

LOFTY AMBITIONS

STORY **CATALINA MARGULIS** | PHOTOGRAPHY **JASON HARTOG**

Toronto's Cabbagetown is known for its architectural heritage, with its concentration of Victorian houses, but it was a former peanut factory space that caught the eye of Charlie Eansor.

Purchased in 1988, the spacious, multi-level, 2,300 sq. ft. condo includes a living room, dining room, kitchen, two bedrooms, two bathrooms and a garage, as well as a rooftop deck.

"At the time, I was in the market for a conventional condo, but this came up and all the pieces came into place. It's a condo ownership but physically more like a townhouse complex; it was just so spacious," says Eansor. *Continued on page 26*



Soaring windows shine the light on the impeccably decorated living room space. It's a great space for Zack, the couple's standard poodle, to relax. **LEFT:** Stunning artwork is a vibrant addition.

By the time 2013 rolled around, the condo was due for an update, says Eansor, who lives in the condo with wife Judy Cowling. “The bathrooms needed redoing, the kitchens needed redoing. We had some damage from a leaky roof over the years. So we decided to do it, and do it all at once,” he says.

With an office just down the street from the couple, **Jeffrey Douglas of Douglas Design Studio** was the right person to take on the project. “I walk the dog by Jeffrey’s office every day,” says Eansor, who shares that he and his wife had already embarked on the renovation before hiring a designer. “We had first started working with a contractor, but as it grew into a larger project, the need for someone to direct started to emerge. We thought we needed a quarterback to help us out. So I called Jeffrey.”

Douglas was immediately a fan of the space. “It’s a wonderful three-storey-high, open-space loft,” says Douglas. “I loved the high, open space at the front of the house, I thought it was amazing. The main living and dining space – that staircase, the way the light comes in – was wonderful.

The bones were great, but it was dated and really needed to be done.”

“Modern was the word that was used,” says Douglas of Eansor and Cowling’s consultation. “They wanted it fresh and new and modern. They’re very open minded and relaxed, but definitely had preferences, which was great, as it gave us direction.”

“We wanted to enhance and make the most out of the space,” says Eansor. “We talked things over with Jeffrey, figured out things we liked, and he gave us options. It was a very good, collaborative process.” Once the plan was finalized, Jeffrey called on Creative Director **Gordana Di Monte** to select lighting, furniture and fabrics and pull the overall aesthetic together.

The biggest change came to the third level layout, which was redesigned to provide better flow. The open living, dining and kitchen space features 12-foot ceilings and a floor-to-ceiling window. A staircase leads to the terrace above. The kitchen was moved to the back of the house, and cabinetry from **Convoy Custom Interiors** and pendant lighting from **Klaus** helped brighten the space. *Continued on page 31*

The custom lacquered media centre creates a focal point and houses components.

RIGHT: The room layers sleek furnishings with plenty of seating options. **BELOW:** Award-winning designer Jeffrey Douglas of Douglas Design Studio combines creative and design leadership skills to achieve extraordinary results. **BOTTOM RIGHT:** Gordana Di Monte helped bring the design vision to life. **OPPOSITE:** The open concept helps maintain the loft-like feel. A staircase with open risers leads to the rooftop deck.



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The custom kitchen was relocated to maximize the flow of the condo.



Built-in cabinetry cleverly hides a support column. **OPPOSITE, TOP:** The couple's vintage chairs are paired with a piece titled *Open Secret* by Alice Teichert. **BOTTOM:** A cloud-like light by Artemide shines on a cosy seating nook.

