



Modern art complements the classic lines of the formal Mediterranean architecture. In a small rotunda off the grand hallway, Sin Fin II, a bronze by Jesús Curió—"We call it the Blue Man Group," says the wife—shares space with nine faces in gesso that the couple picked up at a shop on Via Margutta in Rome.



MEDITERRANEAN *Masterpiece*

A world-class art collection takes center stage in a palatial estate filled with antique furnishings and luxury finishes.

BY REBECCA L. RHOADES PHOTOGRAPHY BY GARRETT COOK

“WE WANTED OUR HOME to be a work of art in its entirety,” says a pair of Scottsdale homeowners of their formal Mediterranean-style abode. “We wanted the finest house in America.”

Filled with luxurious materials and fine craftsman touches, the abode also needed to complement the couple’s enviable collection of traditional and modern art. Picasso, Van Gogh, Dalí, Moreau, Toulouse-Lautrec, Delacroix, Modigliani: The names are found in some of the world’s greatest museums. As such, the home in which works by these masters are displayed needed to rise to the top in an upmarket landscape brimming with monumental estates.

“The homeowner said he wanted the house ‘to be exquisite,’ so it needed to be timeless,” says architect Mark Candelaria. The *Phoenix Home & Garden* Masters of the Southwest award winner knew that in order to achieve such a lofty objective, he was going to have to diverge from the then-popular Tuscan trend and embrace a light, airy aesthetic. “At the time, the Tuscan craze was in full-force, and everything was dark and heavy, but we wanted something that was a lot cleaner and brighter.”

The palatial home is impressive on approach. Built on a sloping lot in the exclusive community of Silverleaf, it sits below street level, with its stately facade unveiling itself to guests as they wind down the long, curved drive; through columned gates; and into an open auto court complete with an elaborate multitiered central fountain. The rear of the home, which overlooks the golf course, is protected from interlopers—of the four-legged variety—by a moat that runs the length of the property.

The grandeur continues inside, where the floors are lined with polished crema marfil marble, walls are finished in Venetian plaster and the hand-painted ceilings are accented with white gold leaf. Chandeliers glisten in every room, and elaborate woodwork envelops a library and his-and-hers offices. The color palette is neutral and elegant throughout, with furnishings and finishes in whites and soft creams underscored by cool blue accents in the parlor, on the rear patio and in the master suite.

“It was really important to let the art be the life and the color of the house,” says interior designer Kimberly Colletti. “The homeowners



OPPOSITE The alder-paneled library with its hand-painted and gold-gilded ceiling is a favorite of the homeowners and their design team. The staircase is from 19th-century France, while the 14-foot-long by 11-foot-wide Pazyryk area rug was custom woven for the husband in India in the 1970s. It is modelled after an ancient rug found in the frozen tombs of Siberia; the original resides in the Hermitage Museum in Russia. The two marble busts are of famous economists John Maynard Keynes and Adam Smith. **LEFT** This early painting by Pablo Picasso rests on a stand in the library. It is dated 1895.



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have an incredible collection that they've acquired over 50-plus years, and I didn't want to distract from that."

The design of the home was influenced by Candelaria's travels to Italy, and like many grand European estates, its focal point is a large wood-paneled library. "It's one of my most favorite rooms that I've ever created," says the architect. "I mean, how often do you get to build a space like that? It's also probably the most important room in the house for the owners. From day one, the husband said he wanted one of the grandest libraries in the country. It's a spectacular place, but it's also comfortable."

Cloaked in alder, the sumptuous space brims with thousands of volumes. "What's most impressive to me is that the husband has read every one," says Colletti. "They're all catalogued. He's incredibly smart, and this room is his baby." Antique furnishings, including a 19th-century French library staircase and a 12-foot-long Italian baroque refractory table, fill the space. A pair of busts commissioned for the room pay homage to the husband's career. "I'm an economist," he says. "Looking at the busts of Adam Smith and John Maynard Keynes gives me a degree of comfort."

Groin-vaulted ceilings with clerestory windows open the space, creating a sense of lightness typically not found in wood-paneled rooms. Subtle stenciling draws attention to the surface's curves. "Everyone is blown away by the ceiling because it's so soft and elegant," says Colletti. "The painting really ended up accentuating Mark's architectural details."

