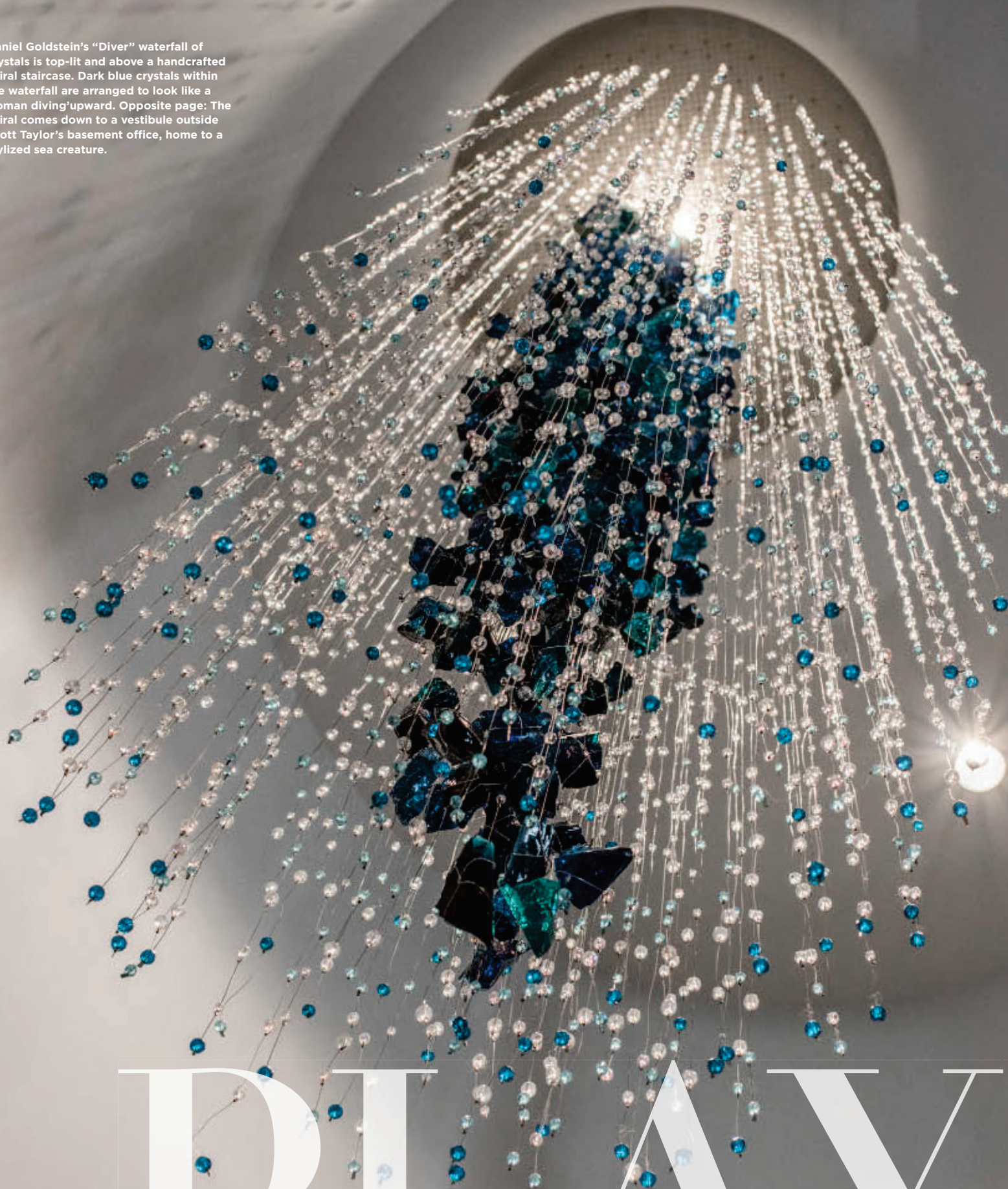


Daniel Goldstein's "Diver" waterfall of crystals is top-lit and above a handcrafted spiral staircase. Dark blue crystals within the waterfall are arranged to look like a woman diving upward. Opposite page: The spiral comes down to a vestibule outside Scott Taylor's basement office, home to a stylized sea creature.



