

# From A to Zinc

DSPACE STUDIO AND PROJECT INTERIORS TEAM UP ON A STUNNING, METAL-CLAD ABODE IN LAKEVIEW.

BY TATE GUNNERSON

When it comes to residential architecture in Chicago, brick, stone and concrete are the norm. But local firms dSpace Studio and Project Interiors took a different route with its recent project, a 6,000-square-foot, five-bed home on a double lot in Lakeview, cladding the front facade with standing seam zinc panels.

The architects credit the forward-thinking design to their clients, Jared and Stefanie Schenk, who raised their three children in a more traditional frame house on the same lot. “They’re very progressive, and they kept pushing us to go even further,” explains dSpace principal architect Robert McFadden, who collaborated with principal and founder Kevin Toukoumidis on the project.

While the dwelling is closed off from the street, the rooms on the main level have

double-height glass walls overlooking a lush private courtyard. Like the front walkway, the concrete patios are scored with a trapezoidal motif that is repeated on the concrete flooring inside. “There was a cohesive vision,” Toukoumidis says, noting that the house is built slab-on-grade with no basement, enhancing the sense of connection between inside and out.

Overlooking the courtyard, the double-height great room is just as dramatic as the exterior, a molded metal staircase with a nearly invisible hand railing rising over the space from the open second-floor gallery to the third-floor master suite level.

The graphic black-and-white Orca backslash in the open kitchen also lives up to the architecture, popping like artwork against the white lacquer cabinetry. “Who doesn’t want a large monochromatic abstract painting from the earth

From top: Accessible from all the major rooms, the home’s private rear courtyard features areas for living, dining and recreation; the master suite’s low-slung upholstered headboard is recessed into a rift-cut oak-clad niche inlaid with brass, an homage to the home’s stepped front facade.



From left: Built-in bunks lined with a black vinyl grass-cloth wall covering and privacy draperies create additional space for guests in the family room; concealed from the street by zinc panels, the modern manse opens up along the side elevation, where tall windows capture the morning and afternoon sunlight; a brass mobilelike sculpture dangles through a hole in the ceiling, creating a focal point in both the front foyer and the wife’s office one floor up.



BUNKS AND FOYER PHOTOS BY AIMEE MAZENA; EXTERIOR AND TUB PHOTOS BY TONY SLORE; LIVING ROOM PHOTO BY GIANNI FRANCHELLUCCI; ARTWORK IN LIVING ROOM (FROM LEFT): BY MARLON PORTALES CUSETI; BY CHICK CLOSE; BY SAGOLS VLAJIMIR LEÓN



From left: In the master suite, both the metallic tub backslash and the porcelain floor tile with a brass inlay reference the trapezoidal shape that can be found throughout the property; white walls in the double-height living room create a gallerylike backdrop for the couple’s extensive art collection.

anchored in the heart of the home?” asks interior designer and Project Interiors founder Aimee Wertepny, who worked with colleague Jennifer Kranitz and the architects on the interior design.

Across the room, a rift-cut oak fireplace with a steel hearth floats between the living and dining areas. On one side, a thick handspun alpaca, mohair and wool yarn rug inlaid with a brass channel by local artisan Brian Erden grounds a comfortable seating zone furnished with a mod sectional sofa and an occasional one-armed chair distinguished by its rust-dyed alpaca fur and

matching mohair upholstery.

“If our firm had a signature, texture might be it,” Wertepny says, pointing to the shredded leather throw pillows on the sofa. “That contrast keeps it interesting.”

In the dining area, a long mohair-covered bench and barrel-back deco-inspired chairs covered in blush wool mélange surround a vintage dining table with an ornate stone top. The rosy hue is reflected, literally, in the high-gloss pink interior of the rift-cut oak wet bar. “We didn’t want it to be one-note modern,” Kranitz says. “There are a lot of fun surprises.”

The unexpected elements

include a hanging sculpture comprised of brass geometric shapes, which cascades down through a hole in the wife’s second-floor office to the entry foyer below, where it shimmers alongside a black baby grand piano atop a hide rug painted in an energetic circular pattern by Italian artist Selvaggia Armani. “Definitely unexpected,” Wertepny notes. “The brass sculpture is playful, but serious enough to honor the architecture.”

Riffing off the architecture whenever possible, the designers didn’t forget the trapezoidal detail: The porcelain tile in the master

bathroom is laid in a similar pattern highlighted by a brass inlay, and the lines in the metallic tub backslash echo the shape. “It’s a beaming surprise upon entering the master bath,” Wertepny says, “and it sets the tone—regal, chic, sexy.”

Indeed, inside and out, the home is like nothing else in the neighborhood—just what the owners envisioned. Says Toukoumidis, “They let us dance with them and create some really innovative ideas.”

“Never before have we had a client pull out a bag of tricks like Stefanie Schenk,” Wertepny adds. “It all whistles one happy tune.” ■