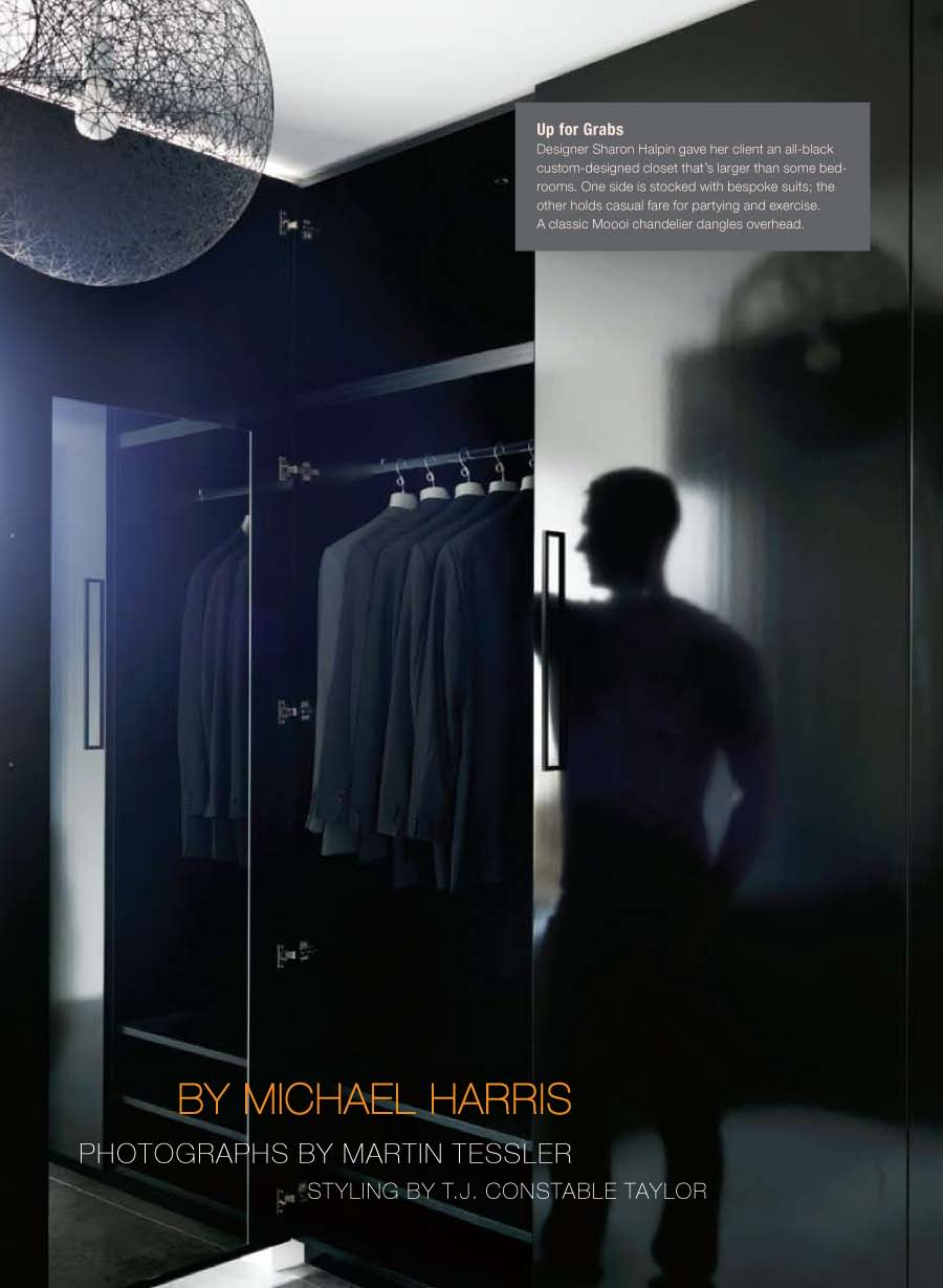


Gentleman's Choice

A Yaletown
warehouse
becomes one
man's personal
Shangri-La.





Up for Grabs

Designer Sharon Halpin gave her client an all-black custom-designed closet that's larger than some bedrooms. One side is stocked with bespoke suits; the other holds casual fare for partying and exercise. A classic Moooi chandelier dangles overhead.

BY MICHAEL HARRIS

PHOTOGRAPHS BY MARTIN TESSLER

STYLING BY T.J. CONSTABLE TAYLOR

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There's a new game being played among a set of Vancouver's professional, 30-something men. A game of exuberant one-upmanship that leaves petty sportscar rivalries in the dust.

