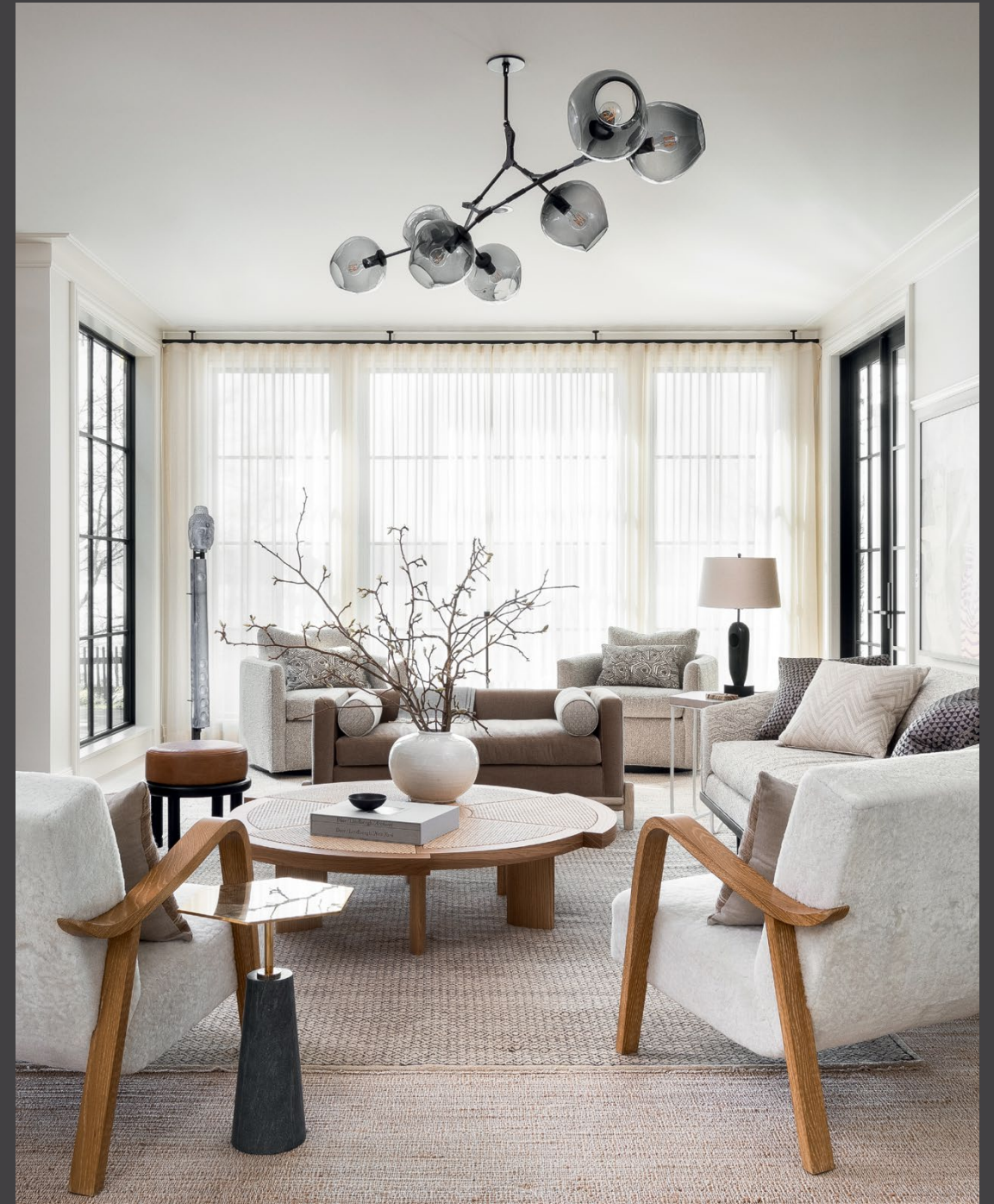


# AT HOME

EVOCATIVE AND ART-FORWARD INTERIORS



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**Evoking memories of the past and aspirations for the future to create unique contemporary interiors.**

