



In Full Bloom

VIBRANT CANVASES ADD ROBUST FLAVOUR TO ARTIST BOBBIE BURGERS' BRIGHT, MODERN OKANAGAN WEEKEND HOME.

Text and photography by Kim Christie



It's hard to take in artist Bobbie Burgers' vibrant Okanagan weekend home without coming to the conclusion that its raison d'être must be modern design. After all, Bobbie and her husband, furniture designer William Wishloff, have crafted crisp, gallery-like spaces and filled them with a veritable who's who of classic modern pieces — both understated and bold — which they juxtapose with a healthy dose of her lush floral canvases and his playful accessories. But while it's certainly a lesson in livable contemporary design, the house is, above all, an inviting hub for family life — and for their newfound love of farming.

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Sculptural pieces like the Eames Elliptical coffee table and red bent-plywood chairs, and vintage Fat Lava pottery contrast the living room's sleek, minimalist shell and play off Bobbie's exuberant paintings. **Furniture, Inform Interiors.** OPPOSITE: Life at the Okanagan home of William Wishloff and Bobbie Burgers (with Annaka, 8, Tatjana, 1, and Isabella, 9) revolves around the outdoors.



A bank of hinged french doors along the back wall opens the living room right up to the lawn and panoramic views of Skaha Lake. The clean lines of the Eames lounge and Eileen Gray side table suit the home's modern vibe and don't detract from the view. William sandblasted the 1950s-era home's original wood-burning fieldstone fireplace, but left it otherwise intact. **Lounge chair, sofa, side table, Inform Interiors.**



The canary yellow gas range is the bold focal point in the cool white kitchen, which is outfitted with glossy, flat-front laminate cabinetry. A contemporary bar cart is piled with vintage finds from Parisian flea markets: an antique ice bucket and amber glass candlesticks. In the work area, 24"-sq. porcelain floor tiles continue the clean, white theme. **Range, Bertazzoni; cabinet, Citation Kitchens; floor tile, Stone Tile; cart, Inform Interiors.**
+ To make brightly coloured accents really pop, set them against a backdrop of white and uncomplicated shapes.

OPPOSITE, BOTTOM: To add contrast to the contemporary kitchen, William and Bobbie decided against an island; instead, an 1890s Quebec convent table (raised with lathed leg extensions) acts as a work table and eating counter. In harvest months, the fridge fills up with the property's produce, and fresh flowers echo Bobbie's vibrant canvases. **Fridge, Liebherr; Stelton stainless steel ship's lamp, Inform Interiors.**
+ For a warm, textural and unfitted look, sub in a rustic vintage table where you'd normally put an island.



CENTRE: To transform the farmhouse into an airy, modern space, all walls were washed in clean white and the oak ship-plank hardwood floors were refinished. The living room's Falkland pendant lamp by Bruno Munari does double-duty as lighting and low-key sculpture. Likewise, the white, linen-covered sofa conforms to the understated aesthetic. William first designed the Kandlevaros candlestick collection for a friend's wedding, and they're now produced commercially. *B&B Italia sofa*, *Inform Interiors*; *Kandlevaros candlesticks*, *Ainsworth Custom Design*; *wall colour*, *Decorators White (CC-20)*, Benjamin Moore.

➤ **A neutral sofa can be reinvented as whims or seasons change with a handful of new pillows and blankets, which also add another layer of comfort.**

BOTTOM LEFT: Fluttering in the cross breezes of the dining room, a Settle light by Ingo Maurer looks like art hanging above one of William's hybrid creations: an Italian glass tabletop added to a vintage table base. It's paired with six vintage Saarinen Executive armchairs.

BOTTOM RIGHT: William and Bobbie's father, Vancouver architect Robert Burgers, designed the pavilion to be a fuss-free lounging and dining area. It's walled in fieldstone and floored in concrete pavers. Floating steel benches line its edges and are outfitted with easy-care cushions covered in Sunbrella fabric. The pavilion's stainless steel poles and cablework hold eight varieties of table grapes.

