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COMING INTO THEIR OWN

To ensure that the six Romare Bearden paintings from the artist's iconic Jazz Series were the focal point in the dining room, Ford chose a custom linear chandelier by Evan Wood. The low-lying backs of the Knoll Brno chairs keep the view open to the impressive art display.

DESIGNER BRONWYN FORD HELPS ONE COUPLE TRANSITION FROM EMPTY NESTERS TO URBAN DWELLERS WITH AN UPDATE TO A MODERN INTERIOR DESIGN.

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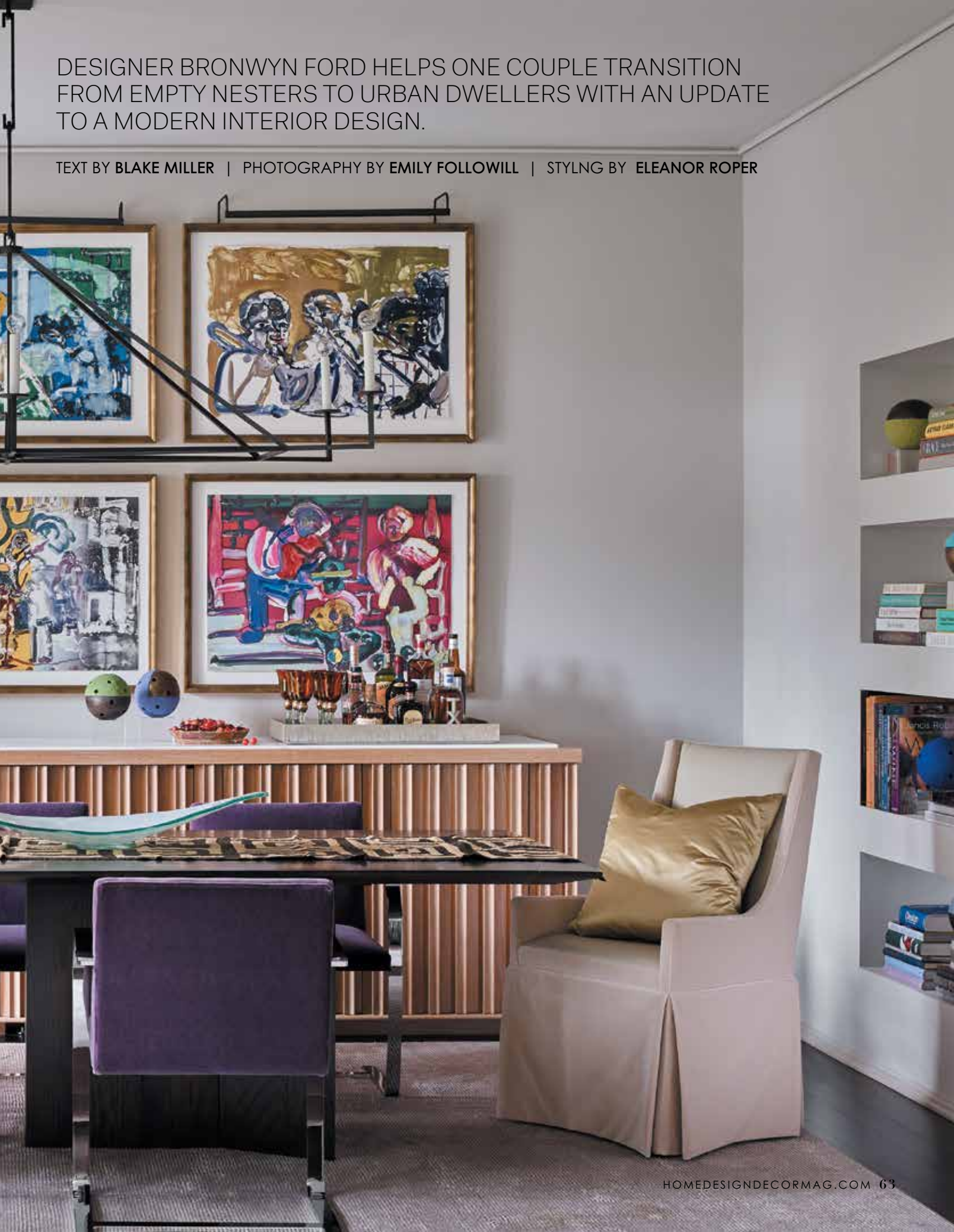

