

Home is where the Art is

By Shannon Linden



photos: Keith Anderson

If Italy is a country synonymous with romance, it's no surprise a young Yvonne Reddick fell in love on her first visit.

One look at the Old World paintings and sculptures of the Renaissance and Baroque periods and she was smitten — with a passion to paint.

"After university I hitch-hiked around Europe. I don't know if I should admit that now," the Kamloops artist laughs.

"When I saw Michelangelo and Caravaggio, I wept. Something in me called and I knew someday I just had to paint."

But it would be many years, a fulfilling teaching career, and the raising of a family before Reddick would heed the call and take up the brush.

"I was busy being a mom and teaching at Kamloops Christian School, both of which were arenas for creativity," she explains. Reddick found artistic fulfillment in the kitchen, baking pies and cakes with her children and in the classroom, developing lessons.

"Back then, my only experience with paint was rolling my kitchen wall with colour," she grins.

For Reddick, home and art have always been connected. The two are intertwined, representing what she values most: soulful places where creativity and love may blossom.

As her children grew, eventually moving to the

coast to pursue artistic endeavors, Reddick's own life evolved. As her art career was taking off, she found herself settling down alone.

She knew it was time to embrace big changes, starting with a move to some place smaller. The sizeable heritage house in which she'd raised her family was simply too much for her new lifestyle, though she still longed for something with character.

"I've always valued old," she explains. "I wanted a place that my adult kids could call home when they came to visit and something that I could afford by myself as I made the switch to an art career." Not to mention a house that was easier to manage, leaving Reddick more time to focus on her work.

"I'm in favour of downsizing," she says. "It's time for North Americans to live smaller. This house is so much greener and it's downtown. I can walk everywhere!"

At 1,100 square feet, her 1912 heritage home is more cottage than mansion, but it suits Reddick — herself a petite but striking presence — perfectly. Like its owner, the house exudes a timeless elegance. Warm and welcoming, comfortable and down to earth, it's a classic beauty.

The original exterior brick has been dressed in modern day paint but the front door, simple in style, is reminiscent of earlier days. Made of warm wood, a retro rectangle of opaque glass decorates its center.



Left: Yvonne Reddick takes advantage of the natural light in a former porch that serves as her home studio. Above: Rich colours and an inviting, old-fashioned style bed contribute to the restful ambience in the guest room. Right: Beautiful tile work and stylish fixtures give the wash-room a spa-like atmosphere.



To the left of the hallway entrance is a guest room so quaint that visitors might be tempted not to pause in the doorway, but to immediately step into the simply, yet stylishly, decorated bedroom, place their suitcases down and ready themselves for a pleasant stay.

Follow the short hallway a little further and you'll happen upon one of the highlights of the home: the bathroom. While it's the only facility in the house, an opportunity to enjoy the spa-like serenity would be worth a wait outside the door.

Thoughtfully designed and remodeled, there isn't much left from 1912, but the décor is tasteful, predominantly neutral tan and bright white in colour. A furniture-style vanity, with its sensually curved counter top, delicate drawers, and square legs, sits center stage. A large soaker tub balanced on old-fashioned legs occupies one corner, while in the other, a huge, walk-in shower sporting dual heads is tiled floor-to-ceiling in bright, clean white. Decidedly feminine, yet not fussy, the bathroom combines modern day functionality with elegant old-style charm.

The fir floors throughout the home glow with the worn-in look of well-walked wood.

"Previous owners took the floors out, refinished them, and put them back in," Reddick explains.

Original radiator heaters add more than shapely aesthetics to each room: they provide a cozy feel.

"I love the way they look," Reddick says, "But I really like the warmth. Radiant heat is lovely and so moist. Thankfully, a plumber who knows what he's doing services them once a year. He came with the house!"

A recessed, retro-style sliding door framed in wood and designed in opaque glass (much like the front door inset) cleverly separates the cozy dining/living room from the hallway.

Filled with a mix of old and modern furniture, the living room is relaxed and welcoming as Reddick explains that she had more fun decorating this house than her previous heritage home.

"I'm being more eclectic this time," she says.

One of Reddick's own paintings hangs above the sofa. A gorgeous grouping of pears (a fruit Reddick likens to the beauty of the female form), the work glows with an ethereal depth. The colour is rich and intense, the composition sensuous.

She proudly points out a breath-stealing painting by renowned Canadian artist (and Kamloops resi-



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