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MID-CENTURY MODERN

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ARCHITECT: EISENMANN ARCHITECTURE
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Page 91: Opening the kitchen onto the dining room enabled the sharing of visually high contrast materials.

Page 92 (top): A large kitchen skylight provides for a quality of light that was previously missing.

Page 92 (bottom): Large hex tile was the foundation of the master bathroom design. Integrated mirrors and wall faucets were organized relative to the size of the hex.

Page 93: The updated design accentuates the existing mid-century architecture. For example, the lines of the Tech Lighting Syrma fixture juxtaposes against the lines of the original brick fireplace.



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> “...a floating shelf named the “Infinity Loop” provides playful storage that engages with a wall jaunt.”

Real estate agents Matt Vance and Peter Ashbaugh discovered a rare mid-century modern home in North Berkeley and recognized its potential. The house had been designed by architect Elwood Hanson and offered a well-organized floor plan with vaulted views from the living room. Matt and Peter hoped to reinvigorate the minimally touched house, so they reached out to Eisenmann Architecture.

The original 1964 kitchen was centrally located but enclosed by four windowless interior walls; a single skylight provided the only natural light. Furthermore, a bulky elevator had been added, separating the living and dining rooms. The priority was to better integrate the public spaces while honoring the intent of the original architect.

Removing the wall between the kitchen and dining room proved difficult because the slender two-by-six-foot roof sandwich could not accommodate a vertical upturned beam. This was resolved by installing a sideways LVL, creating a seamless ceiling between the kitchen and dining room. By eliminating the elevator it was possible to see from one end of the house to the other. Glass accordion doors to the back yard and a large kitchen skylight further improved the quality of light.

Matt and Peter were willing to be bold with black-painted cabinets, white-oak accents, and quartz countertops—all selected for dramatic contrast. Eisenmann Architecture also developed design solutions to mitigate existing structural oddities: the dining room dry bar conceals the bulkhead of the basement stairs, and a floating shelf named the “Infinity Loop” provides playful storage that engages with a wall jaunt.

In the bathrooms, skylights were added to improve daylight and wall-hung fixtures were chosen to maximize space perception. The master bath has the mirror integrated with hexagonal tile and wrapping the corner to visually enlarge the space. Floating walnut shelves overlap the mirror for storage and interest.