

## MANSION



**MARLON BLACKWELL  
FAYETTEVILLE, ARK.  
2,500 SQ. FT.**



courtyard secured behind a gate so he can keep an eye out for deliveries.

Mr. Wilkinson says the same sense of connection but separation also prevails in the main interior living space of the house, where each member of the family has staked out their own area of a large open room. There is a breakfast nook off the kitchen, an elevated bar with stools, a long dining room table, leather chairs by the window, a big sofa and a library.

The current crisis also has reinforced the importance of flexible space, says Janet Bloomberg, principal at KUBE Architecture in Washington, D.C.

When she doubled the size of her 1,000-square-foot Midcentury Modern house last year, she added what she thought would be three bedrooms, including a master suite. That suite is now a living space where she, her husband and their 12-year-old son hang out together, but it is also the backup quarantine room, where someone could stay if they get sick. It has a microwave, a coffee maker, a refrigerator and a bathroom.

There has been a lot of room-shuffling since the crisis at Max Strang's 2,800-square-foot house in Sarasota, Fla. The principal of Strang Design has taken over what was the family den for his home office, while his 15-year-old son commandeered the garage, his 17-year-old daughter stays in her dark bedroom and his wife uses the master bedroom. At night they all commune in his office, which turns into a family room.

What he has learned is that it isn't necessary to have a large house to accommodate different people's needs at once. It is more important to think through how everyone can be separate and together at different times.



Marlon Blackwell sees a need for a small separate structure with a cot and a study where a family member can get some privacy. His covered outdoor kitchen is a keeper as a place to socialize at a safe distance.

TIMOTHY HURSELEY (3); MARK JACKSON/CHROMA (PORTRAIT)

## Homeowners Will Have More Choices in How to Create a Grand—And Clean—Entrance



**Serena & Lily jute border rug // \$48**

By MELISSA FELDMAN

Le Corbusier's fixation on modernity and cleanliness is trending as designers reimagine residential life post-Covid. His maxim "A house is a machine for living in," is particularly apt now.

The Swiss architect's iconic Villa Savoye, an international-style home he designed in 1929, merged modernist materials like steel, concrete and glass, with ceramic bath fixtures and a wash basin in the entrance hall.

Miami architect Rene Gonzalez underscores Le Corbusier's industrial style as a response to the last century's pandemic, the Spanish Flu, while New York architect Michael K. Chen is similarly fascinated with the sink in the villa's entry. "Its equal parts titillating, an art installation and sanitary device," Mr. Chen says.

Homeowners, co-op boards and renters alike are experiencing unease regarding sanitation and the transition from public to private space. With state-of-the-art medical devices, touchless technology and wellness tips, here are some designer recommendations to help envision a new entrance to the home.

"There is indeed a return to ancient traditions," says the Parisian in-



**Crate & Barrel's Batten storage bench and panel set // \$1,147**

terior designer Charles Zana pointing to the example of Japan's genkan, where shoes and outdoor wear are removed before entering a home.

"I believe they will now be making a comeback as we are forced to change our habits," he says. He stresses having vestibules and personal lockers in the entrance to store outdoor garb.

Brooklyn architect Frederick Tang, known for warm, yet pared-down domestic spaces, is mindful of a heightened response to clothes and hygiene.

"We will see more mudrooms that elide with laundry functions. The utility sink for washing will also enjoy a second life as a hand-wash station, perhaps with motion sensor plumbing fixtures for touchless use," he

says. He can even envision storage outside the front door. Inside, the washers and dryers could be made suitable for small loads cleaned in short cycles.

Mr. Tang's director of design, Barbara Reyes, offers simple additions like automated soap dispensers and medical-grade shoe-sanitizing stations with UV rays used to disinfect communal items and contaminated areas.

"Creating a sense of arrival has always been key," says designer Christine Gachot, principal and co-founder of Gachot Studios. She and her husband John are immersed in hospitality projects such as the recently opened Shinola Hotel in Detroit. "If custom millwork is out of the question, I would consider an interesting bin with a lid for clothing and a bench for sitting and taking off shoes with storage underneath. There's no need to reinvent the world here," she says.

Robin Standefer, co-founder of the New York firm Roman & Williams, champions traditional rituals surrounding wellness and home care. Along with Stephen Alesch,



**CleanSlate UV sanitizer for phones // \$5,999**

the couple are known for their furniture emporium as well as idiosyncratic interiors for Ace Hotels.

Ms. Standefer recommends natural-fiber door mats, slippers, stone floors and anti-bacterial medicinals such as tea tree oil for the body and for cleaning the home.

Boris Vervoordt, who with his father Axel, oversee an art, interiors and antiques empire outside Antwerp, also insists "natural materials are always anti-bacterial."

The senior Vervoordt's interiors are internationally recognized for spaces that embrace minimalism interspersed with artifacts.

"We never liked composites or plastics," he says. The Vervoordt aesthetic, emphasizes comfort and includes informal entrance halls,

with elegant washrooms in proximity.

"I would rather imagine an intelligent mudroom as a physical and mental portal to the home," says Kulapat Yantrasast, founder and principal of WHY, an interdisciplinary design firm based in Los Angeles.

Mr. Yantrasast's future-forward stance involves promising new products, such as nanocoatings that could expand antimicrobial resistance on surfaces and UVC lights that could sterilize an entire room. But any such practical amenities, the architect warns, has to be installed carefully.

"An intelligent mudroom in the wrong hands," he says, "can look like the TSA checkpoint at the airport."



**PathO3Gen Solutions footwear sanitizing station // \$22,542**



**Sterling's latitude utility sink // \$289**

CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT: SERENA & LILY; CRATE AND BARREL; CLEANSLATE UV; STERLING; PATHO3GEN SOLUTIONS FOOTWEAR SANITIZING STATION