It's a woman, though, who's become a master of this game. Designer Sharon Halpin knows several of the boys in question, knows that their lavish parties win them bragging rights, and that they're inspecting each other's marble bathtubs, frowning at the size of rooftop bars and geeking out over computerized lighting systems. So, when Halpin found herself working with another mid-30s bachelor who had conquered his professional field, she was prepared to raise the ante.

The client had purchased a 1,400-square-foot condo in the Murchies building, a 1912 warehouse that's now a Yaletown residential icon with heritage status. That status prevents its exterior from being manipulated, but indoors Halpin had free rein. The condo was a functional two-bedroom place that was "fine," Halpin says with a shrug. "But we aren't in the business of just fine."

The walls came down, for starters. The second modest bedroom became a walk-in closet that most men wouldn't know what to do with. "He's got two lives, you see, and therefore needs double the wardrobe. He



Prince of Hides

The bedroom goes masculine-luxe (top) with a Brazilian cowhide rug, a custom leather headboard and rich Frette sheets. Planes of polished concrete unite rooms (above).

What's Cooking?

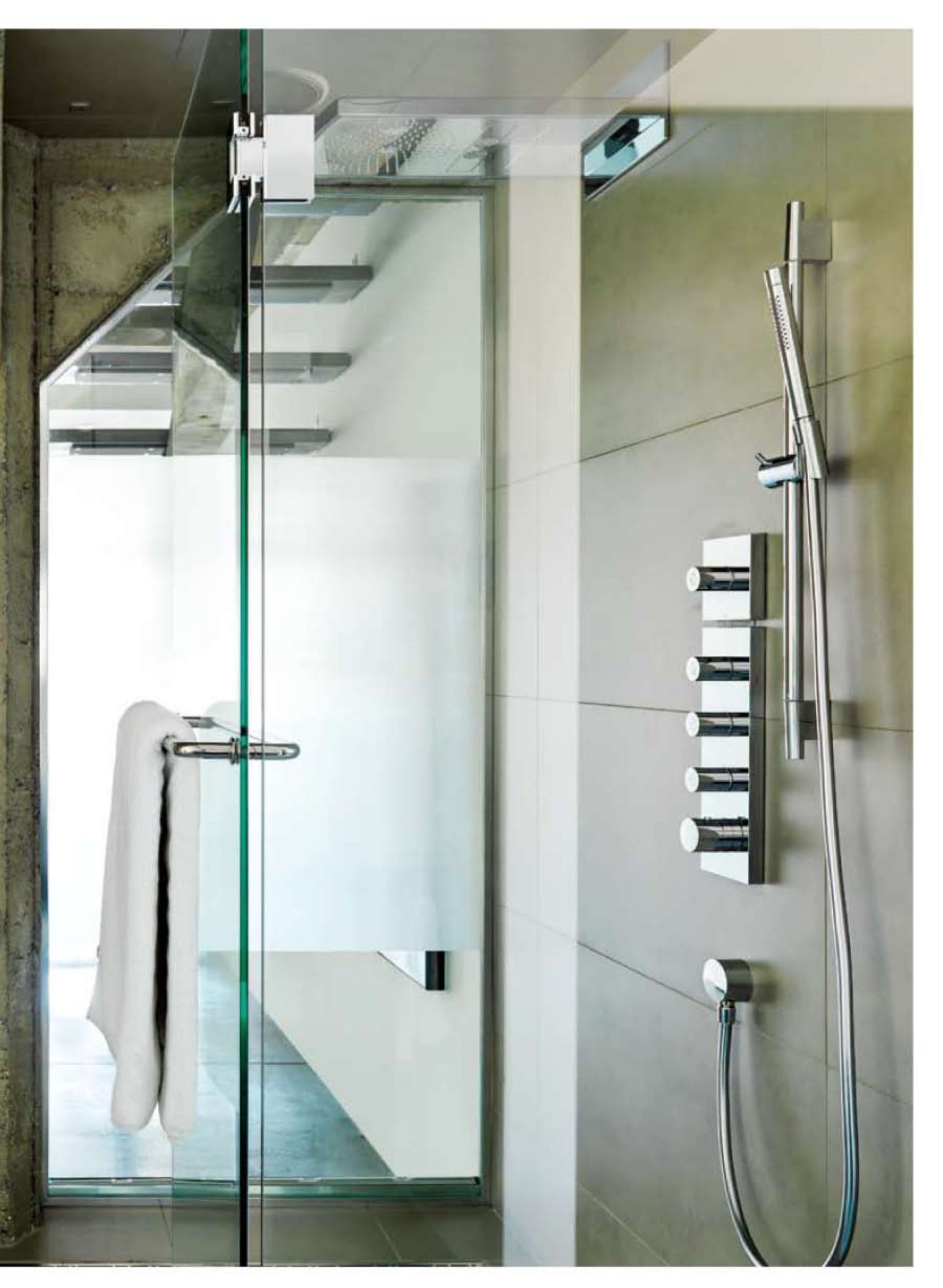
The slick luxury of Miele appliances and La Palma bar stools gets warmed up by touches of red resin in a vase and platter by Martha Sturdy. Concrete countertops tie together concrete flooring and concrete beams up top. Front and centre: a black "Eve" faucet by KWC.



