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## Urban Zen

Rebecca Teagarden

Trey Parker is a busy guy, dude. Animator, screenwriter, director, editor, producer, actor, voice talent and composer of the Academy Award-nominated and Emmy-winning variety.

But after 10 years of fame and glory as co-creator of Comedy Central's "South Park," Randolph Severn Parker III really had no time left to work around the house(s) in Hawaii, California, Colorado and Seattle.

The producer needed a producer. He got one in Dana Hamel of Dana Hamel Interior Designs.

"Trey is one of those people — he likes houses. His homes keep him grounded," Hamel says. "We were having dinner and I told Trey it was important for one person to oversee all the houses to get all the work done and be consistent. And that job is very much like being a producer."

Next thing, Hamel found himself not only charged with remodeling the Seattle retreat Parker was buying in 2004 but with designing all the homes *and* planning Parker's January 2006 wedding to Ema Sugiyama in Kauai.

"He got engaged during this project," Hamel says of the Belltown condo that was originally supposed to be a crash pad in between sailing trips. "So he asked me to get Brentwood and Kauai ready for the wedding, and then to plan it," Hamel says.

The point here is, what happens in South Park *stays* in South Park. Parker in private is just a nice guy from rural Colorado. His homes are peaceful respites from the crude mayhem of Kenny, Kyle, Stan and Cartman.

"It was a very understated, elegant wedding," Hamel says, with 65 people there. After, everybody flew back to California for a



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The painting in the living room is by San Francisco artist Darren Waterston. The chairs, covered in a neutral suede, are by Holly Hunt. Interior designer Dana Hamel designed the sofa, which is covered in Great Plains linen. "The whole idea was to keep things very restrained," Hamel says. "There's the hard line of the (condo) shell, and the furnishings are a counterpoint to that, luxurious and tactile."



BENJAMIN BENSCHNEIDER / THE SEATTLE TIMES

Window seats begin in the master bedroom and carry through the media room and living room into the dining room. "We decided to leave them as they are because it is such a beautiful place to sit and have the view," Hamel says. The seats are a taupe linen from Holly Hunt.



big party. "Sometimes I can't believe I pulled it all off," he says.

But he did. Beautifully, by the looks of the condo. In this city of views, this is one of the best. The windows in this corner unit start with wide-open vistas of Puget Sound, carry across the Space Needle to Queen Anne Hill, Lake Union and on to the city.

The mood is "Zen" — Parker's request. Beiges and browns, wools and silks, Carrera marble, a floor lamp designed by architect George Suyama. Dark-stained oak and blackened steel. No unnecessary trim or hardware. Paintings by Kenneth Callahan, Robert Motherwell, Betsy Eby, Hiro Yokose. Wall-to-wall tranquility.

The result was award-winning: Best of Contemporary Design, second place, in the Seattle Design Center's 2006 Northwest Design Awards.

"People are shocked," Hamel says. "They think we have "Team America" stenciled on the walls. But Trey is such a grounded and happy person. We don't do quirky stuff in Trey's houses."

Quirky is how they *found* it.

"This place was a 1980s time capsule," Hamel says, laughing. "It had pink carpeting, white fans everywhere, mauve, stenciled grapevine wallpaper and gold fixtures."

Hamel opened up the 1,780-square-foot space, turning it from three bedrooms and 2 ½ baths to two bedrooms and two baths. He designed the beds and sofa, another story.

"Because of issues with the elevator, the couch had to be hauled 27 floors up the side of the building. This sofa costs as much as a car. It was hair-raising; I couldn't watch."

Because Parker is so very busy (especially during the "South Park" season when shows are written weekly), he placed his complete trust in his interior designer.

"Trey's assistant called me one week and said, 'How important is it that Trey meet you at the condo this week? Because if he doesn't have to, they're going to write a two-part episode. If he does, they won't,' " Hamel says, amused.

"I told him, 'By all means, don't let me dictate South Park! I'll

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The blackened-steel frame for three small paintings by Hiro Yokose was designed by Hamel and built by Co. K. The walls and bookcase are paneled in rift-cut oak. The custom sofa, covered in Rose Tarlow linen-velvet fabric, is by Belmar.



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The hand-hewn table and bench, both bog oak, are custom by Gulassa & Co. The column in the art niche hides mechanical elements (wiring and plumbing). The painting is by Kenneth Callahan. "The art was a really fun part for both of us," says Hamel. "Trey would fly up and we would both visit galleries. We wanted it to be Northwest."



BENJAMIN BENSCHNEIDER / THE SEATTLE TIMES  
The cabinet hides the state-of-the-art audio-visual system. The plasma TV pivots so the viewer sitting on the window seat can choose between the water and, say, "South Park."

#### Trey Parker on Seattle

"My dad was a geologist, so we would take a few family trips up there," says Trey Parker, who along with friend Matt Stone created Comedy Central's "South Park." "About six years ago I started going up there on my own. I've never been a city person, but as far as cities go, Seattle's one of the ones that still has an identity. My wife is from Tokyo. She loves Seattle so much. It just reminds her of Tokyo. So now we go up there even more. The idea was to have this condo to always have a downtown place, but then find

see him next week.' "

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something outside the city. I'm sorta using this place as a base to explore.

"We love just going up there to eat over the weekend. It's great. Our favorite place is the Dahlia Lounge, and all the places right by the condo, Cascadia, the Brooklyn.

"We went and got Seahawks tickets, and just walked down to the stadium last year. That's the fun part of having a city house. Growing up in Colorado we could never walk to anything."

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