



AT HOME

Pig in a box

Piggy soaps-on-a-rope (left) come from Bermuda, where they are scented with lime or bay rum. Shop Talk. Page C16.

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his blue heaven

A composer's renovated brick house in the South End is a symphony of vivid color and Modern Revival ideas



GLOBE STAFF PHOTO/DAVID CHEN

The view from the mezzanine: architect William Ruhl in the living room with Koeca, the homeowner's Akita (above). The house features a cobalt blue wall (right) that provides support to prop the formerly sagging floors.

PHOTO/ANTON GRASSL



By Robert Campbell
GLOBE CORRESPONDENT

The house was a wreck when Shafer bought it. The roof leaked, the floor joists sagged. The original construction was poor. The house was built in the 1890s as low-priced quarters, Shafer thinks, for people who provided services to the grander bowfronts of nearby Union Park. Shafer found an architect, Will Ruhl, and a contractor, Sea-Dar Enterprises. They restored the brick shell, then built what amounts to an entirely new house inside it.

The blue wall is the masterstroke that makes everything work. It's not only a visual accent but also a practical necessity. A foot-and-a-half thick, the wall provides support to prop the formerly sagging floors. At the same time it houses new heating and air conditioning ducts, new plumbing and wiring. It's the one-stop solution to half a dozen problems.

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