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BEST OF BOTH WORLDS

A SPANISH COLONIAL-STYLE HOME IN ATHERTON MASTERFULLY MIXES CLASSIC AND CONTEMPORARY INFLUENCES.

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ARCHITECTURE / ANDREW SKURMAN, ANDREW SKURMAN ARCHITECTS
INTERIOR DESIGN / KLAUS BAER AND RUSH JENKINS, WRJ DESIGN ASSOCIATES
LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE / THOMAS KLOPE, THOMAS KLOPE ASSOCIATES



The living room includes a console and a large sofa by Caste Design. The larger sofa is upholstered with Loro Piana wool and Liaigre leather, while the smaller one is by Liaigre. The coffee table is from Town in Denver.

It looks like it's always been here," muses architect Andrew Skurman as he scrolls through photographs of the house he recently completed for a pair of executives. "We wanted a building that blends in with the neighborhood, not something that stands out, so we chose a contemporary Spanish Colonial style." For inspiration Skurman looked to the work of early-California architect George Washington Smith, who worked predominantly in the Santa Barbara vernacular, and specifically to the architect's 1925 Jackling House in nearby Woodside. It's a building he knows well, having drawn up proposed renovation plans for it some 10 years ago. And although that home was ultimately demolished, Skurman's interest in Washington's design remained. With this project, he was able to tap into Washington's original ideas and translate them into an entirely new vision that perfectly suits the owners of this home.

"We designed the house around the site and chose to do a modest entry that's low key and welcoming. It's so Californian, very inside-outside," Skurman says, noting the home's elongated bracket shape that creates a sheltered backyard, part of the larger grounds designed by landscape architect Thomas Klope. "The north and south ends of the home feel like pavilions," he adds, explaining that one is the wife's office and the other, which is open to the elements, is a *stoa* (or a covered colonnade) designed for public use. The linear portion of the home contains the primary living spaces on the ground floor and the family's private spaces on the second floor. In keeping with tradition, the exterior is rendered with plaster and barrel roof tiles in varying shades of terra cotta to give the impression of age—but once inside, there's a distinctly contemporary feel.

Skurman is quick to point out some of the home's clever details. The primary wing of the house is a modern version of an *enfilade* (a 17th-century French system of aligning internal doors in a sequence that creates a vista through the rooms when all doors are open) but instead of partitioning off the series of rooms with walls and doors, he divided the space with large, floating volumes with walkways on each side—one conceals a butler's pantry, another houses a fireplace. "The bones of the home are classic, but the articulation is contemporary," says the architect.



An LED-illuminated, bronze and acrylic light fixture from Carpenters Workshop Gallery descends some 17 feet down the center of the stairwell. Architect Andrew Skurman likens the spiral structure to a work of functional art.



A corner of the living room features just one item from the homeowners' collection of quartz pieces displayed on a custom bronze mount. A pair of Liaigre slipper chairs sit on either side of a table top sculpture by Jiun Ho and atop a rug from Tony Kitz Gallery. Illuminated built-in shelves make the perfect place to display small objects.

Poltrona Frau dining chairs and a table from Troscan in Chicago can be seen from the eat-in kitchen; a Jonathan Browning Studios chandelier hangs above. The console is by Jefferson Design Group and the barstools are by Walter K. Appliances include a Wolf range and a Franke sink with Dornbracht faucets.

Eschewing the expected wrought-iron staircase, the architect instead designed a nautilus-like spiral. "Why not walk up and down a sculpture every day?" he asks. It's a rhetorical question he answers with a host of uncommon details that defy categorization. "This house is not overtly contemporary or classical," he says. "It's a hybrid."

Skurman's artful approach was picked up immediately by designers Klaus Baer and Rush Jenkins, who joined the project shortly after it began. A chance meeting with the designers inspired the collaboration. "We jumped in full throttle," says Baer. "Our biggest challenge was how to make a 15,000-square-foot home feel intimate for a growing family while considering the architect's vision for the design," adds Jenkins. The answer came, in part, with soft draperies to filter the sunlight and a neutral palette that complements the architectural finishes as well as the couple's art collection, which includes Australian Aboriginal works and paintings by Picasso, Matisse and Chagall.

"We wanted to create a beautiful relationship between the art and the furniture," Jenkins continues, noting custom pieces like the entryway's dandelion-inspired chandelier. "These features add a bit of whimsy, but they are also elegant." Working with senior designer Sabrina Schreiber, the team strove to echo Skurman's simplified forms. "We created an incredible sofa with Caste Design and found a gorgeous Vladimir Kagan sofa in London. The custom dining table is set with bronze droplets for a surprise," Jenkins adds. In the master bedroom, the designers created a sensory experience with a cashmere rug and cashmere-upholstered seating. "We all have an internal response to softness," he says.

"Ultimately, we wanted the interior to express the Japanese philosophy of half hidden-half seen," says Baer. "The house unfolds like a novel. There's a sense of discovery, and of beautiful, quiet moments." But it's also a family home. "The kids are able to enjoy every part of the home with their parents and their dog," says Jenkins. "There's warmth and harmony here." ■





“THE BONES OF THE HOME ARE CLASSIC, BUT THE ARTICULATION IS CONTEMPORARY.”

—ANDREW SKURMAN

Opposite: The outdoor lounge area looks across the lawn to the wife's study, and provides a comfortable place where the whole family can relax and play. The teak and canvas furnishings, as well as the poufs, are from Janus et Cie.

Below: In the studio, a bronze, double-sided desk and bronze and leather chairs are by Bottega Veneta. The light fixture is by John Pomp and was sourced through Town in Denver. The photographs are by David LaChapelle.





Opposite: The master bedroom is defined by luxurious textures, from the cotton linens on the bed by Italian firm Tessilarte to the Holly Hunt armchairs upholstered in Loro Piana cashmere. The bronze and crystal chandelier is by Australian designer Christopher Boots.

Below: A Porcelanosa tub centers the light-filled master bathroom, which also features Waterworks fittings. The marble is from Riva Marble & Granite.

