

ARCHITECTURAL PHOTOGRAPHY BY DON JONES, PORTRAITS BY BLUE FOX PHOTOGRAPHY

A Timely Transformation



MARY COBB hated the '70s house perched on a wind-blown bluff overlooking the Broadmoor Valley area.

Tim Cobb, who inherited the house when his parents died, didn't want to part with it.

But they put it on the market for many months before deciding they needed some help with staging, to make it more sellable.

Enter Rich Schell, of Rich Designs Home.

The more he talked, the more Tim Cobb wanted to transform the house into something Mary would like. Schell believed he was up to the task.

"I said, he'd have to do a heck of a lot to this house to make me like it," she confesses. "I was not a fan. The house was dark, choppy and had a terrible floor plan."

The exterior was overgrown with foliage that blocked the spectacular views of Cheyenne Mountain. The red tile roof was rotten. The narrow driveway was inconvenient. The windows were awful.

Where would she put all her art?

At about 3,500 square feet, the house was half the size of their current home.

“But at this point in our lives, with the kids grown and just the two of us, it was time to downsize anyway,” she says.

The only thing she really liked in the



above The bedroom in the Cobb home is a relaxing retreat in soothing colors and now has access to a newly created laundry room as well as an expanded master bath.

(opposite) left Walls came down and the bathroom doubled -- or more -- in size. Now there are separate sinks, a nice soaking tub, a multi-head shower and even a mirrored vanity for applying makeup.

house was the heavy carved wooden front door, which Tim's folks had bought in Santa Fe. It stayed.

“We changed every other thing in the house except two rooms – the garage and the walk-in safe!” she says.

The driveway was widened, and heated. The landscape was cleaned up and simplified. The entry was reconfigured and now has a stunningly large piece of contemporary art (weathered oil drum bottoms) hanging there. Walls were knocked out, windows replaced, and light came flooding in. The middle-of-the-room wood-burning fireplace was torn out and replaced with a gas fireplace on the south wall of the living room. And the beams on the vaulted ceiling were transformed from rough, rustic wood to a smooth, dark finish.

“Walls had to come down,” Schell says.

Faded pink carpet and old *salt* tile

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before

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gave way to lush, dark pecan wood floors. He had dark woodwork hand-crafted to match; grass-cloth came down off the walls, to be replaced by soft neutral paint. Large, textured area rugs soften the look and muffle sound.

A custom-made dining room table, also in dark wood, now seats 12. The custom-made chairs Schell had made in Canada. Other custom furniture reflected Tim's single wish – for a big, comfortable chair.



In the master bedroom, contemporary design gives a nod to traditional in the form of a gold-framed, 12-foot mirror from Mexico on one wall. Shades of gold and cream get a touch of color from the blue in the Italian silk drapes, which Schell selected for them.

A laundry room was created next to the master suite for convenience. A former outdoor courtyard was enclosed and added to the master bath, which now sports his-and-hers walk-in closets, a deep jetted tub and steam shower with five heads.

far left Tim and Mary Cobb had different ideas about what to do with the house he inherited from his parents. A major renovation was the only way Mary would stay there.

left Rich Schell, right, of Rich Designs and his partner, Greg Wragge, were instrumental in turning a dark, dreary '80s home into a showplace the Cobbs both love.



Walls came down and a fireplace was moved from the center of the room to the exterior wall to create a bright, open GREAT ROOM in the Cobb home.

"I love this bathroom!" Mary says.

The kitchen, with custom cherry Bentwood cabinets made just for them, is now a spacious 24 feet long, with a 12-foot, two-level island down the center with a Caesarstone quartz top.

Architect Tremmel says the house has good bones, but needed a more open, contemporary floor plan.

"It's a great kitchen for entertaining," says kitchen designer Nancy Moon of Beckony Kitchens. "It's a chef's kitchen," with lots of roll-out shelves, a pull-out spice rack, a vegetable-prep sink and all stainless steel appliances.

The four-panel glass doors between kitchen and patio fold back to create a true indoor-outdoor space.

This change was a favorite of architect Mark Tremmel.

"It so needed to be opened up more, and this really did it," he says.

Down the stairs to the lower level, a backlit wall of frosted glass illuminates the stairs. At the bottom, the first thing that catches the eye is the "elephant hide" tile floor. A wine room/wet bar is on one side and a large family/theater room on the other.

"The bricks lining the back wall of the wine room came from Tim's old elementary school, Buena Vista," Mary says. The family room presents more amazing mountain views and a wall of built-in shelves houses Mary's Lalique glass collection.

Schell used the couple's favorite furniture pieces in his design.

"It gives soul to a house," he believes. "There are no rules any more, and if there, are you can break them!"

The design mixes contemporary with traditional, with a little Santa Fe and a hint

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of Japanese style thrown into the mix.

“You can mix anything with anything, if they’re both in good taste,” he says. “And luckily, the Cobbs have great taste!”

Design aside, “I just love that it feels so comfortable and homey,” Mary says.

Because Schell had done two other homes for them, the Cobbs trusted him completely. They were gone during most of the year-long renovation. They came back once, saw the basement floor torn up down to the dirt, and didn’t come back till it was complete, in June.

When they returned, they discovered their home had a new slate roof—and gorgeous new landscaping, done by Paul Fredell. Paved paths, large boulders for seating areas, a terraced backyard with 2,000 square feet of patio and outdoor kitchen, plus a new deck on the

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upper level, make this home a place to enjoy as much outdoors as in.

“It turned into a very nice, usable outdoor area,” Fredell says. “We always want to integrate the indoor spaces into the

natural landscape, when we can.”

Schell says the project was a designer’s delight.

“The great thing for me was that the vision I had when I first saw this house is the way the house actually turned out,” he says. “It came to life as I dreamed it.”

Architect Tremmel says the house has good bones, but needed a more open, contemporary floor plan.

“The great synergy between us (him, Schell and the Cobbs) made it possible to do this,” Tremmel says. “It was a great collaboration.”

Mary says the home is now “elegant, sophisticated, comfortable, and unlike any other home in Colorado Springs.

“I love it here now. I’m so glad we didn’t sell it!”