➤ **To make one-of-a-kind accents for a mod family home, let kids paint masterpieces on sturdy fabric and use it to make pillowcases.**

OPPOSITE, TOP LEFT: William designed the Cameo stainless steel mirror. To give it centre stage in the bathroom, it's paired with a small, clean-lined sink. *Mirror*, *Ainsworth Custom Design*; *Flaminia sink*, *faucet* by Arne Jacobsen, *Cantu Bathrooms & Hardware*; *bathrobes*, *Marimekko*.

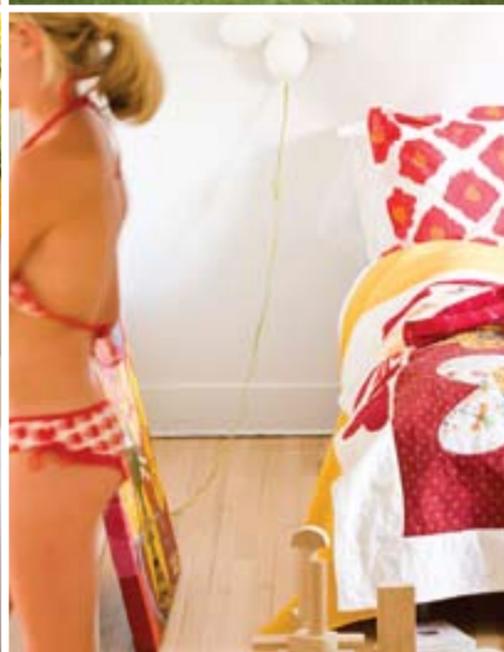
TOP RIGHT: Bobbie's father, Robert, also designed the guest room's platform bed, which she dressed in sunny yellow bedding from France and paired with an Artemide Nesso lamp.

➤ **Turn an oversized canvas into a showstopping headboard.**

BOTTOM RIGHT: Bobbie had the girls design their own quilts, which were sewn by a friend. She pairs them with playful Kate Spade bedding. *Pillows*, *Pottery Barn*; *light*, *Ikea*.

WHERE TO BUY IT

- Bobbie Burgers' paintings are available through:
- Bau-Xi Gallery, Vancouver (604) 733-7011 and Toronto (416) 977-0600, www.bau-xi.com
 - Peter Robertson Gallery, Edmonton (708) 452-0286, www.probertsongallery.com
 - St. Laurent & Hill, Ottawa (613) 789-7145, www.galeriestlaurentplushill.com
 - Galerie De Bellefeuille, Montreal (514) 933-4406, www.debellefeuille.com
 - Caldwell Snyder Gallery, San Francisco (415) 296-7896, St. Helena, Calif. (707) 200-5050, www.caldwellsnyder.com
 - Foster White Gallery, Seattle (206) 622-2833, www.fosterwhite.com
 - For information, www.bobbieburgers.com.



Secrets to Vibrant, Modern Style

Inside

- **White is right** Finish surfaces in white so you can play around with what's in the foreground: the furniture, accents and flowers. White is clean and uncomplicated, and allows you to accent with intense colour, as Bobbie does. A white background gives the colour room to "breathe."
- **Keep it simple** Create a living space that has the brightness and open flow of an art gallery, and you'll be rewarded with a space that really lets you "think," and that guides your gaze outside. To maintain the clean look, keep furniture to a minimum.
- **Take your time picking the palette** To hone in on the colours that appeal to you most, start by adding colour via small accents, say, luxe French tea towels in the kitchen or a bold vase. Once you've determined which hues are most you, then invest in designer fabrics for throw pillows, blankets for the beds, and lastly, a few key pieces of furniture.
- **Palette perfection is in the mix** To mix up colour, pair hues that have the same intensity, and balance the sweet and the sour. Here, tart lemon tones have a cooling effect on hot oranges and reds.
- **Plan ahead to limit clutter** If you build it, it will come. So, for example, in the bathroom don't install lots of towel bars or storage space; the more you have, the more you'll stuff into them. Family members and guests tote toiletries to the bath as needed.
- **Buy high-quality classic furniture** Opt for furniture designs that have already stood the test of time; they're beautiful, durable and comfortable. You won't tire of design icons, like the dining room's Saarinen Executive chairs.
- **Choose easy-care fabrics** Steer clear of fussy materials like silk and satin, and stick to durable indoor-outdoor fabrics. Bobbie's living room cushions have been known to end up out under the cherry trees or in the hammock and stay there — even when the sprinklers come on.
- **Rethink the lighting** Have fun with it! Think of lighting like sculpture or artwork.

