

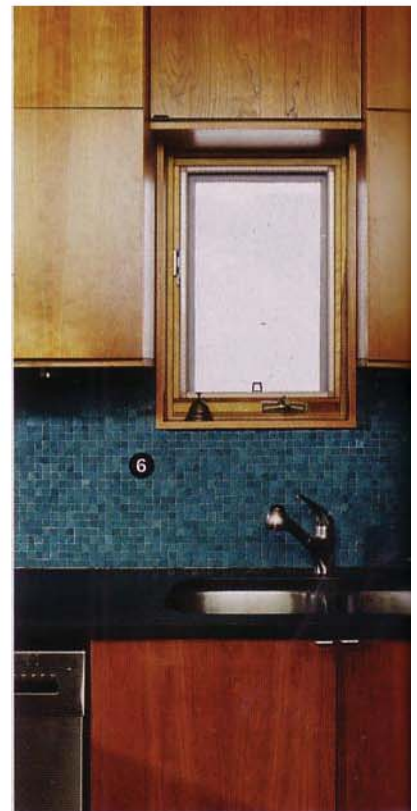


The people: Melana Janzen and John McMinn

The profession: Architects with the eponymous firm MJ Architecture

The Place: A massively renovated Victorian near College and Ossington

In 2004, McMinn bought an old three-storey Victorian fixer-upper from the estate of a woman who had lived there since 1928. He made the first floor his own (with an addition tacked on the back) and turned the rest into apartments. Midway through the reno, in 2005, he met his wife-to-be, Janzen, who is also an architect. When the couple decided to go into business together, they also made an office for themselves at home. For this, they gutted the garage—once home to the previous owners' trucking company—and created an airy, peaceful studio just across the backyard. "The main thing was the convenience, especially with small children," says McMinn. The couple created an attic loft in the garage where their kids, five-year-old Soren and two-year-old Annika, can play while their parents work.



1 The old doors are original, but Janzen and McMinn covered the windows with new frosted, double-paned glass for insulation and privacy.

2 McMinn fashioned the wraparound desk out of maple tabletops salvaged from Parkdale Collegiate's science labs. The labs were being refurbished and the tabletops were about to be trashed.

3 The shelves, also from Parkdale CI, accommodate all of the studio's architecture books. (Fiction is kept inside the house.)

4 The red exterior of the studio is clad in embossed metal made to look like brick.

5 The kitchen's mahogany pendant

fixture is from Costa Rica. The couple bought it at Studio EyeSpy on Carlaw, along with the vintage Danish modern teak table.

6 The green tiles in the kitchen are Venetian glass mosaic. McMinn amassed a collection of them in the 1990s from a dealer in Hamilton who was retiring. He still has lots in storage.

7 The airplane mobile was a gift from their friend Jyhling Lee, an artist and architect, on the occasion of Soren's birth. They're wooden replicas of World War I biplanes that fly around with subtle drafts.

8 The sign was for the old trucking business that was run out of the garage.



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