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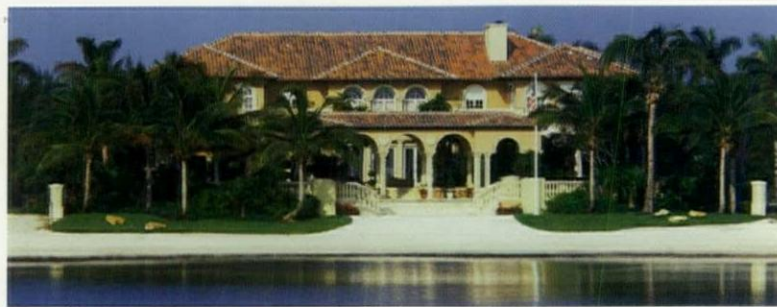
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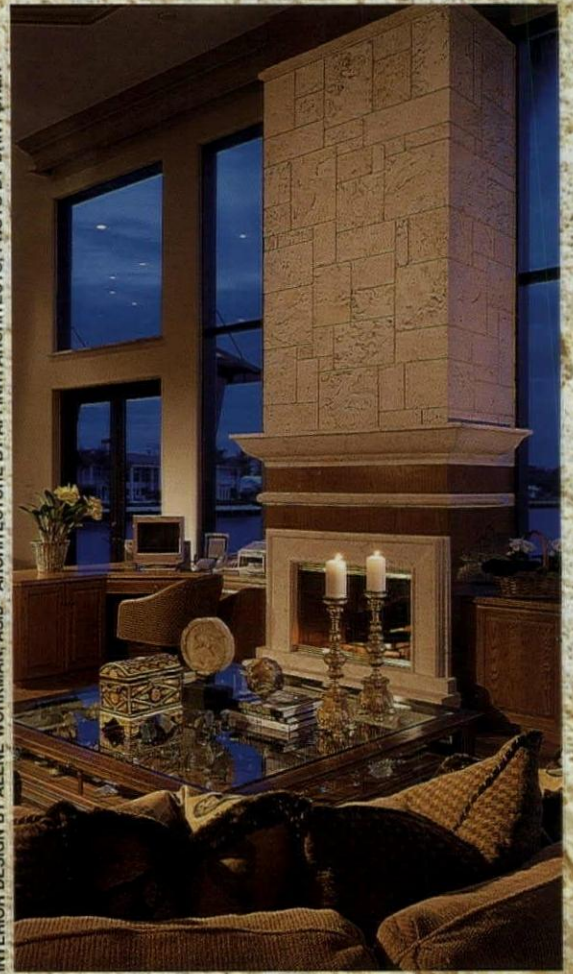
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FOREWORD

With this, our 60th edition, we are celebrating several milestones. One is that we are not only still in existence (despite a laundry list of publications that have come and gone) but that we are flourishing. We have doubled both our frequency and our distribution. This 60th edition represents an expansion in distribution that was accomplished without compromising quality, an achievement that flies in the face of what many industry experts had predicted. And it is our first bi-annual issue.

In addition, after over 60 years of publishing, Florida Architecture Magazine continues to be reader-driven. As a result, we can offer you, our valued readers, fewer advertisements, more editorial, and what we believe is more bang for your buck.

We have learned from various sources that Florida Architecture has become a reference book for prospective homebuyers and homebuilders. The architecture and interiors of the carefully selected homes we publish provide a bounty of rich ideas to borrow, translate, reinterpret or just savor. Our commitment is to continue publishing features with the same high standard we have maintained throughout our history.

Along with an exciting representation of Florida homes in this issue are two tributes. The first is in memory of John Michael Telleria. His unique interiors and his quick wit will be greatly missed. Secondly, editor Roberta Klein has written about the Masters of Tropical Architecture, ten remarkable men who have left an indelible imprint in Florida with their indigenous designs. As always, we welcome and encourage our readers' comments and response to this 60th edition. And, of course, to our 61st, which will be out in early 2000.

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Private Residence on Key Biscayne

Maria Elena Valls, ARCHITECTURE

Ladrillo, Inc., INTERIOR DESIGN

Myriam Hernandez & Veronica Reiser,

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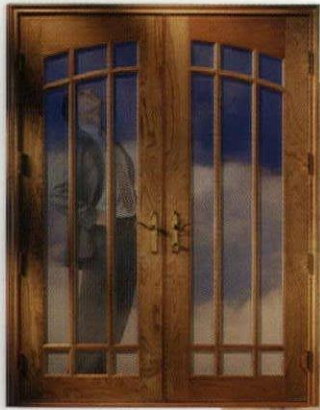
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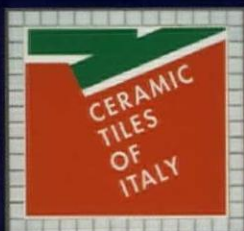
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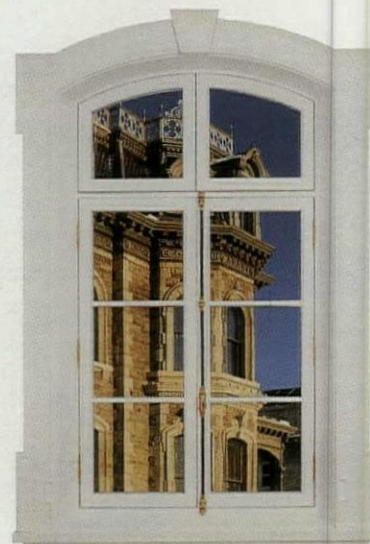
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59th Edition (February 1999) - \$21.00
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60th Edition (July 1999) - \$21.00
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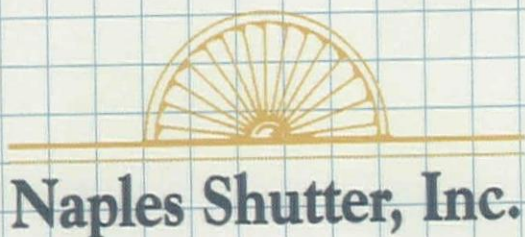
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A PLACE TO DREAM



In the Greek island of Santorini, the white stucco houses are hung by their eyelids from high volcanic cliffs, lunging toward the Aegean Sea as if to drink the very water. Their blue domes pay homage to the sky, their sun-drenched terraces worship the light, their gleaming white facades bow to purity. They are earthy, even elemental, but their spirit is ethereal, unbound.

An Italian man, who often visited Greece during the summers of his youth, never forgot the simplicity and insouciance of the Cycladic island homes. Their honest architecture and oneness with the elements carved an indelible impression in his consciousness – so much so that, decades later, he and his wife built their own Greek temple to the sea and sky. Just like the terraced, whitewashed villas of Santorini, this house seems to float like a cloud among shades of ultramarine. Only the view is different: instead of a Mediterranean archipelago, it overlooks Biscayne Bay.

With its flat roof and jutting terraces, domes and parapets, the house is unlike any of its Key Biscayne neighbors. Its raw simplicity is so mesmerizing as to be seductive. Cubist forms are grouped in multidimensional fashion, so that the house appears less like a single structure than a cluster of smaller ones. Simple, wood-framed windows open up onto balconies and arched arcades. Barreled and domed ceilings and mosaic tile accents allude to the Byzantine roots of the architecture.

For all its apparent simplicity, the house was a complex project that spanned four years – two years in planning, another two to build. Part of it, says the owner, was that most architects didn't understand this type of house. After several dead-end inquiries, he connected with Maria Elena Valls, who immediately grasped the concept. "I showed her a book on Greek architecture," says the husband, "and said, 'This is my dream.' She had never done anything like this but it made sense to her."

Written by
**Daphne
Nikolopoulos**

Photography by
George Cott

Maria Elena Valls
ARCHITECT

Ladrillo, Inc.
INTERIOR
DESIGNER

**Environmental
Design
Consultants,**
Raul Alvarez,
LANDSCAPE
ARCHITECT







The floors in the formal spaces are unfilled travertine in intertwining natural and walnut tones, punctuated by Byzantine-inspired mosaic insets and broken stone thresholds and floorboards, all from Forms & Surfaces.



Valls, who collaborated with her daughter, Maria, on the project, relished the challenge. “We do more Spanish/Mediterranean style houses,” says Maria Valls. “We have never visited Greece. We did a lot of research and bought enough books on the subject to start a library.”

The most important facet of the project, for architect and client, was a strict adherence to authenticity. The owners insisted on certain specifications – small, arched windows, thick plaster walls with rounded corners and materials that look like they have a history. Of course, scales and proportions are much smaller in Greece, so achieving authenticity required very specific problem-solving on the part of the architects.

“The windows in Greek houses are usually not big,” says Valls, “but we wanted to maximize the





The master bedroom is the essence of simplicity. In a nod to authenticity, an altar displays a Greek Orthodox icon, illuminated by an antique oil lamp. An antique Hindu wedding chest sits at the foot of the bed.

views. We did that by orienting windows and French doors strategically toward the water and by utilizing different shapes, so they follow the lines of the architecture.”

Then came the walls. To emulate the thick, solid walls of Greek houses, Valls used two layers of 8-inch concrete blocks, then layered them with plaster and finished them with brilliant white paint. The layering technique serves two purposes – it gives the appearance of mass and hides storm shutters by recessing them into pockets.

The structure itself also presented a challenge. Very few area contractors had constructed the types of domes the plan called for. The solution? Put it in the context of something more familiar. “The dome is formed like a swimming pool, but inverted,” says Valls. “Then it’s sprayed with concrete and waterproofed.”

The interior landscape also played a major role. To keep with the straightforward nature of the vernacular, Valls had to create spatial dynamics and visual imagery without overburdening spaces with architectural detail. Most ceilings, for an example, are stark and unadorned. Curiously, only the dining room has a four-point domed ceiling. Interest comes through arched niches and doorways, stucco banquettes and rows of windows that would not look out of place in a Byzantine cloister.

Other authentic touches came through interior designers Myriam Hernandez and Veronica Reiser, another mother-daughter team. To impart the look of age throughout the interiors, the designers chose “natural, weathered materials,” says Hernandez.

“The floors in the formal spaces are unfilled



travertine in intertwining natural and walnut tones, punctuated by Byzantine-inspired mosaic insets and broken stone thresholds.”

Walls are textured with plaster but otherwise kept simple and pure, allowing the architecture to assert itself. Windows are, for the most part, left unembellished to admit the sunlight and water views.

In their quest for authenticity, Hernandez and Reiser left no stone unturned. Instead of installing fancy lighting fixtures, they illuminated rooms through naked light bulbs suspended from the ceiling, or electrified antique oil lamps. They deliberately left walls devoid of art, save for a few icons and rough-hewn mirrors, both commonly seen in the modest Greek island home. The heavily distressed doors, hand hewn in Mexico of heavy knotted cedar with rugged iron hardware,



A PLACE TO
DREAM

An arched, arcade terrace leads down to the freeform, lagoon-style pool. Terraces also dominate the second and roof levels, to take full advantage of the waterfront setting. Windows are from Marvin, distributed through Window Classics.







A nook in the master bedroom provides the perfect spot for watching the sunrise or sharing a romantic breakfast. The antique table cover is woven with actual gold threads.

celebrate the Greek philosophy of denouncing materialism and honoring history.

In researching the roots of the Greek vernacular, the designers found a melange of distinct influences – mainly Florentine, Moorish and Ottoman. Thus they chose furnishings with an eye for eclecticism, never neglecting the classic lines and purity of design in which Greek style is firmly rooted. In the living room, Hernandez and Reiser combined cane-back British Colonial settees with a neoclassical walnut and marble table and a serving table from Marrakech. In the dining

room, they combined Biedermeier reproduction dining chairs with an enormous, conversation-friendly round dining table, custom made as a replica of one they had seen in photos. They kept bedrooms devoid of ornament, opting instead to impart detail through embroidered fabrics.

Fabrics were of paramount importance. “The white walls and abundance of stone can look cold and harsh,” says Reiser, “so we infused warmth through the furnishings and fabrics. We’ve used silks in rich jewel tones and lots of texture and pattern, accented with tassels and fringe.”





The roof terrace is the owners' favorite spot. With its sweeping views of Biscayne Bay, the terrace inspires a sense of lightness and liberation. The mosaic insets are by Luciano Franchi.

A Greek house is nothing without its outdoor spaces – and that's where this house truly shines. "Everything had to be open to the water," insists the husband. "That is the purpose of such a house."

A sprawling, bi-level roof terrace offers an unimpeded view of the bay so one feels buoyant, as if floating between sea and sky. On one corner of the terrace is a domed gazebo, perfect for an intimate picnic or even stargazing. Beyond it is a Moroccan-style bar, which Hernandez calls the "cazbah."

The home's outdoor spaces may be perfect for gatherings with friends and family, but the owners have a more esoteric purpose in mind. As Reiser says, "They wanted to achieve the height of simplicity and comfort. But they also wanted a place to dream. This is just such a place." ▲

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JOHN MICHAEL TELLERIA

1951 - 1999

Written by **Al Alschuler**

Photography by **Carlos Domenech**

John Michael Telleria & Associates, Inc., INTERIOR DESIGN

*D*eath, noted Shakespeare, is a “necessary end (and) will come when it will come.” But when an acknowledged talent is snuffed out, suddenly without the excuse of age or infirmity, such a loss is all the more affecting.

John Michael Telleria III was in the prime of a productive career when he was slain earlier this year. The Miami Herald’s account of his untimely end referred to Telleria, only 48 years old at the time, as “one of South Florida’s most respected interior designers.”

Born in Cuba, he was orphaned at an early age and grew up in Miami Shores where he lived with a grandmother. Telleria’s determination to succeed in his favored field was subsidized by the Interior Design Guild of South Florida, whose scholarship grants funded his architectural design studies at the University of Florida. The Guild’s confidence was confirmed some twenty years later when he won one of its coveted “Designers of the Year” awards for his own Coconut Grove bungalow, a personal retreat and working studio. By then he had taught on a part-time basis too and was now proceeding to share in the establishment of a new showroom source for fine furniture, T. Martell, Inc., which would be inaugurated in Coral Gables and, some years later, reopened in the Miami Design District.





John Telleria's sophisticated and innovative interiors, as noted on these pages, were remarkable for their great style, comfort and obvious quality.

Regarded by colleagues as a "warm, friendly fellow with a wonderful sense of humor," Telleria was a reputed workhorse who consistently strived for perfection. His clients were usually affluent and worldly, yet unpretentious, with homes here in Florida, Central or South America. "(He) was a real creative genius," The Herald quoted one friend and patron. "Exclusive, expensive and worth it...he had the finest taste."

Six exceptional residences designed by John Michael Telleria & Associates, Inc., have been published by Florida Architecture since 1990, commencing with that award-winning home of his own.

Subsequent editions featured an expansive home on Culbreath Island in Tampa, another renovated cottage in Coconut Grove and then a second totally reconfigured waterfront residence, this time in Boca Raton. His fifth to appear was a Key West-style oceanside condominium erected in Islamorada and His last, a Mediterranean home

in Coral Gables. The diversity of his commissions, as witnessed by such projects, is remarkable – widespread in both situation and style.

Many of these installations reflect Telleria's multifaceted abilities, relatively unique among his professional peers, for he was appropriately credited for not only their interiors, but also for their architectural and landscape design. He designed the lighting too and, often, some of their fashionably classic furnishings as well. Telleria took deserved pride in his proficiency, noting on at least one occasion his preference to be considered a Design Coordinator instead of an interior designer.

John Telleria's sophisticated and innovative interiors, as noted on these pages, were remarkable for their great style, comfort and obvious quality. Treating contemporary spaces with traditional detailing was a particular specialty, as was his antithetical flair for enlivening traditional concepts with contemporary accents, including the



admixture of antiques and assorted art. He preferred to retain prized family furnishings which he “refreshed” by refinishing, reupholstering and occasionally by simply relocating these to some other, less common site. “I like things to last forever,” he once conceded, adding that “You can enjoy recycling if you buy well.”

Other distinguishing characteristics included his predisposition for “a harmonious flow” through the use of some continuous design element, for elegant simplicity and ease of maintenance. He also favored neutral materials but, above all, Telleria prized an environment well suited to the life-style of its owner, yet subject, as sought, to future change. Telleria’s concern was timelessness, not trendiness.

Months prior to his death, Telleria purchased another home in Coconut Grove. Sadly, this was neither finished nor photographed, but the scenes of previous installations selected for this memorial, hopefully, testify to his great talent. ▲

“The interior designer should be someone with total vision, in order to meet the demands of the 90’s. The designer should know property values, comprehend the architecture and construction, plan interiors with regard for the client’s lifestyle, as well as provide furnishings and art.”

John Michael Telleria







SCULPTING THE SOUTHWEST INTO A SOUTH FLORIDA HOME

*Written by Roberta Klein
Photography by Joseph Lapeyra*

Krupnick Design Studio, ARCHITECTURE
Miller Construction Company, BUILDER

*T*he home appears like a giant sculpture on the banks of the New River. Although the Fort Lauderdale site is exceptionally small, the large house does not overpower it. On the contrary, it integrates harmoniously with the surroundings. This is most surprising since the style of the home echoes the southwest.

Tom and Virginia Miller had a passion for “things southwest”, which they nurtured over the years during trips to Santa Fe, Phoenix and Sedona. The passion ultimately evolved into a vision to build a southwestern style home.

