if needed) have been set up. And the theme of sinuous lines continues with the sapele wood planks cladding the block that houses the bathroom and serves to connect these rooms with the residential entrance. We see those lines again on the bedrooms level where the wood furniture is defined by rounded shapes. And the showcase is the third floor, home to the living areas, featuring a space with ample windows, a double-height ceiling and mezzanine. "From here you can see the sky and the outdoors, but it's not an urban view. You don't feel like you're in the city," says Hamelin. A vaguely surrealist stairway leads to this sky-scape and a large terrace overlooking Mount Royal, a delightful spot for the homeowners and their guests on a summer's day. ➔





The kitchen island, topped with Calcutta Borghini Extra marble, mimics the curved architectural forms used elsewhere in the house. It is matched with a trio of Tractor Stools by Craig Bassam (bassamfellows.com). The owners ordered Yohen Border ceramic field tile (inaxtile.com) for the backsplash. A brass and multicoloured-glass 28 suspension lamp by Omar Arbel (bocci.com) brings a dash of fantasy to this more subdued area. MESURE 0.1 tumblers by Fusion f. (@fusionf_) and Essence wine glasses by Alfredo Häberli (finnishdesignshop.com) below a photo by Joshua Jensen-Nagle. Porcelain 1616 teapot with cup and saucer by Stefan Scholten and Carole Baijings for Arita (goodeeworld.com).





Wooden stairs that lead to a rooftop terrace off the living room lend warmth to the large, amply windowed floor.





[1]

“The outside fades softly into view, with sheer curtains creating intimacy.”

— Marie-Claude Hamelin

[1] — A Standard sofa by Francesco Binfaré (edra.com) lends structure to the large third-floor open space.

[2] — On shelves in the living-room nook, a sculpture by Montreal artist Zeynep Boyan (zeynepboyan.com) and vases by Object and Totem (objectandtotem.com) and Yoona Hur (yoonyounghur.com). The painting is by Peter Hoffer.

Opposite page — Stairs equipped with a steel handrail and guardrail painted in a brass shade bring an additional play of light to the third floor. The comfy midnight-blue sofa sits opposite a Lakes coffee table by Studio Klass (fiamitalia.it). Kipu pouf by Anderssen & Vol (lapalma.it).

[2]





"The double-height ceiling helps to delineate the different areas."

— Marie-Claude Hamelin





[1]

[2]



[1] – The couple's bedroom opens onto a bathroom crafted by Ébénisterie Richard Tanguay (ebenisterierichardtanguay.ca) and Inter-meuble (inter-meuble.com). Red Gum veneer and a slab of Piombo Honed quartzite (ciot.com) cover the vanity, whose rounded shape repeats the house's curved forms. The mirrors and the smoked glass of the shower screen are from Installations J.R. Yohen Border ceramic tile (inaxtile.com) covers the shower walls and one side of the room.

[2] – The walls of the shower area are lined in Yohen Border ceramic tile (inaxtile.com).

Opposite page – Storage space has been integrated into the passageway that connects the bathroom to the owners' bedroom, which features a walnut bed. Herringbone flooring (fogliedoroparquet.com) evokes the European interiors that served as inspiration for the home's decor.



Although the couple gave the architects carte blanche for the outside of the house, they were heavily involved in designing the basic decor, drawing inspiration from the many photos they took on trips abroad—especially in Italy and Spain, where one of their sons has been living the last four years—and from their general love of beautiful things. This explains the use of colourful accents and refined materials in this minimalist gem. Indeed, the terrazzo tile on the ground floor recalls the type of flooring typical of Milanese palaces. Among other features, the owners' pride and joy is the multicoloured ceramic backsplash in the third-floor open kitchen, which they ordered directly from Japan.

Attention to detail, the hallmark of yh2, is found throughout the new home of these two aesthetes. And this extraordinary project owes a great deal to the various artisans who took part in creating it, especially the Carlier brothers, who brought their woodworking mastery to the home's custom-made elements. Maison Carlier, this innovative home made of brick, glass and wood that sits opposite the studio of the architects who designed it, now bears their name as well as their fingerprints. — (yh2architecture.com)

[1] — An oval block, clad in sapele wood planks, houses the ground-floor bathroom. A small kitchen on the right would allow independent use of this floor, which is currently reserved for work.

[2] — Colosseo Honed terrazzo tile (ciot.com) covers the entire ground floor.

Opposite page — Maison Carlier, streetside, with its weave-like brick facade. Frosted glass gives the owners privacy in the ground-floor living room.

[1]



[2]



