
Moody
Masterpiece

NARI Minnesota - 2026 ROTY Awards

Project: Moody Masterpiece **Category:** Residential Historical Renovation/Restoration $250,000 and Over

Built in 1929, this nearly century-old residence enters its latest chapter still carrying the architectural character of its original era.

Over the course of nearly 100 years, the home has been altered by three previous renovations—additions, facelifts, and projects both large and small—each leaving its own imprint on the original architecture. With so many layers accumulated over time, one of the greatest challenges of this renovation was determining what truly belonged to the home: which elements contributed to its enduring character, and which were remnants of later interventions that no longer served the architecture, or the homeowner.

This time, the renovation encompassed the entire main floor—and the intention was not simply to make it new, but to make it feel whole again. Shadow, texture, contrast, and craftsmanship quickly became the language of the design. The client, an artist with an eye for the unexpected and a collector drawn to the unusual, has long held an appreciation for preservation while never being afraid to make something distinctly her own. She wanted a home that felt unapologetically personal—a place layered with character, curiosity, and just enough mystery to continue revealing itself over time.

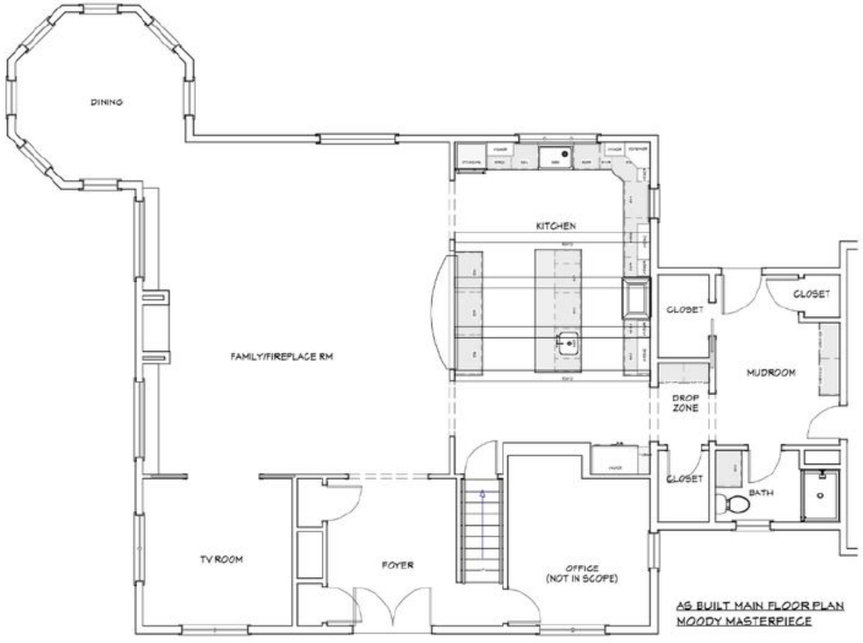
And revealing itself is exactly what this home continues to do. Rather than erase its history, the renovation sought to uncover its potential: modernizing the function of the spaces while respecting the proportions, craftsmanship, material richness, and architectural language that have defined the residence for generations. The goal was to create a more cohesive interior, one that feels as though it belonged in the home, rather than one fragmented by decades of renovations.

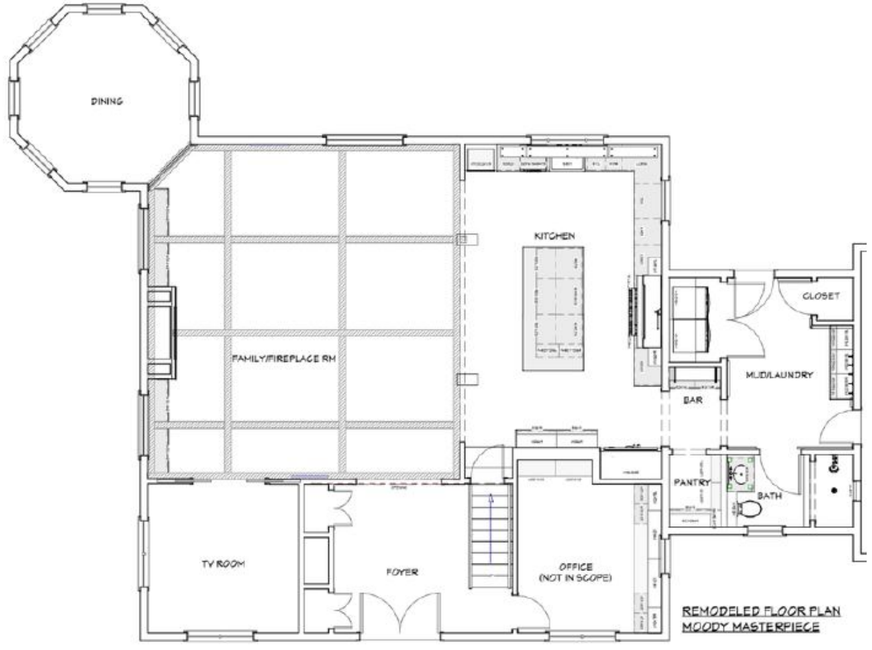
After nearly a century of additions, alterations, and reinvention, this latest renovation feels less like another layer and more like a resolution, a chapter designed to endure.

And perhaps, finally, one that is here to stay.



Before & After Floor Plans





Client Requests

- Create a home that honors the past while seamlessly incorporating modern amenities and thoughtful personalization.
- Incorporate bold, expressive design elements that reflect drama and mystery.
- Bridging past and present through repeated architectural elements, establishing rhythm, balance, and a sense of continuity throughout the home.
- Celebrate natural stone throughout the home—not only for its beauty, but for the emotional connection, permanence, and grounding presence it brings to each space.
- Create highly functional spaces with concealed storage, thoughtful organization, and a pantry designed to support daily routines without sacrificing beauty.
- Wrap the home in materials that engage the senses—surfaces that feel as luxurious as they look through texture, depth, and craftsmanship.
- Create a home that feels unmistakably hers—reflecting her love for the wonderfully strange through layers of drama, whimsy, craftsmanship, and comfort.
- Transform underutilized, forgettable spaces into destinations where family and friends naturally gather and want to linger.
- Improve the home's flow by removing visual and physical barriers, creating a stronger connection between cooking, entertaining, and everyday living.
- Ensure every room feels intentional, layered, and connected to a cohesive design story, beginning with a foyer that serves as the first chapter of the home's experience.
- Transform a builder-grade bathroom into an immersive retreat filled with craftsmanship, personality, and moments of discovery.
- Anchor the kitchen with a large island that establishes balance within the space while creating a place for cooking, gathering, entertaining, and everyday connection.
- Celebrate the home’s heritage and preserve the spirit and history of the past.

Kitchen / Bar / Pantry

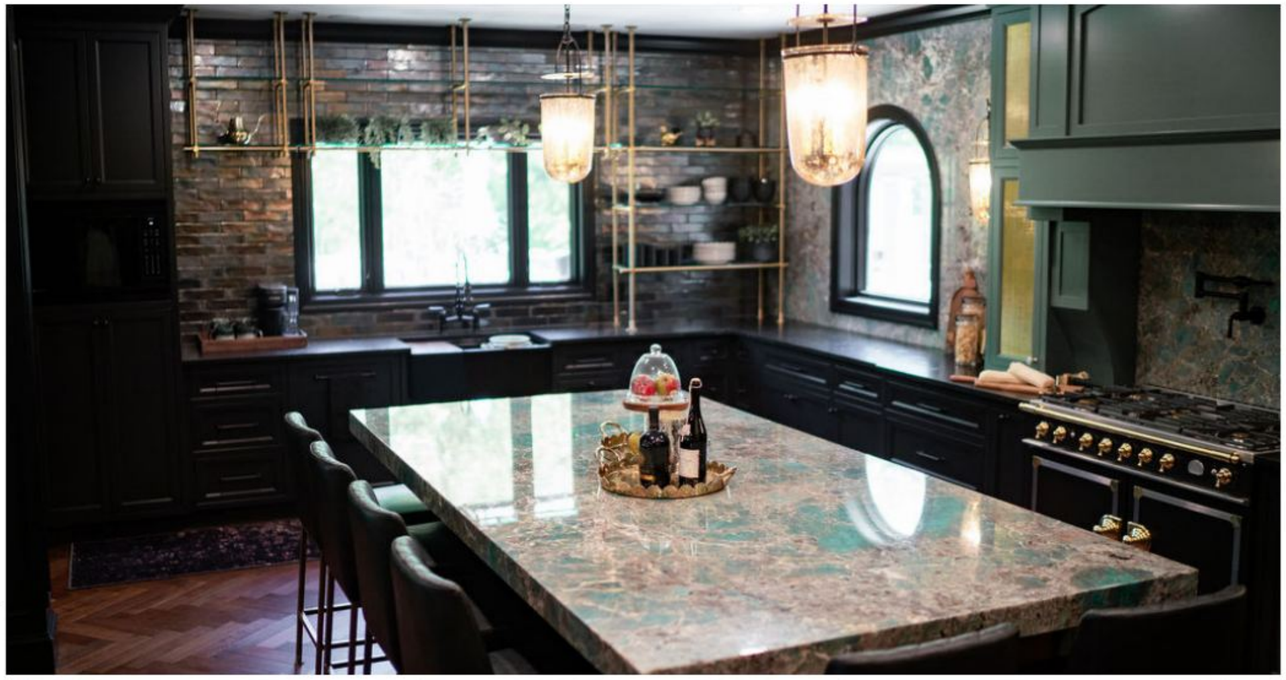
This kitchen presented an opportunity to introduce modern performance without sacrificing character. Before, the space was caught between past renovations. Heavy beams pressed down from above while competing architectural gestures fought for attention below. Nothing felt settled or truly belonged.

