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## A BLANK CANVAS

When Laura and Eric Krudener found the right place at the right time, they transformed a Highlands lot into an expressive, eco-friendly masterpiece and party pad extraordinaire.

WORDS: Eleanor Perry-Smith • IMAGES: David Lauer

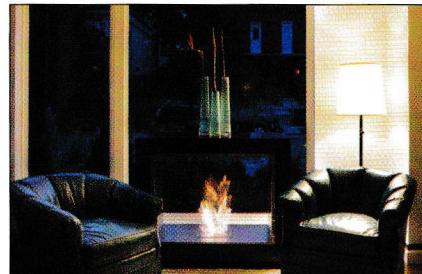


The Krudeners love to entertain and so opted for this Big Sur dining table by Crate & Barrel lined with Soren chairs by Room & Board. The black border lifted from Laura's work extends from the living room and ends at the kitchen. "We didn't want to continue the banding into the kitchen in order to create distinction between the spaces," says New York based interior designer Elizabeth Bolagnino, who orchestrated the Krudeners' home project.

"I have an affinity for the industrial juxtaposed with the natural." The aluminum paired with the cedar creates a connection between synthesis and natural life." Laura Krudener



The jutting cedar box, Eldorado stone stack and two stucco colors gives the exterior a rich depth of feel and visually extrudes the home's volume.



**TOP:** Privacy film on the windows shield the living room where the Krudeners added two club chairs, à la family tradition, to the space. The custom Vanguard Furniture chairs created in Laura's favorite color swivel and delicately rock, as not to spill morning coffee or evening cocktails.

**LEFT:** The Eco-Smart free-standing fireplace is fueled by ethanol and only emits pure oxygen.

Artist Laura Krudener was soaking in the view atop Keystone when her phone rang. She unclicked a snowboard binding and answered the call. It was Laura's real-estate agent. She'd discovered a condemned building in LoHi that was scheduled for demolition, and it was situated in the perfect place. "We never planned on building until we saw the lot," recalls Laura, whose head is still spinning from how quickly everything has unfolded in the past few months. For Laura and her husband Eric, the cityscape and doublewide lot were too good to pass up, so they broke ground and flung open the doors to the project of a lifetime.

Laura's art studio in RiNo's TAXI community is lined with abstract, vibrant paintings that reflect an artist of ceaseless energy and insight. Even the floating frame style Laura created, which rises off the wall at a 45-degree angle, presents her highly calibrated attention to form and function. Interior designer and architectural consultant Elizabeth Bolognino took on the challenge of weaving Laura's aesthetic and Eric's eco-conscious vision into their new home. Part of that meant decorating with Laura's works instead of purchasing other pieces, as well

as keeping control of color. "Her work stands alone," Elizabeth says, referring to a large piece boasting fluorescent hues, floating atop a white canvas in the dining room. "You don't want to compete with it, which is why simplicity wins."

The great room's main color comes from the array of bright volumes nestled on a bookshelf spanning the west wall and melding into the dining space. And while most everything else in the space is white, a distinctive thin, black border serving as crown molding traces the room. It's an uncommon feature that was lifted directly from Laura's paintings. Within her work, one can usually identify a Mucha-esque thick, black line shadowing the sweeping movements of her paint. This subtle nod frames the room nicely and fuses well with other standout features, such as the ceiling-mount work Laura created for the space above the basement stairwell. Head-on, the piece tricks the eye into seeing an inverted trapezoidal quality. "There's a weightlessness to my paintings," Laura points out, especially in this one as it hovers above the corridor leading to Eric's basement music haven. His musical aptitude and vinyl collection were taken into account while creating a soundproof subterranean practice space for him and his friends.

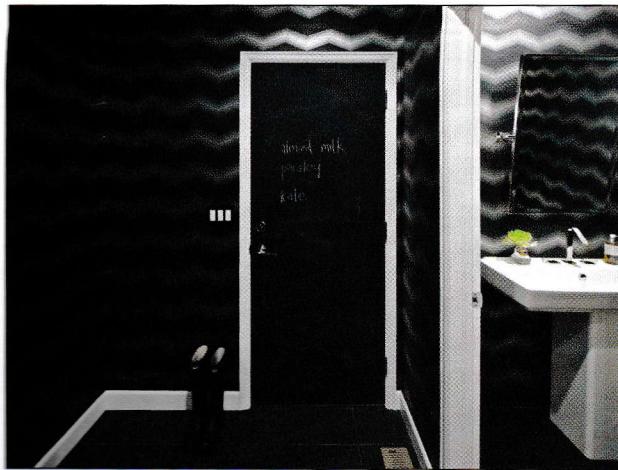


**Surrender with Me:** acrylic, enamel, ink, charcoal and paint marker on raw canvas, 144x36.

"I didn't want to paint until I knew what the space would look like," says Laura, who created this piece especially for her home and hung it in an unconventional, yet dynamic way.



