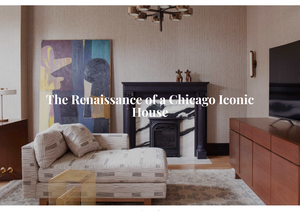


The Renaissance of a Chicago Iconic House

Journal

by Gabriella Jacobson Cole

Photography: Isabel Parra | 07 / 01 / 2022 | Interior Design: Cari Gianoulias Design

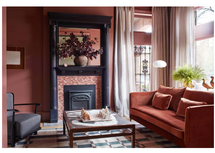
The primary source of inspiration for this house was undoubtedly the house itself.

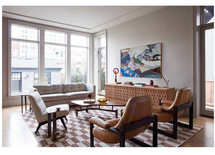
Located in Chicago, this a Percy J. Benson House, built in 1894. Standing three stories tall, it has numerous signature features of the Romanesque Revival style, including rough-ashlar (constricted) stone walls conveying a massive appearance, picturesque moon with a bay two-story front, foliate ornamentation and arched openings.

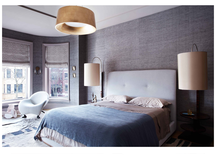
The primary source of inspiration for this house was undoubtedly the house itself. In addition to being a Chicago landmark, this is also a home steeped in architectural sensibilities.

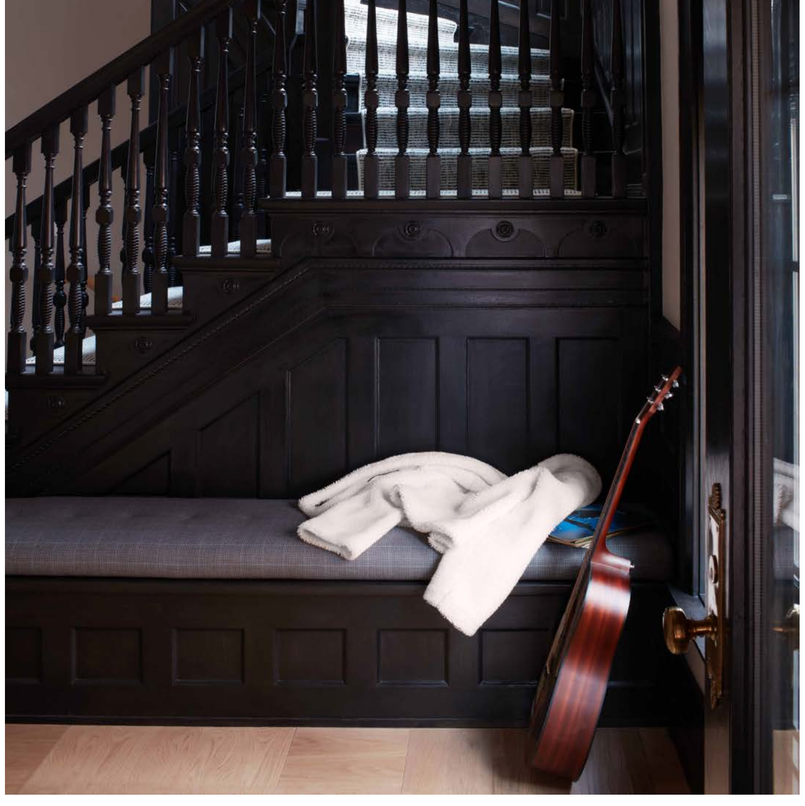
Cari Gianoulias, interior designer on this project, focused on bringing the living spaces to life through materials, textures, "and an underlying tension created between modern vs traditional art", she says. "The lighting and furniture could live in any era – some pieces are very old, others are very modern. The architecture is very traditional, carefully composed crossed blending styles, and any place the house is feel timeless." The interior designer has preserved everything of historical significance, namely the large panelled doors with brass fittings, the fireplace joinery, the original staircase and the front door hardware.

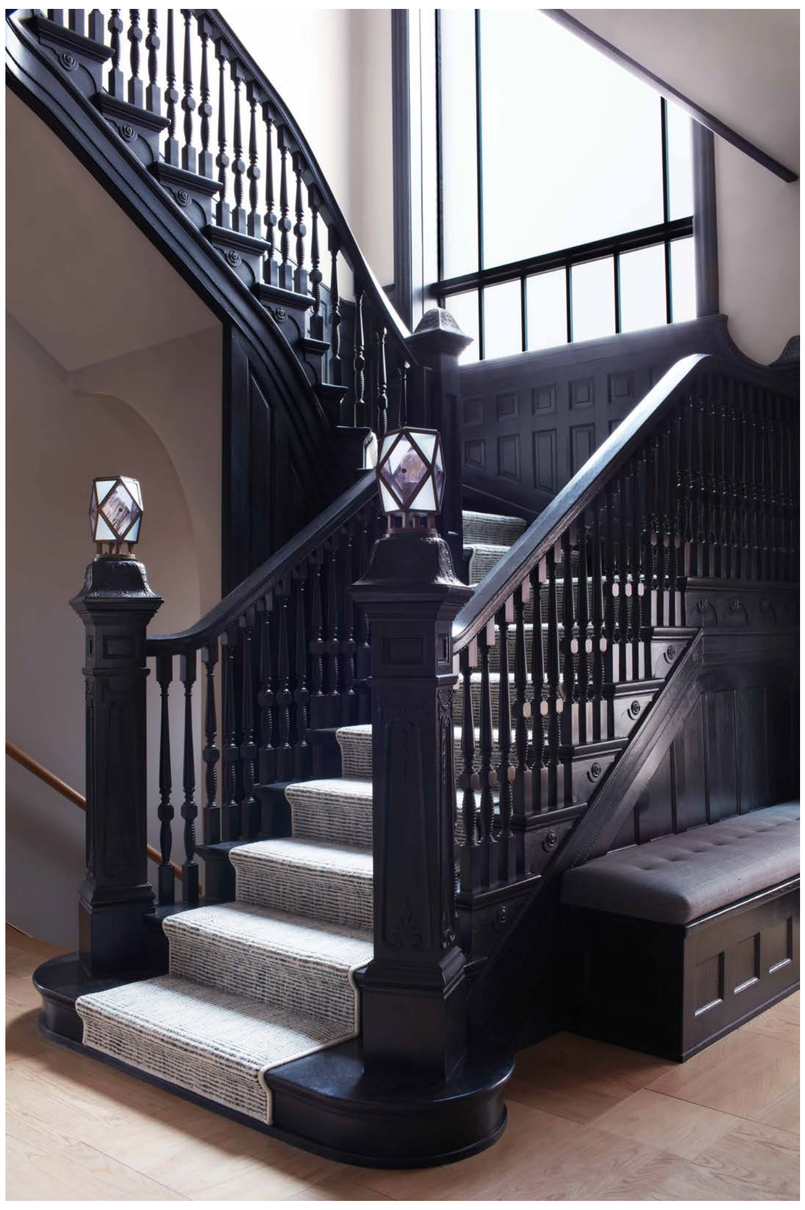
The biggest challenge? "Making it feel current and curated without compromising the historical integrity or appearing disingenuous," says interior designer Cari Gianoulias.