Beams added during a previous renovation were removed, revealing the full volume of the space.

Now, custom inset cabinetry with traditional proportions and layered detailing surrounds the kitchen, while a furniture-like hood creates an architectural focal point above the range. The La Cornue range brings heritage style, brass detailing, and bespoke craftsmanship. Brass mesh inserts, lantern-style lighting, and paneled appliances further reinforce a sense of permanence and craft. A farmhouse sink was retained, but now drenched in black blending with the landscape.

Walnut herringbone flooring connects the kitchen to the surrounding living spaces, while richly veined quartzite introduces the depth and natural variation of traditional stonework. Beyond the kitchen, a hidden pantry and bar reveal themselves through checkerboard flooring, transforming the everyday into something almost theatrical.

While the kitchen provides the storage, appliances, work surfaces, and circulation required for modern living, its materials and detailing were thoughtfully chosen to feel at home within the age and character of the home.





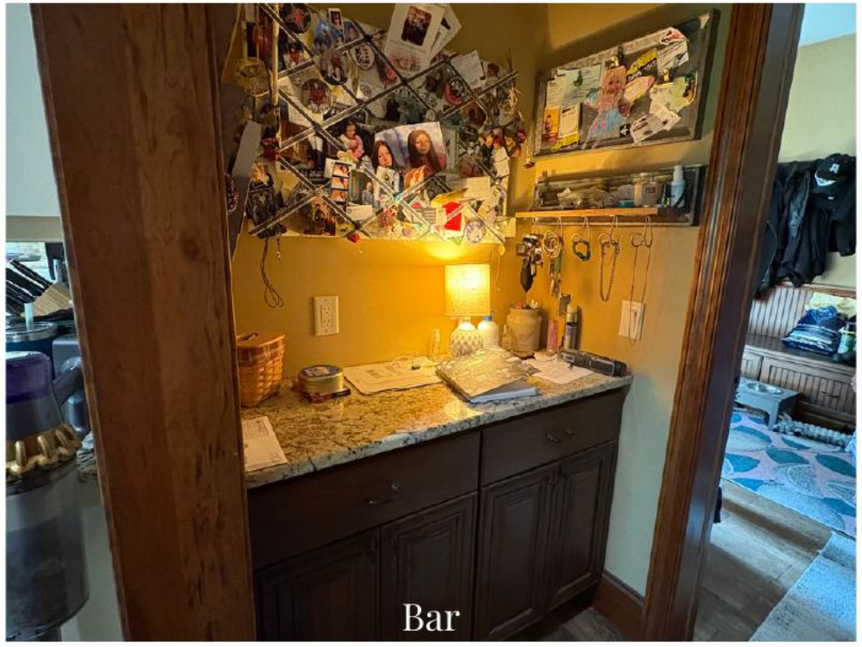
Before Photos: Kitchen / Bar / Pantry


Kitchen


Kitchen


Kitchen


Kitchen


Bar


Pantry

After Photos: Kitchen / Bar / Pantry

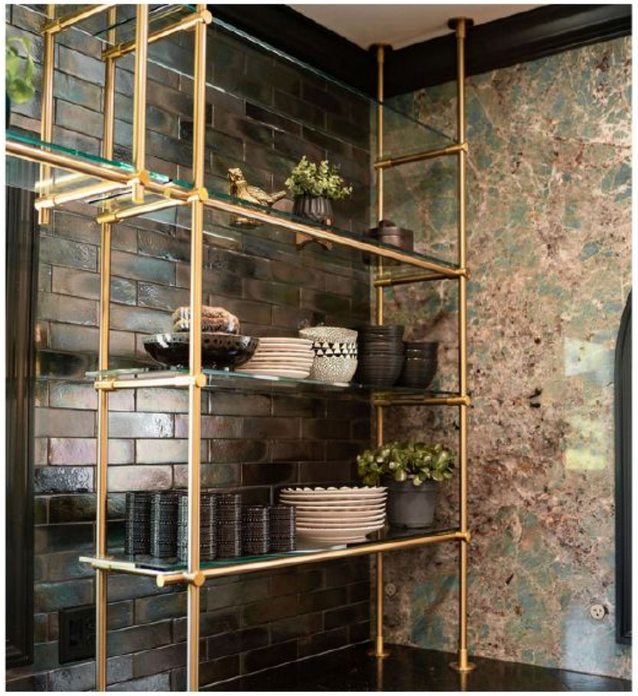


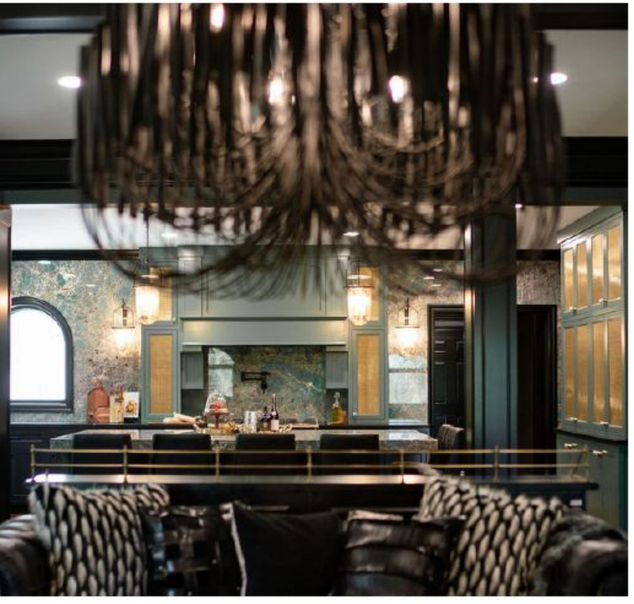






After Photos: Kitchen / Bar / Pantry

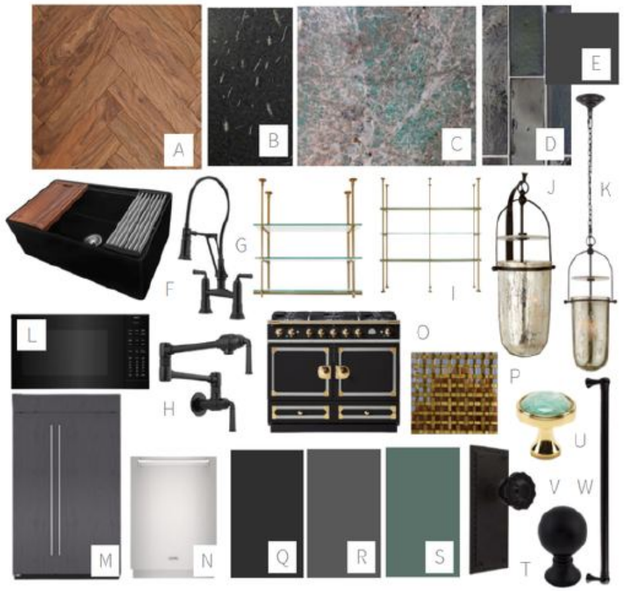






Features & Materials: Kitchen / Bar / Pantry

- The herringbone pattern in the walnut flooring brings timeless elegancy, rhythm and direction.
- An arched window echoes soft curves repeated throughout the living spaces, reinforcing a cohesive architectural language.
- Smoky sconces and pendants create repetition through form, function, and scale taking a nod to lines of the past.
- An oversized Jack Pine island anchors the kitchen with furniture toe kick detailing.
- Amazonite Quartzite commands attention across the expansive island and range wall.
- Shinju Smooth Olympia Bronze tile reflects light with shifting tones of blue, violet, bronze, and amber.
- The Brizo Rook bridge faucet and farmhouse sink ground the homes farmhouse heritage.
- Brass metal mesh accents highlight focal points in the space.



