



**ABOVE** Budget-friendly hard maple plywood is used to create various multi-functional storage and seating units.



**RIGHT** The studio collaborated with woodworker Matthew Van Sluytman, who fabricated the unique millwork.

Richmond Hill focus on just 730 square feet of premium space: the entryway and staircase, the kitchen and a dedicated playroom. "Rather than re-doing the entire house, we put all of the resources on these ground-floor areas for maximum impact," says Lam. The entrance, a triumphant mix of sleek lines and warm, cozy vibes, delights with an angular portal that mimics the shape of a house. A set of staggered, black-fronted cabinets offers hidden integrated storage. "We wanted the tall-to-short cascading design of the cabinets to resemble a family welcoming you as you entered," says Ho. "The contrasting black keeps the

scheme from feeling too childish."

Black touches continue in the kitchen where pendant lights, appliances and a laminate veneer on the built-in fridge add dimension to the otherwise pale backdrop. "We extended the plywood from floor to ceiling to make the kitchen seem taller and treated the windows as part of the cabinetry for an effect that hugs the room," says Ho. The capsule-shaped island, which features a base of movable storage trolleys, tightens the aesthetic by echoing the cabinets' curved, cut-out pulls and rounded tops.

In the playroom, vertically cut plywood slats with chamfered edges line the walls and

recast a once generic space as a never-ending fun zone with a healthy dose of hygge. "We very much like the playroom's coziness," says Lam. "It was a favourite spot for gathering and games during the pandemic lockdown." Throughout the space, colourful home furnishings and lighting, chosen by the owners Jessica Ho and Kenneth Wong, are perfect counterpoints to the neutral, yet not so muted background. Ho says, "It's like we set-designed a place to house all of their art, cute collectibles and graphic puzzles. The design is simply a reflection of the stuff they really like." It's also as fun as all get-out. CANALSIDE.STUDIO