True, their vision was doused with a realization that the architecture had to be modified for South Florida’s damp, tropical climate. Yet the thought of an adaptation did nothing to diminish their enthusiasm.

It was a happy coincidence, then, that an expert on southwestern architecture was in their midst. He was Michael Krupnick, a Fort Lauderdale native who had recently returned home from the southwest, and the Millers knew him well.

Krupnick had worked summers for Tom Miller during his high school years and early years of





The main public space consists of a voluminous living room adjacent to a more intimate sitting area. Lattillas above the entryway pierce into the sitting area to become the ceiling. Abundant glazing brings views and natural light into the entire space.

college and had learned much about building. His job was hands-on at Miller Construction Company, the company Tom Miller started with his brother, Harley, 25 years ago.

Miller's Fort Lauderdale-based firm not only built its reputation on luxury custom homes but everything from office buildings and shopping centers to medical facilities and multifamily residential structures. No design was too complex for Miller and his staff. Building the southwestern home he and his wife wanted would be the proverbial busman's holiday.

Over the years Krupnick had stayed in touch with Miller, even while he earned his masters degree

in architecture in New Mexico and hand-built adobe homes with natives. When he and his wife/partner Kim, a graduate architect and artist, moved to Fort Lauderdale in 1996, they resumed the friendship.

In a leap of faith, the Millers retained Mike Krupnick to design their southwestern style home. It posed a gigantic challenge. Not only did the style have to adapt to an entirely different climate from the west, but the site was only 100 feet wide by 140 feet deep. Yet the Millers went forward.

"We've always liked southwestern architecture—rounded corners, softness," says Miller. "We knew a pure southwest house wouldn't fit well





The Chaco style steps of the interlocking flagstone lead to Virginia Miller's office. The railing with its simplistic, primitive design, was crafted by Newcastle Design Works.

down here, so we asked Mike to do 'influences' instead." Working closely with his wife, Krupnick rose to the challenge.

"The hardest part was that with setbacks the building area was only 80 by 90," says Krupnick. Predicated on these limitations, the new design had to be 2,000 square feet less than the Miller's previous home. "Virginia was not as much in favor of downsizing as I was," says Miller, "but not overloading the lot dictated the size of the house."

At the same time, the river location was a double-edged sword. Certainly the views were exceptional. But building riverside required strict compliance with the city, county, state and federal government's stringent zoning regulations.

By carefully studying the codes, Krupnick learned that a dock could be built 30 feet into the river - and so could an island. This would produce a visual expansion of the site by utilizing the setbacks. "We added the small island plus boulders and mangroves in the river," says Krupnick. "Lately, I've seen porpoises and tarpon, and a lot more bait fish. It is now a better place to fish."

Other forms followed in the setbacks, including an eight-foot long bench under a six-foot high wall in the front. Instead of being a forbidding force, the walled area became a welcoming place for neighborhood skaters, cyclists, and joggers.

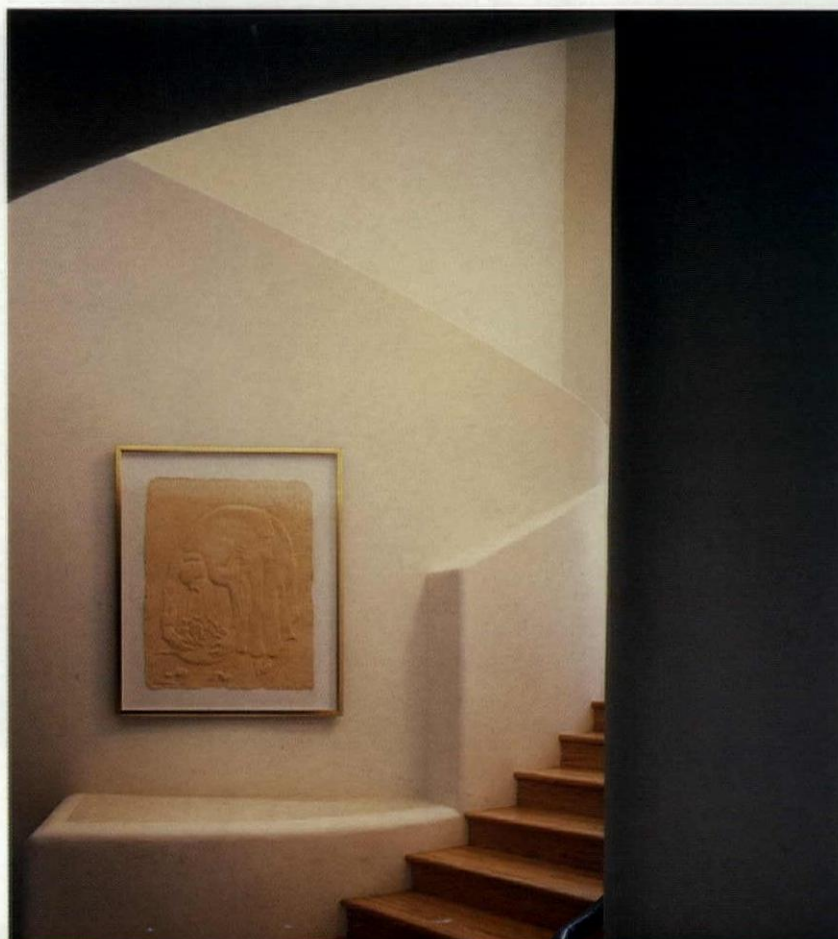
Within the structure, the southwest "influences" are prevalent. The house is solid concrete with hand-plastered walls, Arizona flagstone floors,



and cherry wood. Almost every wall is an enticing radius, whether subtle or obvious. At the same time, the walls have a rustic, uneven finish typical of native handiwork. "The walls were intentionally not perfect," says Miller. "When you do custom homes, you want everything to be perfect, so I had to get out of that mode in order for the radiuses to look authentic."

For further authenticity, three New Mexico stone masons installed Arizona flagstone floors throughout the main living spaces.

"We brought the men down from Santa Fe, and they worked here for four months," says Krupnick, who was bent on authenticity. The expert craftsmen also installed the flagstone on the exterior stairs, applying the Chaco style of varied inter-



SCULPTING THE
SOUTHWEST
INTO A SOUTH
FLORIDA HOME

Sun umbrellas rise from the shallows of the pool for a beach reference around the southwestern influenced home. The three masses that present a village effect embrace the water recreation area, which is enhanced by two oversized stepping stones.









locking stone shapes and patterns. While the home has three different themes – sculptural, village-like and southwestern – all meld together in a unique blend of architecture. An aggregate of exterior features establishes the style, with the village feel emerging from three different masses. One mass is the completely separate garage, while the other two are only visually separated.

A red-trimmed barrel tile roof on the main structure reflects the vernacular southwestern influence, while the cooler all white roof on the garage bows to the tropical environment.

Inside, a central spine is the home's main artery, maintaining organization for the complicated plan.

Integral to the plan was natural light with abundant light sources. As a result, the home boasts a profusion of large mitered windows that seamlessly draw illumination.

There are other unexpected sources, as well. One that borders on whimsy is located in the guest bathroom shower, which is reminiscent of the bow of a boat. Here the window is a "sliver," less than two inches wide, yet it provides an exciting view across the New River to sailboats by day and city lights at night. "It's like an aperture to the outside world," says Krupnick.

Light virtually floods the master bedroom, where mitered glass windows imbedded in plaster are

The master bedroom is almost completely translucent with large expanses of uninterrupted glass providing long distance viewing of the New River. The glass heights vary, depending on privacy needs.

SCULPTING THE
SOUTHWEST
INTO A SOUTH
FLORIDA HOME

Detail of the concrete structure shows elements of the southwest through windows, roof and rustic beam. The rich textured finishes inside and out are also evocative of the southwest.



tantamount to transparent walls. On the stairway approach to the master suite, a 14-foot window frames the view of the river, while a tapered skylight mimicking the shape of the stairway floods the area with daylight.

As a by-product of the light, the home is deliberately absent of ornamentation. Krupnick explains: "We rely on light and shadow to give much of the detailing. It is more powerful than crown molding when one walks around the room."

One of the home's most unusual southwest features is an adaptation of latillas, which are a series of small sticks that were originally roof structures for pueblos. In the Miller house, the latillas are painted, decorative logs, dramatically piercing the wall in a sculptured assemblage between the living and sitting rooms.

Mark McCartney, the project manager from Miller Construction, said building the Millers' home was "very challenging."

"We had to build and design as we went. Although we had detailed working drawings, the radiuses were done by hand. The home was an artistic masterpiece in itself," he remarks.

The home took a year to build – "a good time frame" considering the complexity of the design. Notwithstanding the complexity, McCartney says building the Millers' home was much the same as building a custom home for other clients.



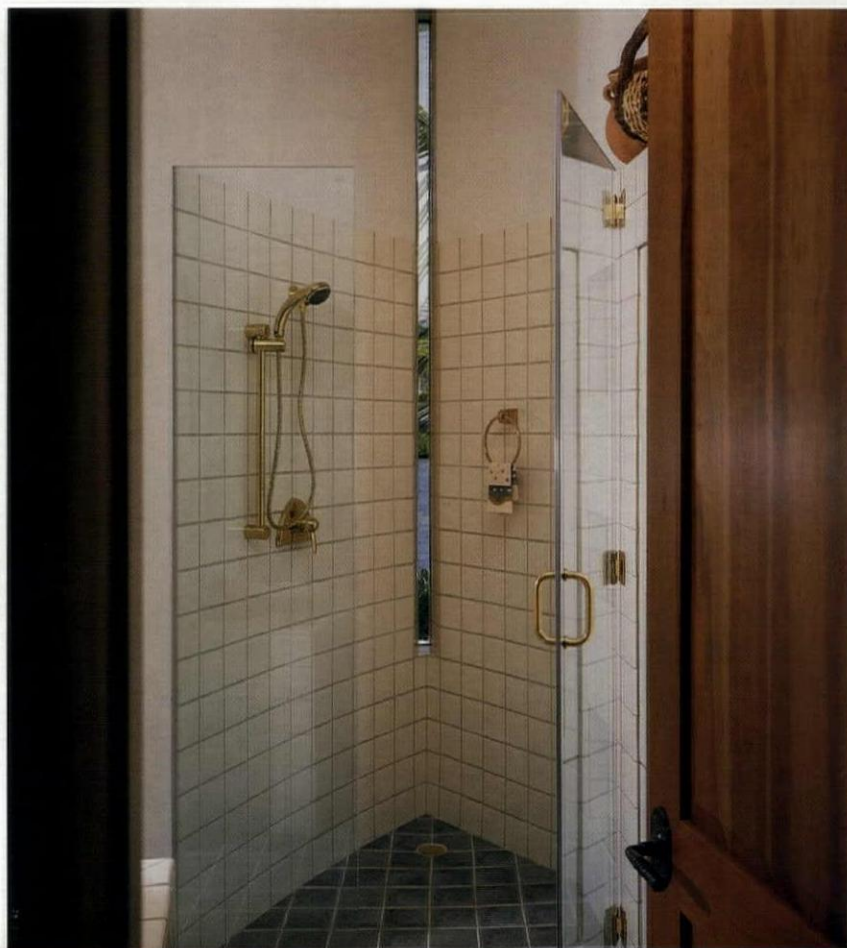
PHOTO BY AERIAL PHOTOGRAPHY, INC.

To the Millers' pleasure, the river view is theirs from every primary area of the home – a home that clearly harkens to the southwest. Indeed, it is as if the east gestured to the west and the two blended as one extraordinary entity.

Krupnick proudly says, "Not only did the home turn out beautiful but it is very environmentally correct." ▲

RESOURCES

Builder
Miller Construction Co.
614 S. Federal Hwy.
Ft. Lauderdale, FL 33301
(954) 764-6550



Tn the prestigious, private gated communities of Coral Gables, the homes often reflect the history and tradition of days long gone. Behind the classic colonial façade of one such house, a collection of antiques and *objets d'art* betrays an unwavering allegiance to tradition.

The home's European heritage is everywhere evident. Austrian crystal chandeliers. Art and accessories dating to the Art Déco era. Sweeping mahogany staircases. By all appearances, the owners of this house are mature individuals who



have cultivated an appreciation for objects of pedigree over several decades of collecting with a prudent eye.

Appearances can be deceiving. The house actually belongs to a couple in their mid 30s with three young children and a high-energy lifestyle. "Our taste definitely runs to the traditional," admits the husband, a real estate developer who built the 7,000 square foot home as a retreat for his family. "We are young to build such a house."

Though they have amassed a significant collection, the two are not collectors per se. "We have done some antiques together," he says, "but



HISTORY IN THE MAKING

Written by **Daphne Nikolopoulos**

Photography by **Joseph Lapeyra**



Billy Saster, INTERIOR DESIGN / Randall Stofft, ARCHITECTURE

Taft Bradshaw, LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE



A white wood banister is capped with a mahogany handrail to form a classic curved staircase. The Art Déco-inspired mahogany and stainless steel mirror and console are from Baker.

we're also proud to have objects of art and antiques that appeared in my parents' home – a grand piano, paintings and sculpture, a silver collection and some wonderful old pieces."

His parents' legacy, along with the couple's own traditional bent, dictated the leitmotif that would pervade interior spaces. But this traditional house has a distinctly youthful edge, mostly at the urging of their interior designer, Billy Saster. "Bill made a point of telling us, 'You're not building your parents' house,'" says the husband. "He discouraged us from doing a purely traditional house. And he was so right. As a result, the house has some hip and lively elements that reflect a younger, more contemporary state of mind."

Though the house radiates a European formality, there is a certain minimalism to it, a lack of

ornamentation that puts it in a different context. "It's sleek, spare and not overly accessorized," says Saster. "I call the look 'the new traditional.' It's more appropriate for people their age."

This neo-traditionalism is evident from the initial point of entry. Double mahogany doors open to reveal a luminous foyer that is flooded with natural light, admitted through an enormous clerestory window. Illuminated by the light, classic pieces like an antique Tibetan rug, a sleek bronze and brushed steel sculpture by Wertheimer, a Baker console and Déco-inspired mirror seem to float within the space. "There is definitely a sense that you are entering something smart," says Saster. "It's not quite the Delano [hotel] but it has some qualities of large mass with great detailing."

The concept continues in the formal living spaces.



In the living room, Saster leaves windows and French doors completely untreated to allow the light to stream in. Walls are devoid of superficial finish. Instead, they are subtle and understated in a warm tone of matte taupe, accented by sparkling white millwork that glows in the light.

The palette is monochromatic, dependent more on texture and detailing for impact. Even furnishings are on the spare side of traditional. Lines are clean and straightforward, fabrics are tone-on-tone, accessories are minimal.

The living room, according to Saster, is ideal for entertaining, as it is divided into intimate conversation areas without sacrificing flow. "Though open and grand," he says, "it isn't like a vast ballroom. It has realistic dimensions." Here, guests can gather around the fire at the 19th century Italian marble fireplace, stand around





The grand piano, once a prominent feature of the husband's parents' home, now enjoys a central spot in the living room, near the bar.

the grand piano or have a drink at the elaborately carved mahogany bar.

For all its formality, the living room is far from hands-off. On the contrary, it is consistently used for family activities. That aspect is very important to the owners, who appreciate formal spaces but also insist upon a great degree of coziness and maximum functionality. "Our main mission was to design a home in which every space is welcoming and utilized," says the husband. "We wanted

every single space to be functional. This isn't a show house – we use all parts of it every day."

Even the dining room enjoys daily use. While most families reserve the dining room for special occasions, opting instead to dine casually on the breakfast table, the owners take their supper on the dining room table most every night. Never mind that the table is 19th century French, the chairs are Chippendale and the service is antique silver. "They do use everything," says Saster.





Saster designed the metal four-poster and headboard for the master bedroom. The latter is covered in the same harlequin patterned fabric used in the living room.

“It’s wonderful that young people can appreciate great old things.”

That appreciation is nowhere more evident than in the master bedroom. The only room of the house to stretch to a full two-story height, the bedroom is grand yet intimate, detailed yet unfussy. Saster achieves this by maintaining a single color palette, where “the interest is strictly in the texture.” From the sumptuous cotton damasks, imported from Italy, to the 17th century

English striped wallcoverings to the diamond-patterned Wilton carpet, textures are layered strategically to depict a rich European pedigree.

