



Shore LINES

The interior designer and architect of a new house in suburban Chicago ensured that its most prominent feature, Lake Michigan, remained the centerpiece of every room

INTERIOR DESIGN BY *Victoria Hagan*
ARCHITECTURE BY *Randy Correll, Robert A.M. Stern Architects*

PHOTOGRAPHY BY *Read McKendree/JBSA*
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Opening page: The main staircase in a new home in Winnetka, Illinois, assumes an architectural presence in the entry foyer as it winds its way up. This page: The house, sited directly on the shore of Lake Michigan, includes its own private beach. Iron pergolas and archways fashioned by Covax Design demarcate many of the outdoor rooms. Opposite: Expanses of fieldstone walls and bluestone paving are used to great effect, including for a spa and fountain area.



Victoria Hagan established a precise balance and symmetry in the living room, which she furnished with custom sofas upholstered in Cowtan & Tout fabric, a pair of hammered bronze benches, upholstered in Larsen fabric, and a custom bronze and shagreen coffee table she designed. The walls are finished in specialty plaster with painted trimwork.



Absent a formal dining room, an eating area in the kitchen serves as one of several places for family meals and those shared with guests. A Démiurge dining table is set with chairs upholstered in leather. The oak floors, composed of wide planks, are hand-scraped and darkly stained.



In a house whose walls are mostly monochromatic, an alluring hue of blue is plastered in a powder room. A Waterworks faucet is paired with sconces from Visual Comfort & Co. and a custom mirror.

Architect Randy Correll's embrace of the American Georgian style is evident on the stairway landing, a destination centered with a recessed Palladian-style window. With its upholstered bench, the space becomes not only a place to pause on the walk up, but also to sit and read.



EVEN BEFORE THIS NEW HOUSE was built, it came with a decorative accessory that would have to be accommodated: Lake Michigan. The moment interior designer Victoria Hagan began her work on the rooms and just as architect Randy Correll started to draw the plans for what would be a new home on a lot in Winnetka, Illinois, they both knew that the great body of water on which the residence was sited would be a detail that dictated the design, inside and out. As Hagan emphasizes, "It's not just the presence of the lake outside every window, but also the light off the lake that's so special." So pervasive is the hue of the water and the straight horizon line that draws across the land that those natural features had to become integral to how the house took shape.

The four-bedroom residence, designed by Correll, a partner at Robert A.M. Stern Architects, embodies what he calls the American Georgian style, whereby stone façades are combined with elements such as clapboard siding, Classical pillars, Palladian-style and mullioned eyebrow windows. "Although the style is rooted in the Northeast," says Correll, "the suburban North Shore of Chicago, where this house is located, has many styles of houses, maybe every kind of style." Indeed, that contiguous line of suburbs that runs from Evanston up to Lake Bluff, and which includes Winnetka, represents one of the best timelines and stylelines of American residential architecture. The challenge, if not also the benefit of this building site, was how to configure a house on a steep bluff overlooking the lake while fashioning a floor plan that would allow every room to have a view of the water.

The chosen palette for the rooms—neutral tones, interspersed with a variety of blues—is in response, of course, to the water views, but Hagan also emphasizes that the color scheme is what the homeowners wanted. "The colors are really a response to what my client prefers, which is what every project of mine is about. It's about working with a palette that feels right for them, the people who live there. Yes, interior design is and always should be a collaboration, but I work in response to what the homeowners want." And just as the clients' wishes are the main agenda, with this house, it's the lake that takes, as Hagan says, "center stage" in every room.

Although this is a new house, it already possesses what Hagan calls an "old soul," the result, in part, of its prosaic materials, its traditional styling and profile, and its embrace

of family life. Hagan, who works from New York and whose completed projects are found throughout the United States, understands well that the very agenda of most new American homes differs from what used to exist even just a generation ago. "It's a common thread in my work these days that people want homes that have nod to tradition but that feel and look younger, that are designed with a casual frame of mind. With this house, nature, namely the lake, is so mesmerizing that the dwelling—inside and out—was designed so that its occupants live with that natural element."

In keeping with the clients' desire to have a home that readily accommodates their grown children and grandchildren, they instructed Correll to devise a floor plan that did not include a formal dining room. Rather, a dining area is situated adjacent to the kitchen, with others in a sunroom and in the living room; meanwhile, outdoor terraces and nooks, sheltered loggias and balconies become additional areas for seasonal entertaining and dining. Correll cites in particular a rear seating area centered beneath an open-air arched trellis, designed by a master ironworker. "Here is a space where the homeowners can sit in shade while still being outdoors and gazing at the lake."

In configuring the interior rooms, Hagan accomplished one of the many characteristics for which she has long been known—the ability to surprise. In every room, Hagan introduced an element meant to be noticed without being extraneous. "The lighting fixtures are contemporary," she says, "particularly the one that hangs in the foyer." There, in the two-story-high space, a molded fiberglass fixture assumes the presence of sculpture, as well as a practical source of light. Contributing to the new, old-soul feel of the residence, Correll designed a staircase that Hagan refers to as "the wow moment" of the house. "I love the idea in old houses of how you often enter below the staircase," Correll explains, "whereby you turn around to see what is happening above your head, with the staircase landing above the vestibule." As Hagan adds, who has worked on numerous projects with Correll, "Just to see the curve of the stairs going up in such an elegant fashion is such a special detail of the house."

Hagan knows, too, the most important decorative element of any house that even she can't shop for or create. "A house is really a home when you hear the laughter inside—of the owners, of family, of friends. When a house contains that, it makes it priceless." ■

In the master suite, Christian Liaigre's Sud bench, inspired by Giacometti, is upholstered in Larsen's Murray White. Fabric-covered walls add a note of intimacy and calm to the room. Bedding is by Frette. Opposite: Waterworks fixtures and flooring are used throughout the master bath. The lighting fixture is from Charles Edwards.

