



Styling not to sell but stay



After moving to Austin, 'Sell This House' host redesigns a home that an owner plans to keep

By Michele Chan Santos

SPECIAL TO THE AMERICAN-STATESMAN

Roger Hazard, the genial, well-muscled host of the A&E television series "Sell This House," transformed a contemporary home in East Austin into a magically appealing mixture of rural-meets-urban, a combination of modern design and "Little House on the Prairie."

This design project is not a one-time Austin gig for Hazard. He moved to Austin in September and now lives in a downtown condominium.

The move doesn't represent an end to Hazard's work on the Emmy-nominated show. He'll continue to host "Sell This House," flying from Austin to the various cities when the show films.

"I grew up in Texas," Hazard says. He studied environmental design and landscape architecture at Texas A&M University and was a garden designer in Houston. "But I've lived in New York for the last 17 years. We've done the show the last eight years. I could live anywhere, but I have a lot of family and friends in Texas, and a lot of my childhood friends have relocated to Austin. There's a vibe to Austin that's very unique. I've gone to 200 cities over the years with the show and I really felt Austin had a lot to offer."

Right now, the show is on hiatus (they

See **DESIGN**, G4

Internet entrepreneur Chris Stout grew up with antiques but likes the modern style of his Agave neighborhood. TV designer Roger Hazard integrated the two in his redesign of Stout's home.

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'Sell This House'

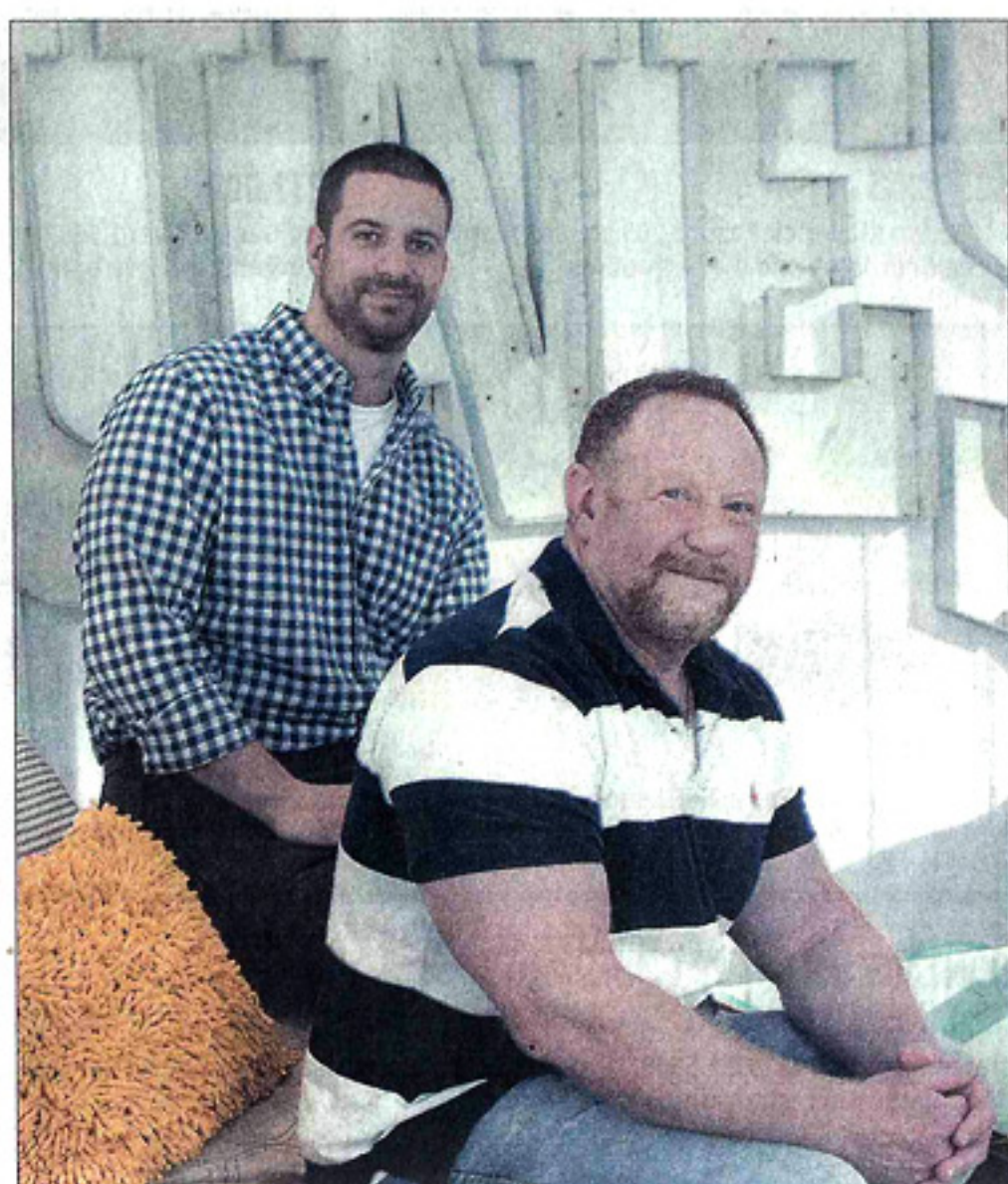
7, 7:30, 8, 8:30, 9 and 9:30 a.m. Saturday A&E

The 7:30 a.m. episode this Saturday will feature a house in Austin.



"There's a vibe to Austin that's very unique," says A&E host Roger Hazard, seated at right, who now makes the city his home and took on the redesign of Chris Stout's house here. An eclectic mix of antiques and modern furnishings stand out against the crisp white board-and-batten walls and white Venetian blinds, above. A bathroom gets extra storage from a repurposed wine crate, above right.