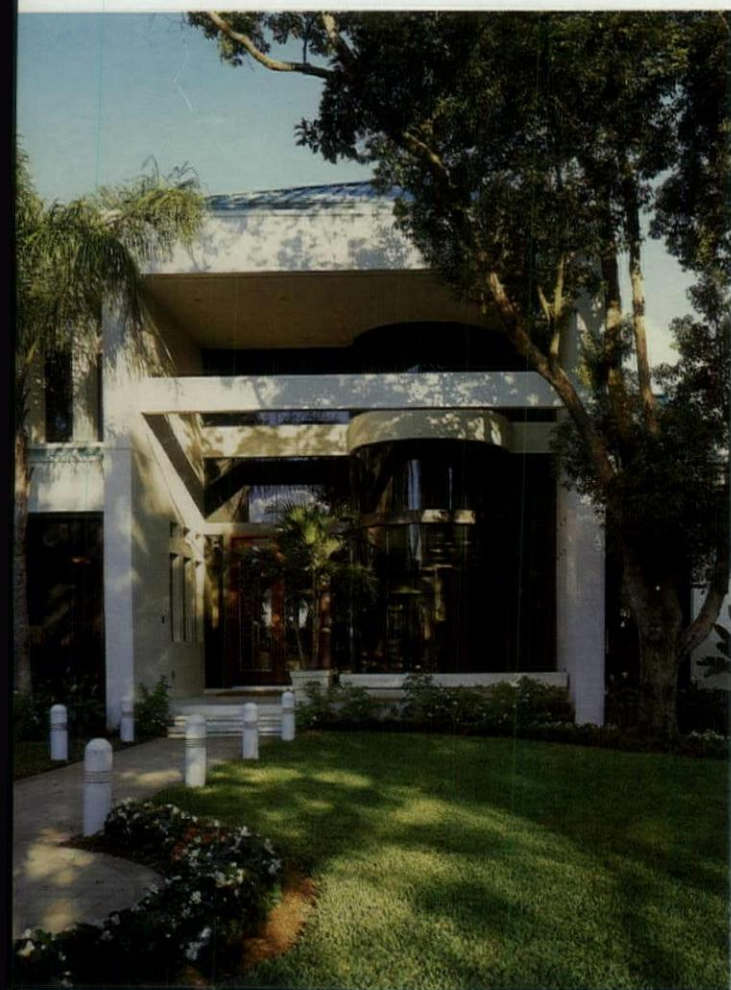
Though Saster’s “new traditional” design defies categorization, it succeeds in proving that traditionalism need not be staid. Its youthful vibrancy resonates in its minimalism while its heritage is celebrated in the distinguished provenance of its elements. And that, perhaps, is its greatest triumph. ▲



*I*n a prestigious Tampa subdivision where the architectural character is defined largely by traditional Mediterranean Revival homes, a boldly contemporary structure stands out like a Rauschenberg in a sea of Renoirs.

The depth of this architectural experience is apparent from the very approach. Instead of simply arriving from the street unto the house, the visitor is confronted by a series of integrated forms – square, rectangular, angled, round – arranged in a series of distinct pavilions.

One first encounters the entrance pavilion, supported by four columns and a pyramidal roof, which leads to a courtyard and on to the main



house. To the left is a freestanding four car garage which is connected to the house via a 15-foot-long, glass-enclosed bridge.

At the landing the experience continues with the front entry pavilion, in effect a structure within a structure. Though attached, this two-story configuration juts out from the main house to enclose the front door in a stucco hood and encase the staircase in a circular, bent glass tower. The main house itself displays sharply defined angles and



BREAKING WITH TRADITION

Written by **Daphne Nikolopoulos**

Photography by **George Cott**



Fleischman Garcia Architecture, ARCHITECTURE / Sandra Chancey Interior Design, INTERIOR DESIGN

Alvarez Homes, BUILDER



The 10-foot entrance doors are rendered in solid mahogany with glass panels that are etched with an abstract pattern that represents the movement and organic nature of the house.

crisp geometries, its severe rectilinearity tempered by rounded, Art Déco inspired forms.

Architect Sol Fleischman, Jr., who is known for his contemporary structures, explains his approach: “When we built this house, there were no contemporary structures in the development. The architectural review committee was concerned that such a house might look too stark, too severe. So we warmed up the design considerably by breaking it up into pavilions. By virtue of this separation, we have different roof lines and heights and an incredible, three-dimensional layering of forms. It feels almost like a small village.”

The review committee also had something to say

about the roof shape. The owners originally wanted a flat roof but the committee would not hear of it – flat roofs are simply not allowed in the development. So Fleischman found a solution to make both parties happy: a pyramidal roof system in galvanized sheet metal with patinaed copper coating, with its slopes set back far enough from the edge to give an illusion of flatness.

The contemporary nature of the architecture also extends into interior spaces. Walls (what few there are) are left pure and unfinished, surfaces are simple, layouts are logical and windows are devoid of embellishment.

Instead of moldings, Fleischman utilizes reveals



– “reverse moldings,” he calls them – to separate floors from walls and distinguish between dissimilar surfaces. Pure glass is used in abundance to invite natural light and to establish a correlation between indoor and outdoor spaces. All told, there is an honest, straightforward feeling to the house.

The unifying theme that repeats itself throughout the house, in every plane, is the Art Décoesque curvilinearity. A subtly curved stainless steel staircase with floating limestone treads is reminiscent of the railings of an ocean liner, an element commonly used in Déco period design.

In the main living areas, stepped cove ceilings are softened by rounded edges and steps. Unadorned round columns are used instead of walls to divide living spaces without impeding flow, or to delineate outdoor spaces like the summer kitchen pavilion.

Within this contemporary context, interior designers Sandra Chancey and Catherine Christie have achieved an uncommon degree of warmth and livability. By manipulating the spatial dynamics to full advantage, they have imbued otherwise stark and open spaces with full-wattage energy. That’s critical to the lifestyle of the owners, a Tampa physician and his family, who appreciate wholesome family living as much as they enjoy social entertaining.

Central to Chancey’s and Christie’s design is the consistent use of polished, highly lacquered woods for built-ins and furnishings. When the space calls for a sense of richness and a higher degree of formality, as do the dining and living rooms, the designers use lacewood and mahogany. When the space demands buoyancy and lightness, as does the master bedroom, they use maple.

The decision to use highly lacquered woods was based less on what the owners stated than on their subliminal messages. “They had chosen a beautiful Siematic kitchen,” recalls Chancey. “We determined that they liked that glossy, polished look so we extended that concept throughout.”









Also paramount to the owners was the display of their African art collection. The collection's primitive and earthy characteristics are an important counterpoint to the simple, pure architecture and sleek design elements.

To make a transition between the two seemingly disparate energies, the designers have punctuated the owners' collection with glass art. "The African art needed to be softened a bit with something that contrasts with and complements it," says Chancey. "We introduced them to fine glass art, which proved to be the perfect marriage between the earthiness of the African objects and color-rich, organic forms."

Exhibiting a collection of such depth in a logical manner often presents a challenge. Conscious of the need to give each object its due importance without ganging pieces together, the designers





have taken advantage of niches within the architecture. For instance, glass forms and statues of African warriors and tribesmen fit strategically into niches dispersed throughout the length of a central corridor, adding aesthetic purpose to an element which otherwise functions as an axial spine.

Other niches, such as the extreme vertical recesses in the dining room, stand alone. "We didn't force an object into every niche," explains Christie. "We maintained a balance so it didn't look like a gift shop or gallery. We let the architecture be the art."

To balance the use of niches for display, Christie and Chancey also use brushed steel pedestals to isolate particularly important pieces, such as the antique Asian masks displayed between the living room and breakfast area. They also add a new







dimension to the collection by introducing furniture with artistic lines and classic references, such as the Barcelona chairs in what they call the “dessert room” or the Kezu leather dining chairs by Dakota Jackson. “These classic pieces are the antiques of the future,” Christie says.

All in all, the designers and architect agree, the house represents the clients’ personalities more than any house they’ve ever owned. “There is an international quality about it,” says Chancey. Fleischman adds: “It’s sleek and contemporary, yet it has a certain earthiness, albeit in small doses.” ▲



ACCENTUATE THE POSITIVE

Written by Deborah K. Dietsch

Interior Photography by George Cott

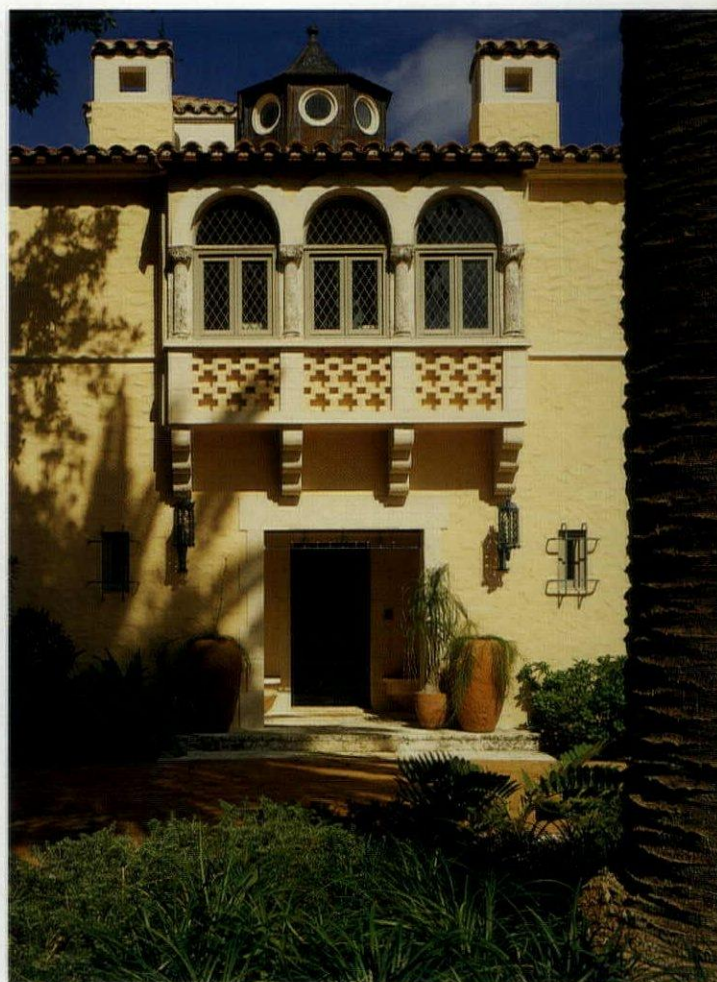
Exterior Photography by Steven Brooke



Brian Reale, INTERIOR DESIGN / John H. Bullen, ARCHITECTURE



*A*ccentuate the positive, eliminate the negative. That was the philosophy of interior designer Brian Reale of Reale Frojd in upgrading a 1925 mansion in Miami Beach for two successive owners. The designer, who has offices in St. Petersburg and New York, not only respected the house's Mediterranean Revival architecture, but by removing and expanding selected elements, he actually strengthened its historic character. "There were so many exquisite details," Reale explains. "I wanted to enhance them while modernizing the house."



Sited on the edge of Biscayne Bay with an impressive view of the Miami skyline, the two-story structure reflects the influence of Addison Mizner and other leading architects of the 1920s in its combination of Spanish, Moorish and Italian motifs. Porches and loggias with arches and coral-stone columns animate its stucco facades, and picturesque cupolas and chimneys project above its tiled roofs. Between the wings of the house, a planted courtyard with a tiled fountain provides a quiet, lush oasis.

Inside, the Mediterranean character continues in



Second-floor bedrooms open to a new loggia with views of the pool and Biscayne Bay. New precast concrete columns are textured to resemble coral-stone originals.

arched doorways fitted with wrought-iron gates, barrel-vaulted ceilings, and rustic clay tiled floors.

Descendents of the original owners occupied the house for decades, until it was sold in the 1980s to a Florida businessman and his wife, who commissioned Reale to update the property.

To capitalize on its waterfront setting, the designer connected the house to the bay by adding a swimming pool with a fountain. In one corner, he designed a changing pavilion and bar that mirror the Mediterranean architecture of the main house. In addition to stucco exteriors and tile roofs, the new structure's mahogany eaves and brackets exactly match those of the original house.

Reale further oriented the house to the pool by extending the existing loggia on the second floor across the entire west facade. The addition looks completely authentic with precast concrete columns textured to simulate the coral-stone originals and a filigree balcony. New French doors open from the bedrooms onto the loggia, which is linked to the pool by a circular staircase.

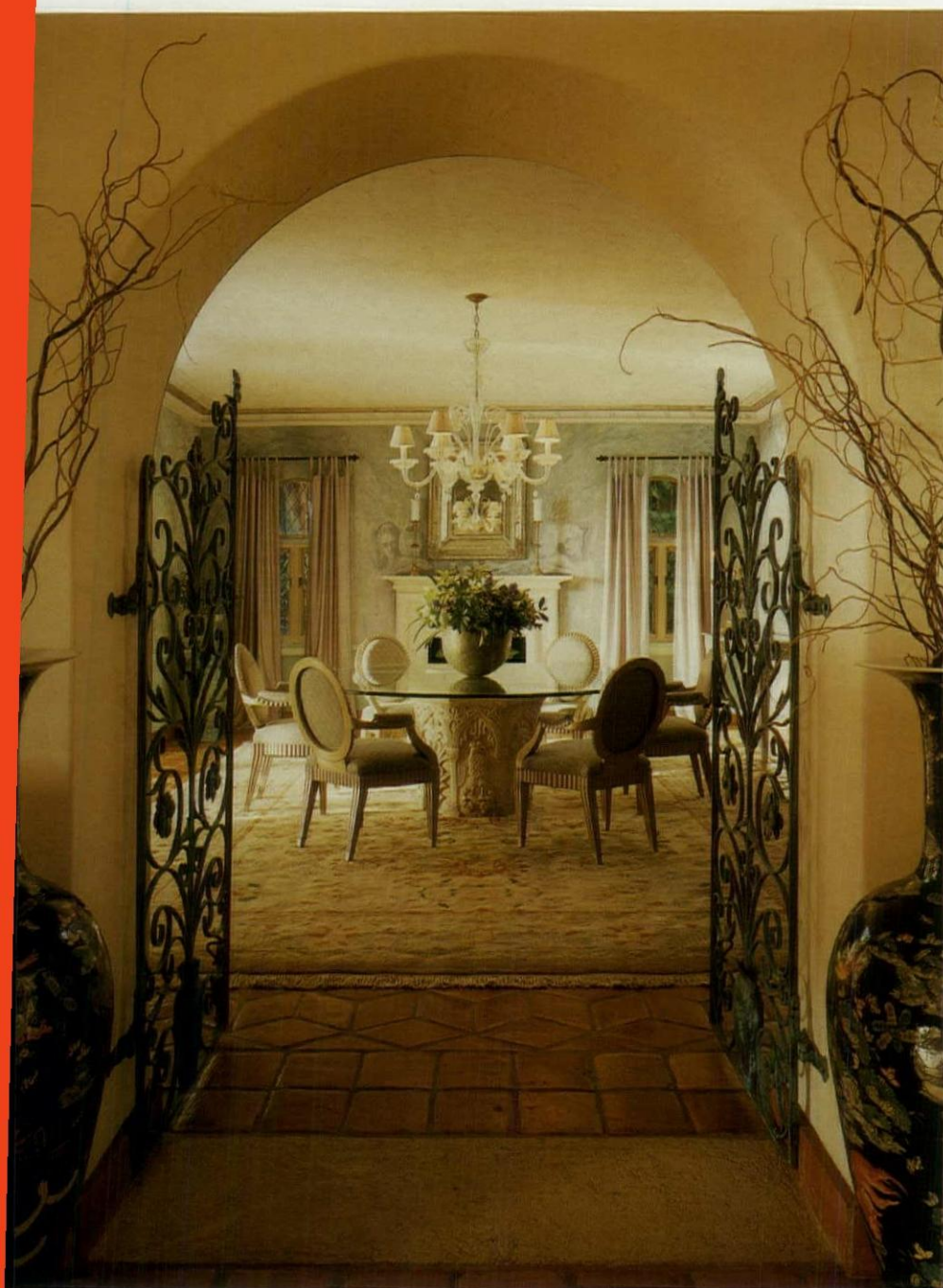
Although the previous owners hadn't substantially altered the original house, the interiors were "a real horror," according to Reale.

Downstairs, the living and dining rooms were dark and dingy with shag carpeting obscuring their tile floors. Upstairs, the bedrooms were



ACCENTUATE
THE POSITIVE

Original ornamental wrought-iron gates screen doorway between living and dining rooms. Donghia dining chairs encircle custom glass-topped table supported by a cast stone font from Kenneth Lynch & Sons of Wilton, Ct. Mural is designed by Gary Finkel, a scenic painter for New York's Metropolitan Opera.



numerous but small, and covered in wood-grained composite board paneling.

Reale began his interior renovation with the basics: upgrading the electrical, plumbing, and air-conditioning systems. He repaired the roof, re clad the copper cupola over the entrance hall and removed offending finishes to reveal the original floors and walls. On the ground floor, he added simple touches to make the rooms lighter and more comfortable, and in the process brought out the beauty of architectural features.

Most ingenious are elements that look original, but aren't. In the living room, new moldings with concealed cove lighting now stretch across the ceiling to brighten the long space as well as illuminate its sculptural, barrel vaults. The large fireplace is also new, but looks perfectly at home in the baronial room. Reale's hefty, Romanesque Revival design, which replaces a "silly and small" Adamesque mantelpiece, incorporates precast concrete columns to harmonize with the house's limestone details.

Similarly, after joining two bedrooms into the master suite, the designer recombined their separate fireplaces into one. He added a new surround with an Arts and Crafts-style plaster relief of a weeping willow to symbolize the tree of life.

In places where new elements intersected with old, Reale carefully concealed his additions. To



enclose the cloister that faces the interior courtyard and turn it into an air-conditioned sitting room, he inserted glass behind the paired columns. The transparent panels are supported by thin, wrought-iron mullions, which are barely noticeable from the outside.

Throughout the house, Reale preserved original details such as ornamental iron gates, lighting fixtures and balusters, as well as the pink Art Deco-style bathroom tucked off an upstairs bedroom. "I don't like to throw things out because they're old-fashioned," says Reale. "If something is made well and the quality is there, I work with it."

