

# Contemporary Classic



Iconic 20th-century style combines with everyday livability in a highly functional Franklin home.

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**W**hen a Jewish couple moved into their traditional Cape Cod-style home in Franklin early in their marriage, it was everything they wanted for raising their family. Years later, when almost all of the kids had flown the coop, their tastes had evolved and their needs had changed.

Down the street, a spectacular Irving Tobocman design taunted them daily as their new idealized dream home. So when the contemporary home became available, their dream came true. To expand and tweak it to their precise needs — to make sure they had plenty of space for their three children to visit and to host their large family and many friends for holiday dinners — they recruited a design team that included architect Alex Bogaerts, founder and president of Alexander V. Bogaerts + Associates in Bloomfield Hills; builder Joel Lerman, owner of Lerman Corporation in Bloomfield Hills; and interior designer Lynda Charfoos, owner of Charfoos Design in Bloomfield Hills.

“It was a major restoration project,” says Lerman, who created a two-story addition with four new bedrooms, baths and walk-in closets, plus a sunroom, a landscape renovation with stone patio, a theater room and more. Each component of the stellar team had been recommended by friends whose taste the homeowners trusted and respected explicitly, and each was brought on at the beginning of the project.

“When a client recognizes how beneficial the partnership between architect, designer and builder can be, and we all have a great rapport together with the client, we are able to problem-solve issues before they become real issues — the end product becomes seamless, flawless and has literally no drawbacks,” says Charfoos. “We were fortunate that these homeowners realized this, and we all benefited from understanding exactly what the clients wanted from every perspective. It moved like clockwork, and there were no problems that needed to be readdressed later because everything had been thought out early on. And the home became exactly what they wanted.” □

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Because the homeowners entertain often and have pets, the front entrance gets a lot of traffic, so designer Lynda Charfoos opted for marble rather than wood floors. “This is a great bridge room between the kitchen, living room and the private spaces in the house, and it sets the stage for what’s to come,” says Charfoos. The use of marble, the brightly toned palette punching up neutrals and even the Knoll Platner chairs are echoed throughout the home. “The homeowner comes from a family of art collectors, so we created the potential of great art walls,” says Charfoos, who is on the board of directors at Cranbrook Art Institute and worked with art consultant Marilyn Finkel, president of Marilyn Finkel & Associates in Southfield, to find the works throughout the home.

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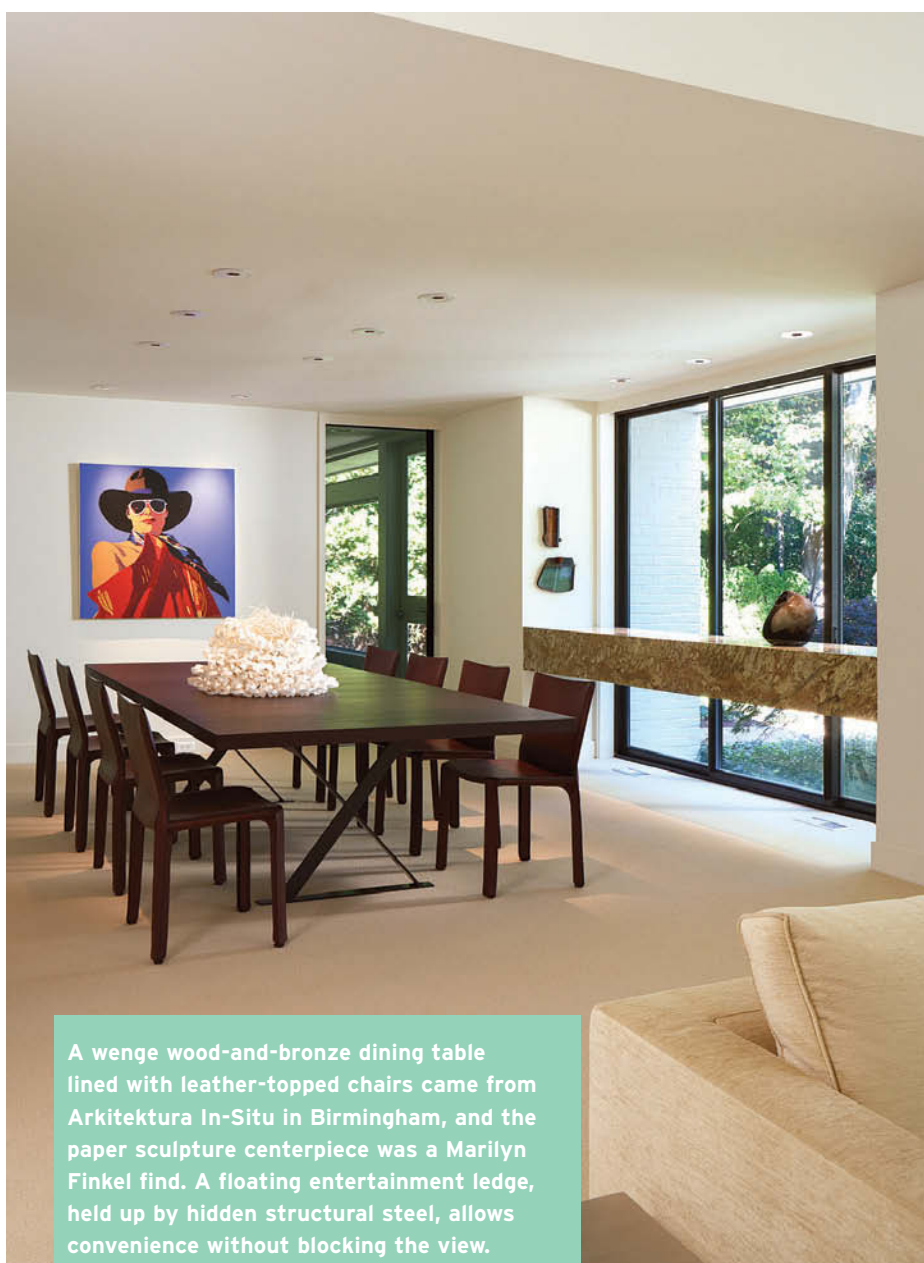


A glass-and-steel Knoll Platner card table with Platner chairs and the repetition of the leather ottomans offer a subconscious connection to other areas in the home, making the large space feel more intimate. The extremely private, lushly landscaped yard allows the family to forego window coverings.





The family had come from a traditional home and wanted to make a major shift to a more contemporary and sophisticated aesthetic, but they also wanted the home to be comfortable for family, friends and their pets. “They wanted it to be livable, with no rooms off limits,” says Charfoos, who took her cue from the spectacular vista that welcomes people into this space. The enormous living area was broken up into distinct “conversation areas,” she says. “Because there are usually just two people living there, but who also needed space for entertaining, we needed to accommodate anywhere from two to 30 and have all be comfortable.” The sofa faces a custom-designed fireplace with a ledge that seats up to five people, and two leather ottomans paired with a glass and steel table can be moved around for additional seating. “If a room is not functional, it’s not a great design,” says Charfoos. The back corner provides a cozy spot to read and enjoy the view.



A wenge wood-and-bronze dining table lined with leather-topped chairs came from Arkitektura In-Situ in Birmingham, and the paper sculpture centerpiece was a Marilyn Finkel find. A floating entertainment ledge, held up by hidden structural steel, allows convenience without blocking the view. Covered with the same marble used on the foyer floor and flanked by pillars that double as seamless storage cabinets, the ledge hides electrical outlets so that coffee pots and other buffet items can be plugged in while the cords are kept out of sight.