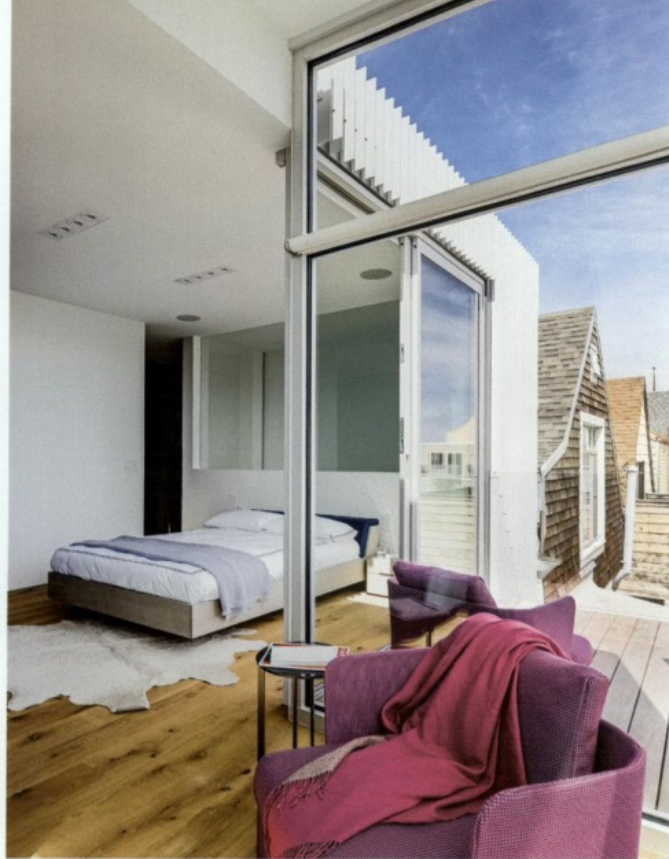


dwelling

either a really run-down old house or something that a developer has remodeled superficially.” One property grabbed their attention: a lofty building in the Mission District that was part photography studio, part house. Their bid was unsuccessful, but it made them realize that renovating an older home could be the way to go.

Then they came across a fixer-upper in Noe Valley. Built in 1901, the 1,540-square-foot row house had two levels above a garage, with two bedrooms and one bathroom, and a small but sunny south-facing backyard. Because of historical preservation mandates, the front of the house had to stay basically the same. But in back, there was the potential for creative license. The couple closed on the property and set Fougerson loose.

She and her team, including project architect Todd Aranaz, gave the facade a simple makeover, covering the navy blue and white exterior and its Victorian embellishments with dark gray paint. To create a main living space that had direct access to the outdoors, they excavated the backyard and placed the open kitchen and living room behind the garage. Structural engineer Paul Endres and contractor Dermot Barry worked out how to cut and support large openings in the two floors above, which contain three bedrooms and three baths, so that the upper levels function like mezzanines in a voluminous atrium. “In a traditional Victorian, the floors are stacked like a series of pancakes,” says Fougerson. “We interconnected the floors by creating these big two- and three-story spaces. You’re trading square

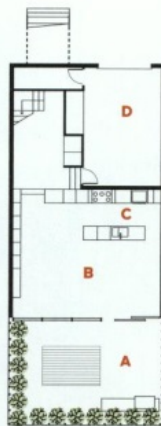


• Cut-out House

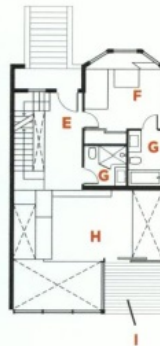


ARCHITECT **Fougerson Architecture** LOCATION **San Francisco, California**

- | | | |
|----------------------|---------------------|-------------------|
| A Backyard | E Entrance | I Deck |
| B Living/Dining Area | F Bedroom | J Master Bathroom |
| C Kitchen | G Bathroom | K Master Bedroom |
| D Garage | H Office/Guest Room | |



Ground Level



First Floor



Second Floor



“THE GLASS COMPONENT EMPHASIZES NATURAL LIGHT AND AIR—THINGS THAT HAVE NOTHING TO DO WITH THE WAY VICTORIANS ARE TYPICALLY ORGANIZED.”

ANNE FOUGERON

footage, but you're getting light deep into the house by opening it all up, and it feels larger." Another reason the expanded 2,300-square-foot home feels bigger than its true size is the 900 cubic feet of built-in cabinets by John Myers, which reduce the need for sideboards and other furniture.

The architects tied the three levels together with a bright tomato-red staircase of perforated steel and the aforementioned built-in storage, done in three shades of blue-gray. "The blue cabinetry and the stair are threads that knit the three floors together spatially, in complementary hues that add a burst of color at the front of the house," says Fougeron.

Key to the home's openness is the rear wall of glass, which allows the interiors to take full advantage of the sun. It is canted inward at a nine-degree angle for both aesthetic and practical reasons: It gives the space a sense of drama, and it allows the ground floor to extend farther into the yard. (The city's building code mandates a setback for each floor, but the architects made the case that the slanted floors averaged out to meet the setback requirements.) Typically found in large-scale buildings like convention centers or museums, the wall imparts a feeling of monumentality to the 25-foot-wide house.

Six months after moving in, Jim and Noriko are still getting accustomed to their new architectural surroundings. "It was a bit intimidating at first," says Noriko. Sophie, meanwhile, relishes the bright stairs and her custom bunk bed in her favorite color. Says Jim, "This house has definitely raised our design awareness." ■

Set on the home's top floor and featuring a deck that overlooks the backyard, the master bedroom is clean-lined and filled with light (opposite, top). The Fusion bed is by Zeitraum; the purple Cove chairs

are by Paola Lenti. During the day, a skylight illuminates the master bathroom (opposite, bottom). Transforming the rear of the house is something more often found in a high-rise building—a certain

wall (above) that Fougeron and the team hung from the third floor. "It's actually very complicated to make the field glazing look simple and minimal," says the architect. Piero Lissoni's Metallico table for Porro

anchors the dining area, while built-in cabinetry offers ample storage. The main living area was created from what was once a basement behind the garage. Limestone floors inside and out unify the living spaces.