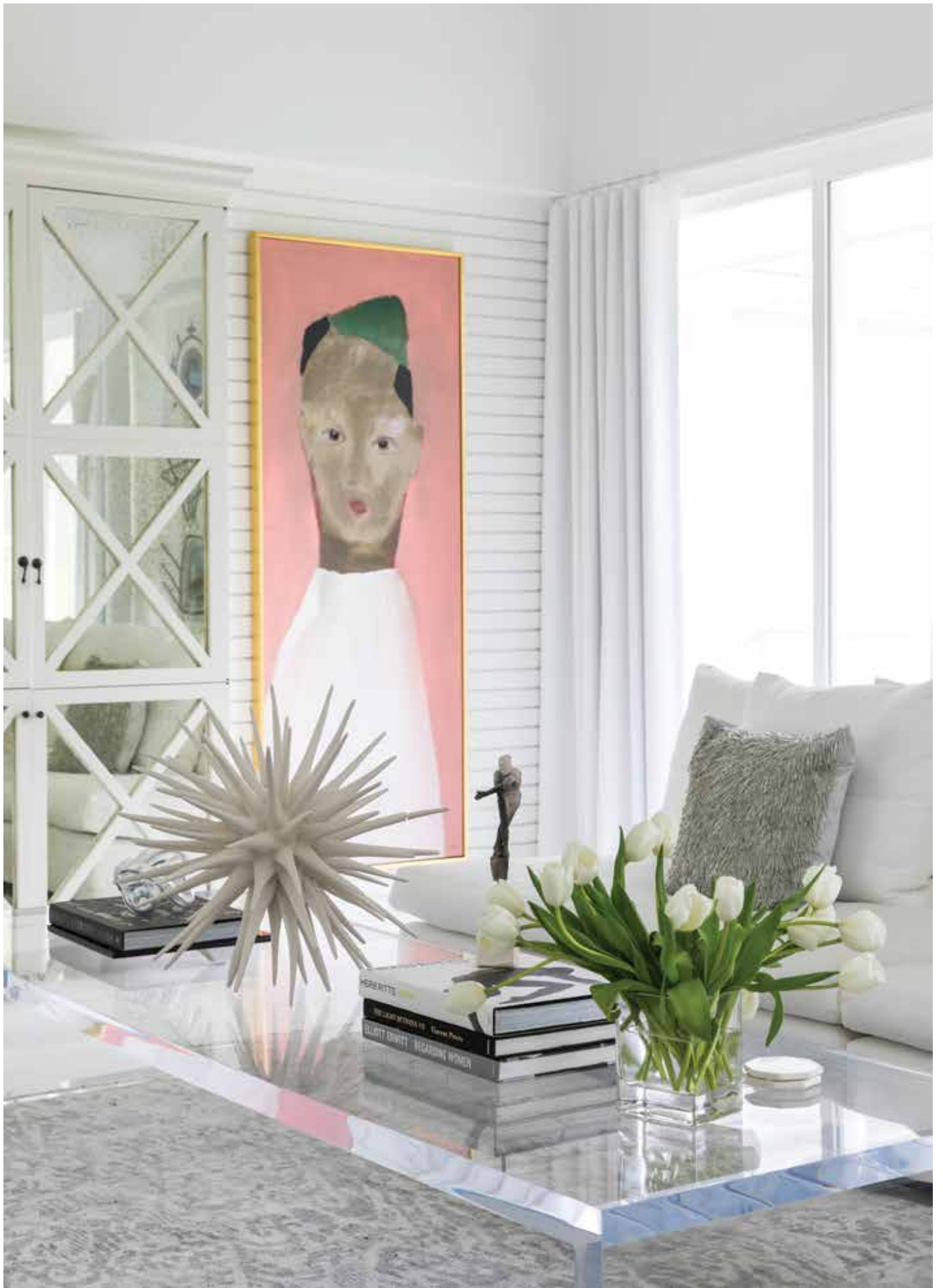


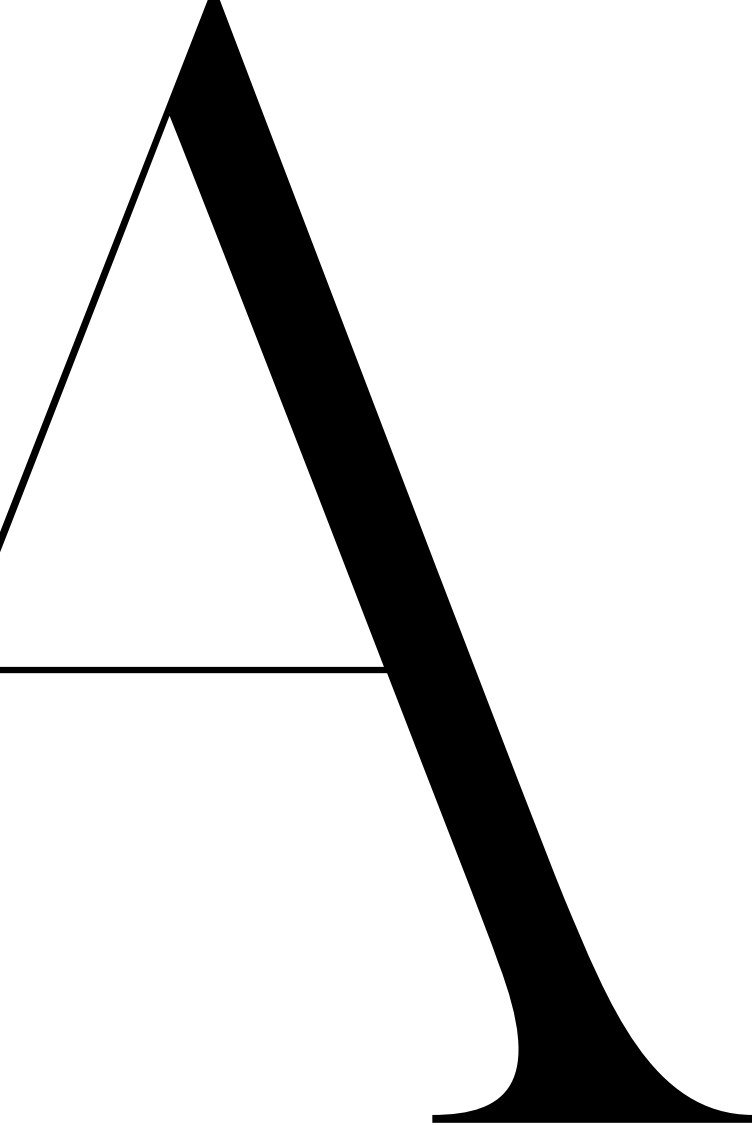
A second home in Covington provides respite and ample room for New Orleans designer and her family

# A WHITER SHADE OF PALE

WRITTEN BY AND PHOTO STYLING BY VALORIE HART  
PHOTOGRAPHED BY SARA ESSEX BRADLEY

The homeowners are well versed in decorating and designing using a palette of every hue and shade of white imaginable. The artwork next to the armoire in the living room is by Tony Mose. The mirror front armoire is from Oly Studio. All furnishings, artwork, lighting fixtures, and accessories used throughout the house are from Villa Vici, 4112 Magazine St., 504.899.2931, info@villavici.com.





white surface reflects light of all hues completely and diffusely. Most so-called whites are very light grays: fresh snow, for example, reflects about 80 percent of incidental light. White is the ultimate limit of a series of shades of any color. It is the opposite of black.

Vikki Leftwich and Bryan Colwell own the paeon to all things incandescent, their New Orleans home furnishings store Villa Vici. They are well versed in decorating and designing using a palette of every hue and shade of white imaginable. There is a lot more to it than just accumulating any and every white object and placing it into a room. A keen eye for lighting, a deft hand with subtlety and the ability to curate and layer a room is the stuff of dreams.

The couple recently completed a gut job renovation of a 1960s house in Covington. This is a second home for them, a respite from their busy lives. When thinking of a second home being a getaway, a beach home or a country retreat usually springs to mind. The choice of Covington is unique, yet just right being both far enough from and convenient to the city. The charming town has cute shops and restaurants and is surrounded by the natural beauty of the area. There is Tammany Trace, a 31-mile bike trail running east and west through several communities on the north side of Lake Pontchartrain, and a laid back lifestyle perfect for relaxed weekends alone or for entertaining with friends and family.





