



## Pimp My Bathroom

THIS TUCSON BATHROOM GETS AN EXTREME MAKEOVER THANKS TO DESIGNERS BAKER + HESSELDENZ, INC.

WHEN DESIGNERS MARY ANN HESSELDENZ AND SCOTT Baker are asked to describe their style, they hesitate to say “modern” in order to avoid people’s preconceived notions of cold interiors and formulaic proportions. “We use the phrase ‘urban contemporary,’” says Hesseldeuz. “Then they usually scratch their heads, and that gives us a chance to explain,” she jokes.

The couple recently formed a design collaborative, Baker + Hesseldeuz, Inc., and are willing to tackle everything from furniture design (Baker’s background) to room design (Hesseldeuz’ background) to projects that involve both. A recently completed bathroom remodel in Tucson, AZ is their finest example of collaboration to date. Allowed creative freedom by the client and a healthy budget of about \$85,000, Baker + Hesseldeuz knew that in order to turn this bathroom into a spa-like retreat fit for a bachelor, square footage would have to be added, ceilings would need to be raised, and everything from

lighting to flooring would have to be ripped out.

After filling the sunken tub with concrete, an exterior wall was punched back, acquiring about 150 square feet from the home’s driveway, bringing the bathroom to a total of 270 square feet.

**When asked about snags during construction, Hesseldeuz jokes: “No, nothing really, other than your typical nightmares.”**

Baker began fabricating the cabinetry from ebonized quarter-sawn walnut. Although the long, wall-hung rectangular forms help elongate the space, they all double as shelves and cabinets so any reference to function is kept stylishly secret. The cabinets at higher levels open upward and some, such as one by the sink,



### INSPIRATIONAL DESIGN

Baker says he loves the buildings and structures of Thom Mayne (Morphosis) and Renzo Piano, the furniture and design work of Emile-Jacques Ruhlmann, and Jasper Morrison. Hesseldenz has a background in fashion design and tends towards long lines. She says, "I look at interiors as a fashion collection and how everything relates to each other as a whole unit, looking to Mies and Corbu for inspiration. They not only designed architecture, but the interiors and the furnishings as well. They understood the importance of the relationship between the two." Hesseldenz is the former curator of the FADS show, a modern furniture design exhibition. Although the show is currently on hiatus, this is how the pair met, proving that design brings people together.



Previous: Walnut encases the new tub and sink. This page: The wall behind the tub in the before picture (above) was deleted to add room for the new soaking tub and spa-shower. The after picture (below) was taken from outside. While the rectangular window in the shower measures approximately 8' x 12", the cutout between the shower and vanity measures approximately 3' x 12". The shower fixture is by Hans Grohe. Next page: Jonathan Adler sculptures and an Eames chair set a mid-century tone to the contemporary space.

## >>> bath

have integrated storage for toothbrushes, soap, and other everyday items. A cabinet by the toilet holds toilet paper within and vase above. Walnut is also used to frame the new Oceania Nature Chromatherapy soaking tub, with its underwater lights and placement along an expansive window with views of the Catalina Mountains.

Two design points make this project ultimately bachelor-esque: A pony wall made of walnut frames one side of the toilet area. Here, Baker recessed the interior of the wall for magazine and book storage. (What man doesn't read while on the john?) Secondly, the new shower features wall-mounted jets for two and enough room for five or six people. (What man doesn't fantasize about such situations?) EcoTerr, a recycled terrazzo tile, covers every inch of this wet zone, even the floating bench which runs the length of two walls within the showering room.

Next up: the rest of this Wes Miller-designed house. Now that the owner spends most of his time hanging out in his new bathroom, Baker + Hesseldenz will try to coax him out with more of the same urban contemporary aesthetic. "It's a real gift when a client grants creative freedom," says Hesseldenz. ■

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