Deborah Cannon photos
AMERICAN-STATESMAN



DESIGN: Old and new blend in modern home's farmhouse style

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will probably start filming again in January) so Hazard took time to do this home makeover in East Austin.

When you walk into 7308 Annette Cove, your eye is drawn to a tangerine-colored piano next to an artfully decorated large drum that lights up from inside. The cabinets on the kitchen island are bright green. In the living room, which is in an open space connected to the kitchen and dining room, a huge antique sign spells out "DUNES." Cowhides are scattered on the floor.

"I really wanted it to look like a barn that had been converted into a contemporary house," Hazard says. He succeeded, and he did all the interior changes in two weeks (plus one additional week to shop for furniture and accessories). Because of his experience on the show, Hazard is used to working with many contractors and doing things as quickly and thoroughly as possible, he says.

Although this house's transformation is not currently scheduled to be on television, Hazard's work on the house is part of what he sees as his next design phase: instead of styling to sell, styling to stay.

On "Sell This House," Hazard and his crew style homes in a neutral way, so they appeal to as many buyers as possible. Hazard's new plan — and possibly his next move on television, as part of a spinoff series — is helping homeowners who want to stay in their homes but need them restyled to better fit their lifestyle and personality.

The homeowner of Hazard's latest remodeling project, client Chris Stout, is the principal of DocWorthy, an online community for doctors and professional advisers. Stout bought his home in the modern-design Agave neighborhood in 2008.

"I love super-modern design, but I grew up in a house full of antiques," Stout says. "I like modernism, but it isn't all that I like."

The design project gave his home "a little bit of modernism, a little bit of antique," he says. "There's a definite style to it. Roger pulled me out of my comfort zone."

Stout was quick to point out, though, that Hazard has an eye for good deals and for using inexpensive items in creative ways. The whimsical artwork on the stairway wall is paint-by-numbers pieces bought online. The handsome dresser in the second-floor guest bedroom is a \$60 find from Salvation Army, and the smaller desk in the office was found at the dump. Many affordably priced IKEA items judiciously were used throughout the house, including the red-and-white checked curtains in the office.

One of the most striking changes made during the renovation was to the walls. Chad Golson, the owner of 5G Contracting, applied lattice — thin wood pieces — to the walls, giving them a board-and-batten look. A style of siding in which wide, vertical boards alternate with narrow wooden strips, board and batten is common in antique homes and gives Stout's house a farmhouse air. Most of the interior walls were painted white by CertaPro Painters.

Golson also cased some of the windows in wood. Stout didn't have any blinds or curtains on his windows. Theresa Heitmeier, sales manager with 3 Day Blinds, brought in 2-inch white wooden blinds with decorative fabric tape to give the windows a bright look. This way, Stout can have the natural light he enjoys but also can close the blinds for privacy.

Touring the house after the renovation, Heitmeier says, "I am so in love with everything that Roger did. I've been in design for 17 years and I have so much appreciation for him and his vision. It's really brought a continuity to the house."

The stairs also underwent a dramatic transformation. The open staircase consisted of bamboo-and-steel steps with a black steel railing. The stairs and railing were painted white, then each step was wrapped in jute fiber. Robert Peoples of Floor Coverings International changed the flooring.

It took nine hours to attach the jute to the stairs. The new steps are safer, Stout says. His old steps were slippery and he had to warn guests to be careful of them; the dog slipped on them, too. The brown jute against the white color looks very striking.

B & W Certified Lighting Designs of New Braunfels created the custom lighting, and JB Window Works, a window cleaning service, made the large windows sparkle. The new lighting and the cleaner windows made



Vintage fabric for the kitchen curtains was only \$5 a yard at a quilting store.

A home transformed

Here's a room-by-room breakdown of Hazard's home makeover:

Kitchen/dining room: The kitchen window is decorated with vintage fabric from a quilting store for \$5 a yard. The bright orange piano next to the dining table is an instant eye-catcher and conversation piece. The piano used to be dark-colored and hidden under the stairway. Now it's very visible and also works as a place to put a wine bottle and glasses. The bathroom by the kitchen features Pottery Barn wine crates painted white and mounted on the wall. They serve as a way to cleverly store rolls of toilet paper.

Living room: A huge sign saying "DUNES" is the focal point of this room; Stout and Hazard found it at an antique mall. The stereo and other electronic equipment is hidden at the back of a cabinet. A wooden table that used to sit in Stout's backyard was changed into a coffee table by cutting off a portion of the legs. The furniture was reoriented to encourage people to chat and mingle while in the living room; before, all the seats were arranged around the TV.

Office: Stout works from home and frequently has an employee over to help him. His friend used to have to work on a computer in the dining room and he and Stout would shout to each other in the stairwell, or go up and down the stairs, when they needed to collaborate. The new office has two desks, one for each person. It also has barn-style doors, hanging paintings and a glass jar of Stout's old Hot Wheels toy cars for atmosphere.

Guest bedroom: The black-and-white motif of this room is carried out through the checked curtains, the black-and-white photographs of the African countryside that hang above the bed, and a framed drawing, already owned by Stout, hanging on the wall opposite the window.

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the interior of the home seem brighter and more welcoming.

Stout is thrilled with how the project turned out. His newly remodeled home "feels very Austin to me," Stout says. "It combines what I like from more sophisticated settings with a more antique Midwestern style. Austin is eclectic, pretension-free and comfortable."

If you're interested in learning more about Hazard's work or want to ask him a design question, check out www.designhazards.com. He answers reader questions in his blog posts.