

"Art is what you can get away with."

So reads one of several framed Andy Warhol quotes that grace a wall in Ray and Ang Burgess' living room. Of them all, that quip perhaps best defines what makes Ray tick.

Ray created the plans for the couple's home at 340 - 24th Street. Its long, narrow construction is reminiscent of the design he fashioned on a larger scale for National Hockey League player agent Darryl Wolski, a house built at 101 Fraser Crescent and profiled in the Brandon Sun just two weeks ago. The fact that Wolski's abode is much-maligned - deemed the ugliest house in Brandon by some -

leaves the 27-year old draftsman perplexed.

"To me, I don't think it's anything out of the norm," he said of both Wolski's place and his own. "It's just time for something different in the city."

The difference at the Burgess residence starts right at the curb. A wooden pathway leads to the front door. There's a stone water feature alongside the bridge-like entrance, and the home boasts a cleverly patterned brick accent on the front of its adobe-toned walls. But that clay-tinted exterior caused Ray much consternation when it was

first applied.

"The colour outside was a gamble - it came from a picture I saw in a magazine," Ray recalled. "When they were painting it, I..." and here he trailed off, grimaced, and put his head in his hands.

"It was orange. It was so orange! I thought we're going to have to change it."

That reaction is not terribly unusual for Ray, who's been designing for J & G Homes since he did his high-school co-op there 10 years ago. He's a self-admitted colour-phobe who's much more comfortable with neutral shades.

"With white, there's no commitment," he admitted with a laugh. "I'm really plain, believe it or not. Colour scares me."

"That's why I made him paint this wall green," said Ang, indicating the entrance wall that wraps around into the kitchen.

"Yup - the only reason this wall is green is because of Ang," Ray agreed.

The Burgess home is only 600 square feet, but the couple has made much of their limited space. In the living room, a big, bold storage unit/TV stand sits flat against the south wall.

Facing it, there's a streamlined

NO PLACE LIKE HOME

Simplicity and smooth lines at 340-24th Street



Home owner Ray Burgess is a self-described colour-phobe. The orange on the front of his home was a leap of faith for the 27-year-old draftsman. » Colin Corneau / Brandon Sun



Ordinary is not in Burgess' vocabulary. The rectangular tiles in the kitchen are installed vertically rather than horizontally, for example.

» Colin Corneau/Brandon Sun



olive-green sectional under the row of Warhol witticisms. Despite the tapered nature of the dwelling, there's plenty of room to move around – that is, it seems much more expansive than it is.

The story's the same in the kitchen, where the sleek black cupboards seem to melt into the walls, again giving the illusion of greater area. The rectangular tiles in the kitchen are installed vertically rather than horizontally – another striking and uncommon touch that still doesn't meet the creator's expectations.

"It's not as random as I would like,"

Ray said.

In fact, after three years in the house, despite compliments from visitors, he remains dissatisfied with much of it. He views as flaws what others see as attributes.

"I hate the stucco," he said of the exterior finish. "I don't like the texture. I don't really like the look of it."

Then the whole story comes out. It's just too ordinary for someone of Ray's taste.

"Everybody does stucco," he said with a rueful smile.

There are some things he likes, though. The home office above the garage is his favourite place.

"It's like going to the cottage," he said of his workspace.

There's an outdoor hot tub just off the kitchen, and an avante-garde backyard fireplace that appears to be made of steel.

"I don't ever want to move because of the fireplace," said Ang.

But the couple has discussed relocating for a variety of reasons, among them because Ray said he needs "a new proj-

ect."

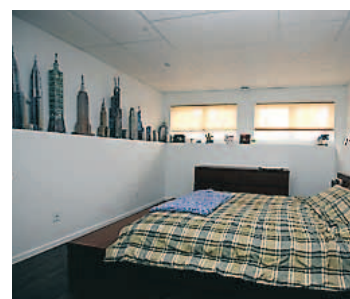
"We've talked about putting a copper trough down the stairs – sort of a weeping wall," Ray said of the entranceway. "And if we do stay, this wall – the green one – is getting re-done in brick."

"But it gets to a point where it's easier to start from scratch." entranceway. "And if we do stay, this wall – the green one – is getting re-done in brick."

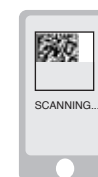
"But it gets to a point where it's easier to start from scratch."

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