Interior design should not be sterile or static; it's a living extension of art meant to be touched, used, and admired. This mindset is at the heart of Brian Paquette's interiors. How does a person allow their lifestyle to resonate within their home? Through fabric? A particular scent? Surface texture? Light exposure? By sharing a process of design for the ten homes featured in this book, readers can begin to consider their own memories and aspirations for how they too can create a home interior that is a true reflection of themselves—past, present, and future.

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PAQUETTE



GIBBS  
SMITH

BRIAN PAQUETTE

PHOTOGRAPHS BY HARIS KENJAR



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ABOVE: We never forget scent as a secret ingredient to a finished room.

OPPOSITE: The client's antique carpet designed this room for us. A saturated blue-and-ochre grass cloth with navy wool drapes surround a vintage burl dining table I bought at auction. Some of my favorite dining chairs sport green leather for levity.





## WINDERMERE

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I was moved to write this section after receiving a text from the husband in this home: “My favorite room is still the media room, but on a winter’s night the living room is fantastic.” I don’t get to see all of my clients all of the time—they are living their lives and I am letting them enjoy their homes—but when I get messages such as this one, it makes all of the hard (and not always so enjoyable) work worth it.

The clients bought this home with the intention of doing a major remodel and expansion in a wonderful old neighborhood in Seattle called Windermere. Calling this a remodel isn’t quite fair as it is essentially an entirely new home. I was brought in at the beginning of the process to collaborate in tandem with the wonderfully talented and organized team at J.A.S. Design Build. We all worked together to create what I will call a contemporary English modern farmhouse. I had to make up this term, as the modern farmhouse label to me was starting to be played out. I wanted to warm it up and add a bit more detail to the oft-used vernacular.

Instead of white paint throughout we opted for warmer whites with slightly darker trim to create good shadows. The palette, unsurprisingly, came from the nature surrounding the house: a mix of warm neutrals, greens, blues, and every shade the sky can conjure up. I also had the joy of working with local galleries to start an art collection for the family, a process very different

than interior design. You don’t select a painting the way you select a chair—or at least I don’t. The process for choosing displayed art is quite different and I like that we separate it. Visual art arrests a person in a different way than a great piece of furniture might. While I am not saying selecting furniture and lighting isn’t emotional for some, art truly is (and should be) emotional for everyone. The objective isn’t simply to fill wall space—it’s a decision to invest in and live with an artist’s point of view (or sometimes your own perceptions and interpretations of a piece). When building your own art collection, find pieces that resonate with you, considering how the work connects to your own reference and sense memory. Ask yourself what emotional response the art elicits in you.

At this point in my career, I regard this home as the closest thing to “our look,” which is quite weird to say since it’s the result of so many peoples’ interests, opinions, and histories, but it just worked out that way. The mix of old and new, the color palette, the finishes, the art . . . all of it just felt right to me as it unfolded. It represents the family that lives here, and it holds up to three kids, one large dog, and a cat while still feeling sophisticated in that laid-back, Seattle kind of way. I very much look forward to seeing this home age over time and evolve with its inhabitants.



ABOVE LEFT: Multiple lighting sources in a bedroom allow for many moods and functions.

ABOVE RIGHT: We placed this chaise near the window with the best views of the water: a place to read before bed or to enjoy a morning cup of coffee.



OPPOSITE: Classic materials and a balance of cool and warm make this primary bathroom luxurious.





## FIREHOUSE

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This apartment, in the middle of Capitol Hill in Seattle, was formerly a firehouse but was split up into individual homes many years ago. Upon first entering the space during our initial interview, I knew I needed to do anything to get this job. The brick, the large black-trimmed windows, the ceilings, and the open floor plan were my late '90s, New York City, Thomas O'Brien dreams come true. By the time we had sat down to discuss the work ahead, I had already designed the entire place in my mind.