Ford placed some of the homeowners' artwork in the foyer, like the *Tower Horses* photograph by Ken Van Sickle, purchased from SOCO Gallery, which hangs above an antique secretary and an antique drop-leaf table. Adjacent, a painting by artist Herb Jackson greets guests. **OPPOSITE:** Architectural designer Emily Bourgeois designed the powder room vanity, which was handmade by Eric Cockrell of Mudwerk. The dramatic walls are upholstered in a Knoll ultrasuede and serve as a neutral backdrop for the artwork by Donald Sultan. The lighting is by Arteriors.

AFTER TWENTY YEARS OF LIVING IN THEIR FOXCROFT home, the homeowners were ready for a change. "We loved our home but wanted to update it a bit," the homeowner says. "We'd done a complete renovation of the home years before, but it needed another round, and we were deciding whether or not that was the route we wanted to go."

Around the same time in 2015, the couple read about a new development planned on Queens Road by developer Brian Speas. Nolen Place, designed by architect Ken Pursley, would be nine luxury condo units on a beautiful two-acre site in the heart of Myers Park. The couple wanted in. "Our girls were getting older, and we were about to become empty nesters," the homeowner says. "We loved our home, but it was just too big for us and, truthfully, we wanted a change. The idea of living in a more urban environment really appealed to us, too." So instead of a whole home renovation, the couple sold their Foxcroft home and purchased the first residence in Nolen Place before construction even began.

The couple knew they needed help with the interior design, as they both wanted something modern and clean—a complete departure from the traditional aesthetic of their Foxcroft home. "They were so excited about reinventing their look," interior designer Bronwyn Ford says. "They wanted to embrace living in this more urban space and let the interiors reflect that." Part of Ford's approach was

ABOVE: In the kitchen, Ford added the Ann Sacks mirror-tile backsplash on which she hung the custom metal shelf that she designed, which was fabricated by Hubbard Iron Works. She accented with sconces by Holly Hunt and Knoll Four Seasons Barstools in Atlas Lemongrass vinyl with a polished chrome base.

TOP: The kitchen was designed by architectural designer Emily Bourgeois and features a view of the outdoor patio. Richard Schultz 1966 Collection dining chairs for Knoll and an iconic Eero Saarinen Tulip Table are standouts in this space. Landscape designer Laurie Durden designed the patio landscaping.

BOTTOM: Ford designed the casual breakfast dining area with several iconic Knoll pieces, such as the Eero Saarinen Tulip Table with a Calacatta marble satin finish and the Saarinen Executive Chair swathed in a Knoll ultrasuede. She complemented the midcentury-modern items with the more traditional lines of the custom banquette by Morgan Chair. The lamp is by Barbara Cosgrove.

to utilize the couple's collection of modern art as the springboard for the home's interior design. "I love the challenge of taking a client's artwork and finding a new home for it," she says. "Interior design is a puzzle to me, and you work it out to fit pieces together perfectly. I love when I have some parameters to work with but some freedom, too. You give me these ideas; I put it all in my mixing bowl and give it back to you." Adds the homeowner, "Bronwyn has such a gift and an eye for design. We trusted her implicitly."

That trust helped the designer take the reins on the interior design and begin pulling together a cohesive, contemporary space that allowed her client's artwork to shine. Having worked as a consultant for American design firm Knoll, the husband was drawn to the company's midcentury-modern furniture, which Ford knew would complement their artwork. "They

ABOVE: The simple but elegant owner's suite bathroom features White Carrera honed-marble flooring as the base. Ford then added Visual Comfort sconces and an RH metal floating mirror to complement the custom vanities by Bill Truitt WoodWorks and the Knoll Eero Saarinen Tulip Stool.

