

CHICAGO

# luxe.

interiors + design®



\$ 9.95 A SANDOW MEDIA PUBLICATION



VOLUME 10, ISSUE 2 | DISPLAY UNTIL 7/16/12

# fresh coat.

WRITTEN BY **TATE GUNNERSON** | PHOTOGRAPHY BY **SCOTT SHIGLEY**

HAVING TOO MANY CHOICES CAN BE JUST AS HAND-WRINGING AS HAVING TOO FEW. That's just one of the reasons why designer Michael Abrams agreed to accompany a young married couple as they searched for their dream home in Chicago's Lincoln Park neighborhood. The couple—he's a hedge fund manager, she's an attorney—discovered Abrams' work while touring a home that he had designed, and wanted him to create the interiors of whichever home they ultimately bought. "It was great to have a professional viewpoint when house hunting and we really respected his honesty," the husband recalls.

It wasn't long before the couple found a four-level home that had been designed by Pappageorge Haymes Partners. When Abrams confirmed the space posed no major design challenges, the couple bought the residence and officially hired him to transform it. "Because the house possesses such an open floor plan, we chose just a few basic colors and carried them throughout," Abrams says. "The owners collect art, and we wanted a neutral base to showcase their future collection."

To that end, Abrams selected a bevy of neutral Benjamin Moore paint shades with names like Grant Beige, Wickham Gray and Cinder—a charcoal tone that highlights a drywall enclosure he designed in the family room around an existing media niche, which accommodates a flat-screen TV and a new EcoSmart fireplace. "We love it," the wife says. "It's very modern and comfortable."

**INTERIOR DESIGN** Michael Abrams, Michael Abrams Limited

**BEDROOMS** 4 **BATHROOMS** 6 **SQUARE FEET** 5,500











**DOUBLE VISION**

A large floor mirror framed in gray-toned wood from Niedermaier reflects the glass and polished stainless-steel chandelier by Charles Loomis, found at The Bright Group, and artwork by Darren Waterston. The gold bowl is from Baker Knapp & Tubbs.



CONTINUED FROM PAGE 216

Following suit, Abrams made simple alterations that transformed the look and feel of the nearby kitchen while keeping the Brazilian cherrywood cabinetry and hardwood floors. The designer hired Stonecutters to replace the island countertop with a medium-gray quartz surface from Silestone, which continues down each side to create a more substantial appearance. And that's not all. "On one side, we continued the island and connected a built-in breakfast table made out of the same material," Abrams says. "It gives the space a bright, contemporary look."

To emphasize the room's horizontal lines and add another source of ambient light, Abrams designed a "light bridge"—a thick piece of Brazilian cherrywood that connects the kitchen cabinets to the media niche. "The light bridge extends approximately 30 feet from the kitchen all the way to the family room," he explains. "It became the top of the new fireplace." For the opposite wall, Abrams designed a long walnut console table with an espresso-finished base, which echoes the bridge's horizontal lines and leads the eye into the family room. Here is where the owners spend most of their time, often watching television on the custom sectional that Abrams designed.



**LINE ITEM**

To improve the flow of the kitchen, designer Michael Abrams emphasized the space's horizontal lines by connecting the island and the previously freestanding kitchen table to create a single piece. Barstools from Design Within Reach and a Kohler faucet add shine to the space.









#### **SOFT OPENING**

Abrams clad the master bath walls with a limestone and glass mosaic from The Tile Gallery. "The most difficult part was carrying the new tub up the stairs," recalls Charlie Vargas, of Charlie's Painting & Handyman Home Service, who helped Abrams execute the modified rehab of the space.