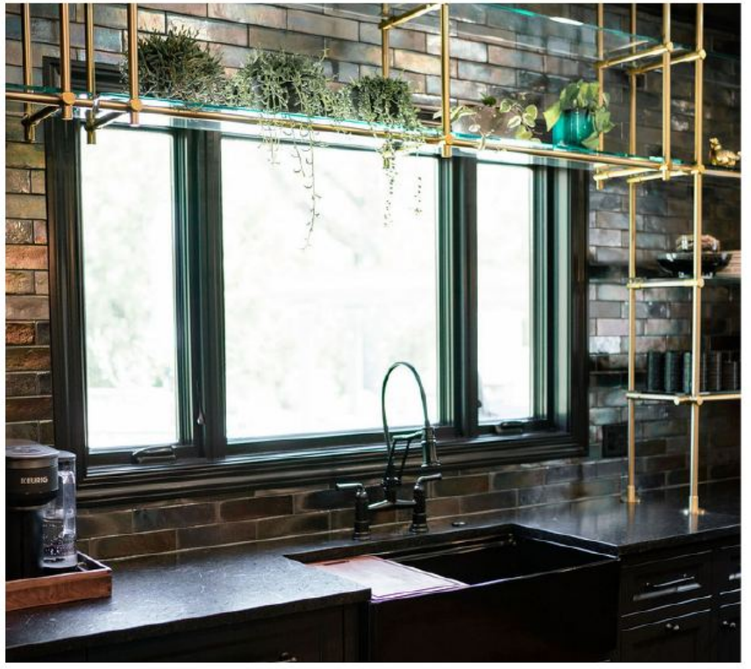
KEY

A. Walk on Wood Casablanca Morocco Walnut Herringbone Flooring
B. Terrazzo & Marble Black Ice Granite
C. Terrazzo & Marble Amazonite Extra Quartzite Brazil
D. Virginia Tile Lunada Bay Shinju Smooth Olympia Backsplash Tile
E. Mapei #5010 Black Grout
F. Ruvati Fiore 33" Farmhouse Single Basin Black Fireclay Kitchen Sink
G. Brizo Rook Articulating Bridge Matte Black Faucet
H. Brizo Rook Wall Mount Matte Black Pot Filler
I. Iron Abode Colette and Simon Custom Glass Shelving
J. Chapman and Myers Lorford Medium Sconce
K. Chapman and Myers Lorford Tall Smoke Bell Lantern
L. Wolf 24" Convection Microwave Oven
M. Sub-Zero 48" Panel Ready Side-by-Side Refrigerator/Freezer
N. Cove 24" Panel Ready Dishwasher
O. LeCornue Cornule 110 48" Matte Black Range
P. TWP Fandango Brass Metal Inserts
Q. Sherwin Williams Tricorn Black SW6258 Trim/Crown/Base Paint
R. Benjamin Moore Grey 2121-10 Cabinet Paint
S. Benjamin Moore Jack Pine 692 Cabinet Paint
T. House of Antique Hardware Ovolo Privacy Door Set in Oil Rubbed Bronze with Colored Fluted Crystal Glass Knobs
U. Modern Matter Lane 1.4" Polished Brass and Amazonite Custom Knob
V. Top Knobs Flat Black Kara Knob
W. Top Knobs Flat Black Kara Pull









Features & Materials: Kitchen / Bar / Pantry

- Fully integrated refrigeration and dishwasher panels preserve the cabinetry's seamless architectural lines.
- Round Prado outlets blend discreetly into the quartzite for high function with minimal visual impact.
- Moments of discovery can be found in the brass hardware with natural stone inlays.
- The La Cornue range brings heritage style, brass detailing, and bespoke craftsmanship drawing inspiration from the past.
- The hood creates a striking focal point while concealing storage and preserving history through its form and lines.
- Checkerboard flooring defines the pantry and bar with graphic rhythm with roots in some of the earliest known architectural traditions.
- Dark bronze wallpaper adds rich texture and depth to both the pantry and bar.



KEY

A. Minnesota Tile and Stone High Ridge 12x12 Nightfall Black Tile
B. Minnesota Tile and Stone High Ridge 12x12 Stardust White Tile
C. TEC Charcoal Gray #929 Grout
D. National Solutions Create Appian CSD-APP-20 Coal Wallpaper
E. TWP Fandango Brass Metal Inserts
F. Terrazzo & Marble Black Ice Granite
G. Iron Abode Leo Custom Glass Shelving
H. Modern Matter Porter Polished Brass and Amazonite 6" Bar Pull
I. Modern Matter Oliver 3" Polished Brass and Amazonite Custom Knob
J. Arhaus Ghiaccio Flush Bronze/Smoke Light
K. Sherwin Williams Tricorn Black SW6258 Trim/Crown/Base Paint
L. Benjamin Moore Grey 2121-10 Wall Paint









Living Room / Family Room / Dining Room

This generous living space lacked personality, cohesion, and flow. A dividing wall completely separated it from the kitchen with disconnected architectural elements that left the room feeling more like a passageway than a destination.

Now, rhythm sits at the heart of the design. Overhead, a custom coffered ceiling unfolds in a bold grid, establishing structure, scale, and movement throughout the expanded space. Its strong geometry draws the eye across the room, creating a dramatic architectural envelope that feels timeless, intentional, and intimately personal to the homes original intent. Walnut herringbone flooring connects the living room, family room, and dining room with warmth and movement.

A fireplace that once drained the room of life now revitalizes it with breathtaking agates, completely inspired by the homeowner love for stones. Oversized arched windows flank the fireplace, softening its strong geometry while inviting natural light. Beneath them, custom inset cabinetry provides concealed storage while preserving balance and symmetry. The fireplace, as it once did before, remains the visual anchor, while the surrounding millwork and ceiling detailing give the expansive room a scale and richness appropriate to the original residence.

In the turreted dining room, wallpaper wraps the walls and ceiling, glistening beneath the light. In contrast, the family room is drenched in saturated color, absorbing the light and deepening the atmosphere.

This living space is now built on contrast, expression, drama and mystery, all while keeping in tact its originall intent.





Before Photos: Living Room / Family Room / Dining Room


Living Room


Living Room


Living Room


Kitchen


Dining Room


Family Room

After Photos: Living Room / Family Room / Dining Room













After Photos: Living Room / Family Room / Dining Room



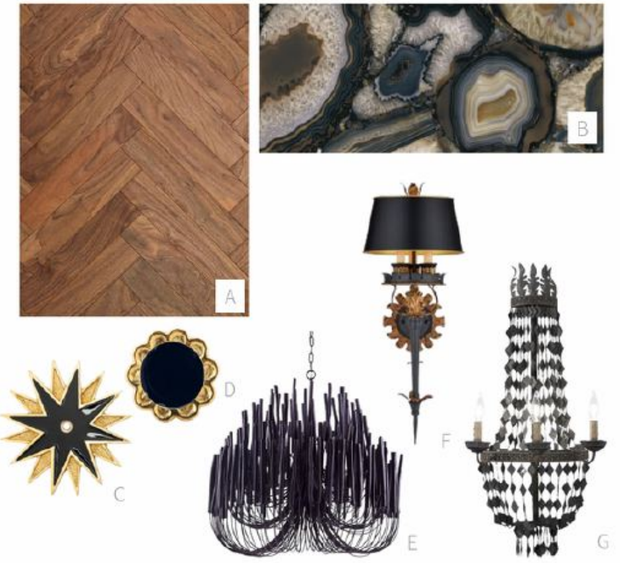






Features & Materials: Living / Family / Dining Room

- The coffered ceiling reinforces the home's historic character through traditional proportion, repetition, and architectural detail.
- Agate Black porcelain slabs face the fireplace, recalling sliced geodes and infusing the room with mystery and depth. A geological element hand-picked with only this client in mind.
- Medieval-inspired sconces take inspiration from the turreted dining room, casting an amber glow.
- Suspended within the coffered grid, a wooden chandelier hovers like a mysterious sculptural relic.
- Two architectural columns stand with quiet intention, wrapped in custom picture molding millwork, adding to the home's architecture.
- Tricorn Black millwork flows between the rooms like a dark thread, bringing sophistication and continuity throughout the home.



KEY

A. Walk on Wood Casablanca Morocco Walnut Herringbone Flooring
B. EMIL Level Marmi Agate Black Porcelain Slabs
C. Modern Matter Star 4.75" Enamel Black Backplate
D. Modern Matter Scallop 1.75" Enamel Black Knob
E. Arteriors Tilda Black 6 Light 36" Abstract Chandelier
F. Curry and Co Winterthur Duke 3 Light Wallchierre Fireplace Sconce
G. Nicia Zentique 3 Light Candle Wall Light
H. Sherwin Williams Tricorn Black SW6258 Beams/Base/Case/Trim/Cabinet Paint
I. Benjamin Moore Grey 2121-10 Wall Paint



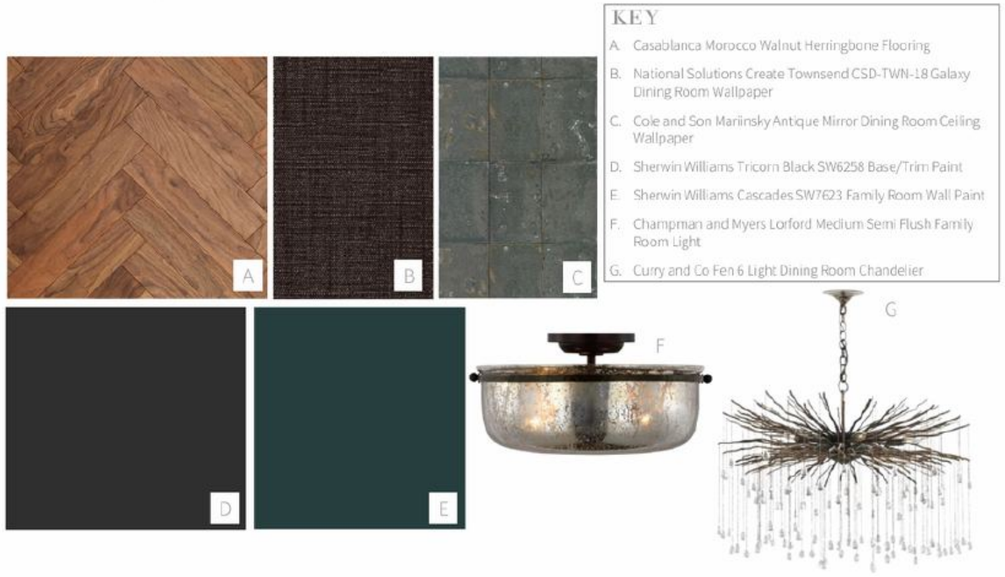






Features & Materials: Living / Family / Dining Room

- Cabinetry flanking the fireplace provided symmetry as well as thoughtful storage.
- A substantial mitered drop edge on the cabinetry adds drama through weight.
- Edgy brass and black hardware punctuate the cabinetry through the use of backplates, adding contrast and character.
- Rather than simplifying the home's unique geometry, the dining room celebrates the turret as a defining element of its architectural history. Patinaed antique mirror, ceiling wallpaper, and subtle bronze wallcovering reflect the natural light pouring through seven windows, giving the room a warm, luminous glow.
- A sculptural chandelier brings a sense of whimsy, with branch-like arms reaching outward and teardrop glass jewels suspended delicately below.
- Original, glass-paneled pocket doors conceal the family room, preserving a sense of mystery and surprise.











