



THIS PAGE: HOMEOWNERS AMBER CASKA-WRIGHT AND JONATHAN WRIGHT ASKED ARCHITECT TYLER ENGLE TO GIVE THE BATHROOM IN THEIR VERY MIDCENTURY HOME A MODERN SPA FEEL. AMBER DIDN'T WANT TO LOSE ALL TOUCHES OF THE 1950s, HOWEVER, SO SHE INCORPORATED THIS WHITE PLASTIC TABLE-STORAGE BIN FROM CHARTREUSE MODERN INTERNATIONAL FOR A TOUCH OF WHIMSY IN THE OTHERWISE SERENE SPACE.

RIGHT: ANOTHER OF AMBER'S MODERN TOUCHES, AN ART PIECE FROM MOMA SITS ON THE SOLID BLACK GRANITE COUNTER TOP.

BATHROOM BLISS

A sophisticated bath captures the best of two worlds for homeowners who hail from the Northwest and Australia

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Design Details
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For resource information,
see page 95.



LEFT: "WE WANTED TO RESPECT THE BONES OF THE HOUSE AND YET GIVE IT THE ILLUSION OF LENGTH," ARCHITECT TYLER ENGLE SAYS OF THE BLACK PLINTH UNDER THE TUB THAT ELONGATES THE ROOM. **RIGHT:** A DORNBRACHT RAINSHOWER BRINGS THE MOST PERVASIVE ELEMENT OF THE NORTHWEST INSIDE. AMBER CASKA-WRIGHT WAS AFRAID WATER WOULD GET EVERYWHERE BUT FINDS IT STAYS CONTAINED.



Amber Caska-Wright wanted a bathroom reminiscent of the stark aesthetic of her native Australia. Her husband, Jonathan Wright, wanted a bathroom with the same color and feeling of his native Northwest. The result of their combined wishes is a bathroom that floats as lightly as bubbles in a bath—and is just as soothing.

The bathroom was designed with a serene experience in mind by architect Tyler Engle, AIA, and its style earned it one of two top spots in *Seattle Homes & Lifestyles*' first Bath of the Year contest.

When Engle initially assessed the original bathroom in the Magnolia home, he saw that just rearranging the bath's layout would profoundly change the room. The door was near the corner on the east side of the room; Engle moved it to the northwest side. "All I had to do was give it a little order," he says.

By shifting the entrance to the room, then adding windows on its north side, Engle's plan made it possible for Amber, Jonathan and 1½-year-old Lennox to see the stunning pink and red sunsets behind the Olympics and hear their backyard water feature gurgle and murmur while they soak in the tub.

After changing the layout, Engle carefully chose colors and materials from a Northwest palette to replace the faithfully midcentury décor. He made sure all decisions would complement the "family-sized" white Philippe Starck soaking tub that Amber purchased before the project began—a tub Lennox now enjoys every day.

A black granite plinth under the tub keeps it in scale with the 15-foot-by-15-foot room. The plinth is set parallel to the counter top made from the same granite, giving the room the illusion of length. "Once you make a design move, the rest of the things you do need to reference that design move," Engle says. So he mirrored that length on the ceiling by adding two soffits, each with a reveal that makes them look weightless.

A large window over the tub frames a hillside planted with young bamboo, a scene reflected in the large mirror over the granite counter tops. Amber says the three Eureka pendants in front of the mirror "hang

like pieces of art." They also divide the vanity into sections, one over his sink, one over hers. "Tyler is really passionate about all the tiny details," Amber says. Indeed, Engle even made sure the window shade was slightly translucent so that the verdant plants outside create a delicate shadow, resembling a Japanese painting.

"In Australia, they've really embraced the whole minimalist aesthetic," Amber says. The clean and spare etch-matte glass that separates the shower and tub is an idea she's seen many times in Australian homes. In Engle's design, the divider is the color of green sea glass, combining minimalism and Northwest elements.

Combed bluestone on the hillside-facing wall is reminiscent of the concrete walls that Amber has also seen in Australian baths, but its texture brings in the Northwest outdoors. Engle says it makes the room feel like it's nestling into the earth. "It's very beachy to me," Amber says.

The new bathroom "is an antithesis of what was there before," Engle says, but the finished thesis is a coherent whole. It simply hums. ■

Assistant Editor Lindsey Rowe always loved modern art in museums, but with each article she writes for Seattle Homes & Lifestyles, she is moved more by the visionary ideas behind living a modern life.