

EXTERIOR

The patio is positioned under an overhang so it can be used when it's sunny or raining.

Landscape design.

Amelia Sullivan. Vintage **settee**; for similar, try Vinterior. Monet **rocking chairs**, Sika-Design. Teak **coffee table**, Harbour at CF Interiors. **End table** by Four Hands, CF Interiors



OUT OF THE WOODS

Emerging from a lush Canadian forest, this modernist house feels at one with nature

* PHOTOGRAPHY Ema Peter
WORDS Karine Monié



a move from New York City to the quiet Edgemont neighbourhood in North Vancouver, British Columbia, would be quite a change for anyone. For this Australian-Canadian couple, however, it was a no-brainer. They were looking for a community in which to raise their two children. Only a short walk from the village, their new home backed into a lush forest, nestled among towering cedars and offering privacy and quiet. 'The view of the forest is breathtaking, but it is the light that is most spectacular,' says Erica Colpitts, the interior designer who worked on the project. 'As the sun moves behind the forest, there are moments when it peeks through the trees and pours into the living room. You can see the individual beams of sunlight – it is magical.'

The couple entrusted architectural firm Olson Kundig to design a fresh concept for the house that both honoured its original mid-century structure and the mesmerising landscape surrounding it, while also meeting all their needs as a family that loves to entertain. 'My task was then to meld Olson Kundig's architecture with an ever so slightly soft interior,' explains Erica.

A neutral colour palette was chosen to marry various natural materials including woods, metals, linens and wools. Soft oatmeal, whites and creams are complemented by warm leather and rich greys, while the original rust-coloured brick fireplace adds subtle colour. 'We searched for the most raw and natural feeling white oak floors, then paired them with a stained hemlock plank ceiling,' says Erica. 'The results are two woods that complement each other despite their different characteristics.'

The update of this home is all about this kind of nuance, so it became important to Erica to preserve the original bookcase that separates the entrance from the living room. 'We fought to keep it intact as it provides privacy from the full-height windows at the front of the house,' she says. 'It was a particular challenge, as it encased a structural beam that needed replacing and refinishing. We were able to sand it down and leave it almost natural, with the lightest clear coat for protection. The different veneer pieces play charmingly together and bring a lived-in feel to the home.' Olson Kundig reworked the end of the bookcase to seamlessly interact with the sculptural metal staircase. 'The bronze and blackened steel accents were added in a Mondrianesque arrangement.'

Throughout, the laid-back, relaxed atmosphere was achieved by drawing inspiration from rural British interiors. 'In another life, the homeowner would've been happy to find herself whiling away her days in a tiny English cottage,' says Erica. 'This home is a juxtaposition of all good things – dramatic and serene; rustic and refined; industrial and romantic; exquisite and comfortable. It is a home that can weather whatever life brings to it.'

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ericacolpitts.ca

LIVING SPACE

The long bookcase behind the sofa separates the living space and entrance. 'It provides privacy from the full-height windows at the front of the house,' says Erica.

Sofa and chairs, RH. **Cushions**, Libeco at Bacci's, CF Interiors and Provide. **Coffee table** ottoman, Four Hands at CF Interiors. **I-Beam side table**, Erica Colpitts; made by Iron Age Manufacturing. **Studio lamp**, Design within Reach





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THE DESIGNER

Erica Colpitts, who designed the house for a couple, their two young kids and dog.

THE PROPERTY

There is a broken-plan living/dining room and kitchen, a boot room and a WC. The lower ground floor has a recreation room and guest suite. On the first floor are the main bedroom, two bathrooms and two children's rooms



KITCHEN

'We wanted ring pulls for the units and found a supplier in Quebec who carries Joseph Giles hardware (from England). We chose a waxed bronze finish that will patina over time,' says Erica.

Try the Sebastian Cox kitchen, deVOL. Worktops and splashback, Diamond Finish Concrete Countertops. Barstool, Arteriors at CF Interiors

DINING AREA

'The owners had their fabulous bison artwork before the renovation, and I insisted that it remain a part of the design. To me it is iconic and moody, and I cannot imagine the room without it,' says Erica.

Windswept - Bison photo on canvas, Thomas D Mangelsen. **Table**, Scott Landon Antiques and Interiors. **Dining chairs**, CF Interiors. **Pendant**, George Nelson at Herman Miller





MAIN BEDROOM

'The proportions of the room are cosy and I needed petite bedside tables to work with the king-size bed. We looked for months before finally enlisting a very talented local maker, Nicholas Purcell, to craft them for us. I am so glad it turned out this way. The detailing and quality make these tables heirloom material,' says Erica.

Custom **headboard**, Erica Colpitts and Cloth Studio. Custom **bedside tables**, Erica Colpitts and Nicholas Purcell. **Wall sconce**, Crate and Barrel. Black with white stripes **cushion**, CF Interiors. **Throw**, Cloth Studio. White ceramic **pitcher**, Elise Du Forcand at The Stylewell



HALLWAY

'The mature azaleas at the front of the house were original to the home and carefully protected throughout construction. The branches are twisted and moss-covered, and they cast gorgeous shadows on the house when lit up at night-time,' says Erica.

Custom steel **armature** lighting by Olson Kundig with **lights** from RH

CLOAKROOM

Dark tiles give this small space a cocooning feel.

Plumbing fixtures, Brodware. **Door pull**, Tom Kundig Collection at 12th Avenue Iron. **Limestone tiles**, Adera Natural Stone Supply



MAIN BATHROOM

'The owner saw a photo of some handmade tiles that were in white ceramic with edges that were almost curled up and wrinkled like pieces of paper,' says Erica. 'We found where to get them, which was in Portugal.' The tiles give the space an artisanal look.

Plumbing **fixtures**, Samuel Heath at Cantu Bathrooms. **Hardware**, Colonial Bronze at Cantu Bathrooms. Handmade Portuguese **wall tiles**, Silent Living. **Pitcher**, Elise Du Forcand at The Stylewell. Soapstone **tray**, McGee & Co. **Linens**, Old Faithful Shop. Antique **stool**, The Stylewell. **Curtain**, Cloth Studio



POOL

Floor-to-ceiling windows run the width of the back of the house overlooking the pool and with views into the cedar forest.

Landscape design,
Amelia Sullivan.
Similar corten **planters,**
Taylor Made Planters