Foyer

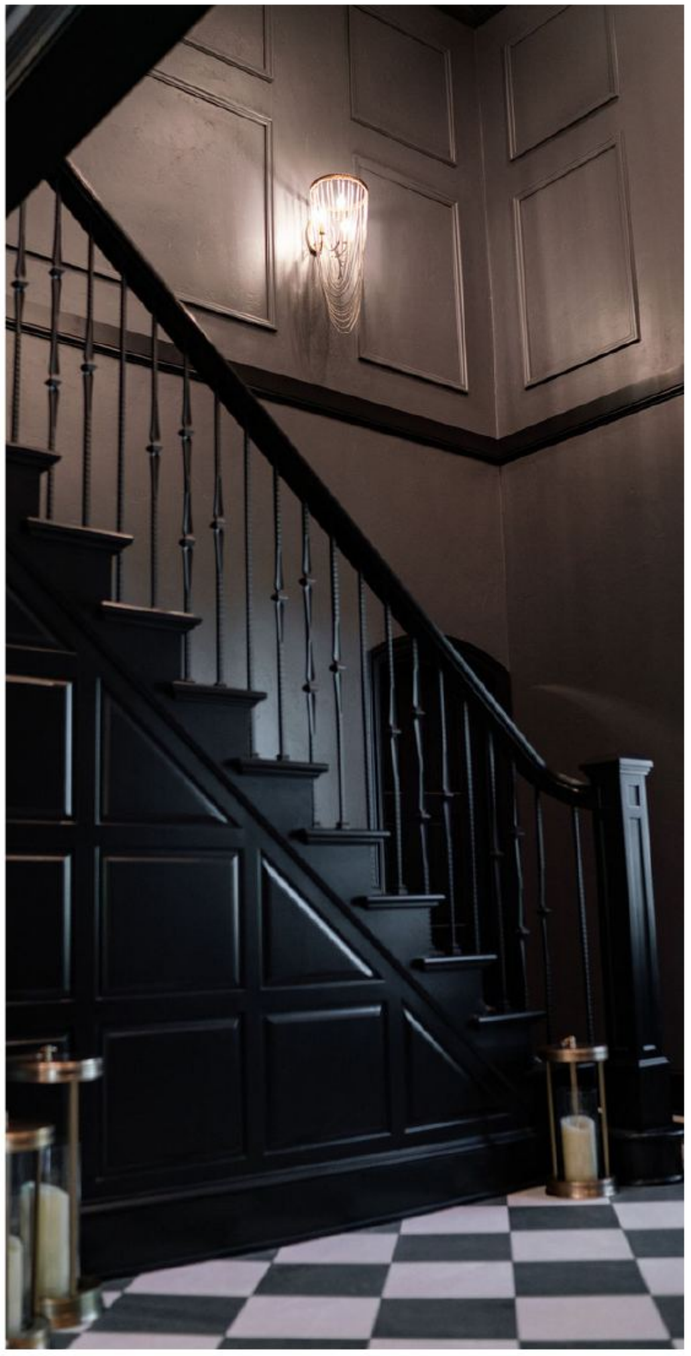
The foyer sets the tone for this 1929 residence by celebrating details that feel authentic to the home's age and architectural character. A striking black-and-white checkerboard floor introduces a timeless pattern with a sense of formality appropriate to the grand entry.

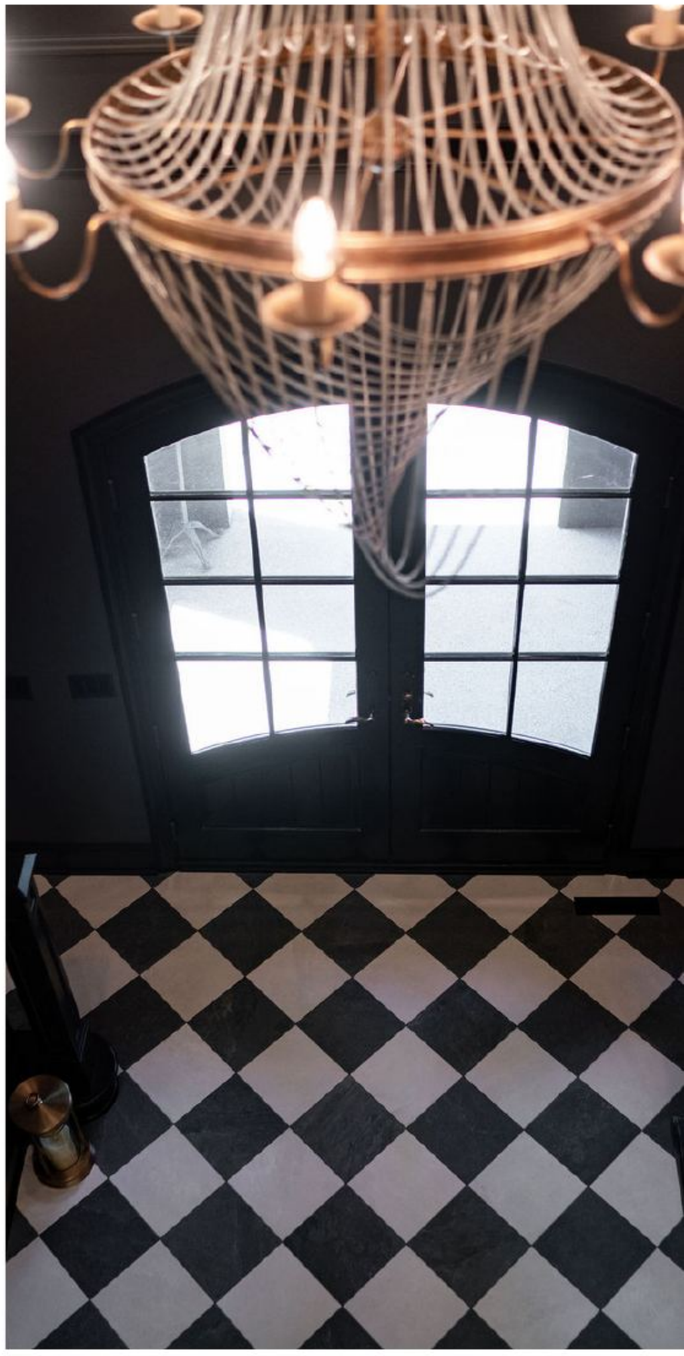
The existing French doors reinforce the traditional character of the foyer while creating an elegant transition into the surrounding living spaces. Rather than replacing these defining elements, the renovation allows them to remain part of the home's architectural story.

The grand staircase serves as an important historic focal point, preserving the sense of craftsmanship and permanence associated with the original residence. Its prominent position within the foyer gives the entry the scale and presence expected of a nearly century-old home.

Picture molding was incorporated along the foyer walls to add depth, proportion, and traditional architectural detail. This subtle millwork complements the doors, staircase, and trim while helping the renovated space feel consistent with the home's established character.

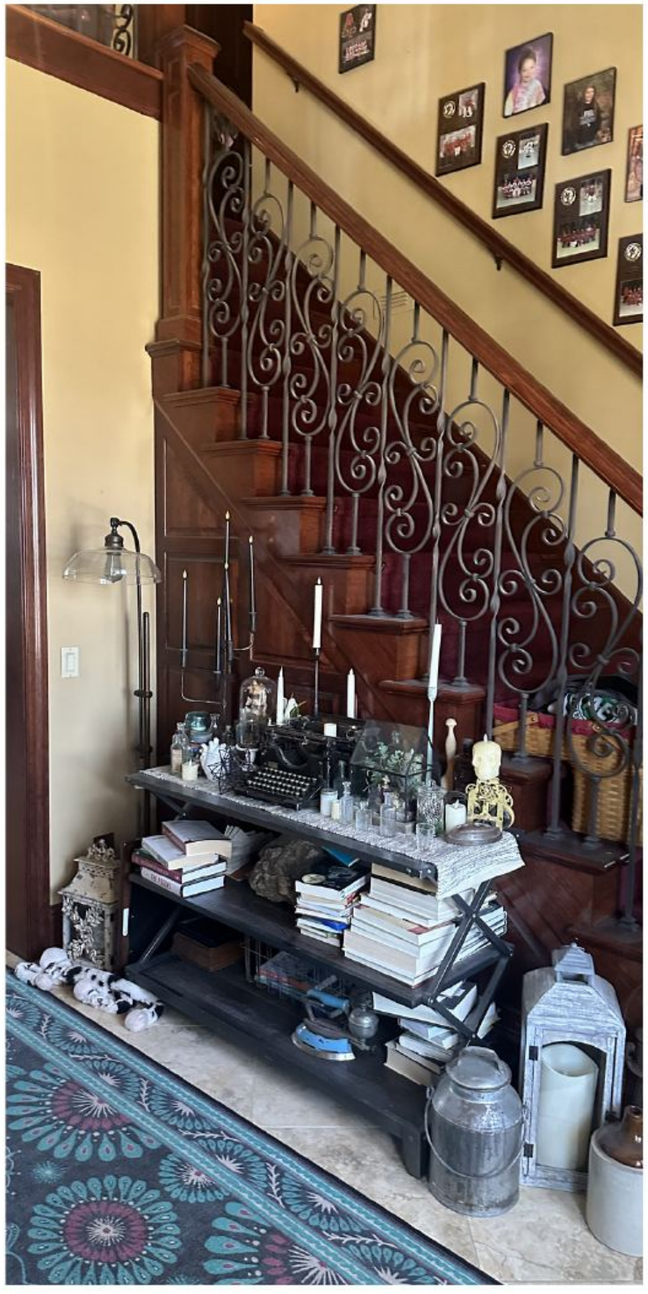
Together, the checkerboard flooring, french doors, grand staircase, and picture molding create an entry that feels collected and timeless rather than newly constructed. Each detail was thoughtfully considered to respect the character of the home while giving the foyer a renewed sense of elegance.





