

# LUXE

INTERIORS+DESIGN®

AUSTIN + SAN ANTONIO

RED AWARDS 2021



# Fresh Alternative

Subtle plays on color and pattern enliven a new home in Austin.

WRITTEN BY MAILE PINGEL | PHOTOGRAPHY BY RYANN FORD



Interior Design: Sara Malek Barney, BANDD Design

LUXESOURCE.COM



**F**or a homeowner with nearly all her children fledged, this Austin residence offered the opportunity to fashion a place tailored to her own desires while still meeting the needs of her family. “She’d never really *loved* her home and finally wanted to invest in creating something remarkable,” says designer Sara Malek Barney, who immediately envisioned a sophisticated but welcoming mix of colors, patterns and textures. “It was a sea of white,” the designer recalls of her first visit. However, she didn’t want to paint it out completely, opting instead to leave enough open space for a perpetually fresh and uncluttered feel.

With the ground floor essentially a great room combining open living, kitchen and dining areas, Barney began by defining each space with varying shades of blue: Farrow & Ball’s deep Hague Blue for the kitchen cabinetry, a denim-hued banquette for the dining table and more silvery tones for the living room sofas, adjoining armchairs and rugs. The designer was hoping to add complementary colors when, to her delight, the client revealed a red contemporary artwork she had brought back from La Fondation Maeght in France. “From there we were able to bring in warm tones like oranges,” Barney says, pointing to accent pillows as well as the caramel velvet of the kitchen’s counter stools.

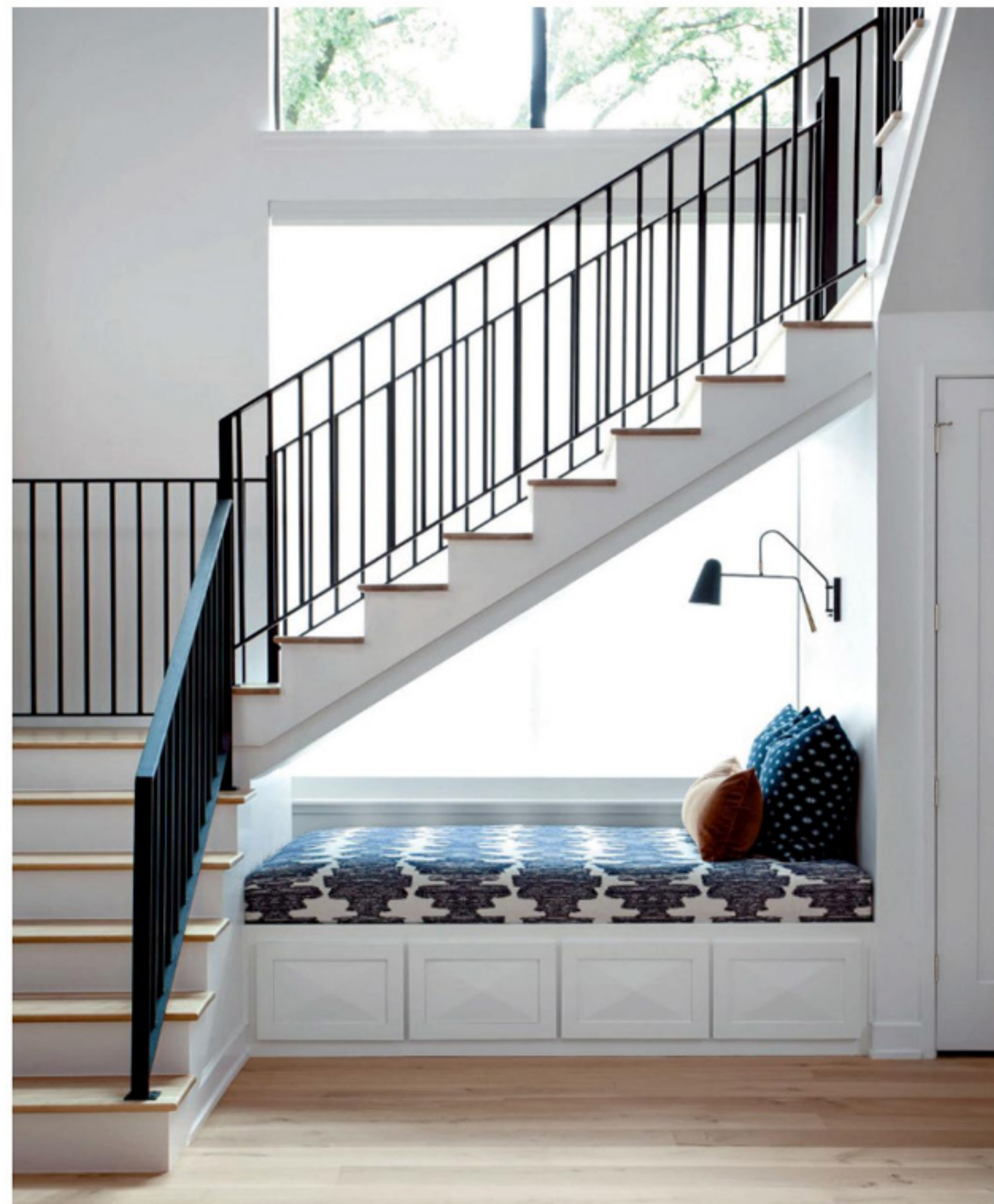
Those warm additions harmonize the furnishings with the natural wood floors and cabinetry, including the custom units flanking the living room fireplace. The owner eschewed a television in this space—a media room upstairs fulfilled that need—leaving no need for concealed storage, which allowed Barney to lighten things even more with caned doors. “We didn’t think we could exactly match the floors—and didn’t want to be too matchy-matchy—so the caning breaks up all the wood,” she explains. Having no television also allowed them to incorporate something more refined: a striking feather artwork from Natural Curiosities. For equally impactful pieces elsewhere, including the abstract in the foyer, Barney worked with Susannah Morgan of SKM Art Advising.