Facing page: (Top) The gut job renovation included raising the 1960s house up five and a half feet, and adding stairs and railings at the front and back. Bottom: Homeowner Bryan Colwell finds a perfect reading nook in the front foyer. The brick walls seen throughout are original to the house. Chair by Vondom, bench by Cisco Brothers, photo of Steve McQueen from Villa Vici, light fixture custom by Solaria for Villa Vici. This page: The white dining table by Fusion has classic modern lines, and converts to a pool table with a felted cover in a vibrant pop of orange. The chartreuse velvet dining chairs are by Mitchell Gold and Bob Williams. The buffet covered in goatskin is by Bernhardt Interiors; the mirror above it by Arteriors Home. The artwork is by Tony Mose. Graphic hide rug was custom made for Villa Vici. Chandelier by Noir Furniture.

The house flooded several times over the years, so it was gutted down to the studs. All of the rooms were reconfigured with the exception of one small bedroom. The outdoor loggia space was enclosed to create a dining room. The house was raised five-and-a-half feet. Stairs were added at the front and back of the house. The attic space was utilized to raise the ceilings from seven feet to 11 feet in one large room that was once a carport. That newly created space was divided into two luxurious bedrooms with en suite bathrooms.

The depth of the front entrance hall was extended three feet outward. The HVAC was moved from the main floor to the attic. The former space for those units was converted into a fourth bathroom.

The living room features a sectional by Eilersen, and a custom coffee table designed by Vikki Leftwich. The artwork over couch is by Ed Whiteman; sculpture on coffee table is by Rod Moorhead; the overhead lighting fixture is by Nuevo.







Some things original to the house did remain, however, such as the front glass windows in the kitchen; the front bedroom and front master closet are also intact, as well as all of the original brick walls. The front and back galley that runs the length of the house is the same, with the new addition of railings to accommodate the raising of the house.

“This is my first project where I did not use an architect for any drawings or plans,” says Vikki. She did however enlist the advice of her mentor George Hopkins who stopped by to look at the project. “He suggested we add more square footage by enclosing the outdoor

logia, and also recommended the bump out in the foyer that I incorporated in my design.”

Kraig Kucaba was the carpenter on the job, helping oversee the entire project and choose subcontractors.

“I drew on paper the size of the rooms and the location of all walls,” says Vikki. “But we actually used blue tape to mark out on the gutted space to envision it all.”

The house was reminiscent of the make-believe home portrayed in the 1960s sitcom “The Dick Van Dyke Show.” As much as the nostalgia of that was charming, the goal was to update to a 21st-cen-



Left: The sleek kitchen is the hub of the home. White glass flooring is used throughout the entire 3,300-square-foot house. The counter stools are by Mitchell Gold and Bob Williams. A vase of blue hydrangeas adds a pop of color (vase by Oly Studio). Right: White quartz countertops add to the airiness of the space; appliances are Thermador. Artwork in seating area across from the island by Austin Allen James; chairs under the painting by Lee Industries.





This page: There are glass sliding doors and windows in every room including the master closets. Art work over bathtub by Ronald Markham; hide pouf by Mitchell Gold and Bob Williams. Facing page: The leather platform bed and leather benches in the master bedroom are by Mitchell Gold and Bob Williams. Accent chair by Lee Industries. Artwork hanging over the bed is by Steve Martin. Hide chest and silver armoire are by Bemhardt Interiors, and the mirror above the chest is by Mirror Image.

tury version. The original flooring in the Covington house had so many mixed materials, including cork, brick and carpet. Vikki wanted to use only one type of flooring throughout the 3,300-square-foot space.

“I found this amazing glass flooring that is used in Germany for the Mercedes Benz showroom,” she says. “I wanted something durable and easy to maintain, and if cars could drive on it, I was all in. I have two adult children and five siblings, and I love to love to entertain.”

Vikki did the interior design and Bryan assisted with the lighting and landscaping. All of the furnishings came from Villa Vici (4112 Magazine St., [villavici-furniture.com](http://villavici-furniture.com)) sourced from

their favorite vendors.

Woven throughout the nuanced palette of white, are pops of color. The dining room table converts to a pool table with an orange felt top. A chartreuse velvet daybed is the centerpiece in a small bedroom used as a reading nook. Artwork adds more accent color.

There are glass sliding doors and windows in every room, including the two master closets, bringing the outdoor green space into the color scheme. The couple couldn’t be more pleased with the new layout of the space, and the decision to raise the house.

They say it feels like they are living in a glass tree house.

