

CANADIAN

MAY 2007

PLUS:
MOTHER-
DAUGHTER
DECORATING

HOUSE & HOME

CANADA'S MAGAZINE OF HOME & STYLE

Go Green!

25 Pages of
Stylish, Guilt-Free
Decorating

CREATE AN ECO-CHIC HOME
OUTDOOR KITCHENS
BUILD A GORGEOUS
ROOF GARDEN

SECONDHAND STYLE:

DECORATING WITH RECYCLED FINDS

Display Until May 14 \$5.95



www.houseandhome.com

HOUSE & HOME

MAY 2007



“

Study nature,
love nature,
stay close to
nature. It will
never fail you

”

— FRANK LLOYD WRIGHT

A FRESH START

High ceilings, an open plan and extra-large light fixtures give the home of Janna Levitt and Dean Goodman (pictured, opposite) the feel of a loft. The kitchen island, made from reclaimed Douglas fir, has integrated electrical sockets for convenience. Counters, YuillBuilt; project

architect, Danny Bartman; pendant lights, Artemide; light (over dining table), Castor; dining chairs, Kiosk; floral arrangements, Emblem.
OPPOSITE, BOTTOM: Greenery on three levels envelops the modern house. Front landscaping, Perennial Gardens.

AFTER YEARS OF
RENOVATING,
A PAIR OF
TORONTO ARCHITECTS
DECIDES TO BUILD
THEIR IDEAL
ECO-FRIENDLY
HOUSE FROM THE
GROUND UP.

*Text by Tim McKeough
Photography by Ted Yarwood*

As environmentally conscious

as it is enchanting, this new home in a downtown Toronto neighbourhood combines the airy, modern feel of a loft with the laid-back vibe of a country garden. Marrying such opposites was no simple task, but not all homeowners are also their own architects. The house, designed by Janna Levitt and Dean Goodman of Levitt Goodman Architects, is the first home the two skilled professionals have built for themselves from scratch.

"We had been moving every couple of years," says Janna. "We either bought a warehouse and renovated it or bought a house and renovated it. That was our way to accrue some value." One warehouse space in particular stole their hearts, but it came with trade-offs: it was located in a semi-industrial area and was nearly impossible to insulate properly. "We always loved the quintessential warehouse space," says Janna. "But this was an old building and it was really drafty. We decided that what we were really interested in doing was making a new place that had the attributes of a warehouse space."

Stepping into their new home, a rowhouse on a relatively narrow lot with neighbours on either side, is a revelation. Though the three-storey structure is modest in scale at 720 square feet, it looks spacious and bright. Natural light floods in from a 13-foot-long skylight above the stairwell and through floor-to-ceiling windows along the front and back walls, industrial-sized pendant lamps hover above an island





A chunky Douglas fir coffee table, a kilim rug and a high-efficiency wood stove help bring the appeals of the country to the city. The drapery is made from Supplex, an affordable UV-resistant sports apparel fabric. Coffee table, Nick Western; throw

cushions, Bev Hisey; sofa, Italinteriors; Rais stove, YuillBuilt; steel hearth, Alexander Tedesco. **ABOVE:** Dean gave Janna the print of a bear and bather by French-Canadian artist Lorraine Bourgeois years ago. They designed a vibrant wall in the living room especially for it.



in the kitchen and the absence of interior walls means the space is open and flexible. It isn't your typical downtown Toronto home — and that's by design. "The basic layout of Victorian houses means there's light at the front and back but nothing in the middle," Janna points out. To lighten up the middle of the home, the architects offset the second storey and installed the skylight. The principal bedroom and bathroom are located upstairs, while bedrooms for the couple's sons Eric, 15, and Henry, 18, are in the basement, which is halfway above grade and therefore gets light from the large windows at ground level.