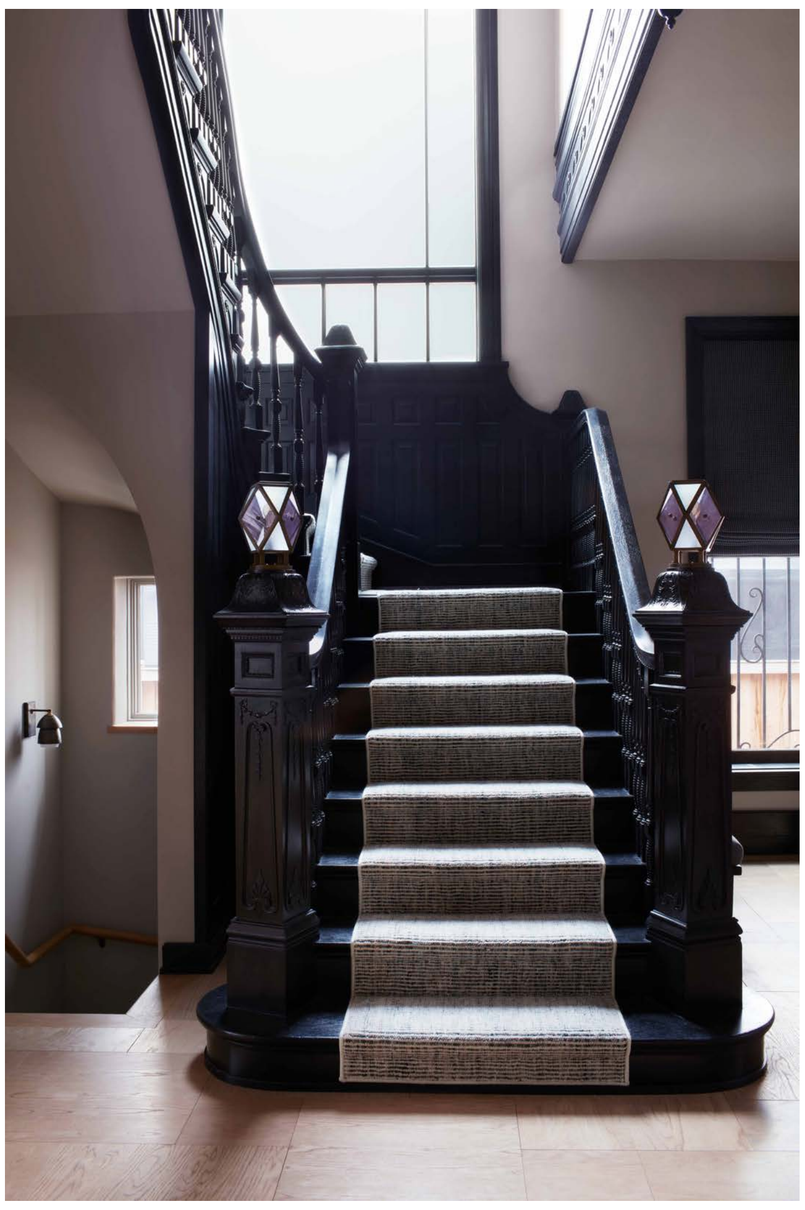












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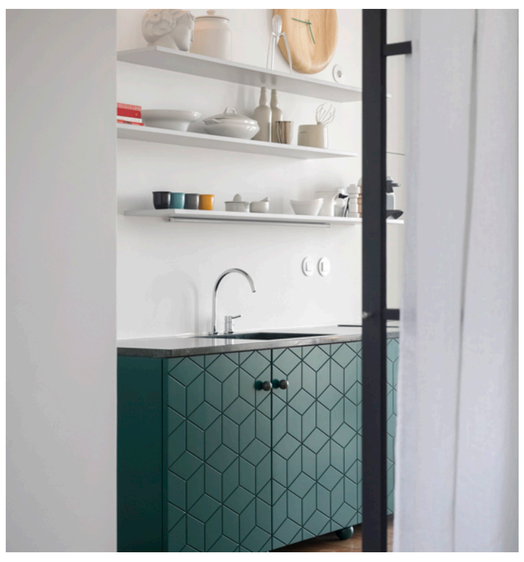

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