

# Tucson Lifestyle HOME & GARDEN

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# Project Renewal

One local architect's student thesis became not only a home for him and his bride, but a boon for the neighborhood.

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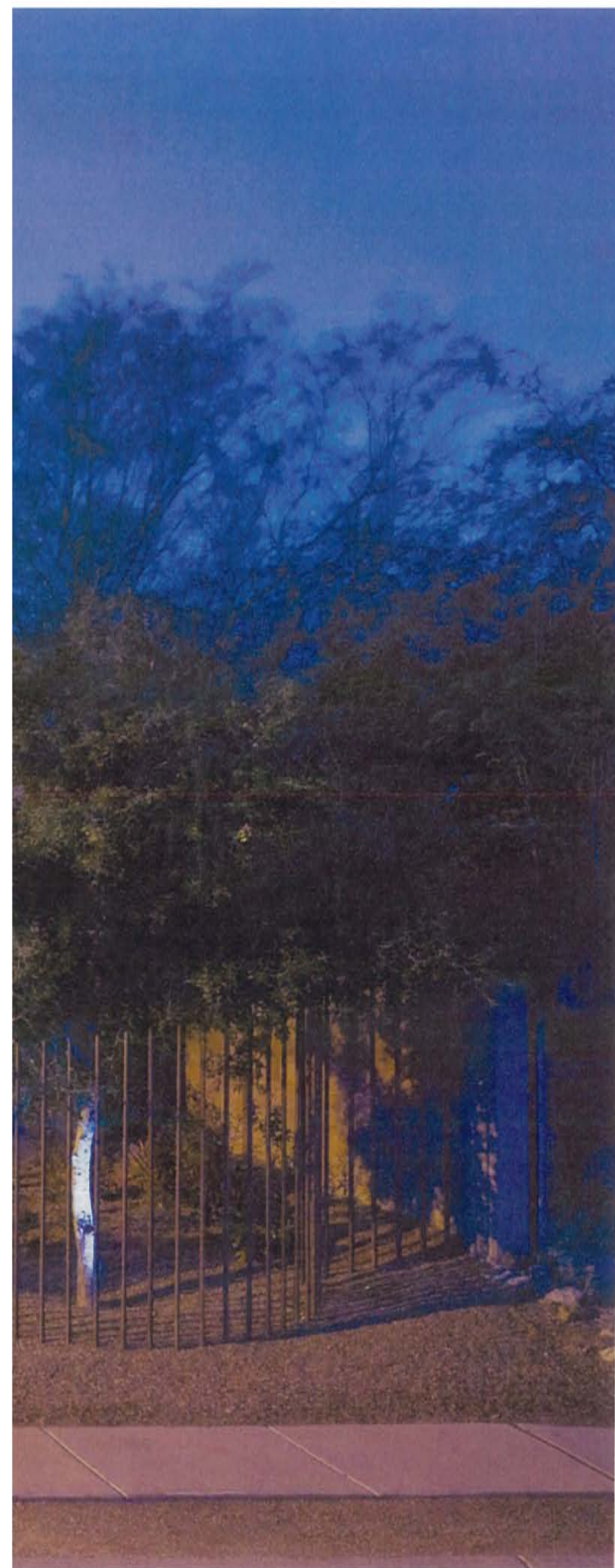




ABOVE The living room features a maple wall and built-in flat-screen. LEFT Page's turntables and DJ equipment are found in the "manden," which is a perfect party space complete with lasers, lights and a fog machine. OPPOSITE TOP The master bedroom suite, with its floor-to-ceiling glass sliders, faces the pool and patio. OPPOSITE RIGHT The eye-catching master bath has a dramatic wall of stacked glass that provides diffused light and privacy. Contemporary-style sinks are placed on a glass-topped zebra wood counter. Walls of glass tiles give the room a spa look.







When Page Repp embarked on his plan to design and build an affordable, efficient home for his senior thesis project at The University of Arizona in 1998, more than a few of his architecture professors discouraged it. So many variables would be out of his control. Would he have enough time to finish it?

