

ELEGANT EXPANSE

WHAT BEGAN AS A ONE-ROOM
MAKEOVER MORPHS INTO
A MAJOR RENOVATION
OF A DALLAS HOME.

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INTERIOR DESIGN / LAURA LEE CLARK FALCONER AND
KELLY SATRE, LAURA LEE CLARK INTERIOR DESIGN
ARCHITECTURE / ROBBIE FUSCH, FUSCH ARCHITECTS, INC.
HOME BUILDER / ROBERT H. CLARK AND JEFF WEST JR.,
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Like many home projects, this one began simply enough. “The homeowners wanted help accessorizing the family room and finding a place to stow their grandchildren’s toys,” says interior designer Laura Lee Clark Falconer, recalling her initial meeting with a Dallas couple. But soon the talk turned to expanding the residence’s square footage, leading to ideas for a larger laundry room—which opened up the possibility of moving walls. It was at this point in the conversation that Clark Falconer, whose project manager was Kelly Satre, contacted architect Robbie Fusch, whom the owners then interviewed and selected to oversee the architecture. “If the alterations were going to affect the façade,” the interior designer says, “I knew we needed his help ensuring everything was done appropriately.”

Further informing the decision to renovate was the fact that the owners had purchased the lot next door several years earlier. “Their house was fully sitting on half of the expanded property, and everything was off-center,” Fusch says. With Robert H. Clark and his project manager, Jeff West Jr., as builders, the architect suggested relocating the front door, which generated plans for a new living room large enough to blend both properties and improve the overall house-to-land proportion. For the owners, these major changes were long overdue. “Although my husband never wanted to leave the neighborhood, we anticipated living in this home for only five years—and before we knew it, 12 had passed,” the wife says. “It was dark with small rooms, and I wanted something lighter and more transitional where I could host dinner parties and social events.”

Moving forward with a full renovation, Fusch exchanged the brick on the original structure with Lueders limestone, more in keeping with the new French-country-manor façade. Inside, the decision to go neoclassical spawned architectural elements such as groin vaults in the grandiose foyer as well as axes throughout that felt intentional and unified the home. “Throughout the interiors, we wanted authentic, classical elements,” says the architect, who incorporated detailed period-appropriate millwork.

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Meanwhile, the abode’s former entry was reshaped into a mahogany-paneled library, and two new garages—one with a playroom above it to stow those toys—were added to the backside of the property. An existing porch was enclosed to create a sitting area in the master bedroom, and two fully operational kitchens were an essential part of the expanded floor plan. This extra kitchen is ideal for the husband, “who is quite the chef,” the wife says. “It also serves as an excellent catering kitchen for parties and entertaining.”

Over a period of about three years, the residence’s total square footage increased by more than 60 percent, and the furnishings and art collection increased accordingly. Taking cues from the classical architecture, in the living room Clark Falconer established a pair of symmetrical seating areas lit by equidistant crystal chandeliers. “I incorporated the owners’ existing sofas and chose chairs on each side that were similar in scale but different in style for variety,” she says. “A modern daybed between the two works as a bridge where guests can sit and face either direction.” Niches with matching banquette seating flank the fireplace, and the interior designer—in conjunction with art consultant Lisa Brown—shopped with the owners for modern artwork to enliven the predominantly neutral space. “A traditional setting with contemporary art creates a wonderful mix,” Clark Falconer enthuses, noting the Henri Matisse *Jazz* pieces from Berggruen Gallery in San Francisco are stand-outs.

In the dining room, a more assertive use of color was an easy sell. Besotted with Gracie wallpaper, the owners chose a green shade for the hand-painted Oriental motif, which Clark Falconer enhanced with a pair of lacquered cabinets holding antique silver urns with jade embellishments. “I love the sophistication of Oriental accents, and the buffets are a modern take on that style,” she says. Centering it all, a glass dining table pairs with wood-frame chairs that have a neoclassical profile.

Art and color continue to play a major role throughout the house. In the library, Joan Miró’s *La Mélodie Acide* series balances the expanses of mahogany, and a single painting by the Spanish master is a counterpoint for the carved-marble fireplace. Nearby, the wife was inspired to paint the husband’s office a lacquered lipstick red after seeing it in the library of a dear friend, who shared the paint formula. And the palette and mood shift dramatically in the wife’s own office, which features a decidedly soft and feminine watery-blue grass-cloth wallcovering and an antique Venetian chandelier. Things become even quieter in the master bedroom, where neutral hues show up in the leather-framed bed with mohair upholstery, a bench swathed in the same soft fiber and a silk-wrapped vintage sofa.

