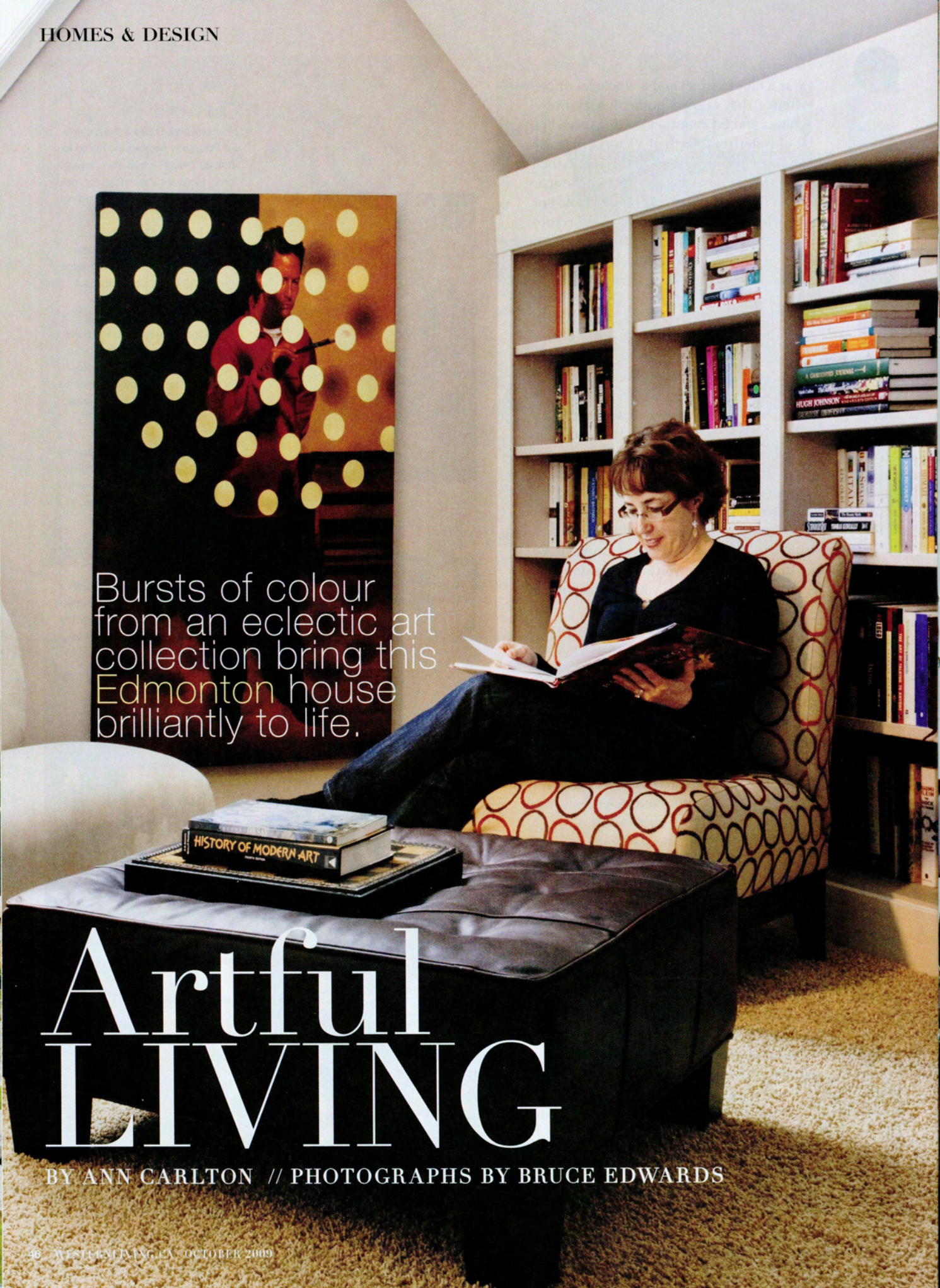


Bursts of colour from an eclectic art collection bring this Edmonton house brilliantly to life.

# Artful LIVING

BY ANN CARLTON // PHOTOGRAPHS BY BRUCE EDWARDS

A Bobbie Burgers painting graces the dining room, part of the couple's extensive Canadian art collection (this page). Homeowner Angela Anderson (opposite page) relaxes in the reading room on a Mitchell Gold lounge chair, near a painting by Montreal artist Dominique Gaucher.

IF you live in a house that vaguely resembles a barn, you might as well keep a horse in the basement. Angela and Marty Anderson's life-sized Joe Fafard equine sculpture is just one eclectic feature of their home in Edmonton's River Valley.

Habitat Design Studio's Trevor Hoover happens to be wearing a shirt the fire-engine red of the exterior metal siding that "helps define that one corner of the house." A craftsman-style flourish over the front door and a wooden pergola over the back patio—not to mention the garage out back, a mini-me of the house—complete the contemporary Rocky Mountain feel of the home's exterior.

The North Saskatchewan River valley is one of the city's more desirable locations. A few years ago the Andersons, who already lived nearby, "just stumbled on the lot one night, with a 'for sale' sign on it," remembers Angela. Habitat had purchased a large plot, formerly a commercial greenhouse, that today is their showcase design-build development, featuring a row of unique new homes.

Hoover recalls that the Andersons's end lot had challenges: long and narrow, with the south-facing exposure on the back. "So this is a tall, narrow house that plays that up rather than trying to hide it."

