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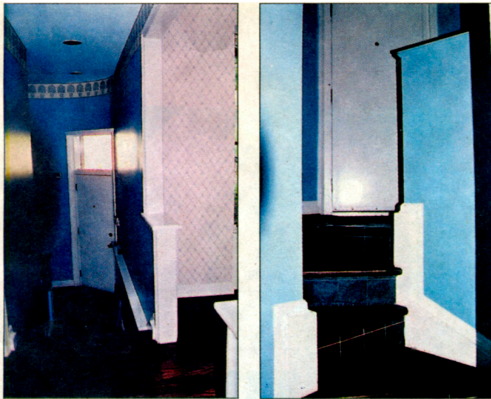
THE GLOBE AND MAIL ★ CANADA'S NATIONAL NEWSPAPER ★ GLOBEANDM

Glamour is back with a vengeance, reports The Globe's **DEIRDRE KELLY**. After last year's austerity shock, partygoers are shimmying into gowns and glitter again, but with a new motivation: Eat, drink and wear bold colours, because life is brutish and short

## Painting the town red

**I**onti Ebers was very clear about why she wore a transparent vintage hat with ebony feathers late last month to the Mater-





**THEN:** Above, left, a dark dreary back entrance leads to the basement. Right, the view from the lower level before the renovation.

## NOW & THEN OPEN AIR

BY DEBORAH FULSANG

**The problem:** How to brighten a dark back entranceway while maintaining the design integrity of a grand 1913 home.

**The solution:** The vestibule that interior designer Sharon Mimran recently fashioned to the back of a turn-of-the-century home in Toronto is no sore thumb. "It's clean and contemporary but not modern so it's still in keeping with the feeling of the home," she says. "It doesn't feel renovated."

It does feel light. With architect Wayne Swadron and general contractor GES Construction, Mimran raised the whole area up to grade. Before, there was a step down to the exterior. She then turned a dark kitchen corner into a separate room with an elegant circular staircase and brightened the entire

space with a half-circle of windows set in generous 4½-inch casings. A partial wall that jutted abruptly into the space to define an eating area was also removed. Broadening steps into the basement also made the space feel larger. It's a far cry from the earlier dismal doorway.

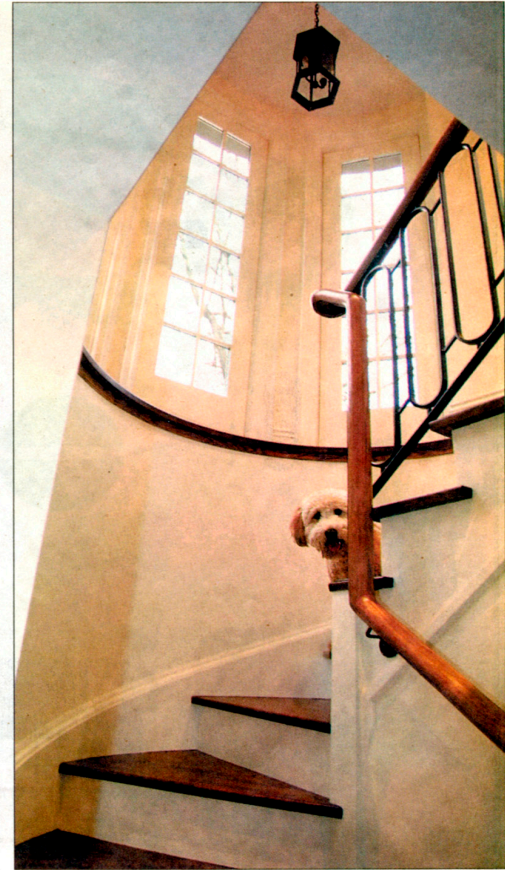
**The result:** a kitchen that looks bigger than its 14 x 18-foot dimensions, and a 180-degree-plus view of the yard. "You feel like you're outside," says the homeowner.

Mimran washed the room in Benjamin Moore's creamy OC60 white. She also mirrored the home's front staircase with a custom-crafted iron railing by Toronto's Steptoe & Wyfe. The homeowners, new parents, loved that detail so much they had her design and deliver a matching baby gate.

**Cost:** About \$15,000.



**NOW:** Left, the area is transformed into a light-filled vestibule with artful circular staircase that mirrors the Arts & Crafts home's two-storey turret. Right, the view from the refashioned lower level with Bingley, the homeowner's one-year-old Wheaton Terrier.



PATTI GOWER/THE GLOBE AND MAIL