While preserving such historic touches, Reale wasn't afraid to add whimsical and dramatic touches. He marked the center of the cylindrical entrance hallway with a marble planter sup-



ported by a late 18th century Italian statue of a beggar.

In the adjacent library, he tapped Gary Finkel, a set painter for New York's Metropolitan Opera company, to decorate a midnight blue ceiling and frieze with astrological signs and starry constellations. Finkel also painted an Italian Baroque-inspired mural in the dining room. Rendered in icy tones of lavender and blue, it depicts the owners as costumed figures on either side of the fireplace.

Other spaces were reconfigured to make them more practical for the owners and their three children: a butler's pantry and kitchen were combined into a family room for cooking and dining. Tiled walls and patterned ceilings continue the Mediterranean theme.

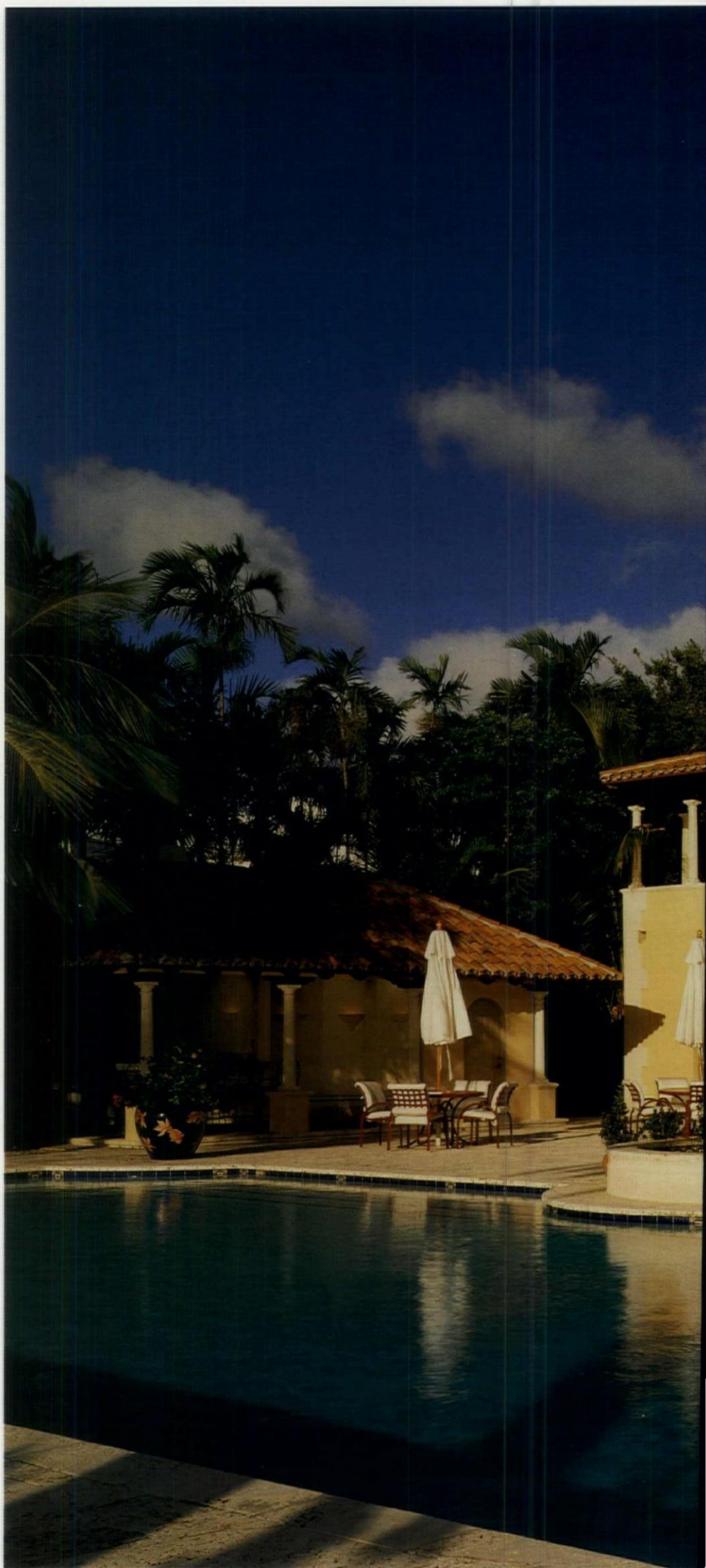
Reale's work didn't stop there. In the late 1980s, the Miami Beach house was sold to a couple from suburban Washington, D.C., who commissioned the designer to modernize the second floor. He converted an upstairs closet into an office, transformed two bedrooms into an exercise room, and turned another into a walk-in closet.

True to the Mediterranean spirit, Reale's renovation provides the latest owners with warm, spacious rooms that take advantage of their tropical setting. A mix of antique and contemporary furnishings both complement the eclectic architecture and provide comfortable places to sit and socialize. "I wanted a relaxed feeling in these magnificent spaces," says Reale. "In designing, I thought about how the spaces will be used."

In the living room, for example, Venetian-style chairs with carved legs and Renaissance Revival console tables are grouped with overstuffed chairs and a sofa, and sleek Italian lamps and torcheres.

When he couldn't find the right piece, Reale designed his own. They include upholstered benches in the entrance hall, a silver-leafed table with mirrored top in the living room, and a dining table fashioned from a glass top and an ornate cast stone font.

"I try to create livable spaces without changing their character," notes Reale of his many renovations. In this house, the designer not only succeeds in preserving Mediterranean Revival architecture, but enlivening its romantic spirit for today. ▲





THE SPIRIT OF ANDALUSIA

Written by **Daphne Nikolopoulos**

Photography by **Laurence Taylor**



The Benedict Group, ARCHITECTURE / Romanza Architectural Interiors, INTERIOR DESIGN
London Bay Homes, BUILDER / Smallwood Design Group, LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE

Builders of multi-million dollar estate homes construct dream residences for their clients every day. But given their seemingly endless options and resources, how do they distill a vision of their own dream home?

For Mark and Gemma Wilson, the British-born principals of London Bay Homes, that dream is articulated in the rhythmic flow and sun-drenched insouciance of a Spanish-in-

spired courtyard home in Naples' Quail West Country Club. Like a time-honored villa in Andalusia, the house welcomes with the arms of its courtyard outstretched. Its stucco façade, its trickling fountains, its stone and tumbled marble flourishes, awash in shades of the midday sun, pay tribute to the understated country estates of European noblemen.

"We love the feeling of casual elegance that the courtyard





The two-sided fireplace separates the outdoor living room from the outdoor dining area and summer kitchen.

home affords,” says Mark Wilson. “It allows for easy flow between indoors and outdoors and looks equally dramatic by day or night. It’s one of the joys of being in Florida.”

As is typical of courtyard houses, the Wilson home is a study in symmetry. An entry tower, the highest visual element, is perfectly centered between two symmetrical structures – on the right, a two-car garage; on the left, a guest cabana with one car garage. “The entry is key to what we were trying to accomplish,” says architect Tom Benedict. “The entire arrival sequence is one of balance and symmetry.”

Benedict refers to the fact that the initial approach to the courtyard house is not necessarily the entry to the house itself. The actual entry is

established by a series of experiences. In this case, the tower doors lead not to a living room, as might be expected, but to an outdoor living area that establishes a predominant theme of the house: the seamless integration between indoor and outdoor living. Proceeding across the courtyard and pool deck, one encounters several points of impact – a summer kitchen and furniture-grade outdoor dining group, a two-sided outdoor fireplace, a Mediterranean-style spa and fountain.

And then, the pièce de résistance: the entry into the home. “After the initial arrival into the courtyard,” says Benedict, “there is a second arrival extending the axis of entry. The impact here comes via an elevated volume rotunda.”

The idea of the rotunda entry was conceived so

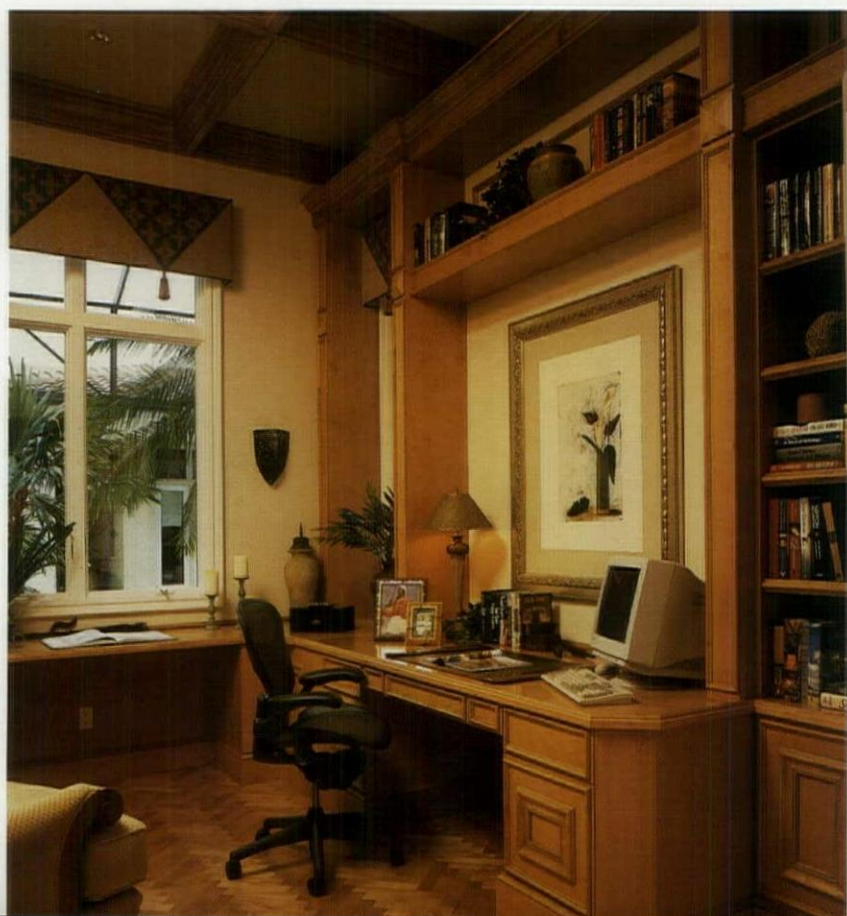


that the sense of arrival into the main house would not be diluted. Chad Moor, who executed the interior design for the home, puts it best: “One of my pet peeves with courtyard houses is that you often wander around wondering where to come in. You can’t always see the front door when standing in the courtyard. Here we celebrated the front entry to achieve arrival impact.”

The rotunda is defined by a circular soffit, supported by 10-foot cast stone columns, circular ceiling detail and a quatre-feuille floor inlay of tumbled marble and Vinaccia stone. Tradition would dictate that the foyer leads directly into the living room; not so here.

“Rather than put a room directly ahead, we moved the living room to the side and put a





window there," says Moor. "Courtyard homes have a tendency to ignore views beyond the courtyard. This was a clever way to showcase the golf course views without detracting from the courtyard focus."

The rotunda is also the center of the axis around which the house is organized. On one end, the axis leads to the master vestibule, repeating the foyer element. The vestibule is an introduction to an enormous master suite that encompasses the bedroom, a writing and lounging area (where Gemma satisfies her literary bent), his and hers walk-in closets separated by a morning kitchen, an outdoor seating area leading to the spa, and the master bath.

The Wilsons spared nothing in creating this self-



contained cocoon of privacy and repose. Gemma's closet, for example, is bigger than most guest bedrooms and is organized for maximum efficiency. "Everything is behind doors," says Mark Wilson. "It looks like a boutique – it's quite spectacular."

The shower is another unique feature. "The glass doors open totally to the courtyard, so it feels like you're showering outside," Wilson notes. "And there are two shower walls, each with eight shower heads – it feels like you're in a car wash."

The other side of the axis terminates in the dining room, a circular room that repeats the impact of the rotunda – both in terms of shape and of materials used. "The stone rug detail utilizes the same stone used in the rotunda," says Moor. "The

circular soffit contains uplights that illuminate the sueded faux finished ceiling."

The dining room, admittedly, is used only for very formal occasions. Even when entertaining, the Wilsons choose to dine in the outdoor dining area or in the "conservatory" breakfast room. The latter, says Moor, is one of the triumphs of the house. "It intentionally looks like an outdoor space that was later enclosed within the house," he explains. "The flooring material, a glazed Satillo tile, is different than in the main house. And we used outdoor furniture. The space is enclosed by storefront glass on two sides and has big skylights above. It's beautiful, day or night."

When entertaining, the family room also sees quite a bit of activity. The space focuses around

A massive pot rack and solid antique pine cabinets and walls delineate the kitchen, a favorite gathering spot for guests and owners alike.



Slate is used generously in the master bath – on a wall inlay above the tub, around the shower and on the floor detail.

a walk-up bar and a built-in wall system that houses sophisticated audio-visual componentry.

“We have integrated audio throughout the house, including the courtyard,” says Wilson, admitting this is an element they love to show off to prospective clients, as it’s over and above what they would ever do in a spec house. “There are two 200-CD changers and six different zones of music playing at any one time.”

The family room is also the main access point to the outdoor living areas. “The doors pocket so the room can open fully to the courtyard,” says Benedict. “The ceiling heights of the indoor and outdoor spaces are the same, and the coffered cypress ceilings are similar,” so one cannot distinguish where the indoors end and the outdoors begin.

“To further blur the distinction,” adds Moor, “we







Spanish style furnishings, wood beams and a carved coquina fireplace whisper nuances of the Mediterranean in the formal living room.

In the master suite, the color palette changes from earth tones and neutrals to soothing greens and silvers. The applied molding on the ceiling is inspired by a Spanish design.





The elevated volume rotunda creates a strong entry experience. The trompe l'oeil painted soffit is supported by cast stone columns.

hung drapes on both sides of the sliding glass doors that connect the family room to the outdoor living room.”

The two-sided outdoor fireplace, which dissects the outdoor living and dining areas, is a major focal point for outdoor entertaining. With its marble detail and rough-hewn wood mantle that started life as a barn beam in Ohio, the fireplace is the perfect place to gather on cool evenings.

To the Wilsons, that fluid dialogue between interior and exterior spaces is the epitome of Florida living. And, undoubtedly, the reason why this courtyard house is the builders' dream home – at least for now. ▲



The site is idyllic – 350 tree-laden acres on the banks of the St. Lucie River. An 18-hole, championship, Gary Player golf course meanders around old native trees, while a three-story clubhouse with a delightfully intricate roofline nods to Old Florida.

To add to the appeal, the property holds a deep-water marina, twin guest “cottages,” and a discreetly hidden dormitory, revamped from an existing structure. Indeed, this is a winning scenario.

The tranquil resort is in Palm City, due north of Stuart on Florida’s East Coast. It could well be the perfect getaway for stressed executives, but it



is unlikely that more than a privileged few will ever pass through its gates. For while many people have vacation homes in Florida, Wayne and Marti Huizenga have their own resort, and it is the very enviable Floridian.

The Floridian was conceived with only one purpose in mind. “We wanted to have a golf course where we could play with just our friends, the people we wanted around,” says Wayne Huizenga, Chairman and Co-CEO of Auto Nation.



A NEW TAKE ON OLD FLORIDA

Written by **Roberta Klein**

Photography by **Dan Forer**



Garcia Brenner Stromberg, ARCHITECTURE / Dianne Davant Interiors, Mary Washer, ASID, PROJECT DESIGNER

Thomas Lucido & Associates, Jane Krebs, LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE



The large cupola in the center of the roof pours natural light into the lobby and sitting room, while the complex hip roof and dormers conceal mechanical, plumbing and ventilating elements that would otherwise penetrate.

As a result, only invited friends and business associates are gifted with honorary memberships to be Floridian guests.

While the high profile Wayne Huizenga, owner of the Miami Dolphins, Pro Player Stadium, and the Boca Raton Hotel and Club reinforces his role of the quintessential entrepreneur, his wife, Marti steers the design of many Huizenga projects, not the least of which is the Floridian. Under her aegis, the project, formerly called Harbor Links and designed in the Mediterranean style, took a different turn.

