



BETTER HOMES & GARDENS

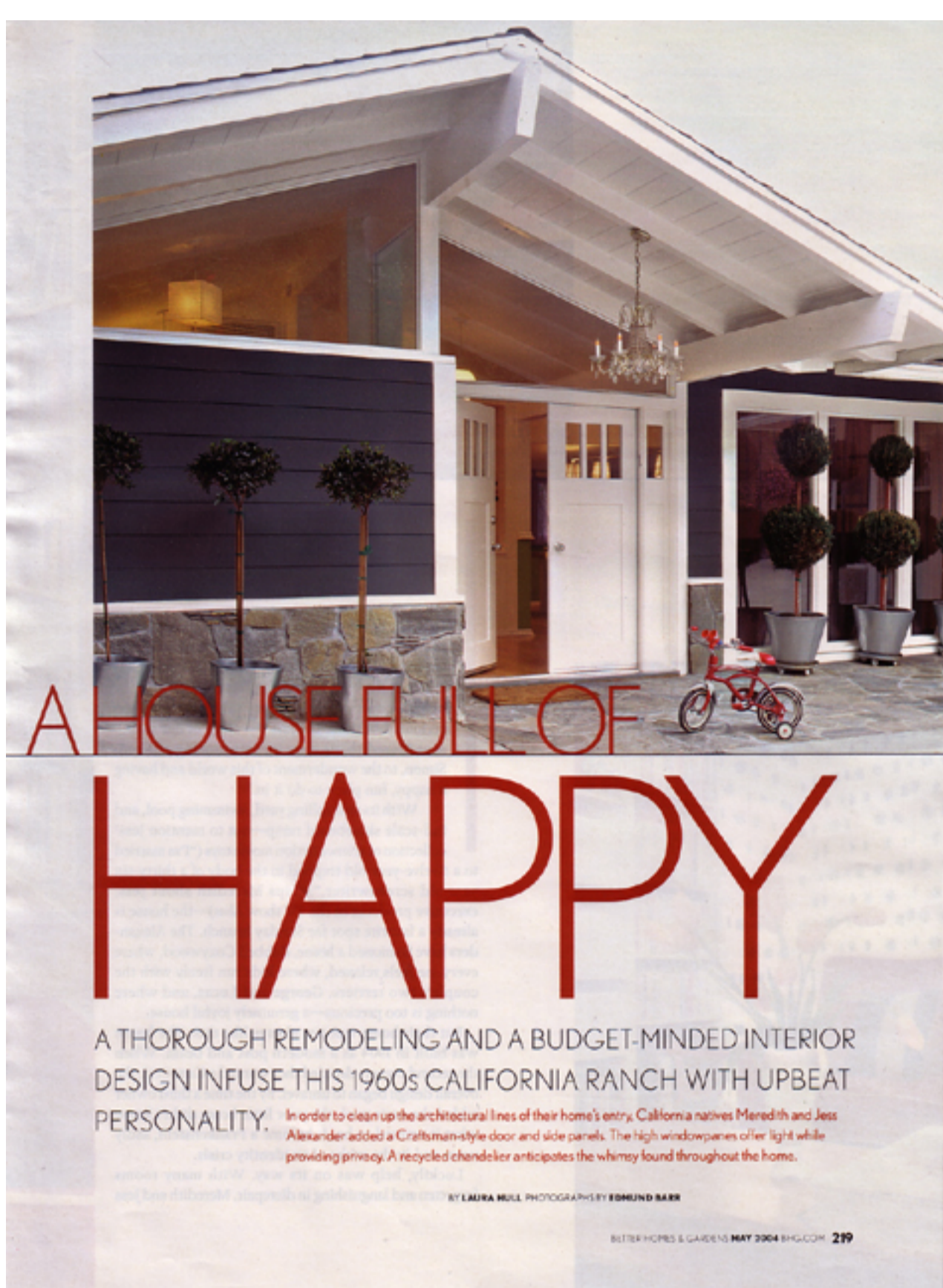
May

2004

VOLUME 82, NUMBER 5

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A HOUSE FULL OF HAPPY

A THOROUGH REMODELING AND A BUDGET-MINDED INTERIOR DESIGN INFUSE THIS 1960s CALIFORNIA RANCH WITH UPBEAT PERSONALITY.

In order to clean up the architectural lines of their home's entry, California natives Meredith and Joe Alexander added a Craftsman-style door and side panels. The high white-painted ceiling's light white-painting primary. A recycled chandelier anticipates the wherewithal throughout the home.

BY LINDSEY GREENBERG MAY 2004 \$5.99

TO BUFFER THE SHOCK EFFECT OF THE GREEN PAINT, A THICK, HIGH-GLOSS WHITE CHAIR RAIL MERGES INTO WHITE WALLS.