Although the home seems big, its energy bill is small. Unlike their old warehouse space, Janna and Dean designed their new place with sustainability in mind, collaborating with architect Danny Bartman, also of Levitt-Goodman. The most obvious features are two green roofs — one atop the offset first storey, the second planted on the second-storey roof. Because the second storey has a smaller footprint than the first, the lower green roof isn't just environmentally sound; it also doubles as an elevated garden space where the homeowners can get their hands dirty. (The upper green roof isn't used for hands-on gardening.) The couple first planted the lower roof with native grasses and hostas, then added lavender and black-eyed Susans last year. "This year we're going to try

CONTINUED ON PAGE 222

Green Card

Having the luxury of a brand new house to design and equip, architects Janna Levitt and Dean Goodman incorporated the following eco-friendly features:

- A smart design that maximizes the effectiveness of windows and breezes and doesn't include air conditioning, a major energy hog in homes.
- Green roofs to help catch rainwater and keep the house cool while attracting birds, butterflies and other wildlife.
- A stone bed in the front yard that creates a large storage space for storm-water runoff, keeping it from flowing into the city's sewer system.
- An on-demand water heater that doesn't see water sitting in a tank, being heated unnecessarily. Water only takes about half a minute to heat.
- Radiant under-floor heating and a wood stove that eliminate the need for a gas-fired furnace.
- Local materials, such as pine and reclaimed Douglas fir, that have much less "embodied energy" than more exotic choices, require less transportation and therefore generate less pollution.
- Lots of glass (with a special coating that keeps excess heat out while letting light in) and an open floor plan to make the most of natural light.

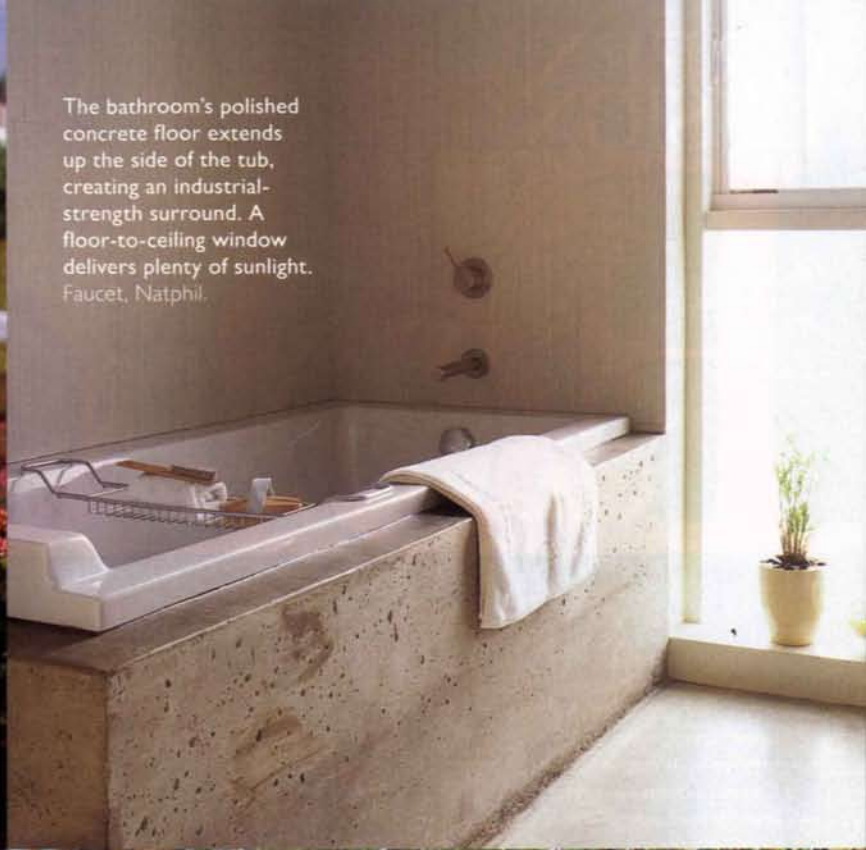


The house is clad in dark-stained pine boards. The trellis over the limestone patio, a subtle contrast to the pine, is locally sourced hemlock. The basement, partly above grade, gets lots of natural light. Limestone patio stones, Mason's Masonry Supply; furniture, Ikea.





The bathroom's polished concrete floor extends up the side of the tub, creating an industrial-strength surround. A floor-to-ceiling window delivers plenty of sunlight. Faucet, Natphil.



This green roof wraps around the principal bedroom on the second storey. Since planting it, Janna has experimented with various grasses, flowers and vegetables. Sedum (top left) thrives in the sunny setting. Throw, Bev Hisey; landscaping,

Gardens in the Sky. **OPPOSITE:** The upstairs den can be curtained off to form a guest bedroom. It's simply outfitted, with a vintage Mies van der Rohe chair and a wall of family portraits and paintings by friends. Rug, R-Interiors; pillows, Bev Hisey; sofa, Ikea.