Before Photos: Foyer





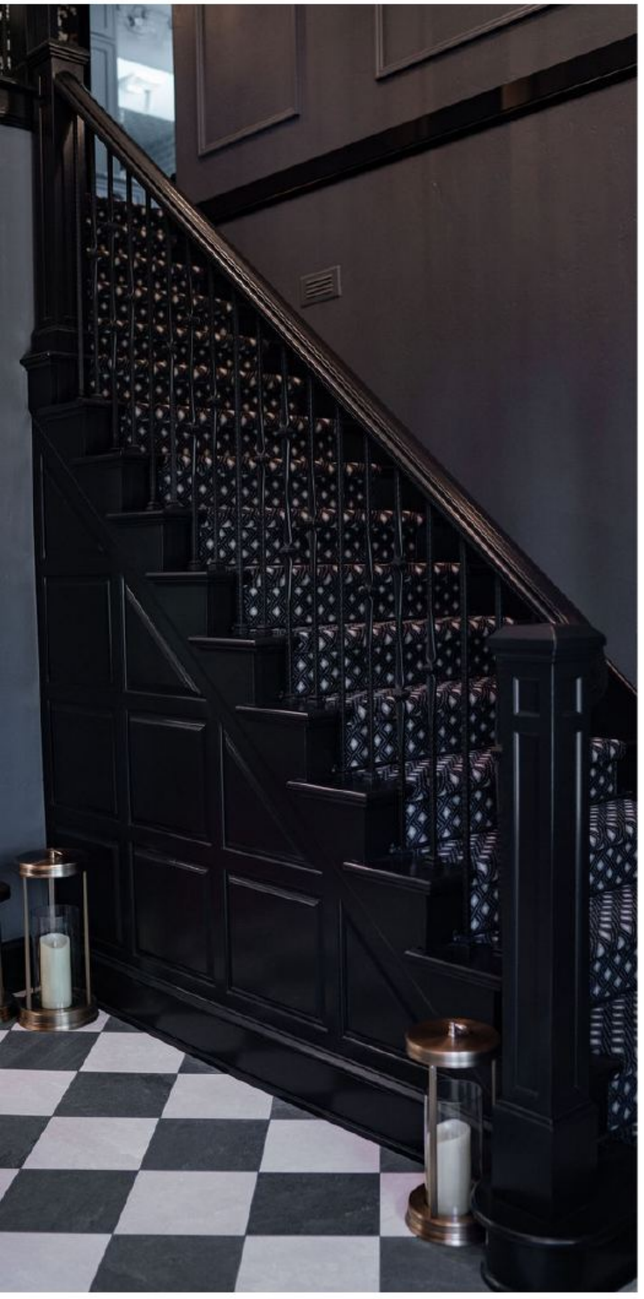








After Photos: Foyer









KEY

A. Minnesota Tile and Stone High Ridge 12x12 Nightfall Black Tile

B. Minnesota Tile and Stone High Ridge 12x12 Stardust White Tile

C. TEC Charcoal Gray 929 Grout I.

D. Built-in Closet Modern Matter Oliver 3" Custom Polished Brass and Moonstone Knob

E. Curry and Co Lucien 3 Light Sconce Wall Torchiere

F. Curry and Co Lucien 8 Light Chandelier

G. Rejuvenation Oil-Rubbed Bronze Ball Finial Stair Rod

H. Iron Matte Black Solid Baluster Gothic Plain and Gothic Double Knuckle w/ Spoons and Flat Shoe

I. Carpets Plus Milliken Diamante Metro Carpet Runner

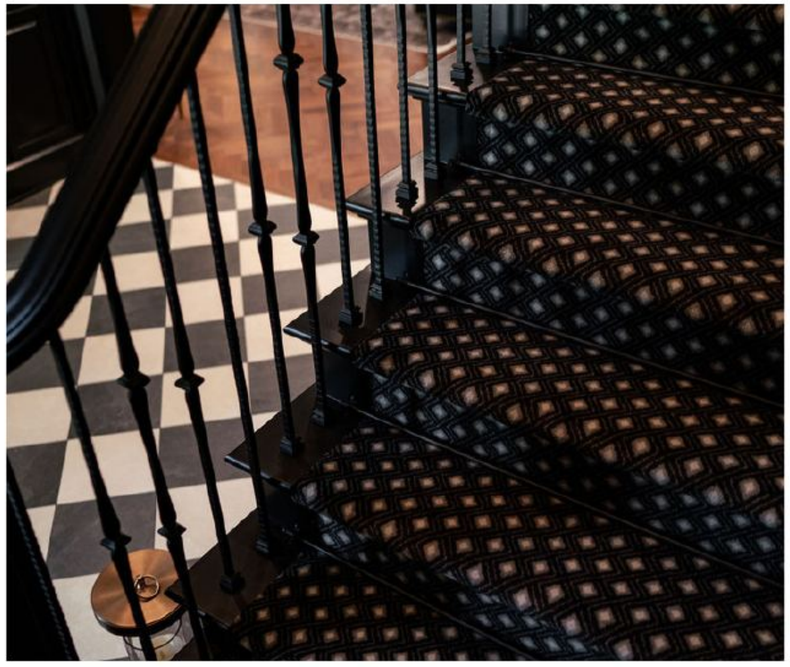
J. Sherwin Williams Tricorn Black SW6258 Millwork Paint

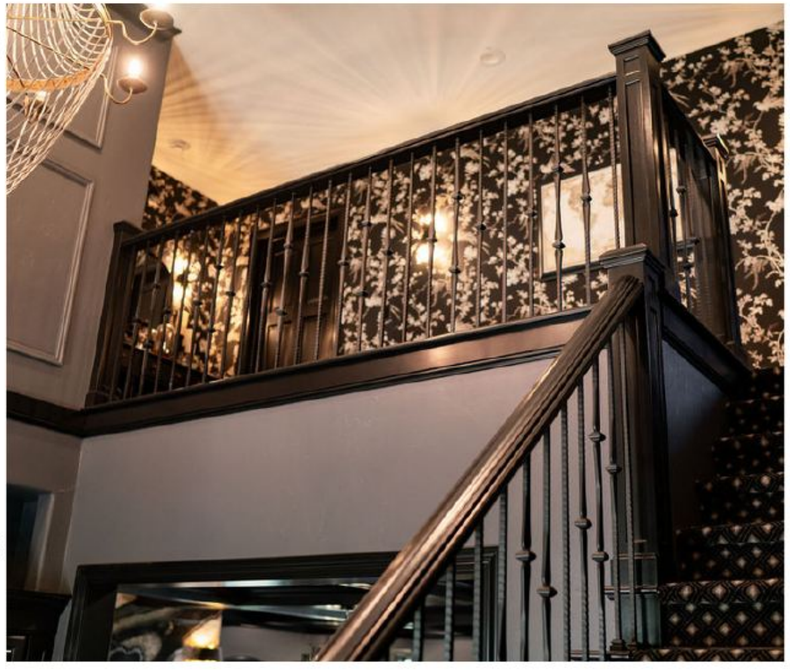
K. Benjamin Moore Grey 2121-10 Wall Paint



Features & Materials: Foyer

- Classic black-and-white checkerboard flooring establishes a timeless foundation, its geometric pattern complementing the home's historic character while connecting the adjoining spaces.
- A tailored carpet runner cascades down the grand staircase, accentuating its geometry while reinforcing the formality and grandeur of the space.
- Balusters rise with strength and stature, connecting the old with the new, using the original railing and newel posts for support.
- Draped in delicate chains, the chandelier commands the soaring foyer, shifting in form and revealing a different silhouette from every vantage point.
- Coordinating chain-draped sconces cast a warm, seductive glow across the walls, echoing the chandelier while drawing the foyer deeper into mystery.
- Benjamin Moore Gray picture molding encircles the walls, adding architectural definition while drawing the eye toward the gracious Tricorn Black crown molding and reinforcing the home's traditional craftsmanship.
- The arched French doors preserve the elegance and formality expected within a home of this era. Their divided glass and graceful arch create repetition.
- Original built-ins were retained, preserving another layer of the home's architectural history. Finished in Tricorn Black, their original form and craftsmanship remain part of the renovated interior.
- Moonstone-inlaid hardware provides a jewelry-like detail against the dark built-ins, subtly connecting the cabinetry to the checkerboard flooring and warm metal tones of the lighting.