LEFT: Ford created an ethereal, relaxing owner's suite with the custom bed by Morgan Chair. The bedding is from Bedside Manor, and the draperies are by Opuzen Gent. The floor lamp is by Robert Abbey.

had some really beautiful and iconic midcentury-modern pieces," Ford says of items such as the Eero Saarinen Tulip Table and Womb Chair and the Richard Schultz 1966 Collection dining chairs. To create a more collected and warm space while simultaneously avoiding oversaturation of midcentury modern and contemporary furnishings, Ford seamlessly pulled in some of her client's existing antiques and more traditional pieces. "When you start mixing things like a bed from RH with a cool modern sofa from Design Within Reach with a vintage chest you found at a flea market, that's when things get interesting." Then, using Pursley's stunning architectural detailing as the blank canvas, Ford began layering and mixing old with new, neutrals with subtle pops of color. "Ken's architecture is definitely more traditional, so we couldn't go all modern in this space; it wouldn't look right," Ford says.

Architect Ken Pursley designed Nolen Place. Units such as this one feature stunning architectural details like the cathedral ceiling in this guest bedroom. Ford designed the custom headboard and wall, which seamlessly tie in with the custom bed frame by Morgan Chair and the upholstery by Bernhardt. The nightstands are by Made Goods, and the lamps are by Jamie Young. **OPPOSITE:** Pursley designed this small nook in one of the guest bedrooms as a cozy seating area. Ford added a simple but luxurious daybed with a trundle by Lee Industries swathed in Farrow Midnight Blue fabric to highlight the dramatic architectural lines.

The neutral backdrop was ideal for highlighting the homeowners' art collection, as well. "They have this beautiful collection by Romare Bearden, the Jazz Series, which was split up in their previous home," Ford says. "But I felt it would have more impact if we kept them together." So the designer grouped the six paintings, creating a dramatic focal point in the dining room. "When we first started talking about where those pieces would go, the thought of putting all six together was almost like, 'Oh my gosh, is that too much goodness in one place?' But it works so nicely together." So as not to detract from the artwork, Ford added the low-lying Knoll Brno chairs and the custom

Ford wanted to infuse her client's personalities into the decor. In the husband's office, Ford hung the homeowners' framed guitar signed by all members of the Eagles. A Julian Chichester Danish credenza serves as the bar, while a pair of club chairs by Verellen is ideal for cocktails. The lighting is by Visual Comfort through Circa Lighting. **OPPOSITE:** The upstairs landing works well as a game table for drinks and entertaining. Mitt chairs by Bernhardt surround the custom "ticket table" Ford designed using the homeowners' collection of ticket stubs. The table was fabricated by Steve Morgan. The Arco Floor Lamp is by Flos.

linear chandelier by Evan Wood, which provides ample lighting but nearly fades away amongst the colorful art.

Ford designed the rest of the home similarly, allowing the artwork to shine while the midcentury-modern furnishings play a supporting role. The vanity, custom-designed by architectural designer Emily Bourgeois and handmade by Eric Cockrell of Mudwerk, coupled with the upholstered walls in Knoll's ultrasuede in the powder room, allow the spectacular artwork by Donald Sultan to pop. In the foyer, *Tower Horses*, a dramatic photo by Ken Van Sickle, purchased from SOCO Gallery, hangs prominently above an antique secretary and an antique drop-leaf table. On the adjacent wall

hangs a bold, modern piece by Herb Jackson that the homeowner purchased through a private collector. "As the design process went on, they started to get a bit edgier in their artwork collections," Ford says. "That drove a lot of the design, too."

Looking back, the homeowners would gladly allow Ford the freedom to design their home over and over again. "Bronwyn took out all the clutter for me, literally and figuratively," the homeowner says. "She really understood and respected that we wanted to maintain the integrity of some of our past but couple it with something new and fresh in this home. She truly just gets it, and we love everything about this home." ◆