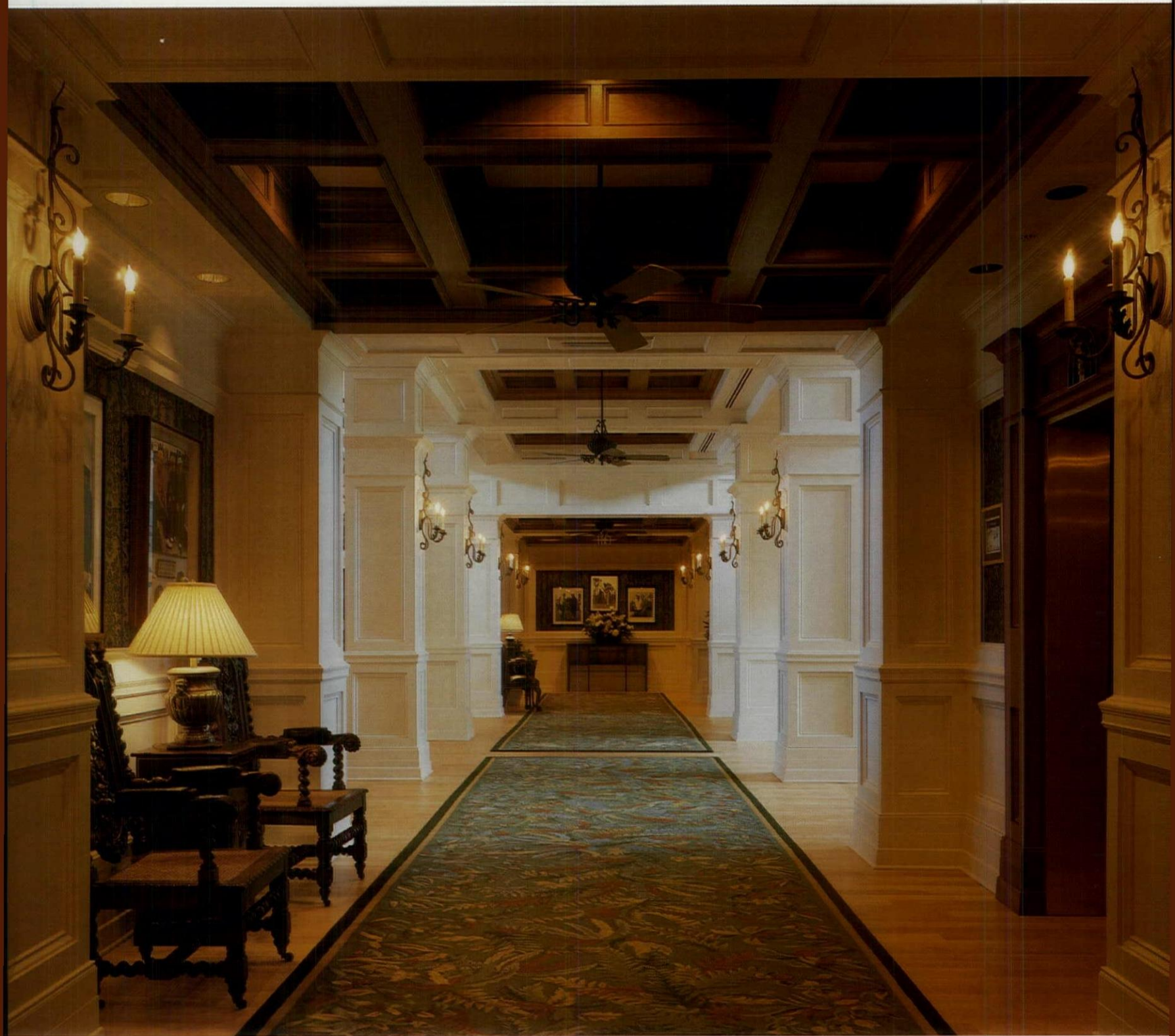
“This was originally going to be like our home in Fort Lauderdale – Old Florida Spanish,” says

Marti, a native Floridian. “But during the conceptual years, it felt as if every place that was being built looked like that. When we changed the name to Floridian, we changed the style. It gave me what I wanted.”

Wayne adds, “Marti wanted a Florida style clubhouse overlooking the water and the golf course down below. She also wanted big verandas with large paddle fans so she could walk all around the building.” The clubhouse is as she imagined, with a look of timelessness inside and out. Interior designer Dianne Davant understood her clients’ desires.

“Dianne and I have worked together for 15 years,”





The main corridor repeats the nature theme through custom rugs that incorporate animals. Two stately carved walnut antique chairs offer a resting place, while custom made sconces along the hallway emit pleasant lighting.

says Marti. "We know each other and work very well together." It was different for newcomer Jorge Garcia. He met the Huizenga group on a Friday afternoon and won them over with a completed plan the following Monday morning. At that time, the style was still Mediterranean.

Marti says, "George is very talented and was confident enough with his abilities to be very flexible. That was important because we had strong opinions of what we wanted to accomplish." One strong opinion was about the resort's ambience.

"They sought the warmth and comfort and richness that would ordinarily not be of something of

this large scale," says Davant. "In other words, the clubhouse would match the graciousness of a lovely private home."

Before embarking upon new plans with the Old Florida vernacular, the design team took a series of "investigative" trips, covering territories from Seaside and the Disney resort to Hilton Head, Dallas, and Augusta, Georgia.

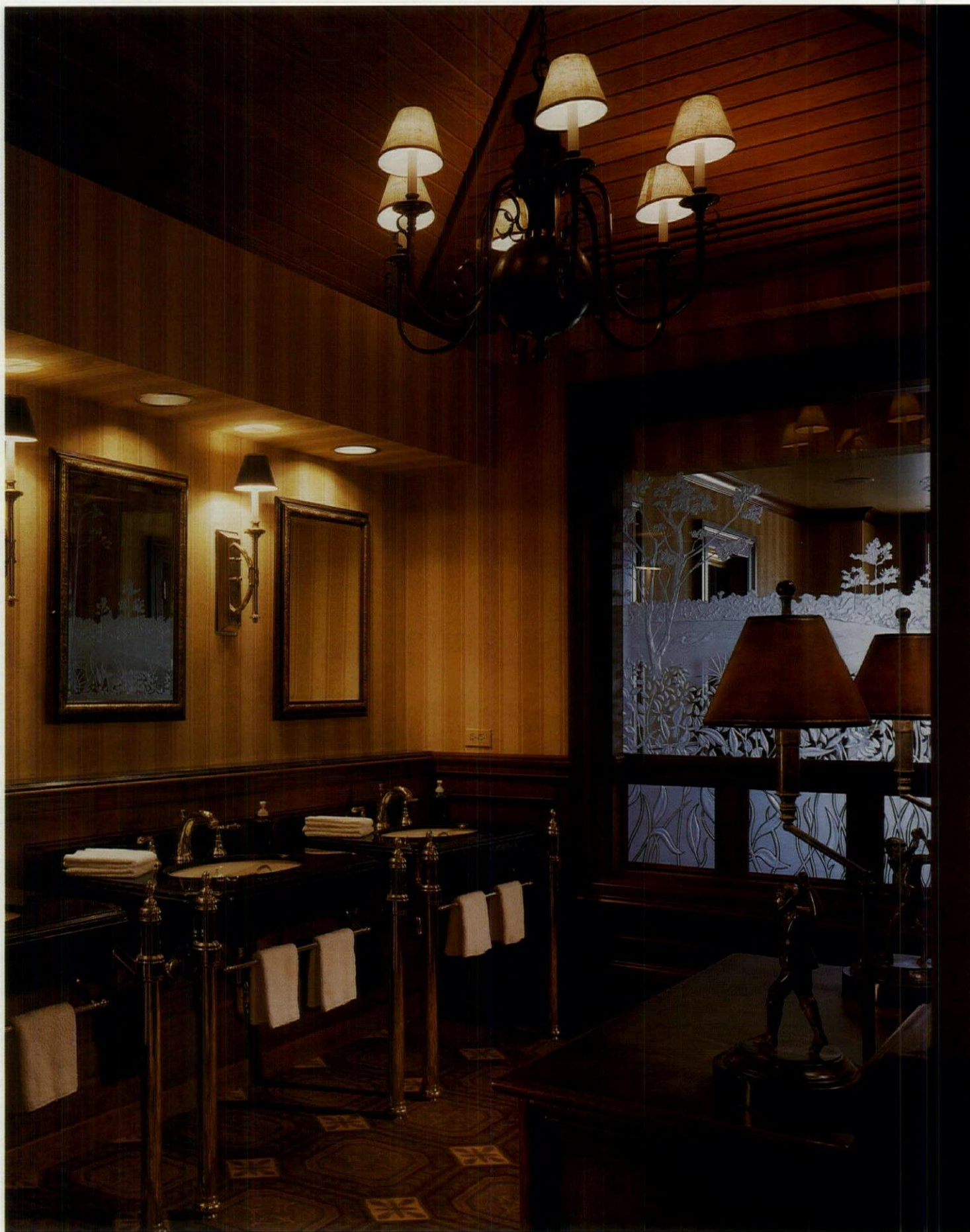
"We even drew ideas from clubhouses in California and Europe," says Garcia. "The Floridian style literally became a combination of three basic architectural foundations - Nautical Key West carpentry, native Florida cracker, and Southern Plantation."



Ground was broken in February, 1997 for the 38,000 square foot clubhouse, and by that Christmas the building was functional. The 10 month completion was record time. The two 3,500 square foot "cottages" were also on the fast-track, and ready for occupancy for Christmas.

The required warmth is expressed on the exterior of the building, which belies the fact that it is an all steel, hurricane proof structure with a concrete skeleton. It is a cementitious finish on the exterior that simulates wood, while beaded ceilings inside are authentic.

The adventurous tin roof, an evolution of the classical Boston hips shape, was a major archi-



The handsome men's bathroom echoes the golf course in a finely etched glass window by artist Eric Mendelson.

tectural achievement. There is absolutely no penetration of mechanical elements. Inside, the clubhouse is almost a paradox.

While the massive volume and dramatic stairway are breathtaking, the colors, furnishings, fabrics and appointments are homelike and inviting. Adding to the language of warmth is the copious millwork, rich and prevalent throughout.

There was such a profusion of work to execute the

complex millwork that the design team established a wood shop in the basement.

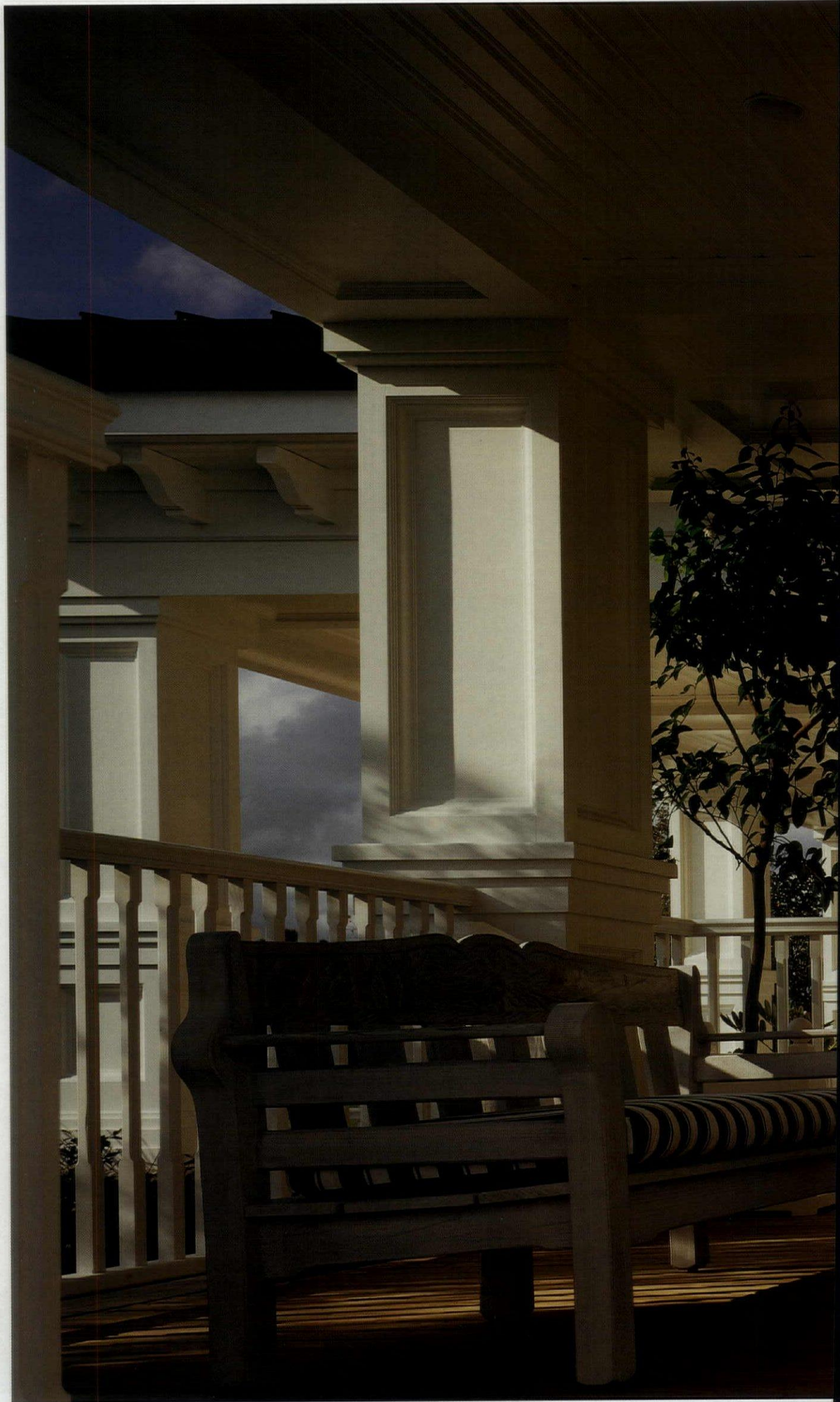
At one time, 85 master carpenters were on the project, producing all of the millwork on site. In order to avoid problems with the cherry wood, mockups were prepared first.

"There are no blemishes, no knots, no worm marks, no scratches," says Garcia. "This is clear cherry and we couldn't afford to do it wrong."



A NEW TAKE ON
OLD FLORIDA

Columns, moldings,
and copious
millwork, all crafted
on site, are
architectural
references to
nautical Key West,
native Florida
cracker and
Southern Plantation
styles.







The classic Boston hip roof translates into an exciting roofline on the Floridian Cottage.

Davant and Garcia were exceptionally challenged by the requirement of making the grand-scaled clubhouse feel homey. “That’s where the marriage of architectural detailing, furnishings and finishes with Dianne came into play,” says Garcia.

Another challenge was making the clubhouse appear as if it had existed for many years. Traditional furnishings and antiques selected by Davant and Marti accomplished the mission.

“Right from the beginning, we wanted to find very special pieces for the furnishings,” says Davant. “When possible, we used antiques, but when we couldn’t find the right antique, we used custom reproductions.”

Additionally, Marti’s love of nature was integrated throughout with nature motifs threaded through custom rugs and fabrics. A prime example is an area rug in the main lobby, a joint

effort by Davant, project designer Mary Washer, and Marti Huizenga. Woven through a background of vernacular foliage are alligators and herons.

In order to meet the extraordinarily fast timetable for completion, Davant, whose office is in Stuart, spent the majority of her time on the Floridian site during the 10-month construction.

“I had to stay on top of things to make sure the electrical agreed with the interior plans and that everything else was in agreement as the building was being built,” she says. “I could leave at seven one evening and by the time I returned early in the morning, the contractor would have literally completed a room.”

Garcia’s situation was even more extreme. At the recommendation of Wayne Huizenga, Garcia and his project architect, Peter Stromberg, actually



moved onto the property for the last half of the construction period. But the payoff for Garcia and Davant is priceless. They both hold honorary memberships to the Floridian.

Almost every weekend, from fall to spring, the Huizengas hop into one of their two helicopters and take the 30-minute ride to the Floridian. "We play with friends who have the same desires we have to be in a club atmosphere that makes you feel good," says Wayne. And there's plenty of room for friends. Between the two guest cottages, the dormitory, and the Huizenga's home on the property, there are 21 bedrooms. ▲



A TRIUMPHANT TRANSFORMATION

Written by **Al Aischuler**

Photography by **Carlos Domenech**



Edward David Nieto Design Group, Inc., INTERIOR DESIGN

Hayek Construction Corp., GENERAL CONTRACTOR

*L*ess than two miles from downtown Miami and deco-hip South Beach lies Fisher Island, a haven for affluent cosmopolites seeking a relaxed and secluded residential environment.

The 216-acre community, accessible only via a seven minute ferryboat ride, a yacht or by air, is currently home to more than 500 families from some forty countries. Only 20 percent of them live on the Island year round. Most, like a couple

from Colombia, relish its seemingly contradictory amenities of accessibility and isolation in a secondary residence offering security, status, and a scenic setting.

While considering the purchase of a particularly well-situated 3,200-square-foot corner apartment, they found fault with its existing layout, conventional appointments and uninspired appliances. The discerning industrialist husband and his equally discerning wife sought a more func-





The living room palette of pink, blue, yellow and lavender was established by two silk Persian carpets. "Barracuda-Nina," an Alejandro Obregon acrylic, is hung above a fireplace framed by custom cabinetry.

tional floorplan with distinctive architectural features. After interviewing several South Florida design professionals, they selected Edward D. Nieto, whose namesake firm has been based in the Miami Design District since 1992.

Nieto recalls the inherent challenge of this assignment: "Over the years I've designed many new homes and enhanced plenty of others. But I'd never before been commissioned to completely eliminate an existing interior – and start over from scratch."

After a complete retooling, Nieto's comprehensive plans were presented to the clients and amended and agreed upon during a visit to their home in Colombia. At the same time it was determined which, if any, of their fine heirlooms

or artwork might be transported to Florida. Ultimately, only a single lighting fixture and certain prized paintings and accessories were chosen to be integrated into the Fisher Island residence. During this visit, Nieto also learned of preferences for furnishings, finishes, colors, etc. and arrangements of same.

The Fisher Island apartment was subsequently gutted by a Miami general contractor, who constructed an entirely new interior to conform with the designer's detailed specifications.

