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## Bright Outlook

R.B. Schwarz Inc.

**THE OWNERS OF THIS 1939** home situated in Shaker Heights Country Club had been searching for a house to remodel. “The home had been vacant for three years,” says Robert Schwarz, owner of R.B. Schwarz Inc. “And my client wanted to redo a house.”

An extensive project in itself, the whole-home remodel was also met with some major challenges. “The home hadn’t had anything done to it extensively since the ’60s, and it all had to be done at once,” says Schwarz. Anxious to get moved in, the homeowners hoped for a tight timeline and, while work continues in other areas of the home, the stunning kitchen, library and first floor renovations have been completed.

The design and renovations of this French colonial struck a balance between restoration and modernization. “The owner really wanted to restore some of the classical details but also incorporate some features of what would be a modern lifestyle,” explains project architect Catherine Middleton, AIA of Pepper Pike.

The existing home had a gracious floor plan and some wonderful, large window areas, which were improved with the

renovation. Portions of the first floor that had previous renovations not original to the home’s design were removed such as the kitchen and adjacent areas,” Middleton says.

Three rooms in total were dismantled to open up a large, 500-square-foot space for the expansive kitchen and living area. “We just created a giant space,” says Schwarz, “which we then turned into a family room with a direct-vent fireplace and a large section of built-in cabinets.”

The space then flows right into the kitchen. “A beautiful island is right there with Calacatta marble and a little area for seating. Then you have your main kitchen run and it flows into the butler’s pantry, which features another big run of wall cabinets,” details Schwarz. The kitchen cabinets were custom-fabricated and the space also features Sub-Zero appliances, including a bar refrigerator and wine cooler, a Wolf range and hood, a Shaw farmhouse sink and handcrafted Waterstone faucet and white oak flooring.

The first-floor back porch renovation took on a complete reimaging. “At the end of the day, the homeowner did not want it to look like a porch,

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she wanted it to look like a library,” says Schwarz. “We built shelves on three sides of the room, added a direct-vent fireplace, equipped the room with new lighting and installed a new 12-foot Marvin sliding glass door.”

The original slate flooring was preserved, and grand glass pocket doors were repaired to open up the library to the newly renovated living room. “This home is now a lighter, brighter space with new LED lighting and a fresh palette of neutral colors, which contributes to the elegance and continuity throughout,” says Middleton. — KK

### NUTS & BOLTS

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**PROJECT FOCUS:**  
 Kitchen, Library and  
 First Floor