But Repp's artistic passion and drive won out, and in 42 days, he built a sustainable house near the gateway to Interstate 10 in the Barrio Blue Moon Neighborhood. "When we pulled it off, they couldn't believe it," he recalls. "To this day, people stop by to see it."

It was an auspicious start for the acclaimed architect and builder behind Repp Design + Construction, but also the beginning of a life journey. He would go on to renovate the house in 2007 with his bride-to-be, Kristen, to fit the lives of two, instead of one. The home is now the iconic centerpiece of an innovative revitalization championed by the couple near the crossroads of Speedway Boulevard and Main Avenue. ▶

LEFT The entrance to the Repp residence incorporates steel, block and cement, creating dramatic curb appeal.  
ABOVE Kristen and Page Repp enjoy dinner in their home.





The urban beauty of the Repp home is evident immediately, with a rusted mailbox and rebar rods that form a unique front fence. Integra block mingles with smooth, cement board panels to define the front façade, punctuated with bright yellow paint on the windows and doors.

“It’s a clean, simple aesthetic,” Repp explains. “It’s not decoration for the sake of decoration.” The materials also are cost-effective and the home is energy-efficient, leaving minimal need for maintenance.

Walking inside the petite inner patio, the sound of water cascading down the green-tiled wall fills the space. Smooth, gray concrete floors provide a play surface for the couple’s two lovable, hairy roommates, Dado and Penny.

Evident in the renovation was the need for a master suite. A steel surround doorway off the living room now gives way to a light-filled space with a zebra wood-ensconced bed that features a powered TV lift. Kristen picked out the silver sparkler light fixture that sits over a reading chair in the corner and diaphanous shades from IKEA layer over the sliding door to the yard. Finally, one of Repp’s subtle, yet spectacular touches is a narrow window of four-inch-wide stacked glass that illuminates the room with diffused light. ▶





**CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT**  
The patio is accessible from the master bedroom; A waterspout in the ceiling fills the bathtub below; Steel cylinders hold stands of pedalarthus; A chain guides water runoff from the roof to the ground.  
**CENTER** The hallway combines sleek glass, polished cement floors and block walls.







“When the sun comes over the house, the light that comes through the glass is unbelievable,” he says. “It sparkles like a ring.”

The master bath is the envy of any spa, in the same green tile as the patio. Contemporary sinks sit atop a zebra wood counter topped with glass. The tub is filled, dramatically, from a waterspout in the ceiling and a tiny window opens to provide the ambient waterfall sounds from the patio. “This is my little mini spa,” says Kristen. “I spend a lot of time here.”

It is truly fun to seek out the skillful touches Repp and his wife have added throughout the home. Indeed, the renovation project gave them the chance to work together, melding his vision with her eclectic style. They were able to finish it before the wedding, even holding their rehearsal dinner at the home. “It made us stronger,” says Kristen. “It was such a pleasant experience. I’m looking forward to my life with him.”

Repp’s “man-den” holds his turntables and DJ equipment (his other passion), and doubles as a hip dance space for weekend parties. It even has a futuristic keg to really get the party started. “We’ve had 300 people in here!” Kristen says. Across the hall is the bathroom that Kristen helped decorate with serene periwinkle floor tiles on the wall, smooth cocoa paint and modern chrome fixtures.

The upstairs quarters boasts two guest rooms, an office and bathroom. It is in one of these rooms that the element of function turns into art. A desk alcove in the first bedroom is a structural steel pop-out. The large metal bolts form a visual arc around the desk, providing a showpiece for the room. The other bedroom has an adjacent narrow balcony and gate that opens for a drop-off into the rectangular pool below. No need for a diving board here.

More than anything, the home is a testament to what is possible in this hidden pocket of

**ABOVE** The second-story deck overlooks the pool.

Tucson and how heavily Repp is invested in the neighborhood’s success. He has built a cluster of homes around his own and plans five more in the future. He also serves as the neighborhood association’s president.

“He’s really increasing homeowner pride,” says Charles Albanese, UA Dean of Architecture and Landscape Architecture, who taught Repp and seeks him out now and then for advice. Repp built a home for Albanese’s daughter and also helped him with his own home. “But he’s also substantially increasing value,” adds Albanese.

“He has raised the spirits of the people in his neighborhood.” **HG**