

# INTERIORS<sup>®</sup>



ART IN DESIGN



# HUMAN NATURE

ARCHITECTURE AND INTERIOR DESIGN: RACHAEL GROCHOWSKI

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**O**n approach, this circa 1918 English Tudor house on a quiet street in Montclair, New Jersey, is mostly unchanged from its century-old origins. Go inside, and that narrative shifts immediately into the present with its warm woods and modern staircase. Step beyond the open living and family room, with its wall of floor-to-ceiling glass leading out to the new rear terrace, and you are transported to the future of design. Architect Rachael Grochowski, who founded her firm RHG A+D nearby in Montclair, is adept at respecting the history of the area vernacular, but making houses livable for all people. For these clients, an empty nester couple with grandchildren who visit often, “the objective was to create a simpler, more modern home that had a connection to the outdoors,” says Grochowski, who took on the interior architecture and design. “Throughout the home, we furnished it with clean lines and contemporary classics that balance color and calm.”

For the gracious living room, which leads seamlessly to the family room set against those walls of glass, a Holly Hunt sofa and coffee table add just a touch of formality, while the light-filled family room’s A. Rudin swivel loungers and ottomans invite the family to sink into their new environment. Their whisper of lavender Fortuny fabric connects with different variations of a favorite color of the clients—that room’s violet fabric on the sectional, the deep purple Stepevi rug in the entrance, and the Hines and Company leather, in lush Viola, on the A. Rudin vanity chair in the primary bath, whose soaring ceiling and sharp angles speak to the modernity of the home. “On the interior, we simplified the flow for modern living,” Grochowski says. A huge part of that flow was harmony with the immediate outside world. “We are often called upon to create spaces with walls of glass to create a sense of connection to nature and the outdoors,” Grochowski notes. “Creating interior spaces that fully interact with the outside increases our joy, reminding us that we are part of nature and that we have an interdependent relationship with it.”

Upstairs, Grochowski worked with the dramatic ceiling angles to create a bunk room swathed in blue for the grandchildren. “I saw it as a faceted jewel and chose to use three different blues, each surface being different—every angle has a different shade of blue on it and they all refract off each other,” she says. As in the primary bedroom’s sleeping niche sheathed in blond oak and faced in a smooth wall of ivory Edelman Leather to help temper the high ceilings, it’s a masterful understanding of how architecture can adapt to the human scale and, as the architect notes, “reflect the calm vibrancy of life.” ■ *Rachael Grochowski, RHG A+D, rhgdesign.com*