"We had worked together over the years," notes Nieto, "and he was well aware of our expectations." The space was accordingly invested with assorted ceiling elevations and architectural embellishments, including coffers and arches,







crown moldings, chair rails and baseboards, in addition to an elaborate array of custom cabinetry. The original, unused appliances and fixtures were replaced by top-of-the-line models.

Nieto's creativity is immediately evident in the entry, where an inlaid circular medallion of Imperial Blue-Green quartz, polished to contrast with its matte honed-and-filled Egyptian limestone surround, reiterates the dome added to amplify the desired ceiling elevation. Silver and gold leaf are both employed extensively as accents. An antique glaze tones down the dome's silver-leaf finish, while a carved gold-leaf decoration surmounts an elegant Italian vitrine.

Circular fixtures, similar though smaller than those in the foyer, are suspended from the living

room ceiling whose pale lavender tint is more apparent at night. Ralph Lauren paint, usually glazed, was applied in almost every sector of the room.

The walls here, offwhite as elsewhere, are tinged with purple, one of several colorations found in two silk Persian carpets used to establish the palette. Nieto sampled these in the trim of shades he designed for a pair of antique Waterford lamps that flank the tufted, rolled-arm sofa. All upholstery fabrics, drapery and bedding treatments throughout the apartment are silk.

Additional living room furnishings include a pair of Louis XVI chairs, also reproductions, a large Rococo cocktail table and a Regency-style side table. Outstanding is a gilt, marble-topped Neo-

Sparkling sconces immersed like the chandelier in a 24-karat gold solution flank an acrylic painting, "Bodegon" by Margarita Lozana, in a dining space demarcated by decorative Ionic columns. Flooring here as elsewhere, matte-finished honed limestone, from Keys Granite.



The unusual lamp sitting atop a lacewood side table from the designer's SoBe Collection was created by Liza Minelli and bought by Nieto during a fund-raiser to benefit DIFFA. Andrew Kaliniak painted the accompanying watercolor on parchment paper.

classic console trimmed in genuine gold leaf.

Decorative Ionic columns demarcate almost half of an expansive area Nieto established for entertaining, essentially creating a separate dining space. The ceiling was also modified here, lower at its perimeter and elevated above a walnut table with a Sheraton-style, double-pedestal base. The top flaunts a racetrack border with ebony, satinwood and kingswood veneers. The table accommodates a dinner party of eight. Ebony columns with gold-leaf ornamentation and feet adorn a Regency-style credenza in crotched mahogany.

The master bedroom—another example of Nieto's felicitous theme of “elegance without ostentation”—has creamy wall-to-wall wool Edward Fields carpet, subtly blending with the limestone floor

featured throughout the residence. Walls here are tinted mint green, one of several “purposely peaceful” colorations found in the room's silk taffeta draperies and bedding ensemble. The peaceful coloration repeats on the upholstered headboard of an Empire-style walnut bed with 18-karat gold-plated ormolu and a mini-floral motif in the fabric of a pair of wing chairs.

One of several closets is fitted with a refrigerator, an icemaker and a two-burner heater for early-morning coffee - or perhaps a nightcap on the couple's adjacent balcony.

Nieto's creative use of architectural elements, such as arches and moldings, extends to the luxurious master bathroom. A pair of custom designed vanities have concave facades with





Green Eucalyptus granite topping paired vanities from Nieto Design's SoBe Collection is repeated in inlays of a white Kashmir granite floor that extends as a tub surround. Granite is from Keys Granite.

antique glazed silver leaf. Their starburst drawer-front pattern combines cherry and macassar ebony, while their tops are Eucalyptus granite. Additionally, the pulls are hand-carved cherubs and angels in antique gold leaf. The soothing room's wallcovering is a waterproofed paper, featuring cream-and-gold fleur-de-lis.

The smaller of two guestrooms reflects the more contemporary taste of the couple's youngest son, a New Yorker who frequently visits Florida.

A pair of beds from the Nieto Design Group's SoBe Collection, upholstered in a charcoal gray combination of textured cotton and wool, are separated by a lacewood side table with a pull-out tray. Its casters readily oblige relocation when the beds are placed together. In contrast to more

formal window treatments in the apartment, Roman shades convey a casual ambiance. The prevailing color here is purple, the favorite hue of this son.

Panoramic views of both Miami and Miami Beach, the waters of Biscayne Bay and the Atlantic are plentiful with some 675 square feet of terrace bordering this strategic corner unit. Limestone flooring used throughout most of the interior extends here as well, while teakwood furniture from Indonesia is pleasantly accompanied by colorful bougainvillea in faux-stone pottery.

Due to considerable preparation and the collaborative concern of the designer, contractor and client, relatively few change orders were issued during the nearly two years necessary for comple-



tion. "It was a pleasure to work with people with such good taste," Nieto recalls. "Quite simply they wanted the 'best' of everything. And we were delighted to comply." ▲

RESOURCES

Windows & Doors
Marvin/Window Classics
7246 SW 42nd. Terrace
Miami, FL 33155
(305) 266-9800

Marble & Granite
Keys Granite
2125 NW 86th Ave.
Miami, FL 33122
(305) 477-7363



A NEW HERITAGE



In a chain of lakes in Orlando's Windermere suburb, among the century-old cypress and oak trees, one house wears its non-conformity with patrician reserve. It is palatial, yes, but it flaunts nothing. Like an heirloom, it is prized for its venerable heritage, distinguished by its timelessness.

Upon the initial approach across brick pavers and past formal gardens and a stone fountain, the house looks as if it has been standing for genera-

Written by
**Daphne
Nikolopoulos**

Photography by
Laurence Taylor
except where noted



tions. A two-story, bayed element that alludes to the tower of a medieval French chateau immediately draws the eye – more so than the entry portal, which assumes a subordinate position according to classic European styling. Architectural forms are tied together by brick wainscoting that runs the full perimeter of the exterior and cast stone moldings that delineate the lower and upper levels.

The architecture harmonizes with its environment, not unlike the classic Country French structures which have inspired it. Indeed, with its gabled entry and brick, timber and stucco façade, the house would not look out of place on the banks of the Loire River, tucked in the misty hillsides of the French chateau country.

That the structure inspires a different sense of place should come as no surprise to those familiar with the work of architect Tom Price. Price, who was awarded the top prize for his design of

Tom Price
Architects, PA,
ARCHITECTURE

**Montanna &
Associates,**
Sharon M. Gilkey,
ASID,
INTERIOR
DESIGN

Ray Coudriet,
BUILDER

Redmon Design,
LANDSCAPE
ARCHITECTURE







The living room pronounces a French reference more so than other spaces, which are designed in what Gilkey calls “European Continental” style.

this 8,170-square-foot home by the National Association of Home Builders, designs homes bearing a distinct European signature and a near-obsessive mindfulness of detail. He calls it the “new heritage.”

“We’ve had a greater call for these houses,” he says. “They provide a personal anchorage in one’s heritage. They have a calming effect.”

In this case, the house is ideally suited to the vision of the clients – the chief executive of an international company and his wife. Because they lived for three years in Paris and traveled throughout France, the Country French vernacular felt familiar to them. They liked the earthiness, the honesty, the warmth of it. Within that context, they also sought to address a critical

lifestyle issue: the need for an expansive entertainment venue conducive to multiple experiences for as many as 400 guests.

“Reconciling the dual objectives that are seemingly at odds with each other was the great challenge,” says Price in reference to the clients’ need for size and their desire for intimate living spaces. “It’s easy to design a big house. It’s difficult to design a big house that’s livable.”

To achieve this, Price creates volumetric excitement through multiple levels and modulating ceiling heights – techniques that give the illusion of smaller, conversational spaces. He also mixes smaller and larger spaces, all connected via a central spine that serves as the primary ordering element.





A Juliette balcony off the master suite overlooks the loft on top of the staircase. The master suite is located a half-flight higher than loft level, a technique used to maintain the ceiling height in the living room, directly below.

"When you have a house this large, it mandates a hallway," says Price. "But we hate hallways. This is a different concept – it feels more like a gallery element."

The "gallery" effect is largely the work of interior designer Sharon Gilkey. "We broke up the length of the corridor visually by introducing three shallow trays onto the ceiling," she explains, "and mixing up floor materials like maple wood, Saturnia stone and marble. Then we incorporated a two-sided masonry fireplace which also opens to the great room."

The corridor also leads to the formal living room, the dining room and the wine cellar, the latter located a half-flight of stairs below the grand staircase. On opposite ends of the spine are the

informal, less trafficked areas – the study and family room. "The idea is that all spaces interrelate," says Price, "for optimum flow during entertainment functions."

Still, spaces are distinct enough to offer a variety of entertainment options. For example, guests may choose to linger by the bar in the great room (or "Ralph Lauren room," as Gilkey renamed it in reference to its design style) or stand around the Steinway grand piano, listening to a mini-concert by the husband, who is an accomplished jazz pianist and, in his spare time, plays in a three-piece jazz band.

Others may gather by the fire in the living room, play billiards in the game room upstairs, or lounge on the balcony. A strong focus is placed



The aged mesquite wood cabinetry, mantle and coffee table in the family room were crafted by artisans in a Mexican village that is devoted to the art of furniture making.

The master bedroom seems transplanted from an Avignon chateau.





on outdoor entertainment, as well – all public areas lead via French doors out to the pool deck, covered lanai and arcaded bridge that connects the main house with a guest house.

“The outdoor areas have been space planned with entertaining in mind,” says Gilkey. “There are two summer kitchens and seating for 300 people outside. People can walk out the French doors to the patio area and pool deck, then cross the bridge to the guest cottage, experiencing garden spaces and picking up hors d’oeuvres along the way. That keeps people moving so it never looks crowded. It works flawlessly.”

While the owners entertain extensively, they also cherish their private time. The husband frequently travels across the globe on business, so



coming home to a restful retreat is of paramount importance. Warmth and comfort dominate the informal gathering spaces reserved for private family use.

In the family room, where the couple retreats to read or curl up by the fireplace, Gilkey introduces the raw sincerity of rough-hewn woods – a pecky cypress ceiling and Mexican aged mesquite wood cabinetry.

But nowhere is the tranquil mood more evident than the master bedroom. Here, Gilkey has capitalized on the room's bay window and octagonal ceiling to imbue the space with all the character of a chateau tower suite. Three sets of French doors swing open to reveal a view of the lake and the tree tops. Leaded glass clerestories refract

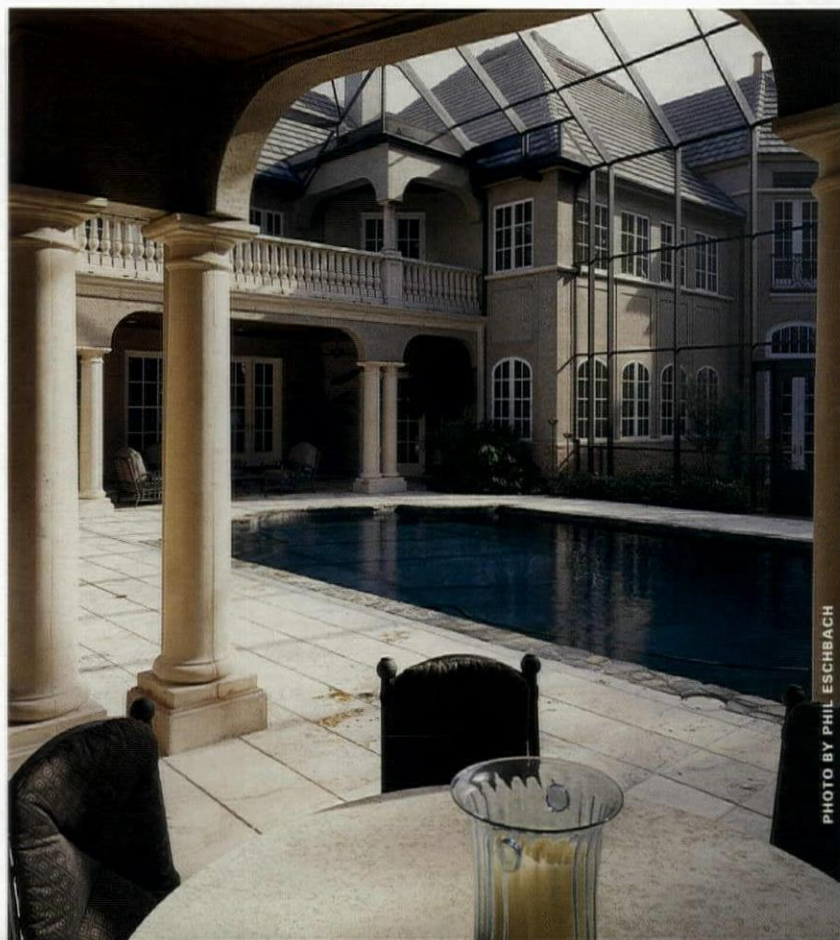


PHOTO BY PHIL ESCHBACH





PHOTO BY CHRIS DONCSEKZ

the sunlight like prisms. A stone fireplace casts a glow on warm woods.

“It feels like a bed and breakfast retreat somewhere in the mountains,” Gilkey says. “It is very much a getaway – this man needs it.”

The true triumph of the house, of course, is the manner in which it becomes all things to the demanding lifestyle of its owners: A venue to entertain the masses in grand style, a structure in peaceful coexistence with the environment, a private retreat to soothe and rejuvenate – indeed, a successful reconciliation of seemingly opposing forces. ▲

RESOURCES

Architecture

Tom Price Architects, P.A.
210 East Gore Street
Orlando, FL 32806
(407) 422-4422

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CONTEMPORARY EASE IN GABLES ESTATES

Written by **Roberta Klein**

Photography by **Lanny Provo**



Dennis Jenkins Design Associates, Dennis Jenkins, Principal In Charge, Diana Vogel, Associate Designer

INTERIOR DESIGN

*A*fter 30 years, Gables Estates still maintains an impressive cachet. A special elegance defines this gated waterfront community within Coral Gables. Yet its diversity of custom homes and abundant mature landscaping make the community as welcoming as it is elite.

This peerless character was the determining factor for a young couple living in Gables Estates to make an upward move in the same neighborhood. In purchasing the decade old home, the couple gained a whole new world. In addition to 12,000 square feet of indoor living space, it gave them a dock capable of

berthing a 50-foot yacht, a luxurious pool and patio, a spacious deck with ample shade and sun, and easy access to the ocean.

To elevate the interior to the level the owner's wanted required major work from Dennis Jenkins. And although structural changes were unnecessary, the project was intense. "We did plenty," says Jenkins, an award-winning, Miami-based interior designer and furniture designer. "The whole living room had concrete planters, including one underneath the spiral staircase. They were



CONTEMPORARY
EASE IN
GABLES
ESTATES

Refined simplicity is evident in the exceptionally comfortable furniture of the two generous seating arrangements in the living room. The colorful Robert Natkin painting reaffirms the sensibility of off-white walls.







Jenkins' custom oversized cocktail table of cherry wood is a critical, functional element for entertaining.

encased in a floating slab that sat on an earth berm, and we had to tear all that out.”

This complicated task necessitated restructuring the slab that had encased the planters and reinforcing several “pocket areas.” Removal didn’t stop at this point. It included the original black and white checkerboard marble flooring and a proliferation of glass block at one end of the living room.

But rather than needing a total rehabilitation, the home merely begged for an appropriate color scheme and attractive furnishings to complement its good bones.

Jenkins had other elements besides the good bones in his favor. Among them, and possibly the most important, was the efficient decision making of his clients. “The two of them worked well together and there was no conflict,” he says.

Another was an excellent floor plan. Four spacious family bedrooms were upstairs, while the guest suite was strategically located on the first floor. The generous square footage also embraced such luxuries as a complete home theatre, an inviting den, and a well organized kitchen.

But the prize of the house, which Jenkins calls “the grandest feature,” is the exceptionally large living room/dining room. “It’s an extremely comfortable space - even though it has a 17-foot high ceiling at its highest point,” he says.

Indeed, under most circumstances such exaggerated height is formidable. But not in this case, where the elevation actually translates to a comfort zone. This ideal scenario is a result of crisp off-white walls that express “a gentle feeling,” and the ceiling painted in a lighter value.

“If you paint the ceiling lighter, it’s grounded,





A custom designed Tibetan area rug anchors the Saporiti seating in the family room, which faces onto the comprehensive audio/visual unit.

creating a better living relationship with the human species,” Jenkins adds.

With this feeling of well-being firmly in place, Jenkins addressed the contemporary furnishings. “The overall effect is calculated to read like a contemporary thought, using the world of ‘contemporary’ as what’s happening now.

“Not just modern,” Jenkins qualifies, citing a common conception that anything modern is of the Bauhaus period. “This is a house of today. The pieces are fresh and the design is current.”

And comfortable, one might add, for the interior fulfills the requirements of an active family with children and animals. There is functionality to resist ordinary wear and tear and ample seating in the living room, which Jenkins transfigured through harmonious designs. In conjunction with the background palette that set the easy tone, this

was partially due to new flooring in unpretentious natural oak.

A collaboration of European furnishings with respected signatures from Saporiti, Luminaire, and Lignet Rose co-exist in synchrony with Jenkins’ custom designs. In the living room, they are evident in two seating areas that are completely separated without being disengaged. This arrangement provides flexibility to accommodate large groups as well as small.

One grouping consists of four off-white chairs flanking a custom, cherry wood cocktail table, its impressive scale in keeping with the room’s proportions.

