

Masterfully Transformed

RENOVATED BEDROOMS AND BATHROOMS COMBINE HIGH DESIGN, FORM AND FUNCTION

BY JEN HUNHOLZ | PHOTOGRAPHY BY DOUG EDMUNDS



City Sojourn

Architects Nick Blavat and Richard Scherer of Deep River Partners, Milwaukee, encountered a unique experience when recently remodeling a Gothic Victorian on Milwaukee's East Side — one in which the homeowner served as the project's general contractor. Blavat and Scherer began working with the homeowner and her husband more than five years ago, transforming their home into one fit for a contemporary couple.

Blavat and Scherer initially completed a master plan for the entire home, with the intention of approaching each portion of the renovation in phases. Since the home's original floor plan had no real master bedroom, the architects combined two bedrooms and an almost "unusable" bathroom to create a private master suite for the couple. Preserving the historic integrity of the 1890s-era home was key, so the existing fireplace was maintained, serving as a natural buffer between the bedroom and spa-like bathroom.

Not lacking in amenities, the master bathroom features dual showers, separate toilet rooms, and heated floors and towel bars. "It's very modern in amenities even though it looks so traditional," adds Blavat. "It is possible to combine modern trends with historic trends." The bathroom vanity, designed by Ryan Fillinger of A. Fillinger, Milwaukee, provides a generous



amount of built-in usability — nearly every piece is functional.

Like the bathroom, the master bedroom maintains a traditional scheme but with an added freshness. The homeowner worked with interior designer Susan Scherer of Deep River Partners to keep the room warm and inviting, employing a monochromatic color scheme. “It truly feels like a great escape at the end of the workday,” she says. The custom millwork, which appears throughout the historic home, is also the work of Fillinger.

“It was truly a collaboration,” says the homeowner, whose satisfaction with both the team at Deep River Partners and the finished product — a sojourn-like master suite — is clear. “They allowed me to grow and learn, and they gave me enough support and help on everything. I don’t think this could have been possible with anyone else in this city. They were true mentors.”

Left: “Monochromatic experiences create a high level of design,” explains Blavat. The area rug is from Persian Rug Gallery, Milwaukee. Custom wall coverings and furniture-like finishes are the work of Yulia Minina & Paul Steffes, with finish carpentry by Bruce Nordgreen of Northgreen Builders, LLC, Mequon.

Below: Installed by Todd Leppien of Stonehouse Tile & Marble, Milwaukee, the accent tile set in the marble floor creates an area rug feel. The applied molding on the ceiling mimics this pattern, tying the floor plane to the ceiling plane.



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