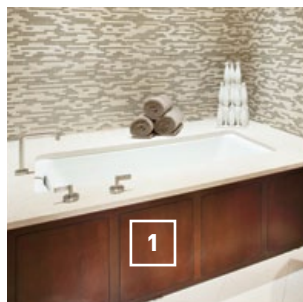
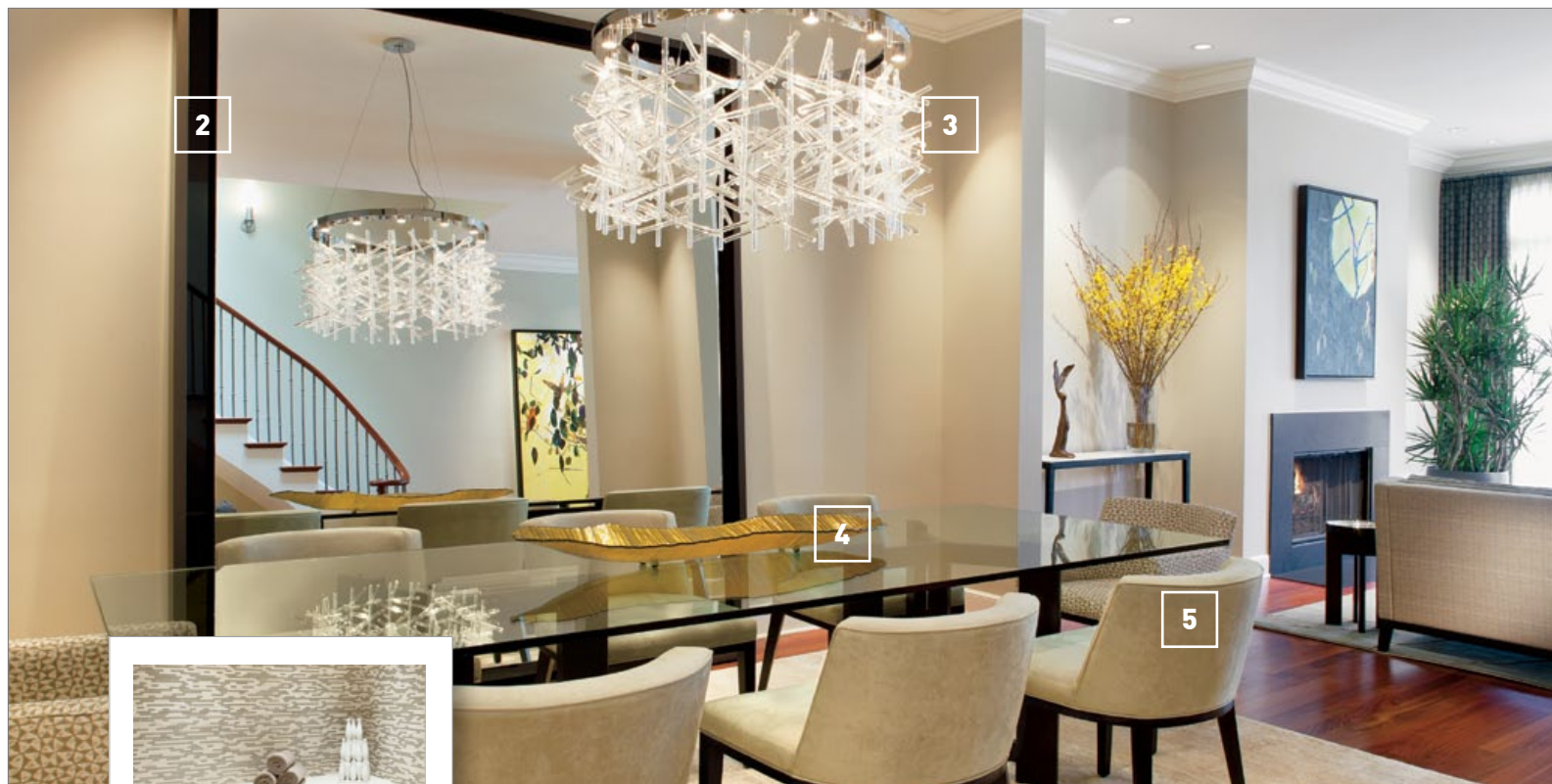
CONTINUED FROM PAGE 219

“Every piece of furniture with the exception of those in the guest bedroom is brand-new,” says Abrams. In the dining room, he designed the walnut and glass-topped table and the 10 upholstered chairs. A large mirror from Niedermaier breaks up the expanse of a windowless wall and reflects the light from a gleaming Charles Loomis chandelier that Abrams had installed over the table. “There are no windows on that side elevation, so the mirror brings in some light to what would otherwise be a dark area,” the designer says. “It also reflects the staircase and some of the artwork.”

