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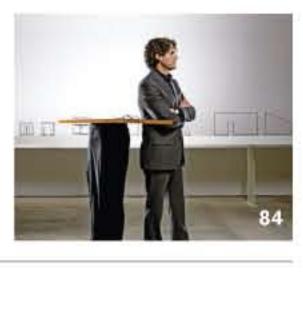
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ON THE COVER Photography: Tony Solver

Styling; D. Groben Kent Hair: Charles Land at Fund Arman Makeups Christian Cidnish using Shu Umane at Fund direits Model: Datus Taylor at Fired Musicly Plesegrapher's Assistant Tim Namph Soylar's Assistanti Janiah Freeman Sohuk White-and-green stripe stretch corvers picket, \$2,285, pierts, \$1,588, and straw hat, \$265, all at Guori, \$12,664,5504. Cotton tank with front pocket, \$155, by Sone at Ikram, 312.567.1000. Velvet

Cherie anble strap sweds, \$1,226, at Lesis Voltan, \$12,844,2010.



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When the busy mother of four first laid eyes on her future North Side home, she asked her realtor if they could skip the showing. The boxy, modern structure,

Spare Cribs

formerly a nail factory, didn't really look like a house, at least not like the more traditional houses in which she and her husband had lived. But the agent, also a longtime friend, knew the family (known to host as many as 80 for Thanksgiving dinner) needed space-

A family of six heats up Roscoe Village with stylin' city living to the minimalist max. Rooftop basketball court? Check. Indoor pool? Check. All white interiors? Why not?

By Tate Gunnerson | Photography by Tony Soluri

something the six-bedroom, six-bathroom house had in spades, so she kept citing the home's features until her dubious friend agreed to at least walk through. "The house hadn't been finished, so I couldn't

even make sense of it," the mother recalls. "But when I saw the basketball court, I realized it could work."

Family is priority number one for her and her husband, and they had no doubt the children would love the home's indoor pool, media room and large bedrooms, but they were concerned they wouldn't enjoy living in the bome, which just didn't feel like them. STYLE EXPRESS The horresoners enjoy the others view of the train line from their narrow midden: terrinon; Wagis chairs and Guide Draces and France. Mello's palyurathase Cectus from Currinors. Server 2009 | Interiors | 79



"I like my things," confesses the mother. "But

To help transform the raw space into a metropolitan

we felt the house lent itself to a more modern,

home, the couple hired Leo Designs, with whom they

were familiar because one of their children attended

school with Leo cofounder Georgeann Rivas' daughter.

"I just really liked Georgeann and felt comfortable with

her," explains the mother, who had also admired their

marching orders, but they did request the design be as comfortable as it would be contemporary, and they

I needed to give the kids a place to put their junk."

The nervous couple gave the designers few specific

"I have a lot of clutter with four kids," says the mother. "If I was going to embrace this minimalist life,

Wish that, the couple turned their focus to family,

work and travel, essentially giving Rivas and biz partner

work at a mutual friend's nearby home.

contemporary design."

asked for lots of storage.

steel cabinets, counters and appliances for family's storage request by designing a chic the upstairs kitchen, and a highly polished mudroom with wenge wood lockers in the wide hallway between the garage and the chrome surround for the master bedroom's fireplace. home. Each locker is equipped with a power Most dramatically, Wirth and Rivas supply for charging cell phones, music devices

collaborated with metalworker David Greene

of Iron & Wire to create a custom iron and

glass partition that shields the entryway from

Chicago's wimer winds and accommodates

the mother's desire for some sort of delineation between the from door and the rest of the home; "I like a breezeway," explains the mother. "This was the perfect way to keep it open yet create a separation and keep it interesting," Wirth and Rivas accommodated the 82 Interiors | Surener 2000

Stephanie Wirth carte blanche to realize their vision.

1999, Wirth and Rivas had been looking for a project

to push them out of their comfort zone, and they'd

never tackled a truly modern design. Embracing the

challenge, the designers envisioned a stark palette

using shades of black, white and sand, a color scheme

that picked up on the home's art: a large piece by artist

Francine Turk that bangs in the entry and black and

white charcoals from Chicago Art Source that add texture and a sort of controlled chaos to the otherwise

polished chrome Cubik lamps from Luminaire for the living room. The fixtures' rectangular shades work

with the angular furniture to echo the home's long,

horizontal walls. Wirth and Rivas repeat the theme of

metal elements throughout the house; in addition to the

lamps and light fixtures, the designers selected stainless.