Outside

- **Develop destinations** Assess your property and lifestyle, then establish a variety of living zones with distinct looks and moods. Create a cosy breakfast spot where the sun tends to linger in the morning (here, that's the woosy veggie garden), and a dining table or lounge area (like the pavilion) in a cool, airy corner as the perfect hangout at twilight.
- **Forgo fussy furniture** Choose easy-care pieces to allow more time for leisure. The pair swapped teak garden furniture (it needed repeated oiling and sanding) for stainless steel and limestone pieces that require no care and stay outside all winter.



The backyard offers views of the large pool and lovely Skaha Lake.

BELOW: Unable to find pillows to match the striking painting in the principal bedroom, Bobbie used a black Pucci scarf to create her own. A vintage marble-top coffee table was enlivened with a coat of yellow paint on the base. Plain white sheers don't steal attention from the view. *Eames rocker*, *Inform Interiors*; colourful *pillows*, *Etro*; *drapes*, *Ikea*.



Produced by Montana Burnett/Text by Katie Gougeon

Striped throw pillows in easy-care fabrics instantly brighten a neutral sofa and can double as poolside headrests. *Tangerine Dream pillow*. Woven cotton. 20" sq. \$54. Through Dash & Albert Rug Company.

SEE SOURCE GUIDE



Blur the line between function and art with sculptural lighting pieces. *Storm floor lamp*. Paper and steel. 47" h., \$30; 63" h., \$40. At Ikea.

Family photos become a statement piece clipped to this quirky wire mobile, a budget take on Bobbie's iconic dining room light. *Umbrra Fotofalls*. 36" h. \$21. At retailers across Canada.



Work unfitted wood pieces into spare modern kitchens to inject organic warmth and texture. *Draper's table*. Waxed pine. 36" h. x 56" w. x 22" d. \$985. At Comptoir de Famille.



GET THE LOOK OF BOBBIE'S BRIGHT, AIRY FARMHOUSE WITH MODERN BASICS AND SPLASHES OF BOLD COLOUR.



Handsome and comfy, classics like the moulded-plywood dining chair by Eames never go out of style. In 11 finishes. 29" h. x 20" w. x 22" d. From \$780. Through Herman Miller.



Open, clean-lined pieces like this bar cart won't overwhelm a space. *Duncan bar cart*. Steel frame with polished nickel plating; glass top. 35" h. x 36" w. x 20" d. \$780. At Restoration Hardware.



Try an intense floral rug as an alternative to bold paintings. *Floral Squares rug*. Wool with cotton back. 7-1/2' x 10-1/2'. \$1,095. Through Dash & Albert Rug Company.



Like the walls of a gallery, white furniture melts into the background and lets artwork come to life. *Willow sofa* in machine-washable cotton slipcovers. 29" h. x 84" w. x 36" d. \$2,099. At Crate & Barrel.



Keep the kitchen white, then inject a single appliance — countertop or major — in the boldest colour of your palette to tie it all together. *KitchenAid Artisan series stand mixer*. \$470. At The Linen Chest and other retailers across Canada.