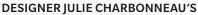


•FALL DECORATING• Contemporary Glamour

Renaissance







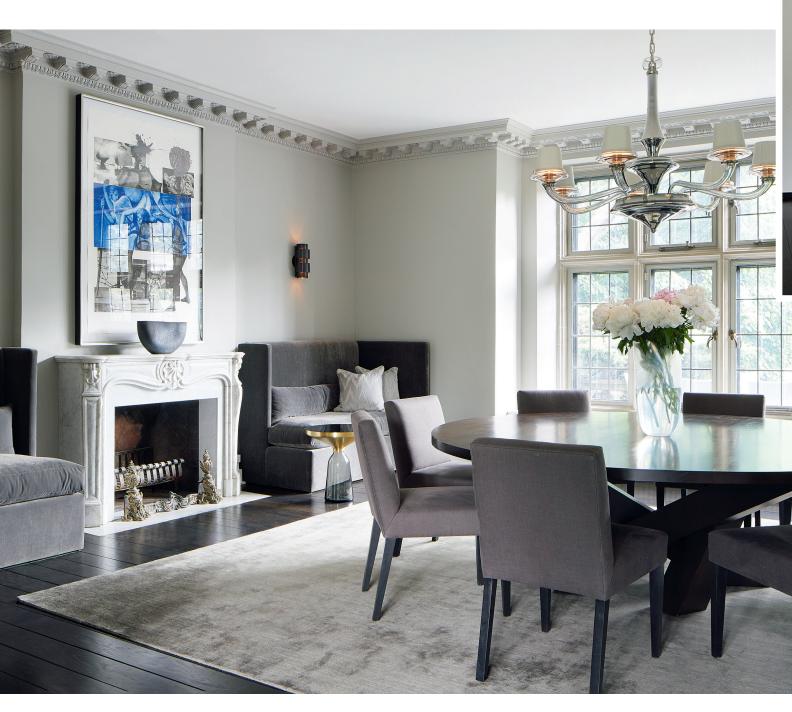
professional mantra sets a lofty goal: make living an art. After a tour of her Toronto home, it's clearly a personal aim, too. The historical gem is decorated with a spare, serene touch — a perfect canvas for her collection of scene-stealing contemporary artwork.

In 2010, when Julie decided to move from Montreal to Toronto to expand her growing interior design business, she had two big wishes that guided her property search: she didn't want to overlook her neighbours (which ruled out many downtown neighbourhoods), and she wanted to live in an old house with character.

After seeing just eight houses, Julie found The One. The seven-bedroom, seven-bathroom heritage home in the city's north end was filled with traditional touches and had only been cosmetically upgraded by its previous owners. "It's not often that you find such beautiful old architecture,"







she says. "I knew it was a special house." It also reminded her of her last property in Westmount, the Montreal area she'd once lived in, and she was taken with the ravine lot and leafy neighbourhood.

As much as Julie loved the picture-perfect Tudor façade, she didn't let it dictate her design plan for the interiors. She was determined to update the house for modern living — without destroying its historical charm — so she kept the original fireplaces, wood panelling, trimwork, leaded glass windows, main-level flooring and the majestic staircase. She did take some liberties with the floor plan, though. "Older homes, with their small kitchens, spooky servant staircases and tiny bedrooms with no closets, were built for totally different lifestyles," she says. To bring the house into the 21st century, Julie opened up the wall between the kitchen and dining room. At first, she was tempted to relocate the kitchen, which was situated at the front of the house. "My instinct was to move it to the back, which is the standard today," she says. "But I realized that the party rooms — the living and dining rooms and the main reception hall — are at the back of the house, which allows you to build events around the backyard." Now she takes advantage of the layout for casual family birthdays and pool parties. CONTINUED ON PAGE 115

In the dining room, Julie placed upholstered, high-backed benches on either side of the fireplace for dramatic impact and to maximize seating. Crown moulding and walls painted in Benjamin Moore's Silver Fox bring a stately elegance to the space. Table, chairs, benches, Julie Charbonneau Design; chandelier, Donghia; rug, Elte; artwork by Robert Rauschenberg.



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ABOVE: Julie with their two standard poodles, Elle and Louis. **LEFT:** A Rue Picot light fixture in the sunroom looks like it's made of twigs, mirroring the wooded area outside the windows. **Armchairs**, Julie Charbonneau Design; **rug**, Elte; **lamp** by Porta Romana, South Hill Home.

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"I DIDN'T WANT THE HOUSE TO BE OLD AND STUFFY. I WANTED IT TO BE YOUNG AND HIP BUT WITH VINTAGE CHARACTER"



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TOP LEFT: The dressing room off the principal bedroom is anchored by a central island and features a lush, blush sofa and coordinating floor-to-ceiling drapery. Surprisingly, the room has become an unexpected gathering place. "Guests often want to hang out in here and drink champagne," says Julie with a laugh. Sofa, drapery, wardrobe, island, Julie Charbonneau Design; rug, Elte.

BOTTOM LEFT: In a sunny corner of the bedroom, a generous armchair is an inviting spot for reading. Chair, drapery, Julie Charbonneau Design; throw, throw pillows, South Hill Home; side table by Sebastian Herkner, Avenue Road; table lamp by Donghia; dresser by Julie Charbonneau Design for Neff.



On the second floor, Julie created a large dressing room off the principal bedroom and on the third floor, she raised the eight-foot-high ceilings to nine and a half feet and turned several small rooms into two spacious bedrooms, each with their own ensuite bathroom.

Because Julie is passionate about contemporary art and photography, she made sure the home's finishes were subdued, sleek and calming. "I wanted a blank canvas for beautiful furniture and artwork," she says. Only touches of blush, blue and camel brighten the black, white and grev scheme.

Her favourite place to hang out in is the intimate family room. With dramatic dark walls, the space has a cocoonlike effect. "It's cosy, comfortable, and there's something interesting to look at on every wall," she says.

Just off that space is a light-filled sunroom where Julie enjoys her morning coffee. With its views of the ravine, the nook puts her in close proximity to the "neighbours" that, as it turns out, she's happy to overlook: a canopy of mature trees and rabbits and squirrels galore.