The designers chose Jean-Marie Massaud's

austere living room.

Longtime friends who launched Leo Designs in

and electronics. Heeding the family's directive, the designers devised interesting ways to maintain comfort without sacrificing style. The master bedroom feels almost cozy with its layered cowhide rugs, upholstered headboard and fireplace, and the windowless media room sports abony-stained built-ins and wall-towall carpeting, a cocoon-like atmosphere for napping or watching a film.

Alone White statuscy murble

stating doors open to recent a

window into the clean-limed. minimal kitches. As expression

light factors from Florence hange.

above the Progette I glass divinu

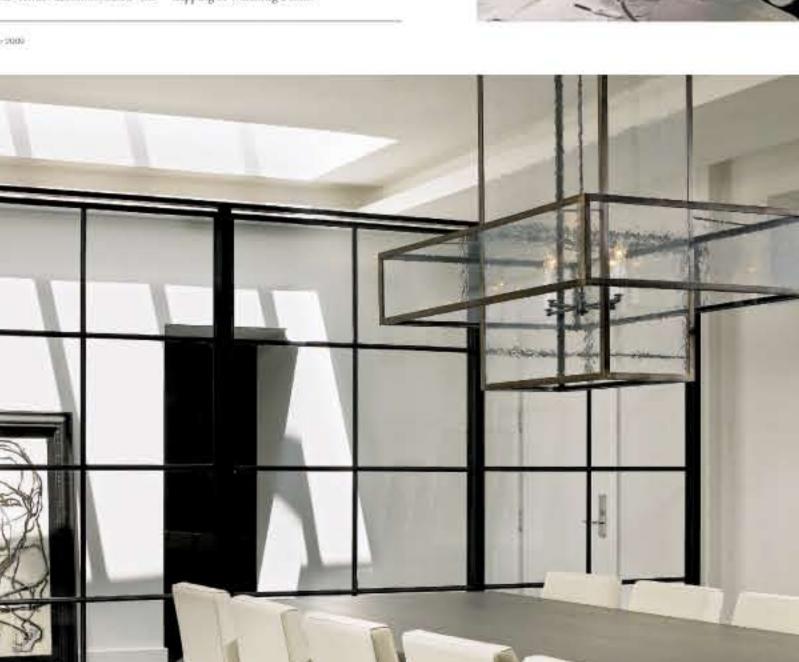
table and Dits chairs from BAS Italia, Appealir page: In the living

Fraction bins stellar letteren ,menn

elements are intentional. "The

family provides fits color,"

soys Wietls.



Despite the amiable relationship that existed between the homeowners and the designers, occasionally, the comfort-versus-style discussion became less of a casual conversation and more of a debate. The designers envisioned sleek, low-slung furniture for the living and

After listening to his concerns (and losing the

debate), the designers decided to retool, a decision

Rivas says helped her and Wirth solve one of their own

design dilemmas: finding the right side tables for the

media room. The task proved as vexing as Sasquatch

sporting in the Pacific Northwest. Wirth's and Rivas'

stark simplicity.

search for stylish yet comfortable seating ultimately led them to recliners with straight lines, brushed leather and built-in cup holders, a fitting but practical choice that eliminated the need for side tables. It might be uncommon for a family to shed their media rooms, but their choice didn't, um, sit well with old style so dramatically, it's the "stuff" that tends the husband and father, who wanted something that to comfort and communicate a story to visitors. But the compromises and solutions Wirth and Rivas would help ease the transition to the home's otherwise

implemented here resulted in surroundings that are,

in fact, comfortable, despite the angular lines. The

building may have retained the industrial look of

its past, but make no mistake: It has the bones of a

traditional family home. Its inhabitants' busy lives are

just expertly stashed in the custom storage beneath

their home's glossy sheen.

Surmar 9000 | Interiors | 83

Decisione from above & curtain uted and glass perfition holes.

datingesh the direct men

without tricking light. Art by

from Ligne Scoot, Bernetone

chairs face each other in front

of the nonce-framed triplace. which may chapte to enfect.

light back late the room: Bubble

Franciss Turk, toble from Mobili Mobel and putty leather chairs