

# take me to the mother side

A two-storey infill does double-duty as a private retreat and play space for the grandkids

By Alex Bozickovic  
Photos by Sean Galbraith

When there's an architect in the family, it helps if everyone gets along; even better when your styles are in sync. Julia Knezic and her mother, Susan Farkas, clearly have an enviable bond. The evidence: Farkas's new, 200-square-metre home, designed by Knezic. The narrow infill, clad in ipe wood and steel siding, is tucked between two hulking Edwardians in Roncesvalles. Knezic owns one of them.

The family moved here in 2007, and before the neighbouring house sold, Farkas took the opportunity to knit her clan more tightly together by purchasing it. The crumbling structure was razed, and she commissioned her architect/daughter to design a new two-storey home. Three years and two grandchildren later, Farkas is now comfortably settled in the compact, contemporary space, which is open and airy enough to host the whole family. "It was a one-to-one hourly exchange of babysitting for design," Knezic jokes.

The architectural language creates a sense of space, with three-metre-high ceilings on the main floor, concrete floors (warmed by radiant heating) throughout and a classic open plan. That expansiveness is partially achieved by the placement of the stair. Hugging the northern wall, the Knezic-designed steel and maple structure, with its singular support and see-through glass rail, affords views of the whole first floor. Off the entry, a galley-style kitchen by Bulthaup conceals appliances and acres of storage behind matte-lacquered wall and base units. The dining/living room is open and leads to a shared backyard with a stone patio. →