“The client also liked earthy materials, so we discussed how to layer in antiques and handmade items as well,” continues the designer. To that

end, you’ll find notable pieces including a hand-hammered iron ladder in the great room offering a contemporary nod to Southwest style; a handcrafted walnut desk in the office, where Barney also had local woodworker Jon Parry build floor-to-ceiling cabinets; and an antique Chinese bench in the hall leading to the main bedroom. Patterns, too, enliven every space along the way, “but we didn’t want to push it,” Barney notes. Instead, they sought smaller-scale prints almost appearing as solids from a distance. “We didn’t want anything too unusual or wild, so it’s dots and stripes for a classic look,” she adds. There is one surprise though: an ink-blot pattern selected for the cushion in a window seat cleverly crafted out of an unused area under the stairs. Custom elements such as these helped further elevate the interiors.

The residence also proved a chance for Barney to introduce the owner to one of her greatest loves: statement-making wallpaper. “I’ll take any excuse to use it,” the designer jokes—and she means it. Not only does it line a downstairs powder bathroom in the form of a dark and brooding seascape, it has also taken the laundry room “from blah to beautiful,” describes Barney, thanks to a fabric-like pattern. And it adds a colorful punch on the daughter’s bedroom ceiling and inside her bookshelves. Elsewhere, the designer further flexed her muscles with impactful lighting, finding an ultra-modern pendant by Australian industrial designer Christopher Boots for the dining area. But perhaps the most important space is the client’s main bedroom. “It’s hers and no one else’s,” says Barney, who employed a subdued wash of color to create an ambience that’s feminine without being girly. And it’s also comfortable enough for the homeowner to enjoy all day if she desires—something she’d never been able to do in previous houses.

“We stayed within my client’s comfort zone but pushed her creatively,” explains Barney, and the result is uplifting with plenty of white space to keep things airy. “A house can also feel homey without tons of stuff in it,” she adds. “This is a new chapter in her life, and everything here has a purpose.” ■



Designer Sara Malek Barney carved out a cozy window seat under the stairway, adding a cushion fabricated in Perennials Ink Blot fabric and a Generation Lighting sconce.

The Broderick dining area table and Fritz Rope side chairs from Palecek mingle with a Thibaut banquette from Verellen, all below Christopher Boots' Phasmida pendant. Above an Oly buffet hangs the Bronson mirror from Croft House. The rug is Felzy.





CR Leine sofas and Lee chairs provide ample seating in the living room around Four Hands coffee tables, all atop a Felzy rug. The ladder is Diy. Art from Natural Curiosities is flanked by shelving fabricated by Jon Perry of Something Old Something New Woodwork.



**“We stayed  
within my  
client’s comfort  
zone but  
pushed her  
creatively.”**

—SARA MALEK BARNEY

Farrow & Ball's Hague Blue adds drama on cabinetry in the kitchen, which features Worlds Away counter stools and a vintage rug sourced from Chairish. Rebecca Atwood fabric enlivens the window shade near an Apperatus Trapeze sconce.



**Above:** Osborne & Little's Marmara wallpaper brings a seascape feel to the powder bathroom, joined by a Rejuvenation mirror and a window shade in Fabricut's Cyclorama print.

**Opposite:** In the main bedroom suite, Currey & Company chests, Arteriors lamps and Julian Chichester Tear Drop mirrors flank a Charleston Forge canopy bed. Oly's Meri Drum chandelier, a Ben Soleimani rug and draperies in Schumacher's Tashmoo material infuse subtle pattern.