PLAY

FICTIONAL DUNGEONS AND DRAGONS INSPIRE REAL-LIFE ROOMS IN A SAN FRANCISCO VICTORIAN.

BY ZAHID SARDAR PHOTOGRAPHS BY DREW KELLY

WHAT HAPPENS WHEN THE WORLDS

of computer and board games collide with reality? You get the kind of individualistic interiors that Scott Taylor, a VP of video game development at Zynga, and his wife, Kristine Boyden, a West Coast president for publicity firm Edelman, orchestrated with artful collaborators, including builder Aaron Gordon, architect Ari Gessler and interior designer Tineke Triggs.

It all began in late 2014 when Taylor and Boyden stumbled on an 1870s San Francisco Victorian with side and back yards, close to the condominium in the Castro that Gordon had only recently remodeled for them. They had no desire to move again but, suddenly presented with an opportunity to have a stand-alone home tailor-made for their creative personalities, they seized it.

Bowden was raised on a cattle ranch near Tahoe, Taylor is from Madison, Wisconsin, and they had each embraced the eclecticism of the Bay Area long before they met online about a decade ago.

Their friends are artists, and they have collected the work of those friends over the years. “We really wanted a place to showcase it,” Boyden says. But rather than a sterile, white museum, “we wanted a backdrop oozing and bubbling with energy,” Taylor says.

The 35-foot-wide property included a separate carriage house behind a two-story Victorian, and the smaller unit became a temporary home for them while the city considered the changes they wished to make. A year’s delay allowed the couple, whose time is often fractured by business travel, to weigh design options and come up with ideas of their own.

As it happened, an old photograph of the house when it was first built, surrounded only by acres of sand dunes, became a kind of design talisman for them. They chose to infuse the otherworldly spirit of that setting into their remodeled home and its modern context.

“We wanted the exterior to remain the same,” Taylor says. It appealed to his sense of history, and for Boyden, a born raconteuse whose career began with tech startups that wanted their stories told, keeping the original shell was critical to forming any fresh design narrative.



LAND





In the fully refurbished interior crafted by contractor Aaron Gordon, Scott Taylor and Kristine Boyden have reconfigured their Victorian home with an open floor plan, linked by a herringbone wood floor. Clockwise from left: The dining room, which leads to the kitchen, left, has a wall of inset bookcases and a floating steel fireplace contrasted with old-fashioned crown molding and wall paneling; one of the bookcases slides back to reveal an opening that leads to the powder room. Within that concealed vestibule is a blue-and-white backlit work by Daniel Goldstein, "Invisible Man." In the living room adjacent to the dining table, interior designer Tineke Triggs added sculptural furniture to complement more art in the the couple's collection.







In the kitchen, a farm sink, a zinc-topped island and a meat hook hanging on the cabinet just right of the La Cornue stove evoke the building's history as well as Boyden's farm country childhood. The tiled backsplash is by Ann Sacks; the unlacquered brass faucets are by Waterworks. Vintage swing-out barstools fit under the island. The antiqued brass and glass Synapse pendants are by Avrett. The Roman shades made of custom Timorous Beasties fabric are designed by Artistic Designs for Living.

However, if they wanted to achieve a larger 3,000-square-foot home, the interior walls had to go.

Gordon shored up the structure, removing an inadequate basement and the building's old brick foundation. Then he dug deeper into the sand to form a subterranean 1,000-square-foot concrete foundation/bunker that has new exits through the east side yard to the street.

Now the bunker contains a guest suite in back, a small laundry room for Taylor's motorcycle gear in the middle, and up front a man cave/office, which, while lacking the clichéd leather couches to smoke cigars on or ugly mahogany furnishings, has a synthesizer with which Taylor can unleash his inner musician.

"We think of this room as a pit of entropy," Boyden says archly.

As a symbol of the chaotic sounds that sometimes emerge from there and float up into the rest of the house, Taylor asked for a sculpture resembling a tentacled sea monster from a novel by one of his favorite science-fiction authors, H. P. Lovecraft. San Francisco Opera prop maker Qris Fry, recruited to create a stylized version of the monster, made one of painted CNC-cut plywood. It snakes its way out of Taylor's studio and toward a new spiral staircase (made by Gordon, of several layers of laminated plywood) that links the basement to the floor above, where an open-plan living space flows toward an eat-in kitchen at the south end.



