

# Wonder Walls

A 1916 WALLINGFORD BUNGALOW NOW SPORTS SPACE-SMART SURFACES



The basement's new laundry room features a sewing section and more storage space hidden by chalkboard-and-cork-clad sliding barn doors. Opposite page: CAST architecture's Matt Hutchins next to his funky but functional shoe wall (the bench visible behind him hides a handy laundry chute).

Many a footwear fancier has fantasized of having a closet dedicated to just shoes. Wallingford residents Noelle Noble and Scott Randall dreamed one better, they have an entire shoe wall. ✱ Although she denies wanting an *objet d'art* display for her shoes, Noble admits that she shudders at hidden clutter. After deciding against adding a story to their one-story, 900-square-foot 1916 Craftsman, the couple—she is a

technical editor at Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center and a sewing enthusiast, he works at Microsoft and is an accomplished printmaker—hired Matt Hutchins of Fremont's CAST architecture to reengineer their dwelling. One creative, space-saving notion: much-loved, often-used items, say shoes, would be out in the open. The floor-to-ceiling fir wall comes with cubbies enough to hold 88 pairs. An unforeseen

benefit? "By keeping them accessible and obvious, we tend to repair and maintain the shoes we have," Noble says. Her only criticism? Her boots aren't cubby size. ✱ As well as a bringing a bigger master bedroom and a custom-built, Stickley-inspired oak media cabinet into the living room, the remodeling project brought impressive basement upgrades. Hutchins and crew dug down to create a fun, functional basement complete

with a sewing area, powder room and laundry room. (A clever CAST invention is a built-in bench upstairs with a hidden chute emptying into the laundry room.) Another artsy surface with a purpose is the laundry room's storage wall hidden behind sliding chalkboard-and-cork-clad barn doors. Now, while the adults do laundry, the couple's 10-year-old daughter, Claire, can doodle out masterpieces or pin up

fabric swatches for the chic clothing she wants her mom to design for her. To fit the family's home and lifestyle, Hutchins says, the team worked hard to "take the mundane considerations and make them extraordinary." The key to working with small spaces, he adds, is to make every inch count and to customize as much as possible so that the owners will never want to leave. We think mission accomplished.

## team >>

**Architect:** Matt Hutchins, CAST architecture, 4216 Sixth Ave. NW, Seattle; 206.256.9886; castarchitecture.com  
**Cost:** \$7,523, for the approximately 8-foot-high by 12-foot-long shoe wall and built-in bench/laundry chute. \$5,201, for the laundry room storage wall, including shelving and barn doors.