To get natural light throughout, the designer placed massive windows on that side of the 3,423-square-foot home, including a huge one in the loft that is "like a big, square window turned on its side." Though it brightens the high-ceilinged room, where HR consultant Angela has her home office, she says wryly: "It made window coverings a challenge." Custom plantation-style blinds, painted to match the trim, were the solution to preserving the architecture of the window but controlling the exposure. High transom windows, blissfully covering-free, provide privacy from a neighbour but preserve wall space for hanging art.

Geometrix pendant lights sparkle like jewels in the kitchen (below); *Jack and Jill* by Winnipeg artist Andrew Valko hangs in the stairwell (near right); the bedroom features a Smoke armchair by Moooi—carefully charred to give it its charcoal look (bottom right); Joe Fafard's lifelike *Valentina* is built to the proportions of a seven-month-old horse (opposite page).

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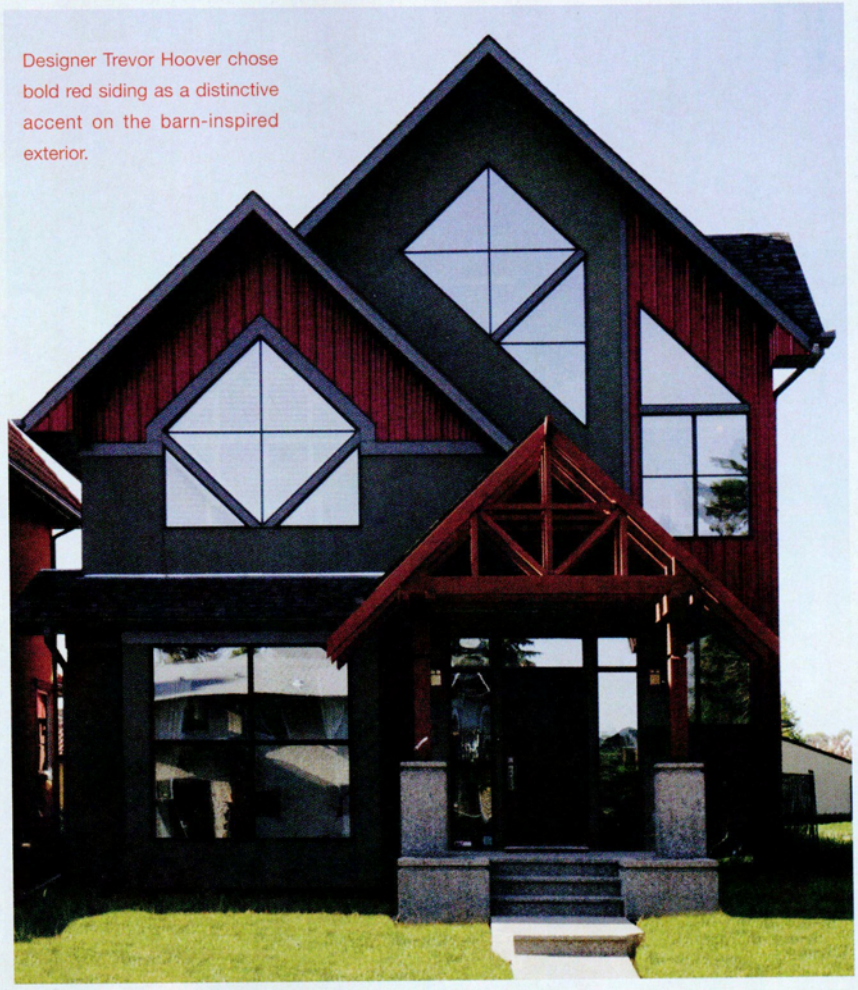
Light and sightlines run not only from front to back of the home but also through the dramatic, Escher-like vertical lines of the custom staircase, a wonder in stainless and cherry wood. Gazing from the basement up to the loft, it's easy to imagine the nine-metre supports being dropped in by crane.

Marty, a CA and partner in the firm Kingston Ross Pasnak, recalls that "Habitat did an extensive interview and asked us about our lifestyle" before designing the house. That research shows in subtle details like a pocket-door butler's pantry with a wet bar and wine fridge, for seamless service at the couple's frequent dinner parties. "You can mix drinks in there," says Marty, "and you're not running back and forth for wine."

Another major requirement was lots of wall space for the couple's art collection, much of it driven by Angela's love of large canvases "that are big with lots of colour," says the habitué of the Douglas Udell, Peter Robertson and Scott galleries. Her eye for colour shows up in the kitchen, where a row of sunrise-colour beaded Geometrix pendant lights bring hip 1970s flair to the prep island. "I saw them and I had to have one somewhere in my house."

A surprising feature of this custom-built home is its versatility. Where the basement treadmill is cleverly hidden by sliding screens you can easily imagine a bedroom, studio or yoga room. A generous sitting room adjacent to the master bedroom was framed to allow possible conversion back into a third bedroom for resale. A storage room is now a luxe wine cellar fitted with custom cubicles.

As for that horse, he helps brings the river valley inside. Sitting in the home theatre, if you tear your glance away from the 65-inch Aquos flat screen to glance at the sculpture of a seven-month-old horse, "It's like you're looking out into the yard," Angela says fondly. *wl* **See SOURCES.**



Designer Trevor Hoover chose bold red siding as a distinctive accent on the barn-inspired exterior.