

# Dressed to impress

Symmetrical exterior detailing gives this dignified residence an even grander presence. The interiors have been reinvented to optimize views and lifestyle







Before



Before

**Sometimes a house with a grand stature and excellent bones can be under-represented by a lack of architectural detailing – much as a haute couture gown might require the addition of fine jewelry to set off its flowing lines.**

This was the case when architect Stuart Silk was asked to give a substantial four-story house a complete makeover inside and out. Originally, the exterior had a slightly stolid look, and the clients wished to introduce layers of detailing to bring an added sense of refinement to the house, says Silk.

“Among the new elements we brought in were six copper-clad dormers that dramatically altered the roofline and allowed light to flood into the master suite on the top level. We also lengthened the eaves on the roof and gave them a classic upturn that acts as a flourish,” says Silk. “In addition, we replaced the wooden roof with more appropriate slate roofing.”

The facade was also enhanced by the use of architectural detailing. For example, an elliptical entrance portico, carved in Indiana limestone, brings a level of formality to the frontage.

“A number of windows were introduced to open up the house to the lake views – including a central window above the portico,” says Silk. “Eight-inch precast concrete casings were built to accentuate the windows and doors.”

Each of the second-story bedrooms now has tall external double doors with traditional leaded glass mullions. These doors have also been fitted with custom-designed narrow stiles and rails. The vertical nature of these elements redresses the proportions of the overall design, making the house seem less boxy and more refined, says the architect.

“To complete the decorative appeal, the symmetrically placed bedrooms were adorned with Juliet balconies, featuring custom-designed wrought iron railings,” says Silk. “The ornate ironwork contrasts the linear windows.”

*Preceding pages and right: A new roof, accentuated eaves and balanced detailing all bring the brick facade of this period home to life. An elevated entrance terrace was turned into a gravel and boxwood garden, defining the arrival experience.*

*Top and above: Prior to the remodel, the strong but stolid base structure was relatively unadorned.*







*This page:* Paneling on the foyer staircase and walls, an ornate chandelier and wall sconces all contribute to the sense of formality.

*Facing page:* Distressed quarter sawn oak parquet in a Versailles pattern runs throughout the interiors. The fireplace is now on an internal wall to optimize light and views.







"On the inside, we introduced a family room on the first floor – bringing in more natural light and improving connections to the lake views," says Silk. "Most of the rooms, however, still occupy roughly the same areas, but each has been reshaped."

The open volumes have a modern look, but the old-world mouldings, together with the wall panels, mean a traditional sensibility dominates the spaces.

With most of the existing rooms stripped back to the joists, Silk introduced a richly detailed wood paneling system. The classic panels build on the formal style of the residence and help accentuate the scale of the interiors.

"Some changes to the interiors were subtle, but others were quite dramatic," says Silk. "For instance, we relocated the openings into the entry and living room to optimize a sense of arrival and pedestrian flow. In the living area we added sets of large French doors that contributed to the outlooks and created an easy connection to the landscaped gardens."

Arches were replaced with clean-lined expansive openings that let in much more light and provide sightlines across the rooms.

"The new family room has tall windows on all its exterior walls and extends beyond the existing floorplate. This addition lends space to the already large dining area behind."

The doorway into the adjacent kitchen was also relocated and widened, says the architect.

"The original kitchen was cramped and oppressive, and has now been replaced with a lighter, more airy workspace, reoriented to take in views in two directions.

"On the first floor, all four bedrooms were subtly reconfigured, with new bathrooms and closets," says Silk. "On the top floor, the new symmetrical master suite benefits from the inclusion of the six roof dormers – which make it a cool, light-filled retreat."



**Left:** A rustic wooden dining table provides a dramatic counterpoint to the formal interiors.

**Top:** Anthracite gray cabinets contrast white veined marble countertops in the kitchen. The new design offers more cooking space and improved natural light.

**Above:** The existing kitchen was cramped, lacked connection to the formal rooms and had limited external views.





**Architect:** Design principal Stuart Silk AIA, Stuart Silk Architects (Seattle, WA)  
**Interior designer:** Timothy Thomas, Timothy Thomas Design  
**Kitchen designer:** Stuart Silk Architects  
**Landscape architect:** Richard Hartlage, AHBL  
**Contractor:** Schuchart/Dow  
**Structural engineer:** Dan Fenton, Quantum Consulting Engineers  
**Siding:** Existing brick, salvaged and relaid by Hewitt Masonry  
**Roofing:** Natural slate by American Slate Company, with slate and copper gutters and flashings  
**Doors and windows:** Alaskan-grade yellow cedar from Dynamic Windows and Doors  
**Flooring:** White oak with custom stain, in Versailles pattern, supplied and installed by Eurocraft Floors  
**Paints and varnishes:** Benjamin Moore  
**Lighting:** Wall sconces in gold leaf from Murray Iron Works  
**Heating:** Weil-McLain boiler; Lifebreath heat recovery ventilation; hydronic and electric mat in-floor heating; radiators  
**Furniture:** Madison Park Interiors  
**Blinds:** Bartlett Blinds, Calvin linen  
**Cabinet Company:** Abodian  
**Countertop and backsplash:** Calacatta marble by Fairweather Stone Works  
**Kitchen sink:** Calacatta by Modern Granite  
**Oven, ventilation:** Viking

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**This page:** A coffered ceiling, wall paneling, baseboards and classic mouldings transformed the master bedroom from a dowdy space to a spacious sanctuary for the owners. Blond wood floors and leaded windows contribute to the serene, refined aesthetic. The original turned balustrade has been replaced with a transitional-style bannister – adding a touch of modernity.

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