

AD Transformation Up-To-Date

By Karine Monie

North of downtown Toronto, Forest Hill is one of the most sought-after neighborhoods, as it houses two of the best private schools in the city. But wealthy families also choose this area because the scenery is charming, with beautiful parks, hills and winding roads. "Toronto is a conservative city as it relates to architecture and design, confessed Gianpiero Pugliese, founder of the firm Audax Architecture. "With projects such as this, we try to push the boundaries." The architect developed a design philosophy called "Human Architecture" which incorporates the best elements of traditional architecture, and recreates them with a modern aesthetic.



This philosophy was used in the complete renovation of this 1480 square metre property, divided into three floors and a basement. The owner, a prominent businessman who cofounded MAC Cosmetics 30 years ago and then sold it to Estée Lauder in 1998, is now a philanthropist and an important personality in the fashion world. He lives in this house with his partner and their four young adult children. "The client needed a house that was better planned and adapted to his family, which is growing as is his art collection, said Jay

Hodgins, who led the interior design team and worked in collaboration with Enid MacIntosh and Stephen Wagg. The exterior design is inspired by Neo-Gothic architecture. In order to respect the neighbourhoods history and avoid creating too much contrast with the surrounding aesthetics, Gianpiero Pugliese and his team decided to preserve the traditional elements of the house, such as the sloping roof and dormers, but redesigned in a modern way.



The rear of the house was also modified to include an office. Materials such as limestone and zinc were used in the buildings older components, while glass was used for the contemporary details. Inside, everything was reconfigured so that they can organize large social gatherings.

"The extensive art collection required limited intervention in decor in order to focus ones attention on the work," said Jay Hodgins. Finishes

include lacquer, leather, metals and rare stones. Marble, onyx and granite are combined in a space where the mouldings and wooden details appear to have always been there.



The result is discreetly luxurious and reflects a truly tactile language. The dark and neutral palette is ideal for the art pieces and various accessories to create strong colourful contrasts.

"This house is an inhabited three-dimensional art gallery. It is a pleasure to explore," concluded Jay Hodgins.



Architecture: Audax Architecture Interior Design: Jay Hodgins of Jay Hodgins Design in collaboration with Stephen Wagg and Enid MacIntosh Construction: Den Bosch and Finchley Interior photography: Erik Rotter Exterior photography: Revelateur Studio.