Looking back, Clark Falconer can remember a time when the rooms lacked spark and the owners yearned to make them right. “They are unpretentious people, but they wanted their home to feel special and exist on another level,” she says. “Thanks to beautiful architecture, transitional furnishings and incredible artwork, the house now has a sense of elegance and refinement that reflects who they are.”



Interior designer Laura Lee Clark Falconer furnished this formal yet inviting foyer in a Dallas home renovated by architect Robbie Fusch. RF Imports fabricated the French-limestone flooring and stair treads. A custom Formations lantern from Culp Associates hangs above the table from Allan Knight and Associates. Lighting design throughout is by Douglas Architectural Lighting.

Opposite: The library exudes warmth with an antique Turkish Oushak rug from Abrash Rugs and Hodsoll McKenzie fabric draperies with Houliès tape trim. The Bernadotte chandelier and Nancy Corzine St. Tropez lounge chair are from Allan Knight and Associates.

Below: A set of 14 works by Joan Miró titled *La Mélodie Acide* lines a library wall behind a Cameron Collection chair from George Cameron Nash in Donghia material, a coffee table from Allan Knight and Associates and McGuire's Robert Kuo Cloud lamp from Baker. Hermès textiles from George Cameron Nash cover the throw pillows.





In the main kitchen, Metroplex Wood Specialty customized cabinetry wearing Top Knobs and Classic Brass hardware from Pierce Hardware. Calacatta Gold marble countertops from Holland Marble pair with a Walker Zanger mosaic backsplash. RF Imports procured the vent hood, which Holland Marble made and Fusch Architects designed. Vaughan's Zurich lanterns from George Cameron Nash light the space.

Opposite: The breakfast room's Niemann Weeks chandelier from Laura Lee Clark echoes art by Valerie Jaudon purchased through Lisa Brown Consulting from DC Moore Gallery in New York. The Michael Taylor Designs table and chairs are from George Cameron Nash.

Below: Feminine details in the wife's office include Schumacher grass-cloth walls, Designers Guild wallpaper from ID Collection on the ceiling, a Murano glass chandelier from Jan Showers and Sam Reveles art from Talley Dunn Gallery. An acrylic desk from Allan Knight and Associates and William Switzer chairs from Ferrell Mittman top an Afghan-Khotan rug from Arsin Rug Gallery.



Gracie wallpaper drives the dining room palette; a Warp & Weft rug from Arsin Rug Gallery and Fabricut draperies balance the verdant walls. The chairs and chandelier are all Therien & Co. from George Cameron Nash. Lacquered cabinets from Allan Knight and Associates edge a custom fireplace surround procured and fabricated by RF Imports, below Jean de Merry sconces and a vintage mirror from Jan Showers.





Atop a rug from Abrash Rugs, matching Nancy Corzine lounge chairs from Allan Knight and Associates in Lee Jofa material join a Silhouette chair—also from Allan Knight and Associates—near the family room mantel. The Formations mirror is from Culp Associates; the Niermann Weeks fire screen is from Laura Lee Clark. In the foreground, a Gregorius Pineo sofa wears Fadini Borghi fabric, all from Culp Associates.

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Right: A framed Bungalow 5 panel from Laura Lee Clark punctuates a guest bedroom painted Sherwin-Williams Softer Tan by Baxter Painting. The Jan Showers bed from David Sutherland features Matouk bedding accented with a Lindsay Cowles pillow from Laura Lee Clark. The nightstand is also Jan Showers from David Sutherland.

Opposite: Clark Falconer played with pattern in a guest bathroom, complementing a custom Walker Zanger flooring design with Clarke & Clarke's Augustus wallcovering. An E. F. Chapman Ruhlmann for Visual Comfort & Co. sconce is affixed to a custom mirror fabricated by Glasshouse. The Top Knobs cabinetry hardware is from Pierce Hardware.





A Janus et Cie lounge chair and sofa—holding Lindsay Cowles pillows—form an outdoor living area near a custom fireplace procured and designed by RF Imports and fabricated in France. McKinnon and Harris outdoor furnishings appear in the background, surrounded by landscaping by From the Ground Up. SoundImage A/V Design Group handled the home's sound and security systems.