The other grouping utilizes a large sofa with a smaller custom table in front. The glass top of this unusual table is a pleasant contradiction of free form with angles, while the base is composed of

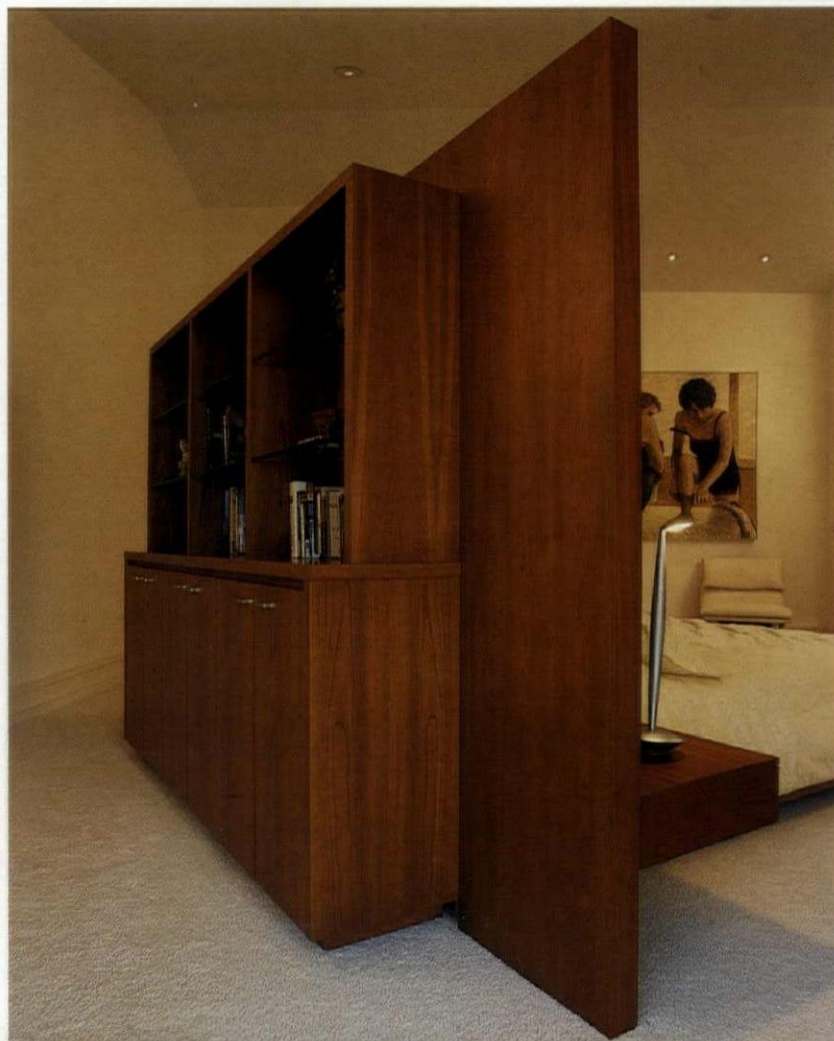


a series of thin aluminum spindles that were cut on a lathe. The adjacent dining room continues the mood with a table from Luminaire and Saporiti chairs. The sideboard, also from Saporiti, was customized to Jenkins' specifications.

"Giorgio Saporiti is wonderful to work with," Jenkins exclaims. "You can phone him in Italy, tell him you want to modify the design and then send him a sketch. He is very accessible. "The sideboard previously had chrome rods that were taken out to make a very clean statement."

While the sideboard was customized rather than custom, the powder room features a Jenkins' original - a cantilevered glass shelf that slides into the walls and loops around from one area to the other.

The removal of the glass block in the living room had afforded a clean new space, paving the way







for the powder room revision into two specific sections. The first is a “foyer” makeup area, containing a slim vertical mirror with the sensual glass countertop and the second is the private area, where the countertop continues. A Phillippe Starck sink and water closet and flowing wood floor emphasize the glamour.

“This is a sparkingly clear bathroom in off-white with a beautiful color of glass and a sliver of mirror above the sink,” Jenkins aptly says.

Another area that showcases Jenkins’ originality is the master bedroom, where a free floating bed is as functional as it is handsome. Built of cherry wood with attached end tables, it has a flip-up headboard for adjustable pillow use and what might be an entire room built into the back.

Behind this unit is a vertical cabinet with a full lower counter that can be used as a dresser or library/study, according to the owners’ preference.

Although “there was plenty to do” to develop the new contemporary mien, the project was completed in a remarkably short six months.

Jenkins says, “This was one of the most efficient jobs I’ve ever done. It was a highly effective use of time because the clients were very effective in responding to deadlines.”

Despite the gritty chore of removing planters and glass block and the effort of designing furnishings and window treatments, no place in the house was short changed. On the contrary, this home is a study of splendid contemporary design with comfort and ease in an exceptionally large space. ▲

Appliances and cabinetry in the kitchen remained in their original form, but the cabinets were refaced in cherry with black granite countertops.

MASTERS OF TROPICAL ARCHITECTURE

TEN OF FLORIDA'S BEST



Written by **Roberta Klein**

They came to South Florida in the '40s, '50s, '60s, these young lions of architecture. Some were native Floridians, returning home. Others were from New York, Kentucky, Ohio. Most settled in Miami, when it was as gentle as a small town. Philosophically, they were united. They would create architecture to collaborate with the climate.

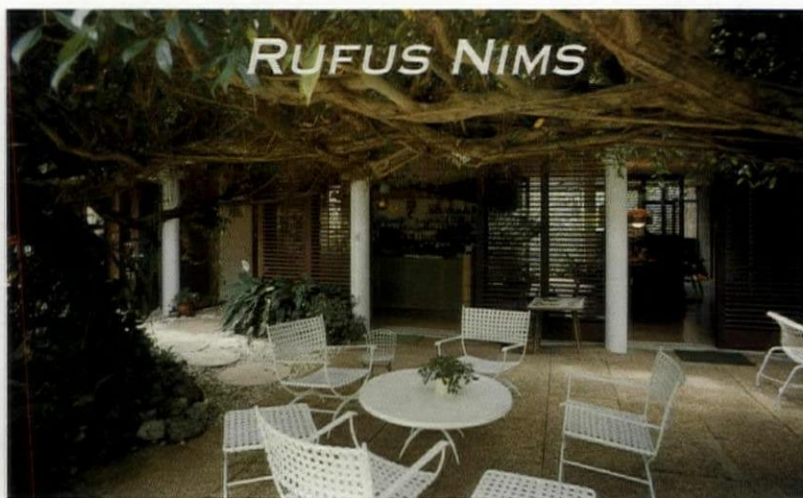
The challenge was exalting. Design for a sub-tropic region with tropical summers. Hot and humid from June through October: searing sun in the morning and torrential rains in the afternoon. Balmy from November through May, with the sky as blue as a new baby blanket. On Florida's East Coast, the prevailing winds hitchhiked along the gulfstream, rippling the water and fanning trees and people, too. Under the shade, it always felt cool.

Over the years, these idealists fulfilled their goals. They designed homes that responded to the climate and their clients. To achieve the optimum they ascribed to essential elements. First, the critical siting for the prevailing winds; then native materials to harmonize with the environment.

A sturdy hip roof provided large overhangs for shade and protection, while the home was situated well off the ground for maximum air circulation. Frames were reinforced and all elements fastened tightly together to resist damage from hurricanes.

Walls of doors made the outside and inside one. Covered porches and broad terraces offered oases for relaxation. Natural light flowed indoors, while trellises filtered the glare. Finally, native trees and foliage and artful landscaping supplemented the shade and complemented the structure. Once these elements were implemented, the talent of each architect took over. It was not merely their talent that went into the process, but their joy and passion as well. These emotions became the soul of the tropical wonders.

Regretfully, many of these homes no longer exist. Air conditioning, strict zoning changes and fashion trends sounded the death knoll. But as one of our masters proudly recalls, "As recently as the '70s, the really great residences in South Florida were tropical. ▲"



If there were a designated guru of tropical architecture, it would have to be Rufus Nims. Almost every architect who has designed for the tropical climate has learned from his work.

A native of Pensacola, Nims came to Miami when he was working for the war department during World War II. Although he fell in love with the city, Miami's climate was not necessarily the genesis of his tropical architecture.

"If I had moved to Minnesota, I would have been an expert for cold architecture," he says. "I just believe in interacting with where you are. To design for the outside - it's glamorous, it's exciting. It stimulates a lot of emotions."

Old photos of his homes are proof. In many, the main house is on the second floor, maximizing the breeze and minimizing insects. Others are built with pavilions separated by gardens. Some incorporate louvered doors and windows along the entire length of the house. And one atrium design has an indoor reflection pool and a footbridge.

Among Nims' achievements is the prototype Howard Johnson Motor Lodge, which redefined American motel standards. Another is the self-contained cook top, which he invented by taking apart an entire stove. Yet his technical approach never compromised aesthetics.



After more than five decades, Nims is still designing homes, but not in Miami. He's disillusioned by changes that occurred after Hurricane Andrew.

"You can't have fun doing a building here anymore, and I just don't do it without any fun," he says. "You used to go to city hall and get a building approval in one afternoon. When it takes several months and 40 more stops to make, it's just not worth it."

A current project is a barn for a farm in Kentucky that he and his daughter own. They raise race horses, and presently have nineteen of them.

Another is a "Florida" house in Citrus County, incorporating the fundamentals of tropical homes. The exception is that it is built at ground level to accommodate the owner's gardening.

Nims is particularly animated about his designs and how people live. He accepts air conditioning as part of today's world, but believes everyone needs to commune with their environment.

"If you shield animals and plants from the environment too much, it is noticeably detrimental. I think it is to people, too. But if you can be in harmony with where you are, it can be an enrichment, and it seems silly to let that go by." ▲



ALFRED BROWNING PARKER

"I'm back exactly where I started 50 years ago - a one-man office," says the venerable Alfred Browning Parker, who currently teaches a graduate design studio at the University of Florida.

"I'm a pencil pusher. I do all of the drawings the old fashioned way - by myself with a pencil."

Parker is inarguably the consummate architect. Over a span of 10 decades in Miami, the Fellow of the American Institute of Architects has designed so many different types of buildings that they're almost impossible to count.

"I love wood, stone, concrete," says Parker, a recipient of an AIA Silver Award. "I'd build with horse feathers if I could stick them together."

Parker learned the power of tropical storms when he was 10, and his father valiantly held the front door against the mighty 1926 hurricane. The house remained intact, but the garage collapsed.

"I learned a lesson in that hurricane," says Parker. "Don't monkey around with Mother Nature. A tropical building has to be tied from the top into the ground."

The prolific architect's buildings include everything from banks and churches to airport terminals. "People think I only do houses. That's the biggest bunch of stuff in the world.

I'm completely a general practitioner."

As proof, he offers a litany of additional work. Farms, a solar hydrogen plant, and even a doghouse. He speaks of two modest buildings with endearment.

One is George Washington Carver School in Coconut Grove, his first school design. Made of pre cast concrete, it had wood {louvered} doors on the southeast and high windows on the west, so rooms could open completely for air circulation and close tightly for storm protection.

The other was his first home, which he built by hand between 1941 and 1943.

Wartime dictated that home construction could not exceed \$200, so Parker utilized natural rock from the site and a salvage yard for other elements. The owner sold it all to the young serviceman in naval khakis for \$150.

The home led to publication in *House Beautiful Magazine* and a meeting with Frank Lloyd Wright that fueled an enduring friendship.

Nowadays, Parker divides his time between his new Vermont house, with furniture he designed and built, and his Gainesville home. He recently donated his archives to the University of Florida, the school where he taught before starting his practice - and teaches now. ▲



PETER JEFFERSON

Peter Jefferson, a Fellow of the American Institute of Architects, follows a liberal architectural philosophy.

“There is no ‘style’ of honest tropical architecture. Certainly no more and no different ‘style’ than an igloo, teepee, sod house or stilt house in water. All are simple and natural responses to climate and resources at a certain time and place,” Jefferson says.

Prior to becoming an architect, Jefferson labored in construction, digging ditches and working as an assistant to block masons and carpenters. He proudly boasts that he can still hang a door and build a dry wall.

While studying industrial design at the University of Miami, Jefferson saw a slide show of Frank Lloyd Wright’s work. Because he was so taken with the beauty and form of the buildings, he decided to become an architect.

The native of West Virginia had previously served a two-year stint in the Corps of Engineers teaching aerial photography. After settling in Miami in 1954, and attending the university for three and a half years, he did two apprenticeships. They were with Thomas Madden, a specialist in schools and churches, and Alfred Browning Parker, respectively.

Throughout his decades of practice, Jefferson has lived by this mantra: “You can’t violate the constraints of climate, sun, rain, prevailing breeze. Aside from the fact that form

can take varying shapes, the principles remain the same.”

One of the most distinguishing aspects of Jefferson’s residences is his masterful use of natural light. His light sources are so adroitly located that there is rarely a need for any artificial light in the daytime.

The advent of air conditioning and increased home security affected tropical architecture. For example, the ubiquitous jalousie windows of the ‘40s, ‘50s and ‘60s succumbed to large paned windows and sliding glass doors. “In that sense,” says Jefferson, “tropical architecture disappeared.”

Nevertheless, Jefferson compensated by introducing a profusion of windows to his designs, even placing them in closets, and implementing new forms of ventilation. One of note was the cupola, used both as a light source and for a ventilation device.

Despite the many changes in tropical design during the last two decades, Jefferson’s philosophy sustains.

“Even with the transition that permitted air conditioning of the whole house, houses should be designed the same way {as before},” he says.

His houses are proof. Every one responds to the climate. ▲



ROBERT BRADFORD BROWNE

The illustrious career of Robert Bradford Browne ended in 1987 with his untimely death, but not the influence of his extraordinary architecture. In the '50s and '60s and even the '70s, Browne's homes embodied caveats of architecture that perfectly suited the tropical climate and environment.

Incorporated in the structures were indigenous materials, such as wood, along with tin roofs, above-ground elevations, and wraparound wooden louvers. The louvers were often utilized as doors and walls, affording homeowners the ability to completely open indoor space to the outside. As a result, the enriching Florida light and extraordinary views, emphasized strongly on waterfront sites, were completely integrated into the residences.

From the onset, Browne's homes were appreciated, published and awarded. Many earned awards from the American Institute of Architect's local, state and national competitions as well as competitions sponsored by such prestigious publications as *Progressive Architecture* and *Architectural*

Record. Some were great collaborations with Rufus Nims.

By 1968, Browne, a fellow of the American Institute of Architects, began integrating tropical elements into schools, churches, resorts, commercial buildings and private and public housing. Still standing in Miami's "Little Havana" district is the much lauded George Smathers Plaza Public Housing Project, which represented the United States at the International Congress of Architects in Buenos Aires in a photo display in 1969.

Browne's widow, Sally, was the firm's interior designer for many years before she and Browne married. She says, "He was very much dedicated to tropical architecture and was consistent with it. He designed with the idea of correct circulation and shade and the natural cross breezes cooling the homes." Browne also says her husband had an outstanding imagination and was never limited in his thinking. "Nothing seemed impossible if Bob felt it was the right thing to do." ▲



MILTON C. HARRY

It was an odd turn of events that inspired Milton Harry to become an architect. He had been studying entomology at the State University of New York when he realized that he preferred his roommate's field of landscape architecture. As a result, he enrolled in the architecture program at Syracuse University, and earned his architectural degree.

Harry first came to Miami for a summer job with a structural engineer whose clients included Rufus Nims. "Rufus knew I was an architect," says Harry. "There was a void in the office and he had a project that needed architectural help."

So Harry began working with Nims and the practice suited him. Nims had a technical approach to solving the problems of tropical living that Harry liked. "Rufus was a very good mentor in that respect," says Harry. "He had very good philosophies and practiced what he preached."

After two years with Nims, he began working for an engineering firm, which he left in 1957 to start his own practice. Surprisingly, his prospective clients only wanted houses.

"I don't think I had a very strong philosophy except to start with the program and the context," he says. "You have to understand the reason for building and deliver a project that works. The client will live in a house or occupy a building for 20 years, and the architect has to anticipate changes that will happen over this time. It's a little bit of fortune telling."

Many of Harry's commercial and public projects are bellwethers of design, technology, and endurance. One such is the International Satellite Terminal at Miami International Airport, one of the first B-747 and International Arrivals/Departure Terminals in the country. In addition, his prototype Satellite Shuttle, the transportation system to the terminal, became the industry standard.

Harry earned a coveted Silver Medal Award from the Miami Chapter of the AIA in 1997, recognizing his leadership and service to the profession over an "extended period of time." His buildings also stand the test of time. ▲



EDWARD J. SEIBERT

Edward J. “Tim” Seibert spent part of his childhood in Sarasota while his naval father was stationed overseas.

“My mother was a catastrophist,” he reveals. “In case dad didn’t come home, she wanted to be in a good place to live.”

That “good place” called to him in the 1950s, after he graduated from Stanford University. But this time it was because he had read about the landmark Revere House designed by Paul Rudolph and Ralph Twitchell.

Rudolph was a major force in the Sarasota School, a group of forward-thinking architects founded in 1941 by Twitchell. Rudolph’s and Twitchell’s innovative collaborations paved the way for a new modernism based on regional culture and

climate. “Paul’s theme was ‘it’s the conceptual that counts.’”

