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Passion PROJECT

DESIGNER ELIZABETH MOLLEN TRANSFORMS
HER FAMILY'S HIGHLAND PARK HOME



From top: Original wood moldings are contrasted by a custom Art + Loom rug and ceiling wallpaper from Elitis France; a striking Galerie Glustin chandelier sourced from 1st Dibs hangs over a custom dining table by Seer Studio.

A MODERN MAKEOVER

Designer Elizabeth Mollen transforms a diamond in the rough into her dream home in Highland Park.

BY PRIYANKA RAJPUT // PHOTOGRAPHED BY DUSTIN HALLECK

THE PROJECT

As a seasoned interior and textile designer, Elizabeth Mollen of Chicago-based Stone Textile Studio has a keen eye for detail and an unwavering passion for transforming

spaces. So naturally, when she and her husband, Russell, found a four-story Tudor-style property built in the early 1900s, which sits near the beach and is surrounded by nature, they knew they'd

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Clockwise from top: Art by Josh Young hangs over a custom Stone Textile Studio console; a custom Porter Teleo mural matches the cabinetry's Farrow & Ball Des Nimes hue; a vintage Jayson Home sofa, Seer Studio marble side table and ottomans courtesy of Stone Textile Studio; Mollen.

THE DESIGN

Various thoughtful accents throughout the home add a distinct personality to the abode. Bath flooring matches the existing fireplace, which is steeped in marble and brass medallions; a plant hook near the breakfast table was once an old potato sack holder; and the double doorway outside the primary bathroom mirrors the home's original window silhouettes. Mollen

frequently integrates repetitive shapes, especially with artwork, to create visual interest and did just that in the entryway to contrast its dark, dated look. Elsewhere, the designer preserved the original windows, stair rail, wooden doors and doorknobs, and balanced dark hues with fresh colors, and added new lighting fixtures, like the Sputnik chandelier from Galerie Glustin in the dining room. **CONTINUED...**

...CONTINUED found something special. While the prospect of the extensive renovations needed in this 6,000-square-foot Highland Park home deterred other buyers, she was inspired by the challenge. Says Mollen, "This is a special home with incredible bones and magnificent details from the period."

THE PROCESS

Renovating a home with a rich history presents the unique challenge of preserving its roots while updating it for modern living. Mollen painted many of the ornate original moldings white, which helped brighten the space, and layered rooms with a variety of colors, patterns and modern art to create a healthy fusion of old and new.



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THE CHALLENGES

Renovating a home during a pandemic is already a challenging task, but for Mollen, it came with an extra layer of complexity: being in Austin, Tex., where she and her family previously lived, while renovating a home on the North Shore. Quick one-day trips to Highland Park to meet with contractors were not unusual.

THE DETAILS

The home is an ever-evolving oasis for Mollen and her family of five. To cater to their current needs, an existing secondary staircase was converted

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From top: In the office, an AGO ceiling fixture from 1st Dibs and Stone Textile Studio wallpaper and chair; a commissioned work by artist Sara Ferguson hangs over the fireplace, which features Ann Sacks marble and the original mantel with dentil molding.



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—ELIZABETH MOLLEN



...CONTINUED into a pantry. “My favorite,” Mollen shares, “is the family room.” Painted in a subdued Buxton Blue by Benjamin Moore, the sprawling space evokes a serene ambiance. It also features a CB2 game table and vintage grotto-style chairs, as well as vintage furniture that’s been reupholstered in kid-friendly fabrics. “Eventually the playroom will turn into a media room,” she says. “and the landing will go from Legos to library.”

THE OUTCOME

After the year-and-a-half renovation process, the family home was complete. “Because I’m an interior designer, we really wanted a project,” Mollen says. And the home’s original gems arched windows, dentil moldings and millwork—much of which was painted from brown to white—offered the perfect canvas. “This house is truly our forever home,” she concludes. “It has the ability to change and grow with us as our kids get older...We’ve made it our own and couldn’t be happier.” ◉



Clockwise from top: A custom bed with Romo Fabric with Seer Studio nightstands; a Jean Alexander Frater artwork and custom marble tile pattern by Artistic Tile; Newport Brass faucets in the primary bathroom; in the primary bedroom, the original marble mantle frames the fireplace, which sits under a Concrete Cat mirror.