Laura's painting, **Drifting Alongside Chaos** (acrylic, enamel, ink, charcoal and paint marker on raw canvas, 60x60) is illuminated by the Excel Chandelier by Roll & Hill. "It gives us that opalescent ambient light," says Elizabeth.



Bold, zig-zag Zanetti wallpaper by Osborne & Little wraps the mudroom and powder room. A large, Kohler Honed white pedestal sink adds drama to the space while polished nickel sconces with agate light the way.





The open shelving and simplicity of the kitchen is a nice compliment to the bold living/dining space. A Thermador range heats things up along while a GE Monogram cools it down.

Speaking of cool, Laura and Eric are such thoughtful entertainers that they installed an ice maker that produces perfect large Scotsman ice cubes.

## "HAVING ALL MY JARS THERE IS LIKE HAVING MY PAINTS OUT IN FRONT OF ME"

The music won't be heard outside, where the Krudenerers decided to install a heating system in the driveway before the concrete was poured. Unseen elements like this bring a livable value to the home that is also apparent simply by looking at the exterior. "The only thing Laura insisted on having was a jutting box," says Elizabeth Bolognino, who has designed for a home in Telluride, and now the Krudenerers, and is making her services available to more Colorado clients. Long slim windows help to facilitate that outward optical expansion. "We wanted to carry the notion of horizontal banding," Elizabeth adds. She kept in mind the principles of balance while being sensitive to the desires of her clients during the process of the exterior design, which was done in coordination with the Wes Abrams and the rest of the build/design team at Urban Green Development. "I have an affinity for the industrial juxtaposed with the natural," says Laura. The aluminum paired with the cedar creates a connection between synthesis and natural life that is meaningful to the Krudenerers.

The Krudenerers' home is not without traditional elements, back inside a spread of dry goods line the kitchen's open shelving

in clear jars. "Having all my jars there is like having my paints out in front of me," says Laura, who relishes the chance to cook; "I also love the natural color and texture they bring out." Brushing past a powder room with an oversize pedestal sink and a chalkboard door leading to the garage, a staircase rises, met by glass enclosed railing walls. Keeping in mind that many of their friends have kids, they opted to close the steps in, but appreciate the added reflections that the Starphire glass projects.

Atop the landing is an unexpected treat—a massive barn door granting entrance to the master suite. Windows in the walk-in closet are a cheery detail to the left, and to the right is the Krudener's own private spa. The ceiling spout above the bathtub is an enchanting, hard-to-miss feature. Laura adds that she sketched out the shower concept by hand, as its symmetric simplicity and pan-less entry display a unique sophistication. Dual entry to the bedroom gives way to a stunning view of downtown Denver. "We wanted outdoor greenery to be the color," Elizabeth notes, as sunlight splashes the pillow-framed Cyrus Company bed through floor-to-ceiling glass on the south wall. Privacy film ensures a shroud during the day while window

coverings keeps things cozy in the evening. Paintable Anaglypta wallpaper leads the way past the laundry room on the same level, a spare bedroom, bathroom and dual office space with a balcony overlooking a yard of intelligent design. "We expect to do some urban gardening," Eric explains, as he's worked hard at incorporating composting material using a permaculture technique called sheet mulching to create the perfect soil. He then climbs the stairs toward the icing on this LEED platinum pastry.

The door swings open to an eight-person hot tub, a boarder of planters and an outdoor living space with an unadulterated eastern view of the city. A few mountains peek out to the south and it becomes obvious why Laura and Eric held a private, catered wedding for just the two of them on this deck. It is outdoor living in flawless perfection, save for the edge of a sombrero peeking over the top of a planter. Eric smiles. "We've thrown one outstanding party so far," he says with a grin that is sure to crack each day he awakes with Laura in their new home that beautifully displays their sense of style, earth-consciousness, creativity and fun. Cheers to that.