Mudroom

This mudroom was designed as a hardworking transition space that feels naturally connected to the rest of the home. Deep tones, traditional forms, and layered materials transform this hardworking space into something that feels intimate, collected, and naturally rooted in the home's history. This once easier overlooked space now proves that even the home's quietest rooms can hold mystery and mood.

As an everyday entrance, it needed to feel connected to the deeper story unfolding throughout the home. Familiar details reappear like fragments from the rooms beyond, making the mudroom feel less like an afterthought and more like a carefully composed echo of everything that came before.

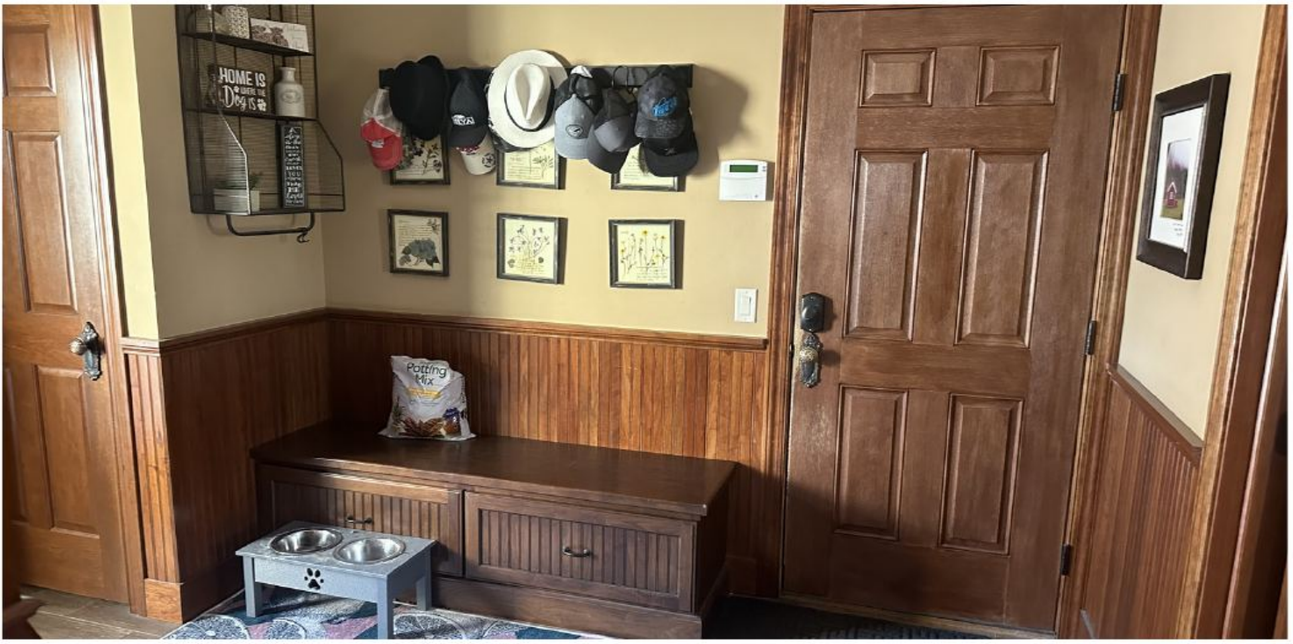
Black, bronze, and smoky gray tones envelop the room in a restrained darkness. Vertical beadboard rises against richly textured wallpaper, layering pattern upon pattern and giving nearly every surface a tactile quality that begs to be touched. Custom inset cabinetry gives the room a furniture-like quality reminiscent of traditional built-in millwork. The cabinetry provides the storage required for modern family life while maintaining the substantial proportions and refined detailing carried throughout the historic-inspired renovation. A classic black-and-white checkerboard floor grounds the space with a timeless pattern.

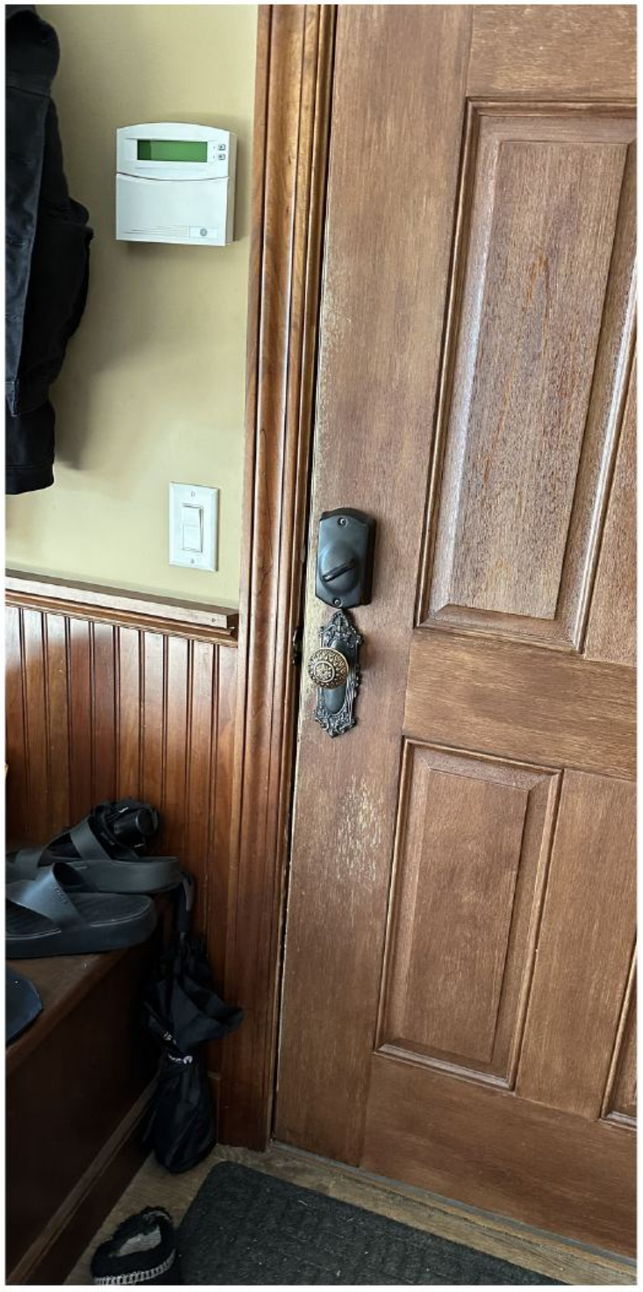
The result is a mudroom that feels less newly constructed and more discovered. A quiet, atmospheric space shaped by traditional detailing, deep color, and enduring materials. Modern function is concealed within a design that feels mysterious, timeless, and compatible with the soul of the 1929 residence.





Before Photos: Mudroom









After Photos: Mudroom











Features & Materials: Mudroom

- Checkerboard tile flooring brings a heritage pattern as well as graphic rhythm and drama.
- Vertical beadboard climbs the walls, adding architectural weight while drawing your eyes up.
- Geometric bronze wallpaper glistens as daylight moves across its surface, revealing patterns that appear and disappear throughout the day.
- Stately crown molding finishes the room with quiet grandeur, echoing the craftsmanship found throughout the home.
- Smoked-bronze glass in the lighting casts a hazy glow, leaving shadows that linger.
- Inset cabinetry provides generous storage with a sculpted foot detail gives the new cabinetry the character of a timeworn heirloom.



KEY

A. High Ridge 12x12 Nightfall Black Tile
B. High Ridge 12x12 Stardust White Tile
C. TEC Charcoal Gray #929 Grout
D. National Solutions Create Appian CSD-APP-20 Coal Wallpaper
E. Top Knobs Flat Black Kara Pull
F. Loft Door Knob Ovolo Privacy Door Set in Oil Rubbed Bronze with Colored Fluted Crystal Glass Knobs
G. Laundry Door Knobs Ovolo Dual Dummy Door Set in Oil Rubbed Bronze with Colored Fluted Crystal Glass Knobs
H. Garage Door Knob Ovolo Entry Door Set in Oil Rubbed Bronze
I. Top Knobs Flat Black Kara Hook
J. Top Knobs Flat Black Kara Knob
K. Arhaus Ghiaccio Bronze/Smoke Sconce
L. Arhaus Ghiaccio Flush Bronze/Smoke Light
M. Sherwin Williams Tricorn Black SW6258 Trim/Crown/Base Paint
N. Benjamin Moore Grey 2121-10 Beadboard Paint







Bathroom

The original bathroom was caught between obstruction and indifference. An awkward HVAC chase and builder-grade shower left the room without presence or personality.

Now this bathroom embraces its moodier side, layered in traditional millwork, rich finishes, and dramatic details, creating a space that feels intimate and collected rather than newly constructed.

Crimson-feathered birds drift through oversized flowers as Tricorn Black millwork frames the walls in shadow. The room embraces maximalism, the architecture remains while pattern, color, and carefully placed glimmers of brass tell the story.