Art is very important to the homeowners, whose works include colorful abstracts interspersed with fine art photography and rustic sculptures. “It’s the spice that adds extra bits of color and interest,” the husband says. And it is Abrams’ neutral palette and clean, contemporary lines that create an almost gallery-like setting for his clients, resulting in an ideal backdrop for their budding art collection. **L**

#### GRAND ILLUSION

To disguise an off-center window in the master bedroom, the designer had the silk draperies—fabricated by Glover Shade—hung to the right, as if covering another bank of windows. The Baker Knapp & Tubbs bed is swathed in linens from Bedside Manor. Rexx Rug carpet grounds the vignette.



**1 BATHTUB**  
Kohler  
Chicago, IL  
312.755.2510

**2 MIRROR**  
Niedermaier  
Chicago, IL  
312.492.9400

**3 CHANDELIER**  
Charles Loomis, Inc.  
Bright Chair Company  
Chicago, IL  
312.527.0557

**4 BOWL**  
Baker Knapp & Tubbs  
Chicago, IL  
312.337.7144

**5 TABLE & CHAIRS**  
Custom by designer  
Michael Abrams  
Limited  
Chicago, IL  
773.248.3039

# INTERIOR DESIGN Michael Abrams Limited

**BATHROOM CHAIR**  
Crate & Barrel  
Chicago, IL  
312.573.9800

**BATHROOM MIRROR**  
American Glass  
Top Company  
Bensenville, IL  
800.793.1011

**BATHROOM WALLS**  
The Tile Gallery  
Chicago, IL  
312.467.9590

**BED**  
Baker Knapp & Tubbs  
Chicago, IL  
312.337.7144

**BEDDING**  
Bedside Manor, Ltd.  
Chicago, IL  
773.404.2020

**BEDROOM BENCH**  
Custom by designer  
Michael Abrams  
Limited  
Chicago, IL  
773.248.3039

**BEDROOM CARPET**  
Rexx Rug  
Chicago, IL  
773.281.8800

**BEDROOM DRAPERY FABRIC**  
Zinc Textile  
Romo  
Chicago, IL  
800.338.2783

**BEDROOM DRAPERY FABRICATION**  
Glover Shade  
Chicago, IL  
312.245.5353

**COUNTERTOPS**  
Stonecutters, Inc.  
Glenview, IL  
847.657.9000

**DINING ROOM RUG**  
Organic Looms  
Chicago, IL  
312.733.8187

**FAMILY ROOM DRAPERY FABRIC**  
Zinc Textile  
Romo  
Chicago, IL  
800.338.2783

**FAMILY ROOM DRAPERY FABRICATION**  
G & W Window  
Treatments  
Chicago, IL  
312.432.9380

**FAMILY ROOM RUG**  
Tai Ping  
Chicago, IL  
312.644.0400

**FAMILY ROOM TELEVISION**  
Premiere Systems  
Chicago, IL  
312.274.0220

**FURNITURE FABRICATION**  
Eurocraft  
Chicago, IL  
312.850.0071

**HARDWOOD FLOORING**  
Charlie's Painting  
& Handyman Home  
Service, Inc.  
Niles, IL  
847.707.0090

**INTERIOR DESIGN**  
Michael Abrams  
Limited  
Chicago, IL  
773.248.3039

**KITCHEN BARSTOOLS**  
Design Within Reach  
Chicago, IL  
312.482.8661

**KITCHEN FAUCET**  
Kohler  
Chicago, IL  
312.755.2510

**LIVING ROOM ARTWORK**  
Portia Hein  
Patti Gilford Fine Arts  
Chicago, IL  
773.687.8918

**LIVING ROOM COFFEE TABLE**  
Holly Hunt  
Chicago, IL  
312.661.1900

**LIVING ROOM DRAPERY FABRIC**  
Brentano  
Donghia  
Chicago, IL  
312.822.0766

**LIVING ROOM LAMP**  
Holly Hunt  
Chicago, IL  
312.661.1900

**LIVING ROOM PLANT**  
Plant Parenting, Inc.  
Chicago, IL  
773.465.0200

**LIVING ROOM RUG**  
Oscar Isberian Rugs  
Chicago, IL  
312.467.1212

**PAINT**  
Benjamin Moore  
Chicago, IL  
312.822.0600