Wet & Wild

Bathing beauties enjoy a glass-walled chamber equipped with an Axor "Shower Heaven." Water from multiple jets funnels down an LED-lit drain.

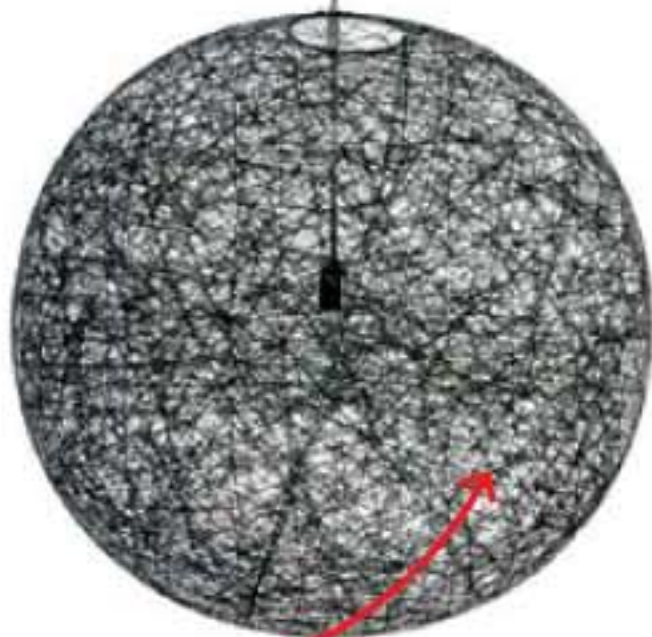






Stay Strong

A solid masculine energy asserts itself in (clockwise from above) a custom metal staircase, the dressing room's high-gloss closets and a metallic black countertop in the bathroom.



Get The Look

The **Random Light** by Dutch design firm Moooi is made from a web of fibreglass soaked in epoxy resin. Use this black version to add a touch of lightness and subtlety without detracting from a dark palette.

works hard and plays hard, so on one side of the closet there are all his Armani suits and on the other, athletic gear, T-shirts, jeans."

The party really gets going in the master bathroom, where a roomy shower seems to invite company. A 32-inch Shower Heaven head by Axor handles one side while a waterfall and rain shower dominate the other; to suit the client's height, Halpin also had body jets installed. On the floor, a drain channel by Arco ignites with blue LED light when it senses water. Throughout the loft-style space, LED channels and strips (fixed into stairs and beneath the kitchen island for a hovering effect) provide an atmospheric alternative to standard overhead lighting schemes.

And atmosphere is certainly paramount here. The client was explicit that Halpin was to use no wood in this space, which resulted in a strikingly specific palette. Concrete became the material of choice—the 400-kilogram concrete countertop required eight men and a pulley system to hoist it up seven storeys, and a more-than-21-metre tube was used to channel concrete from a truck parked on Davie Street for those raw, charcoal-tinted floors.

The sleek, monochrome effect was extended by Halpin's decision to banish baseboards and ceiling trim, which left all corners refreshingly clean. Even the flourishes here tend toward the metallic: examples include a custom chin-up bar and a dancer's pole in the living room (which can be handily removed when parents come for brunch).

The dominating palette of greys and whites (painstakingly selected so they lock into a singular masculine impression) is offset by hits of texture, not colour: a custom suede sectional, a luxurious silk area rug.

Every point in this highly considered residence, then, is designed to inspire delight and a spa-level escape from the messy real world. And maybe, when friends come by, it's designed to inspire a touch of jealousy, too. **CONDO**