

AT HOME StLouis

FABULOUS Rehabs

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Art-filled Affair



completely walled-in kitchen," he remembers. "And the cabinets were Cardinal-game red."

The biggest challenge, though, was that both partners, who work in creative fields, continually travel for work; so does Fletcher. The couple had few opportunities to be in the same place at the same time, so they created a work flowchart with hard deadlines for decision-making. Then they met Fletcher up in Chicago when he was there on business and went on a tour of the Merchandise Mart.

"They were concerned it was going to be boring when we were first choosing finishes, the flooring, and wall paints," Fletcher says. "I said, 'Guys, it's very important that we keep this foundation of the home very neutral, because on top of that we can place all those special things that say who you are.'" And as they inspected kitchens and baths in over-the-top European showrooms, Fletcher reminded them: "You don't have to buy *this* kitchen. But what do you like about it?"

Fletcher literally started from the ground up. After all, he says, "there's more floor than anything" in most domestic spaces. He laid down large, pale neutral tiles that wouldn't be distracting. "I also knew that I wanted them to have that

long wall of wood," he says. "So I didn't want a wood floor. I just reversed the wall and the floor."

On the wall directly off the foyer, he installed a 25-foot wall of rich macassar wood. It is an engineering feat that slants at an almost imperceptible angle, but opens the space up just right. Halfway down its length is a hidden door leading to a tiny, exquisite powder room that sparkles with glass-bead wallpaper, an illuminated cantilevered onyx sink, and a mirror framed by what looks like a Victorian picture frame made of frosted glass. (It's actually resin.) The whole apartment is touched by subtle "sparkle moments" that Fletcher included in homage to one of the homeowners, who works in the performing arts.

"I have some little moments of glitz in each room," he says. "In fact, if you stand in the kitchen and the master-bedroom doors are open, you can look all the way down and see that wall in the master bathroom sparkling," a trick of the eye achieved with glassy tiles.

Sparkle saved a nonnegotiable supporting beam in the kitchen—Fletcher covered it in silvery, nickel-size tiles, which reflect light from a wall of generous windows that offer a view of the sky and the treetops of the Central West End. The

IN EVERY ROOM, THERE'S A LITTLE BIT OF GLITZ, OR WHAT FLETCHER CALLS "SPARKLE MOMENTS."



kitchen's wide open, with a pale, cantilevered island in the middle. The custom lacquered cabinetry was hand-built by Dave Scheu of McMillan Cabinetmakers, who also created cabinetry throughout the apartment.

"The kitchen space was originally an enclosed room with just a door into the box and a door out of the box," Fletcher says. "With all that light and view opportunity, the kitchen is such a gathering place now."

The couple does entertain a lot, and they are buoyant, warm people—not the sort you can imagine in a Le Corbusier-inspired white box. They love modern design, but Fletcher took care to create an environment that was warm, rather than perfect and chilly. "It's contemporary," one of the homeowners observes, "but it's like a *gentle* contemporary."

They also love art, and the simple paint colors—"seven or eight different colors that go from a taupe to a gray," as Fletcher describes them—are the perfect backdrop. On one wall is a series of framed, original illustrations from a Little Golden Book on Bozo the Clown from the early '60s. (From the front door, they look abstract. Move closer, and you can see the brushstrokes, keylines, and pasted blocks of text.) In the hallway off the foyer is a series of framed charcoal sketches done by one of the homeowners. On another wall is a work by Alexander Calder, an Ivey-Selkirk auction