After earning his architecture degree from the University of Florida, Seibert worked for Rudolph until he opened his own practice in 1955.

“At the time Sarasota was a fertile field for artists and writers,” Seibert recalls. “There was a great sense of optimism and possibility. Paul’s vision of a new kind of life made sense to me.”

Seibert was fortunate to realize his own similar vision early on. Part of this was due to Frank Thyne, a Ph.D. in Philosophy with an eye for design. When Thyne became a speculative builder, Seibert became his architect.



PHOTO BY G. WADE SWICORD

“Every other day we would settle down in the Old Plaza restaurant over martinis and decide what to build,” recalls Seibert. “A number of the houses had pavilions that opened up to the outside, and they worked.”

“Air conditioning wasn’t everywhere, and designing without it made architecture more fun. I always liked air moving through the building.”

Today, living in Boca Grande, Seibert designs a selective number of houses. In all of them, he utilizes cross ventilation together with air conditioning.

“There’s a form that suits Florida,” he says. “It protects from the incredible driving rain, the absolutely crazy vegetation. Shading the walls is essential. You need a sheltering pitch roof that obviously shows how it gets rid of rain; a shaded, surrounding porch that rolls back, so in pleasant weather it all becomes one space with the inside.”

Seibert is quick to express his opinion about today’s designs. “I think the stuff that is being built is revolting. Mirrors of

fat-headed parvenus. Houses today are huge, and they use awful elements and no proportions. There has to be more than just having a big house.”

While he obviously prefers the clarity, spaces and simplicity of tropical design, he designs homes of other styles, as well. A recent one was Georgian, based on a concept of what Claudio would do if he had plate glass. “It gave me great glee,” says the Fellow of the American Institute of Architects.

His design of the John D. McDonald raised wood house on Siesta Key fulfills all of the parameters of tropical architecture. The late McDonald, a celebrated mystery writer, was a personal friend of Seibert’s, like many other clients. “Decent human beings who became friends over the years,” Seibert says. “The only time life really went wrong was when I had a bad client.” ▲



CHARLES HARRISON PAWLEY

By the time Haitian-born Charles Pawley reached 20, he had lived in Cuba, Mexico, many regions of the Caribbean, Hong Kong and India.

“My life’s experiences were tropical,” says Pawley, who simultaneously won the Florida Chapter of the American Institute of Architects Gold Medal and Lifetime Design awards in 1998.

“When I lived in India, there was actually a poinciana tree growing into the house,” he adds.

“Because we had no air conditioning, we had paddle fans and high ceilings. It was an extraordinary experience. I didn’t know at the time that it impacted me so much.”

It wasn’t until after Pawley spent two years in the army in Germany and settled in Miami that he decided to become an architect. By then, he was married and had children.

Therefore, instead of attending the University of Miami full time, he worked for architects during the day and attended school at night. He did this for ten long years.

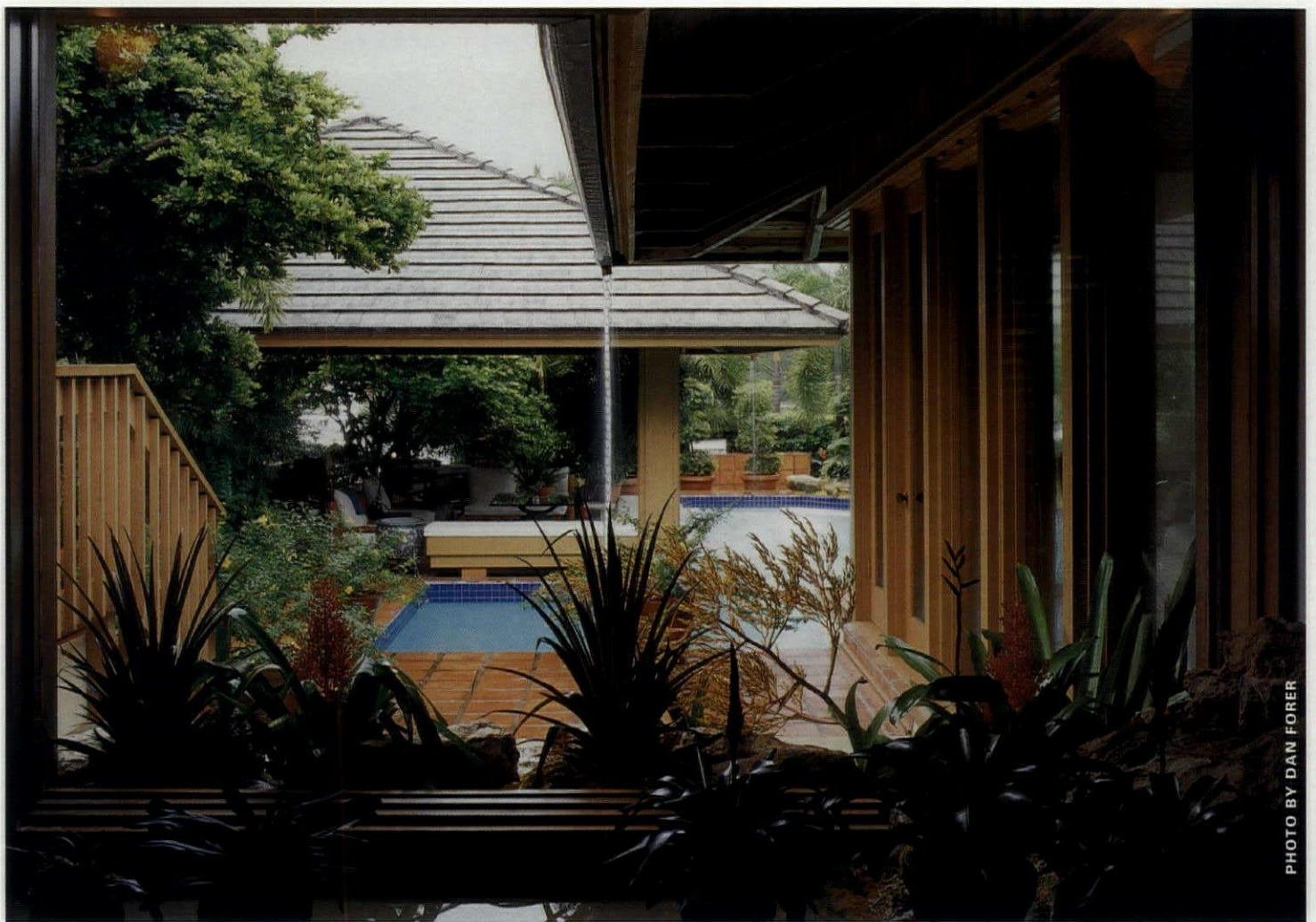


PHOTO BY DAN FORER

“I decided if I’m going to work, I want to work for the best architects in Miami. I didn’t knowingly pick the most tropical, but it turned out that I picked the best of them.”

The “best” included Peter Jefferson, for whom he worked nights and Saturdays while he held a full time job with Herbert Johnson, a commercial architect. Another “best” was his mentor, Robert Browne.

“He hired me because I had done high-rise work for Johnson, and he was working on the all-concrete George Smathers Plaza,” says Pawley, a fellow of the American Institute of Architects.

“As I worked for him, I realized that everywhere I had lived and everything I liked was tropical. It was built into my psyche.”

Pawley continued his on-site education by moonlighting for another “best,” Rufus Nims, until he opened his practice in 1968.

But his affinity for tropical design never wavered.

“Even though we are in the age of air conditioning, I try to design every house to meet the tropical elements,” he affirms. “High ceilings, big overhangs, paddle fans, lots of walls of glass or French doors that open under the overhang to let in light but keep the water out.” And enduring roofs - preferably copper, which will last “forever.”

Pawley criticizes today’s designs. “Developers are

building pseudo-Mediterranean houses because they know they sell,” he declares. “If someone designed a real Mediterranean house for this climate, with thick walls, covered terraces, high ceilings and proper orientation, it would work.” Pawley certainly could do it. ▲

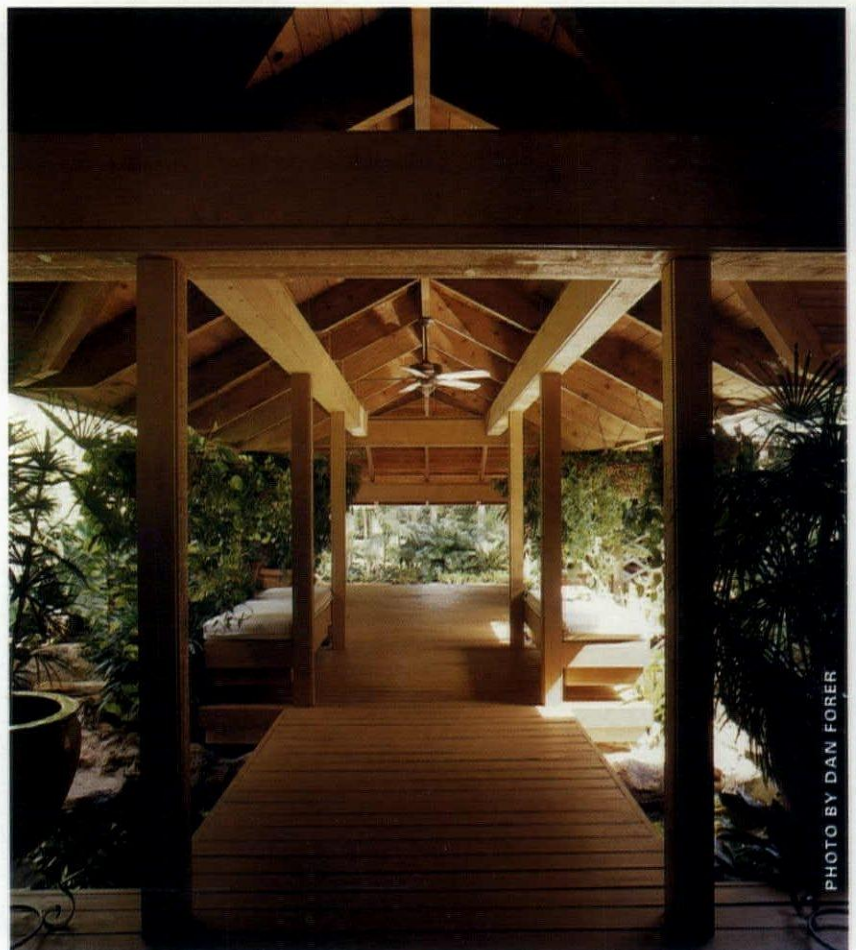


PHOTO BY DAN FORER



GEORGE F. REED

It's no surprise that George Reed is passionate about tropical architecture. He was born and raised in Miami and says he was "taken" with the special trees, light and sparkling water as far back as he can remember.

Reed left Florida to study at Georgia Institute of Technology, where he earned his degree in architecture. When he returned, he says, "I had to make a choice early in my career. I could design hermetically sealed buildings with holes punched in for windows or I could follow the Tequesta and Seminole Indians, the indigenous tropical people."

Indeed, his choice was obvious. All of his residential work clearly embraces the Indians' methodology, but the funda-

mental elements serve as Reed's launching pad. Reed's residences are so completely evolved that they are indisputably romantic.

In building their tropical shelters, the Indians started with small cypress poles that supported platforms to ensure dryness and protection from insects. Planks were utilized for walkways, and palmetto fronds for overhanging roofs. These insulative roofs protected the occupants from scorching sun and thundershowers. At the same time, the Indians' habitats, or chickees, were oriented to the breeze.

Reed, a Fellow of the American Institute of Architects, affirms that chickees were, in fact, his design springboard.



“We’ve created houses one room deep, so that if we open doors on both sides, the tiniest little breeze will change the air circulation.”

Reed believes that the most gratifying type of project is designing a single family home with a one-on-one client. In fact, he says, “The apex in excitement is when clients see the spaces they had envisioned enfold, and realize the architect has exceeded their expectations.” But he defends the rewards of other work, too.

“I enjoy doing schools – don’t get me wrong. I’ve done a great number of elementary schools and a library. The reward is that you creatively provide space and influence generations for many years.”

Although his resume cites some 20 awards as well as

membership and chairmanships on countless advisory boards for the city and the county, he’d rather emphasize the influence of his first two employers – Rufus Nims, from 1953 to 1955 and Robert Browne, from 1956 to 1960. Each of these masters played a critical role in the development of Reed’s architecture.

“When you finish school, you have to work for the best architects there are and take your punishment,” says Reed. “They tell you the right thing. ‘Don’t worry about money; just do it right.’” ▲



WILLIAM COX

William Cox opted out of the construction field, despite having a father who was a major force in an international construction company. “Sure, I got a genetic load of mechanics from my dad. I inherited his eye,” says Cox. “But I always wanted to be an architect.”

After living throughout the eastern half of the United States, his family moved to the West Indies and then settled in Boca Raton. The tropical influence has sustained.

Cox graduated from the University of Miami and for the next three years worked for Robert Browne. “Bob Browne was my first employer, my first job. He was a great teacher and it was a good marriage.” Cox says those were stimulating times for a young man, due to a “cross pollination” of Miami archi-

itects, all with a bent toward tropical design. “George Reed, Bob Browne, Rufus Nims and I had a tight little niche working together.”

Cox recalls their “tropical ritual” at 3 p.m. each day. “We would all break and go down to the corner where we’d sit around and have a Coke or beer and talk. We were the head of the pen, the creative bunch.”

Although Cox always liked transparent buildings with big sheltering roofs, the first commission on his own sealed his tropical approach to architecture. It was the Boca West Golf Clubhouse, to be built on the undeveloped site of a former air force base, and it held a hospital with an open-air plan of pavilions.



“Apparently,” says Cox, “the designer of the hospital figured this plan prevented contagion and contamination. It was also ideal for the tropics.”

“I had previously visited clubhouses from here to Hawaii, and they always disturbed me. I’d walk into these elegant clubs and smell cigarettes and liniments from the locker room. I thought about the hospital in Boca and decided to design the clubhouse with separate pavilions.”

The clubhouse was the genesis of a flourishing practice that includes his flagship Casa de Campo in the Dominican Republic. The resort adheres to native styles with local

materials and indigenous features, including thatched roofs.

“Guests from the United States and Europe say this is what their image of a tropical island has always been,” Cox says with satisfaction.

“I do a building, and when I walk out the door it becomes a fond memory.” But his projects drain him.

“I tell my clients, ‘I come to you to give you a little piece of my soul. If this is a good project, I’ll get it back. But if not, it is irreplaceable.’”

Luckily, his soul remains intact. ▲



DAN DUCKHAM

From the time Dan Duckham drove down to Fort Lauderdale on “spring break” in 1954, he was hooked on the tropics. After he graduated from Miami University in Oxford, Ohio in 1956, he immediately packed his car and drove back to the town that would become his permanent home.

In June of 1959, he opened his own practice. But it wasn't until he had his first commission that he knew what style of architecture was right for him. By that time, he was “a Florida boy.” The commission came from the young owner of a small flower shop that Duckham frequented. Duckham's fee was one hundred dollars to design a new building.

“I designed a little shelter with a hip roof and pinwheel wood framing,” says Duckham. “Part of it was an interior space with a wall and glass. The rest of it was outside. It was more like a shade house than a flower shop.”

From this modest beginning, Duckham's organic style evolved. “I like organic materials, but the materials always derive from the preferences of the clients,” he explains.

This reflects in work that can be executed in stucco as well as wood and is often sculptural. But his residential work also includes abundant screened areas, liberal shaded areas, louvered wood windows with operable glass, and orientation to the prevailing winds.

Duckham bases each project on an idea inspired by his client, which then dictates materials, size, style, and views. While Duckham favors wood, he uses it cautiously. Experience has taught him that when wood can ventilate, it poses no problem, but when it is exposed to moisture, such as when a beam touches the fascia, dry rot can occur.

Duckham likes using dual jalousies combining glass and redwood to control light and heat. He lives in, and practices from, a mixed-use building he built 36 years ago that has evolved to his office and residence for his growing family.

In its original state, the building had wood jalousies, which were replaced by dual jalousies in 1980. “They're still out there,” boasts Duckham. ▲

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For over 60 years, Florida Architecture magazine has published some of the most beautiful homes that have ever been built in this state, or any other state in the country, for that matter. This never would have happened if it were not for the many wonderful submissions we have received over the years. We look forward to a fresh new array of splendid homes to review for each publication. To make the submission process as easy as possible, we have prepared some general information regarding the type of material that fits our format, together with some specific suggestions for methodology.

Florida Architecture magazine strives to sustain a standard of excellence by publishing only high-end Florida residences by credentialed Florida design professionals. "Trendy" is not our style, but rather we seek projects that are comprehensive in their architecture, interiors, application of art and landscape design - and that withstand the test of time.

To submit a project, we recommend that you send preliminary photos, such as scouting shots, which give a good overview of the interiors as well as the architecture and landscaping. Included with the photographs should be the name and contact number of the person submitting the project, together with the professionals involved with the design process. Once we have evaluated the preliminary photos, we often make an on-site visit to the project. We reserve the right to withhold our final decision until after the visit.

We hope this information has simplified the submission process, and encouraged you to send us your quality projects.

The Staff

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Publication Trim Size 9 21/32" x 13 1/4"

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