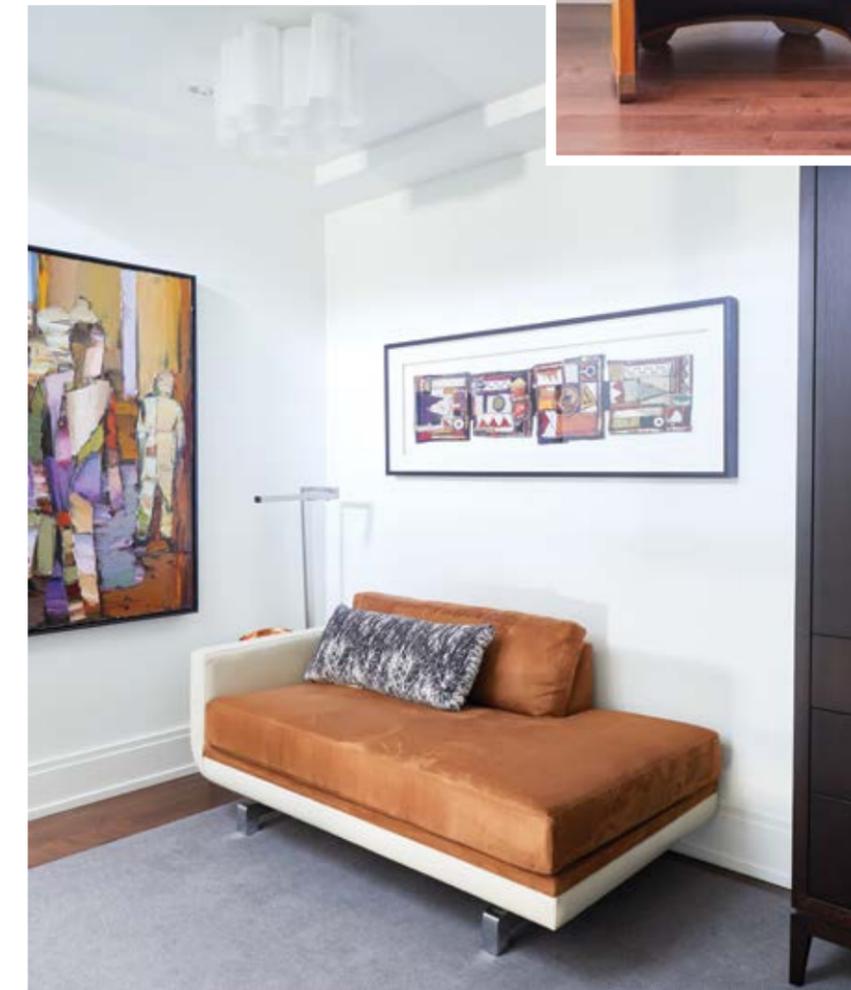
"We lightened the space with white painted cabinets, a mirrored panel over the cooktop and frosted glass cabinet tops, so light can move and bounce around." A bevelled backsplash adds another reflective surface to the kitchen, which now sparkles with light. "It's fresh and soft and bright," says Douglas.

The dining room itself was troubled by an awkwardly located supporting column. To solve the problem, Douglas added display cases on either side of the column to conceal it and offer convenient storage space. "We made it look built in," says Douglas.

In the living room, a bulky wood-burning fireplace was replaced with a more streamlined gas model and a sleek, lacquered media centre was added.

The small guest bath was dark with an enclosed shower. Douglas created the illusion of space by using white and replacing the shower with a walk-in wet area, featuring a glass fin on one side. "The idea is that you don't feel like you're in an enclosed shower area. It feels open and generous now," says Douglas.

The second floor also features a small



laundry room, which Douglas reorganized by stacking the washer and dryer and adding cabinets to create space. He also created an area for the couple's cat litter box. "Pets are a big part of their lives, so it was important to accommodate them," says Douglas of the couple's Calico cat, Louie, 5, and Standard Poodle, Zack, 11.

They refinished the metal staircase and replaced the floors with hardwood from **Palmer Floorcovering**. The landing between the first and second storeys was given purpose with a new seating area outfitted with a chaise by **Jeffrey Douglas Studio Line**, original artwork and a light fixture by **Artemide**. "It's a cosy little spot to curl up with a book," says Douglas. *Continued on page 32*

feature

The ground floor entrance is just that, but Douglas replaced the coat closet with a custom armoire. "It's the most efficient way to store clothing in that space without making it feel tight."

The lighter, brighter scheme makes the space feel vibrant, while dramatic graphic lines add interest. "The idea of fresh was really important," says Douglas. "The drama really comes in through the linear elements: the staircase painted in dark colours, and the front window. There's also an exposed air vent going down the centre of the room, which we painted dark, too. We wanted the linear elements to make it more dramatic. It's a loft-like, architectural style of building," says Douglas.

The renovation makes an excellent backdrop for a vibrant art collection from Oeno Gallery. Striking pieces throughout create focal points and add personality.

Of his newly designed home, Eansor couldn't be happier. "It's a lot lighter, airier and more comfortable. Things are well chosen to fit in, it's less cluttered," he says. "It prompts us to keep it that way. We love it." **OH**



TOP: The entry is airy with integrated cabinetry, a console from Structube and a textured circular mirror. **ABOVE:** The en suite is white and bright with a mix of surface styles. **LEFT:** The beautifully blue master bedroom is a zen place to end each day.

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