The client, who travels back and forth between Seattle and Los Angeles for work, had owned the apartment for a few years but, like most people with his packed schedule, hadn't tackled making it into a home. He didn't want endless meetings or back-and-forth phone calls to get the job done and, after reviewing a few mood boards, he entrusted us to the job. I should stress: this is not the norm, and quite honestly, it's a very stressful approach. As much as you might think it would be a dream for a designer like me (who loves to talk about the organic nature of the design process), it's not. There are technical elements of my job, such as spreadsheets and sign-offs on specific pieces, that make

me happier than you could imagine. I like the order that comes with the business side of my creative chaos (especially when so much of what we create is custom and therefore not returnable). Well, I needed to get over the lack of structure and just get to the task at hand. I didn't stray from my version of the late '90s New York City loft. I couldn't do much wrong with these architectural bones—we didn't even paint downstairs except for the kitchen. We kept the palette neutral, comfortable, and created multiple seating areas on the main floor for entertaining, which our client does quite a bit when he is in town. Upstairs are two bedrooms, two bathrooms, and an outdoor patio—all of which posed a challenge, being, in fact, New York City size. When spaces are small, I tend to embrace their diminutive nature and make them super cozy. We carpeted the whole floor in a gray wool and matched the walls, trim, and ceiling in a complementary gray paint to minimize the small footprint and eaves in the space. It should be noted that this project is included in this book because the client loved it all. I am hoping to get down to his LA home next to see if he lets me loose again.



A vintage Moroccan rug and multiple types of seating make this area off the kitchen very inviting and add softness to the space. The photograph was purchased at the Seattle Art Fair.



OPPOSITE: The textures in the rug and pottery reference the snow-dappled mountains that surround the home.

ABOVE: A guest room is full of all the same comforts as the main bedroom.





## MAGNOLIA

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This house is located in a storybook part of Seattle called Magnolia: a place where there is essentially one bridge in and one bridge out, you know all your neighbors, and the views of the Sound are priceless. I love the age and scale of many of the homes built in this neighborhood throughout the 1950s and 1960s, though this was *not* one of those homes. This new-construction house belongs to dear friends of another client of mine who also lives in Magnolia. These couples have larger-than-life personalities, throw spectacular parties, and have a zest for life that is rarely seen in other people. I was brought in early on in the building process to select or confirm the finishes and layout of the home, and then to furnish accordingly. The inspiration for the home's interiors was equal parts Pacific Northwest and Palm Springs, although the clients tended to favor the Palm Springs references much more. I had to be careful here: Seattle is not Palm Springs and vice versa. Forcing an aesthetic into a home with so many windows (where nature automatically becomes a big part of the aesthetic

inside) can be tricky. While many of the lines of the furniture are very midcentury, or things you may find in a Palm Springs home, the color palette needed to stay true to nature in Seattle and be warm enough for the long winters here. The walnut ceiling paneling in the entry and dining room helps cast a warm and cozy feeling in those areas of the home, and the stone used for the fireplace adds some great texture. The master bedroom is my favorite room (as it often is), with a palette built on natural neutrals that are soothing yet not boring. There are nods to midcentury design in the custom bed and nightstands, which were based on designs from the 1970s. The entry also featured the prototype for what would be called the George daybed from my furniture collection with Lawson-Fenning, named after my dachshund. Overall, our goal was to create a home that reflected the age and character of other homes in Magnolia, while combining a midcentury-modern aesthetic that reflected its homeowners' zest for life. I think we succeeded.



ABOVE: Midcentury classics—a custom live-edge dining table and floating walnut shelf, both made in Seattle—are paired with silk wallcovering and a painting by Michael Duryea made out of coffee grounds and paint.



OPPOSITE: The George daybed from our furniture collection is covered in a textural bouclé fabric, while the oversize mirror balances the light in the entry.