

# Midwest Living

IT'S FINALLY

# Spring!

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MIDWEST  
PLANTS!**

*Our experts  
name their  
go-to blooms*

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*A Mississippi  
journey from  
Huck Finn  
to Elvis*

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TO GREAT  
CARBONARA**

*TV chef Michael  
Symon dishes  
on classic pasta*

**THIS IS  
A POTLUCK?**

*Tips & recipes  
to brighten  
up any meal  
with friends*

# THE SURPRISE INSIDE

Like an Easter egg in reverse, this pearly gray 1911 home hides all its colorful personality behind the door.



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**HANG TIME**

Rather than a typical "gallery wall" of smaller frames, the home's stairwell highlights a few favorites from Amanda and Michael Reynal's art collection, including portraits of their sons painted by Des Moines artist Van Holmgren.



**BENJAMIN MOORE**  
Edgecomb Gray  
HC-173

**WELCOME HOME**

The Reynals' petite entryway is unabashedly pink—top to bottom.



**TOP** To encourage family dinners, the Reynals removed a kitchen desk and awkward peninsula to create a breakfast nook.

**RIGHT** The entryway's dramatic pink gives an encore in the living room, in an energetic painting Amanda spied in the gallery window of local artist Robert Spellman.

**BENJAMIN MOORE**  
New York State of Mind  
805



**a**manda Reynal greets guests in the entry of her century-old Des Moines home, watching with knowing satisfaction as they take in the high-gloss pink vestibule. She's seen those raised eyebrows before. The hue falls somewhere between peony and Barbie, and it's everywhere—on the walls, window frames, even the ceiling. It's a shamelessly bold move you can't help but love, even if you wouldn't choose that shade of pink yourself. (The only person who disagreed? The painter charged with getting uniform spray coverage on the dark molding.)

As the creative force behind the design firm and home furnishings shop Amanda Reynal Interiors, Amanda knows that older homes come with endemic limitations—and sometimes guilt over changing them too much or imposing an excess of contemporary flair. "I loved the bones of the house," Amanda says, explaining why she and her husband, Michael, opted against tearing down walls when they moved in a decade ago. As the parents of two boys, the couple focused on select updates, like an eat-in kitchen and additional bathroom and closet space. The classic center-hall floor plan survived.

But what about that gutsy pink? Or the bedroom ceiling striped with palm fronds? Or the eclectic mod artwork? "If this house were filled with 18th-century portraits, it would feel very contrived, like a museum or historic home," Amanda says. "Period decorating eliminates the personality of the homeowner."

**BENJAMIN MOORE**

Bunker Hill Green  
566

#### IN THE DETAILS

Amanda creatively taps her sons' interests for bedroom ideas. Skate decks and a wallpapered ceiling reflect Henry's passions for art and nature—and skateboarding.

I loved the bones of the house, but we wanted a family home for the 2000s, not an homage to the early 1900s.

AMANDA REYNAL

## GET OUT!

Even as their boys grow older, Michael and Amanda still encourage outdoor play. Oatly barbecue invites lounging with friends, a ping-pong table rolls from garage to lawn, and a projected movie flicker on the side of the house.



**ABOVE** Amanda and Michael opted against removing walls to get a modern open floor plan. "An old house is a lifestyle choice," she explains, describing lively dinner parties that migrate from patio to dining room to living room. The home's signature blue migrates, too, reappearing throughout the first floor.

For the Reynals, personality means color that's fearless but employed thoughtfully. Amanda threaded blues and greens through the whole house. On the main floor, the living room's intense inky hue fades to paler shades and turquoise in the adjoining family room and shows up mostly as accessories in the kitchen. Recurring whites and soft grays act as a foil.

"If you're afraid of color, start on a small scale," Amanda advises. "It can be pillows or fabrics. A judicious and well-edited use of color is just as impactful as an explosion. Or limit brights to a small space where you don't stay for long." That was her thinking with the pink entryway. "It's a little jewel box of a room," Amanda says. "No one spends much time in it, but you see it. It's like walking into a birthday present every day."

Artwork adds another layer of color, and Amanda's philosophy there is simple: Art isn't merely decoration. It should feel personal, whether you buy it from a gallery, inherit it from a family member or make it yourself. Michael's paintings of Henry and George hang in the master bedroom hallway. Henry's brushstrokes dress the wall above the living room mantle. A commissioned pop art piece by street mural artist Jordan Weber includes references to family favorites, like the New York Yankees and Homer Simpson. "The art not only makes the house feel fresh and young," Amanda says, "but it's relative to us as a family. It's meaningful."

And, of course, the house itself is a canvas—Amanda's. "When I first visited 10 years ago, I envisioned a home full of everything I love: art, vibrancy, my favorite fabrics and lots of light." She got her wish. **MH**

**FAMILY MATTERS**

The Reynolds' airy sunroom pulls double duty as a family room, with a TV, a game table for chess and backgammon, and a desk for homework.

**BENJAMIN MOORE**  
Georgian Green  
HC-135

**SINGIN' THE BLUES (AND GREENS)?**  
Tour another color-happy Midwest home at [midwestliving.com/fullcolor](http://midwestliving.com/fullcolor).

For buying guide, see page 103.