

## HELLO ALL!

Welcome to those who are exploring our pages for the first time, and welcome back to our loyal visitors. This month we are focusing on the beauty of well-loved homes and how the owners incorporate contemporary style into their century homes.

The mix of colors, textures, and patterns is popping up across the country, everywhere from apartments and mansions, to tiny microhomes. We explored these homes to provide you with the inspiration to create your own colorful haven.

We met with the ladies of *And Then We Tried*, the new lifestyle and design blog, for information on their favorite DIY projects, how to balance your day job with your dream job, and what they would like to “try” next!

Thanks for joining us this month!



COLLEEN KOWALSKI  
EDITOR

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### A POP OF COLOR

Create warm and welcoming spaces that the whole family will love.

### AND THEN WE TRIED

The Ladies of “And Then We Tried” share their favorite DIYs, what they are obsessing over at the moment, and why they decided to start a lifestyle blog!



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### PRETTY PATTERNS

Patterns are IN! Mix and match to design your perfect home!



# THE LADIES OF

# & THEN WE TRIED

Get your hammers, miter saws, and custom stains ready: there are three new do-it-yourselfers on the block. The ladies of the up-and-coming lifestyle blog, "And Then We Tried", sat down with COLLEEN KOWALSKI to discuss their new blog.

Photographs courtesy of: *And Then We Tried*



I walked up the driveway to Michelle Kowalski's home, passed the dying grass (her parents gifted her with a new lawn for her birthday, so naturally the old one had to be torched), and up to the large front porch where I was greeted by Freddie, the happiest Jack Russell mutt in the world, and George, a cat who looked like he wanted nothing more than to jump off Michelle's lap and run back inside the house.

Michelle was sitting on her front porch eating takeout Barrio tacos with a glass of pink wine, her meal of choice. Hannah Gierosky and her dog, Cricket, soon joined us in the feast. Once we had finished enjoying our tacos, we began discussing "And Then We Tried", the blog that Michelle, Hannah, and friend Robin Anderson began last March.

Michelle had previously run a similar blog titled "And Then I Tried" by herself, but sought the help of Robin and Hannah when she realized that she could not produce enough quality content on her own, as well as the desire to expand the blog's reach nationally.

Michelle and Hannah have been friends since sixth grade and lived together for three years. Robin and Michelle met while attending the University of Cincinnati's School of Design, Architecture, Art, and Planning (DAAP). Hannah and

Michelle now live in charming old houses in Lakewood, Ohio and Robin lives in Pasadena, California.

Creating a blog, especially a blog run by three ladies across the country, can be a difficult undertaking. Michelle, Hannah, and Robin all work traditional day jobs in between running a successful blog.

Although creating unique and interesting content to post three times a week can be difficult, Michelle says it is rewarding and allows them an excuse to continually fill their garages and basements with DIY projects.

Michelle says, "While it does take some time to get all the images and tutorials together, the content comes from things we're already doing. So we're already making our own headboards, or ripping out 100 ceilings, or hanging art in our stairs, so if we can document it a little bit and put it online maybe someone else will give it a try. I know I go online and look for tips and tutorials for most of my projects, so if I can contribute something helpful to the internet that will save someone else some time, that's a win."

Michelle hasn't actually ripped out 100 ceilings, but tearing out seven different layers of ceiling in her kitchen is basically 100 in her eyes. That is just



Michelle creates graphics for the blog, using her graphic design degree. She created this graphic to show which carpets look best with green velvet couches.

& THEN WE TRIED





Robin loves creating high-end looks for less. She used these wooden beads to create a decorative candle holder.

one of the projects she has finished in her charming old home.

In the first three months of living in her Lakewood home, she ripped out all of the carpet and stained the hardwood floors, painted the entire inside of the home, and removed Egyptian hieroglyphs and crystals from the house (don't ask). With so many home improvements, came just as many DIYs and easy fixes at which her friends and family marveled.

Hannah lives with her fiancé and their dog, Cricket. Since moving in, Hannah has been taking on DIY projects and upgrades. She recently installed a vent hood in their kitchen, created a hanging daybed for their front porch, and designed a beautiful gallery wall for their stairway.

Robin lives in a beautiful rental property in California with her boyfriend and their dog, Charlie. Robin loves to create pieces that fill her desire to own expensive furniture without spending the big bucks. Robin never shies away from the challenge to create high-end pieces such as her leather-tufted headboard, pressed flower art pieces, and decorative wooden candleholders. She

also took part in the "One Room Challenge" this past spring. She turned her outdoor patio into the perfect outdoor space, complete with viewing screen, handmade corn hole, and a chalkboard grill menu.

In addition to sharing DIY projects and home renovation before and after's, the ladies share things they are "obsessed with" each week. "And Then We Tried Obsessions" documents the trends, products, movies, and podcasts that

Michelle, Hannah, and Robin cannot get enough of that week. Past obsessions include: Michelle's obsession with Korean beauty routines, Hannah's obsession with true crime podcasts, and Robin's obsession with embroidered heels.

Starting a blog can be daunting, but Michelle has some advice to those who are thinking about creating a blog of their own. "Write about something you like or something you think is missing from the Internet. Other people are probably searching for the same things you are and coming up empty, so create the content you want to read" she says.

It's safe to say that we are "obsessed" with "And Then We Tried" and cannot wait to see what these ladies try next!

## CREATE THE CONTENT YOU WANT TO READ

~ Michelle Kowalski

# FAVORITE "TRY" AT A DIY



### MICHELLE KOWALSKI

#### FEATHER FINISH CONCRETE OVER TILE COUNTERTOPS

"I lived with these gross, one-inch white tile countertops for over a year before I got around to attempting a DIY feather finish concrete counter. I truly don't know why anyone would choose to have mosaic tile countertops."



### HANNAH GIEROSKY

#### CREATING AN EASY STAIRWAY GALLERY WALL

"Before I had even moved out into my own place, I had started hoarding things to frame in my new home. I was excited about the idea of having a whole house or apartment that was mine (and a roommate's) to do with as I pleased."



### ROBIN ANDERSON

#### WEST ELM INSPIRED DIY LEATHER TUFTED HEADBOARD

"As a person of a certain age (cough, cough, late 20s), I often want nice things but my taste outpaces my bank account. so I challenged myself to make the best knockoff version I could."



Michelle loves painting, whether it is her kitchen, floors, doors, or the entire exterior of her house, she always has numerous paint options.