In the master bedroom, Triggs created a moody, Gothic setting with a textured blue wallpaper by Elitis. The animistic accent chair from Coup D'Etat is paired with patinated brass three-drawer bedside tables from Bernhardt Furniture. The arched Gothic-style bed and headboard are custom, designed by Triggs and fabricated by Matthew Case. The Leopold sconces are modified by Jim Misner and the antiqued brass ceiling fixture is Urban Electric. Custom draperies were made by Georgina Rice.

In the living area, Gessler, a fan of Arts and Crafts-era architect Edwin Lutyens as well as modernist Mies Van der Rohe, retained the traditional bay windows facing the street. New windows added on the sides, decorative beams, coves and paneled walls all look Victorian but, to the owners' delight, Gessler also deftly introduced modern elements such as a cantilevered floating hearth for a blackened steel fireplace that seems like it crashed in from outer space.

For Taylor, who wanted no tidy transitions, it creates the right amount of tension.

While the couple encouraged experimental design, Boyden, the pragmatic foil to Taylor's playfulness, wanted their additions to be somewhat functional. So new walls and shelving were proportioned specifically for art pieces in the owners' collection. And to save space as much as make an elegant transition from the dining room, Boyden suggested a wall of inset and sliding bookcases to conceal the vestibule leading into the powder room. As a surprise, one section of the bookshelf wall slides back to reveal a door opening through which, hanging on the far wall of the vestibule, Daniel Goldstein's backlit "Invisible Man" is an unexpected treat.







For the powder room, Triggs picked Timorous Beasties wallcoverings for the ceiling, reflected in the Oskar Zieta mirror. The bubbling glass tile is paired with a black Hydra sink and custom wire stand. Opposite: Views of the master bath.

“WE WANTED A BACKDROP OOZING AND BUBBLING WITH ENERGY.”

Triggs' powder room is yet another extravagantly textured, dark and moody visual thrill. Its shiny black glass wall tiles look like fizzy soap bubbles, reflected in an amorphous stainless steel mirror by Polish designer Oskar Zieta. The ceiling, covered with a Timorous Beasties wallpaper printed with a Rorschach-style pattern, appears to have the eyes of an extraterrestrial creature. Triggs' offbeat juxtapositions include a free-standing wire frame basket, suggested by Gessler, to hold up the sink.

“There are shared spaces as well as spaces for her and him,” Gessler says. Pointing to the generous modern farmhouse-style kitchen at the south end of the main floor, he adds, “This is clearly Kristine’s.” It has limestone and zinc counters that are friendly to the touch and will patinate over time.

A breakfast banquette, a eucalyptus wood island with attached cantilevered barstools, and an old-fashioned meat hook mounted on a pantry cupboard, near the La Cornue stove and custom hood, are accents that allude to Boyden's farm country childhood. A door on the east wall opens to back stairs to the side yard, as if the house were a version of *Dungeons & Dragons* in which players get escape hatches of their own.

If the architecture was tamed for practicality, the interior design throughout fully reflects both Taylor's passion for the primeval yet futuristic landscapes of video games and Triggs' own inner wild child.

The designer plays with textures and colors to heighten the *Game of Thrones* mood of different rooms, especially on the top floor, where the master suite has a neo-Gothic bed she designed, along with Bernhardt brass-finished side drawers; wall sconces resembling medieval candle stands with fluorescent tubing, customized by Jim Misner; furniture from Coup D'Etat; and midnight-blue Elitis wallpaper.

Leaded-glass windows rescued from a demolished garden shed are reused as skylights in the bathroom, which exudes a black-and-white Victorian aesthetic: the vanity created by Triggs and her team at Artistic Designs for Living has a dark rippled front, and the textured Artistic tiles in the shower are white, complemented by dark Ann Sacks floor tiles laid in the same chevron pattern as the stained oak wood floors throughout the house.

“Scott pushed for playful, experimental approaches, but I am not too far out of my realm here,” Triggs says. “I like unique, edgy designs and these clients really let me play and dig deeper into what I can do.” ■