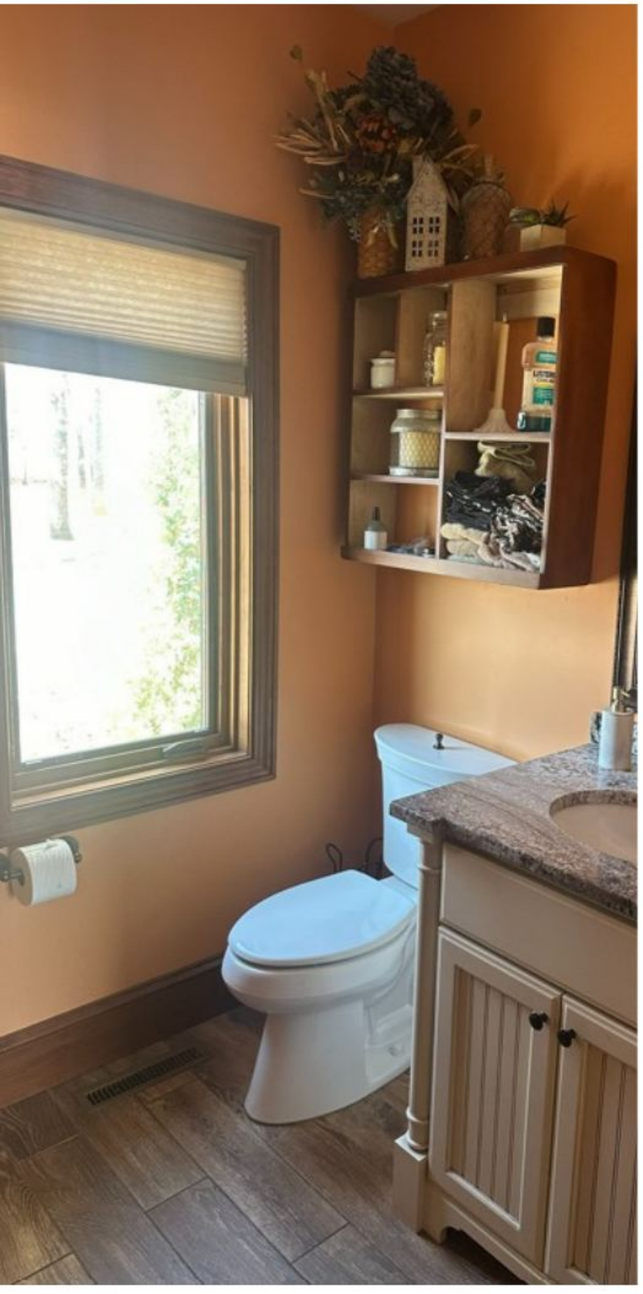
A dramatic arch, clad in glossy black tile creates a portal into the shower. A Carrara-topped vanity and malachite-accented hardware add moments of ornamentation and aged elegance. Lavender milk-glass sconces cast a hazy glow, while polished gold fixtures shimmer against the darkness. Underfoot, checkerboard flooring grounds the room's wilder instincts in timeless rhythm.

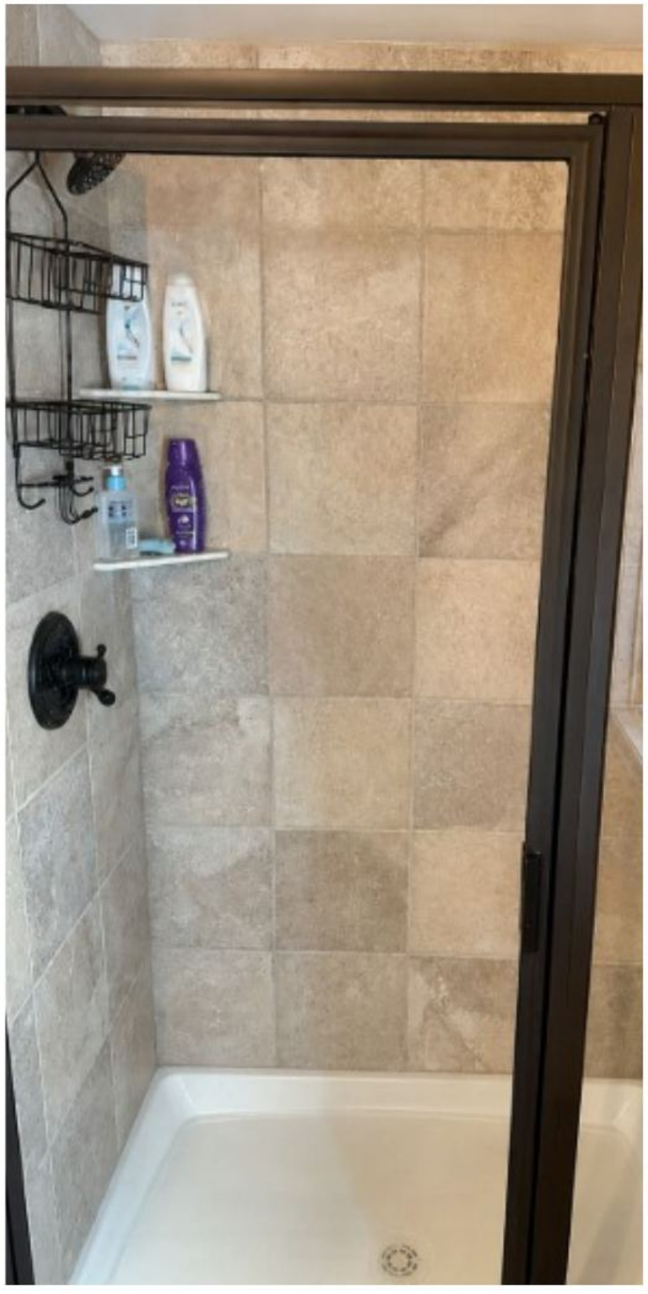
Each surface offers another layer of intrigue, allowing the room to shift between romance, mystery, and quiet spectacle after dark. This is no longer simply a bathroom. It is a secret conservatory where unexpected treasures reveal themselves slowly. Every element contributes to a space that respects the spirit of the home while giving its historic character a distinctly moody new chapter.

