



# THE Art OF A NEW HOME

Though their children were grown, a couple's art collection kept growing. The solution called for moving to a larger house just two doors away.

INTERIOR DESIGN BY *Marcus Mohon*  
PHOTOGRAPHY BY *Peter Vitale*

PORTRAIT PHOTOGRAPH BY *Stephen Karlisch*  
WRITTEN BY *Tate Gunnerson*



This page: Art is as much a part of the décor as the furnishings. A portion of the living room includes a figurative work on canvas by Alex Katz and a vase by Shari Mendelson. Opposite: A distinct seating/conversation area in the home's intimate library is created with the use of a pair of Rose Tarlow Swedish-style chairs upholstered in Mark Tursi leather.

Dining room seating combines custom armchairs slipcovered in Mark Tursi leather and set on casters, along with side chairs that are upholstered in a gray mohair. An Il Pezzo Mancante hand-forged brass chandelier with crystal shard glass provides a shimmering light visible even from the street.





Rose Tarlow's Oppede bed, noted for its walnut frame and metal spires, sets the agenda for the master bedroom. A pair of vintage Italian lamps with Porta Romana satin shades balance the bed. The Cowtan & Tout draperies are accented with a velvet border from Samuel & Sons. Benjamin Moore's Waynesboro Taupe is used on the walls, a perfect backdrop for artworks, decorative mirrors, and antiques.

**HOME IS AS MUCH** about people and place as it is a physical structure. So, when a Fort Worth couple outgrew the house where they had raised their children, they looked no further than a larger residence by Turner Boaz Architecture located just two doors away. "This is a special place, and it's been an amazing part of our family story," the wife says. "We didn't want to leave."

Previously owned by friends who had renovated the interior, the more spacious house offered plenty of space for the couple's expanding art collection and for the many functions they host. They commissioned Austin-based designer Marcus Mohon to help them put their own spin on it. "These clients have very diversified taste," Mohon says. "It was a careful balance to stay connected to both the architecture and the client's taste and to have it all work well together."

Mohon fondly recalls one of the initial moments of the collaboration he forged with the clients. "The first time I met their kids, it was the day they found out they were selling the house they grew up in. They thought I was the realtor, so I was *persona non grata*. They almost didn't speak to me."

Opposing, but complementary decorative elements are one of the defining features of the interiors Mohon created. An antique wood and iron chandelier, for example, calls attention to the soaring ceilings in the foyer, juxtaposed against the Art Deco-inspired steel railing that Mohon and the husband together designed for the stairway. "Nothing quite goes together, but that's the intention," Mohon says.

Early on, Mohon discerned the determined commitment from the clients. "They were both very involved and had strong opinions," he recalls. "I think when clients have strong opinions, it makes the project better. You have a richer project. You have the injection of their personality. We push one another to a better solution."

Artwork added another layer to the project. A sculptural vessel by Shari Mendelson, for instance, elevates the rustic pine table in the center of the living room, while a vibrant figurative painting by Alex Katz hangs above the fireplace. For sentimental reasons, Katz was reluctant to part with the piece, but he relented when the collectors agreed to someday donate it to the Modern Art Museum of Fort Worth.

Their collection of artwork and sculpture is also showcased in the adjacent library, which Mohon furnished

with upholstered pieces and a bronze Italian midcentury desk with a brass top that doubles as a dining table for two. Antique terra cotta pots and a carved wooden chandelier keep the room's ambiance relaxing and approachable. "It's my favorite room in the house," the wife says.

That's also the vibe in the spacious kitchen, which Mohon furnished with a tufted sofa and a pair of chairs—all covered in performance fabrics—around a faux leather cocktail table. "If you're going to be gutsy enough to put a white fabric in your kitchen, it better be an outdoor fabric," Mohon says. The new white marble countertops are likewise protected by a durable resin coating.

More formal affairs are held in the dining room, which already had gray plaster walls and ombre-patterned draperies that Mohon saw no need to change. Above the round wooden pedestal table, however, a new bronze chandelier with illuminated glass shards creates an alluring glow that can be seen from the street. "It's dynamite," Mohon explains, noting it's the only lighting fixture he found that clicked with his clients.

Plastered walls in the master bedroom add depth, richness, and a reflective luster that changes throughout the day. Flanking the wood and iron bed, a pair of midcentury lamps with a floral motif play off the ornate gilded wood wall mirror and the frame around the original Picasso. "They look like they're having a dinner party together," Mohon says, referring to the decorative elements in the room. In fact, the revitalized home has been the setting for many dinner parties, family gatherings, and other events. Perhaps most notably, less than a week after the owners moved in, they hosted a reception for Alex Katz, who was the subject of a show at Fort Worth's Modern Art Museum. The landscapers were hosing mud off the newly installed courtyard just an hour before guests started arriving. After the party, Mohon, his clients, and the home's previous owners sat around the table in the breakfast room, talking, eating leftovers, and drinking wine late into the evening. "Texas hospitality is a very real thing," Mohon says. "It's fulfilling to do a house for wonderful people that you've grown to know, like, and admire." ■

Marcus Mohon responded to the challenge to fill a couple's new home with a growing collection of art.

*"It's a great family house, a great event house, and a great backdrop for their lives."*

*—Marcus Mohon*