PHOTO: SHAY ANKOR



"Meredith found the black-and-white polka-dot lampshades [left] but she never dreamed that the black-and-white polka-dot lampshades [left] would be so useful as her ceiling. Architect Emily Jagoda came on with the impressive solution of building a structure out of low-cost galvanized pipes. The same pipe was used in another room. With the wall space reserved for the Alexander's growing photography collection (far left), which started with a low-potential green line by his father, Jesse Alexander, an astrophotographer and photographer of his own, Meredith put the chairs from Target (left) into place to begin their odyssey into the challenges of renovation.

Thinking most of their work would be cosmetic, a closer look soon revealed a multifaceted air-conditioning system, space heater system, and the presence of asbestos, requiring the removal of all air ducts. Meredith was advised, she worked closely with the contractor to keep everything on target. "Definitely a full-time job, and I'm a mom," she says. "I just lived it." Jess stepped aside and gave her full reign and, with the help of architect Emily Jagoda, the house came together in just three months.

Structurally, the dining room and kitchen were the most change. Since the house was modern in its origin, it already had large openings between rooms and views that formed from one space to another. Jagoda capitalized on this feature, opening up the existing kitchen and adjacent laundry room to the family room by removing several interior walls. Next, she elongated the dining room by incorporating a small screened-in porch and adding an L-shape bank of windows, giving the room additional light. Outside, a masonry collection of various flooring materials was replaced with hardwood, creating a continuous surface that visually unites the space.

"We pushed the house away from the Victorian idea of a separate room for each function, heading it toward

Large windows allow for bright and beautiful. Most of the furniture in this room is from previous homes, including the set of chairs that were kept with their black cloth. Meredith discovered the Queen Anne chair which was discovered by the previous owner.



a more modern ideal of open space," remarks Jagoda. As the construction rolled in, Meredith managed ways to stay within budget. One key was to combine custom work with more affordable solutions. In the newly opened kitchen, old cabinets were refinished with layers of paint and new hardware, and white marble countertops were added to make up for expensive white tile. Custom-made furniture pieces, such as the recycled Douglas fir-spoiled dining room table, are mixed with off-the-shelf items, on this case, a chair and cushion from Target.

The home's entry is anchored with the old chandelier Meredith salvaged from the original dining room. Even in the family room, tailored black slipcovers with white piping around a Queen Anne chair and ottoman left by the home's previous owner. "I don't feel right about spending too much money on furniture because I'm going to want to change it every five years," says Meredith.

The Alexanders wanted an open kitchen (below) because "with a family you want to see what everybody is doing," says Meredith. The built-in kitchen table is a kind of island and bar that provides family seating, as well as a place for the computer and video games.



BY LINDSEY GREENBERG MAY 2004 \$5.99

Although the couple's previous home was full of the size, much of their old furniture could be discovered and reused. Color, carefully positioned and used with restraint, became a primary and respective technique with which to customize the space. As a London-trained floral designer, Meredith learned the importance of color and texture, and the confidence above the interior colors. Line Rind and Isotone from Home Interiors Paints now greet visitors at the entry. "It was so wonderfully held," says Jagoda. "Two courageous colors in the first room that you see."



To buffer the shock effect of the dining room's green water, accented a thick, high-gloss white chair rail wraps around the room and merges into white walls. Likewise, peeking out from behind hundreds of books, the string of the living room is graphically contained by white bookcases.

IT'S A TIME FOR SHOWING OUR SON THE WONDERS OF THIS WORLD FROM A HAPPY, FUN HOME.

PHOTO: LINDSEY GREENBERG

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The dining and living areas (below) were created as an eating party and social area. Best standard color. The new table is perfect for a casual dinner table, and an afternoon drop-in area with eight seats of guests. Hanging in the room is a copy of the "Millennium Falcon" space ship from Star Wars. Since Simon and Garfunkel's "Hotel California" was the first song to be used in a room, Meredith (left) was the only way to know how to do it. Meredith (left) had her own room from a Home Depot carpet and blue shower curtains. Cost? Around \$300.

Along with her color expertise, Meredith spent many hours behind a sewing machine, a skill she picked up while programing with Simon. Existing curtains were cut and reshaped in the family and dining rooms. New blue panels were altered for the living room.

So what does husband Joe think about Meredith's labors? "I love the house," remarks Jess. "We have a job about it, that I think her almost daily."

"With two kids, I really couldn't envision a house with white furniture," says Meredith. "We embrace the fact that there are bright colored toys everywhere and silly music playing." ☺

PHOTO: SHAY ANKOR

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