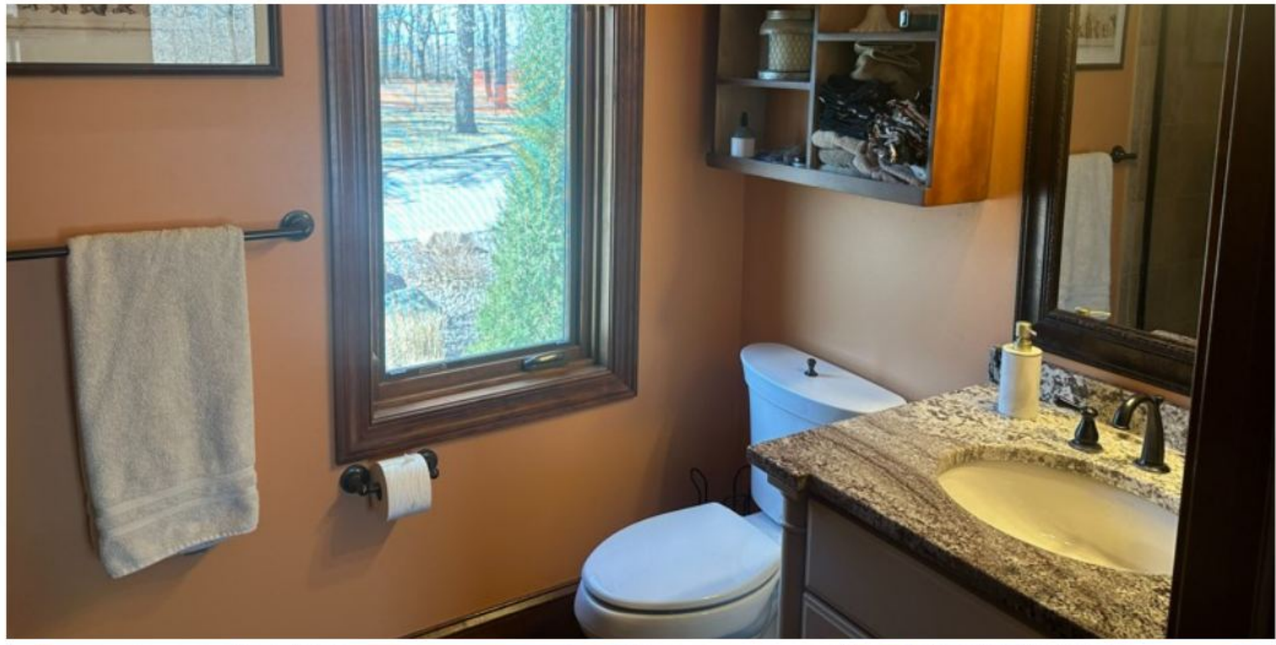


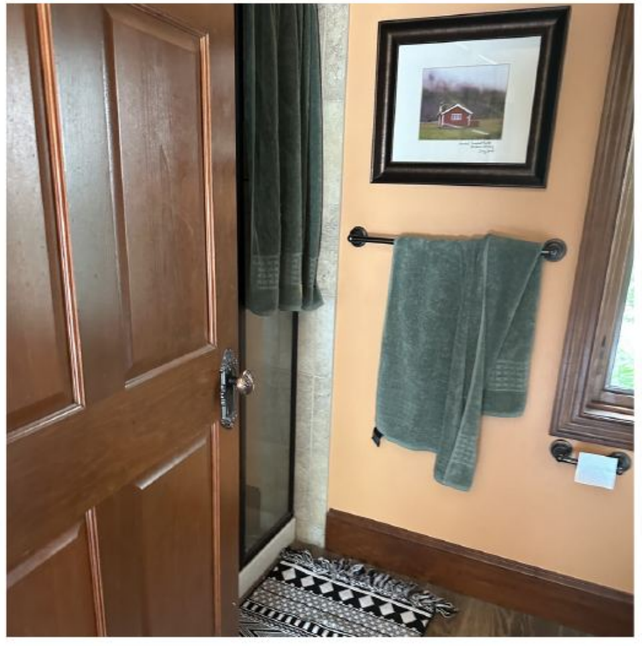


Before Photos: Bathroom







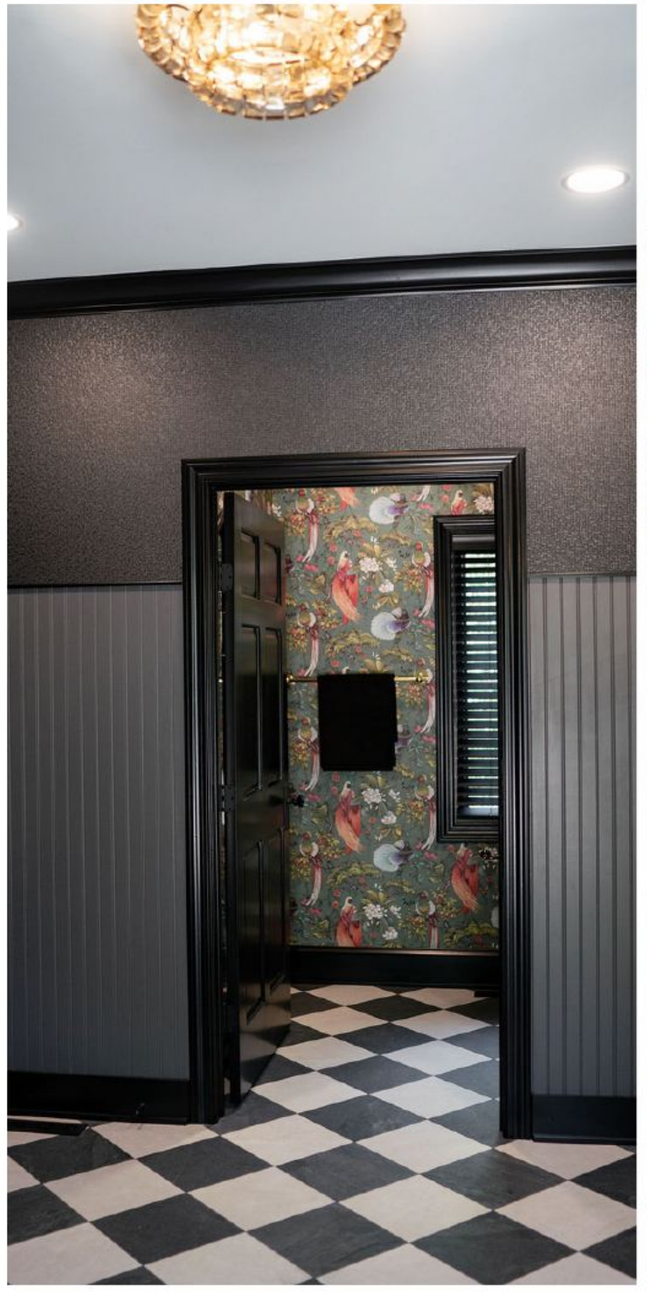




After Photos: Bathroom



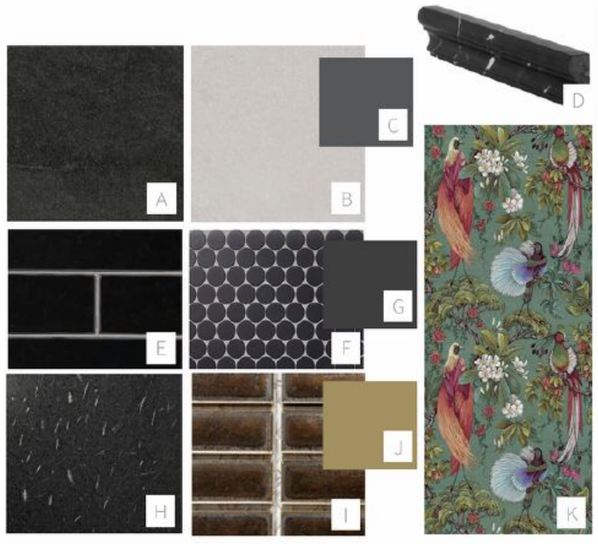






Features & Materials: Bathroom

- Glossy black tile envelops the shower, transforming the enclosure into a shadowed portal.
- Polished black marble chair rail traces the shower opening to form a magnificent arch, a deliberate nod to the graceful arched forms found within the original architecture.
- Metallic bronze tile and coordinating grout, line the arched niche, creating a hidden chamber that glows.
- An arched glass panel follows the curve of the opening, containing the shower while preserving drama.
- Brizo polished-gold shower fixtures shimmer against the black tile like jewelry after nightfall, bringing warmth and ornamentation.
- Overhead, a Jack Pine ceiling echoes the deep green tones of the wallcovering, completing the room with an unexpected canopy of color.



KEY

A. Minnesota Tile and Stone High Ridge 12x12 Nightfall Black Tile

B. Minnesot Tile and Stone High Ridge 12x12 Stardust White Tile

C. TEC Charcoal Gray #929 Grout

D. Wayfair Bond Tile Marble Chair Rail Trim, Polished Black

E. MSI Urbano Ink 4x12 Glossy Tile

F. Virginia Tile Sonoma Hustle Night Fever Disco Tile

G. Custom Building Products #60 Charcoal Grout

H. Terrazzo & Marble Black Ice Granite

I. Ann Sacks Savoy Metallic Bronze Bars Tile

J. TEC #923 Bronze Grout

K. Wayfair Floral Roll Red Barrel Studio Albany Odyssey Yasuni Green Wallpaper

L. Wayfair Crofy Iron Oval Wall Mirror

M. Ping Lighting Cyrilith Vintage Milk Glass Oiled Brass Eloise Lavendar Sconce

N. House of Antique Hardware Ovolo Privacy Door Set in Oil Rubbed Bronze with Colored Fluted Crystal Glass Knobs









Features & Materials: Bathroom

- Feathered birds drift through tangled greenery and oversized blossoms, giving the walls the romantic, decorative richness of a historic conservatory.
- Accents of deep green and woven brass mesh introduce richness and texture, recalling the layered materials and decorative metalwork found throughout the residence.
- Malachite-accented hardware acts like small pieces of jewelry, adding the type of decorative detail celebrated in historic interiors.
- Lavender milk-glass sconces cast a soft, hazy glow, their vintage-inspired glass adding romance and an almost otherworldly presence.
- Tricorn Black millwork frames the walls like artwork, giving the room depth and definition while nodding to the substantial trim and layered molding characteristic of the nearly century-old residence.



KEY

A. Wayfair Currey and Co Briallen Freestanding Standard Single Bathroom Vanity with Carrara Marble Top

B. Brizo Beauclere Polished Gold Widespread Lavatory Faucet with Arc Spout

C. Brizo Beauclere Polished Gold Widespread Lavatory Wheel Handle Kit

D. Brizo Beauclere TempAssure Polished Gold Thermostatic Shower Only Trim

E. Brizo Beauclere Polished Gold Single Robe Hook

F. Modern Matter Addison 24" Brass Towel Bar

G. Brizo Beauclere Polished Gold Tissue Holder

H. Kohler Wellworth Black Toilet Tank

I. Kohler Highline Black Elongated Toilet Bowl

J. Kohler Black Cachet ReadyLatch Quiet-Close Elongated Toilet Seat

K. Modern Matter Lane Custome 7" Malachite Polished Brass Towel Ring

L. Modern Matter Lane 1.4" Malachite and Polished Brass Knob

M. Brizo Beauclere Polished Gold Universal Tank Lever

N. Sherwin Williams Tricorn Black SW6258 Trim/Crown/Base Paint

O. Benjamin Moore Jack Pine 692 Cabinet/Ceiling Paint

P. TWP Fandango Brass Metal Inserts







Project Challenges

- Blending the home owners unique style preferences with the original architecture of the home.
- Matching new millwork, trim profiles, and finishes to the existing homes architectural story.
- Establishing symmetry and visual balance while responding to fixed architectural elements.
- Leveling the existing floors for walnut herringbone and checkerboard tile to ensure clean transitions.
- Coordinating a bold mix of walnut herringbone, polished-gold fixtures, bronze mosaics, checkerboard flooring, deep green tones, and expressive wallcoverings without making the composition feel chaotic.
- Developing a layered lighting plan that provided both function and atmospheric softness.
- Absorbing one of the kitchen's structural beams into the ceiling.
- Removing the dividing wall between the kitchen and living room exposed two structural columns, which were thoughtfully transformed from obstructions into intentional features.
- Installing wall-to-wall quartzite.
- Executing the large-scale coffered ceiling to maintain consistent proportions, clean intersections, and intentional sightlines.
- Aligning the veining across four-foot agate-inspired porcelain slabs to create a continuous, natural-looking composition.
- Installing several oversized chandeliers—including one suspended within the two-story foyer.
- Balancing visually open display areas with highly functional custom cabinetry.









Overall

Removing the barrier between the living spaces created an opportunity for a dramatic, expansive space for gathering, entertaining, and everyday living. Allowing the homes extensive, grand, millwork to be seen from each room.

This home demonstrates the project's larger preservation philosophy that historical character does not require a home to remain frozen in 1929. Instead, new work can respect the proportions, craftsmanship, and materials of the original architecture while allowing the home to continue serving the people who live there today.

Every transition, material, proportion, and detail was considered to shape not just how the home looks, but how it feels. The result is immersive and atmospheric, creating a home that feels both vibrant and intimate.