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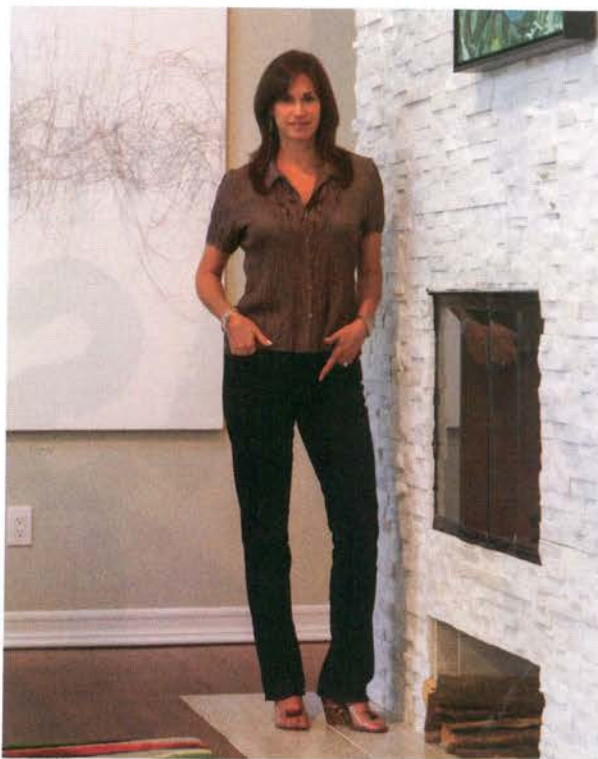
LARAMICHELLE
BEAUTIFUL INTERIORS, INC.

DESIGNER'S EYE

"I love a good design challenge!" exclaimed expert interior designer Lara Michelle upon hearing her client's requirements and wishes for her recent family room renovation. After all, Lara's 20 years of experience specializing in large scale home renovations made her the perfect candidate for the task.

The husband and two teenage boys desired a super comfortable room in which they could watch multiple sporting events at the same time. Naturally, that involved large screen TVs and a killer sound system. The wife wanted lots of seating for entertaining and her priority was for the space to look beautiful. One thing everyone agreed on was that the fabrics and materials needed to be strong, durable, and easy to clean. Adding to the challenge was the shape of the room. Long, narrow, with 19-foot-high ceilings, plus a wall of windows, it made placing the furniture and media a bit tougher to figure out. Not to worry though, Lara is on the job.

The first thing she did was to figure



out placement of the TVs and sound system. These needed to be in the center of the long wall as much as possible in order for them to be seen and heard well from all the seating. Since the fireplace could not be moved, Lara positioned them as close to the fireplace wall as possible. The system required multiple speakers, placed strategically around the room, so she designed the wall unit with cut outs and camouflaging colors so they wouldn't be noticeable. "I wanted everything to be modern and seamless, but also warm and inviting at the same time."

Next, Lara ripped out the old fireplace and installed a new, larger one, raising it off the floor to accommodate logs. The husband loves to make fires all year long, so now he

didn't have to stoop down so low and go back and forth to the yard to get his wood. She applied a layer of white, rough edged marble from floor to ceiling around it, which sparkles in the light. "It's just gorgeous, and I love its light contrast to the neighboring darkness of the wall unit."

She then refinished the floors and added large matching beams on the ceiling to "bring it down and cozy it up." Lara had the 16-foot sofa custom made with extra plush, but oh so durable, black cut velvet on the cushions. A stain-resistant, faux leather was upholstered to the arms and backs of the large sectional.

Lara brought in loads of color in the custom rug by Kravet, and commissioned artwork by Thomas Bigatel to hang over the fireplace, as well as black and white art by Lalani Nan through Kenise Barnes Fine Art.

Lara and her clients are thrilled with the end result. Proof is hearing her client remark: "our Superbowl parties have been taken to another level, and oh yeah, it's just beautiful!" *

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PHOTOS BY CHUAN DING