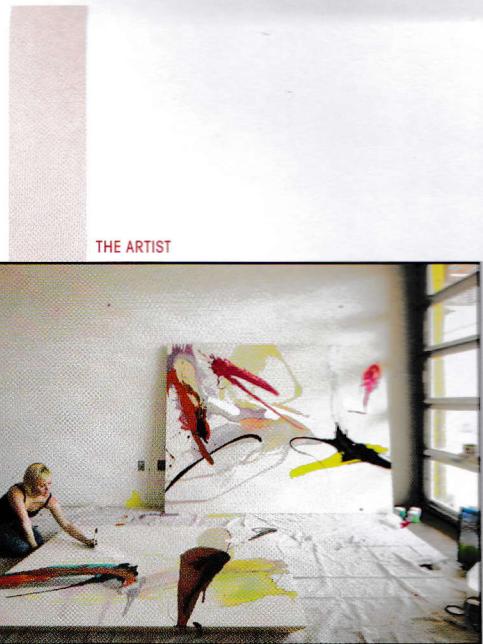
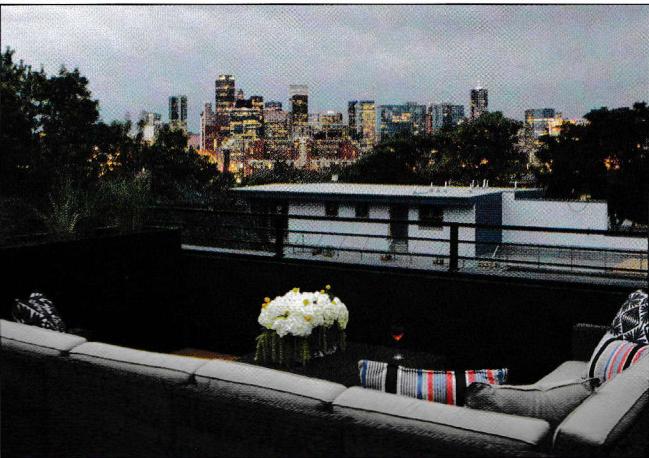
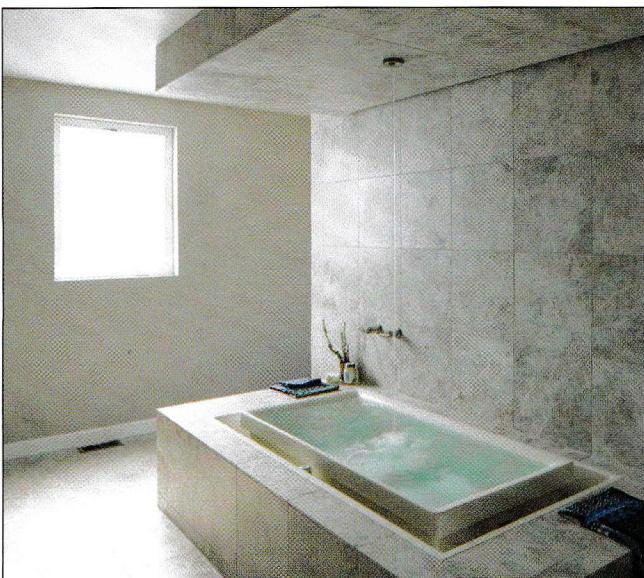
Morning sunlight splashes over Laura and her little buddy Jasmine. Hovering over their heads like the sun itself is a Yoshiaki Takao pendant. The comfy seat is an original Womb Chair by Knoll.



**ABOVE:** The Krudeners light up their lives with these bedside lights from Portland-based Schoolhouse Electric. Watching over them at night is the Atlantic Ocean in this photo taken on their honeymoon in Costa Rica by Harper Point Photography.

**BETWEEN:** Like water floating on air, this Sok bath tub by Kohler is overflowing with relaxation.

**BOTTOM:** The crowning achievement of the Krudener home (other than finding a place to call home) is their year-round use of the rooftop living space. Crate & Barrel furniture supports comfortable sweeping views of the Denver skyline while an eight-person hot tub bubbles just within reach.



THE ARTIST

## A SPLASH OF COLOR

"This is my vocabulary," says Laura Krudener regarding the large, vibrant paintings that have become as much a part of her voice as speaking. And like a voice, they are distinct and unmistakable. Form defying creations spread into a colorful collective of acrylic, enamel, ink, paint marker and charcoal atop white custom-made canvases. For Laura, the white space is as meaningful as the marks, which are an amalgamation of time as her works are rarely created in a single sitting. "I feel like space is what holds all of the moments together," Laura ponders. Born in North Carolina and educated in San Francisco, Laura recalls arriving at the moment of her own distinct style. A professor claimed that she would eventually move on from her technique, rooted in Japanese brush paintings, but Laura knew better. She made the style her own; "At some point, I just tossed brushes aside, and that's when painting really opened up for me."

To view Laura's larger-than-life paintings, contact Plus Gallery locally or Connecticut-based Art and Interiors.