Notes builder John Schultz, a *Phoenix Home & Garden* Masters of the Southwest award winner, "The homeowners had a clear vision of what the library would be and how it would live. The thoughtfulness and details that went into that room really carry throughout the entire house."

Down a long hallway, past a collection of works by 17th-century Flemish painter David Teniers the Younger, is another surprise: an open-air courtyard designed specifically for the couple's cats, Tabriz and Angelo. "It was created so the cats could go outside without having to be in the backyard, where they were susceptible to attack by hawks and owls," explains Candelaria.

A vine-covered trellis protects the space from large birds while still allowing natural light to filter in. Landscape designer Jeff Berghoff added climbing jasmine and orange jubilee for year-round coverage and fragrance. Steppingstones tucked between groundcover surround a rectangular fountain that illuminates the room at night, while shade-loving cyclamen and begonias add a pop of color. In the hallway, cat doors decorated with whimsical designs of mice provide easy access day or night.

"We love our cats," says the wife. "The house was basically built around them."



OPPOSITE A baby grand piano dominates the music room. Interior designer Kimberly Colletti chose the Faringale wing chairs "because the curves of the arms remind me of a harp," she says. Above the cabinets are two framed Gregorian chants on vellum, circa 500 A.D. **ABOVE** Adjacent to the music room is the parlor, which is decorated with an Italian Louis XVI console and blue velvet chairs. "Blue is the only accent color in the whole house," notes Colletti. The artwork on the wall is a hyperphoto by Jean Francios Rauzier. **TOP** The husband purchased the painting that hangs above the fireplace in the music room at an auction in 1967. It was painted by Franciscan friars sometime between 1598 and 1608 in Santa Fe, New Mexico.



ABOVE Two Hunting Lioness by Bart Walter is the homeowners' most beloved work of art. The bronze sculpture rests on a pedestal in the backyard. Completed before the house was finished, the piece was displayed at the National Geographic Society Museum in Washington, D.C. **LEFT** The eight large ceramic heads that comprise Mark Chatterley's Star Gazers stare intently toward the sky above. The pieces are installed at the far end of the pool veranda.



On the back lawn sit another pair of cats that are cherished by the homeowners. "Anybody who has visited the National Geographic Society Museum in Washington, D.C., would recognize them," says the husband.

The feline duo in question is a life-size bronze statue by Bart Walter known as Two Hunting Lioness. "We had taken a trip to Africa in 2005 and fell in love with the wildlife," says the wife. "When we returned, we saw this statue in a magazine, and we contacted the artist and commissioned it. We were able to take possession of it before the house was finished, so we made arrangements with the National Geographic Society, which was having a big cat exhibit that year. The sculpture was displayed in front of the museum. It's my favorite piece."

Berghoff integrated the statue into the manicured landscape by situating it on a plinth and surrounding it with tall grasses, giving the illusion of wild predators stalking prey in the Serengeti. The entire team, including the artist, was onsite for its installation.

"The gentleman who created the lionesses consulted with us on where to display them, what height to put them at, how to plant around them, how to position them—it was a very detailed process," says Schultz. "Getting them in place was quite a feat."

Landscape designer Jeff Berghoff designed the outdoor spaces to mimic the formality and symmetry of Mark Candelaria's architecture. Here, in an intimate courtyard just off the homeowners' offices, an orb-shaped fountain provides a soothing burble of water while drawing the eye out to the manicured gardens and large fountain beyond. The bronze sculpture at the edge of the patio is Arc of Peace by Lori Acott.





A neutral color palette of creams and whites allows the homeowners' art collection to take center stage. In the living room, the curved Schiaparelli sofa echoes the shape of the walls. Eight monotone mixed-media diptychs, known as the "Everyday Saints," by Young June Lew, keep watch. "There were originally seven saints," says the wife. "But we needed an eighth to balance out the decor," so they asked the artist to create a final piece. Colletti sourced the 17th-century statue in hallway. "The cats loved that statue because we would always hide toys in its hands," she says.





Adds Colletti, “It was exciting, because the statue was brought in with a crane over the house. It was one of those times when you’re just holding your breath hoping that the chain doesn’t break.”

Indoors and out, contemporary pieces share space with traditional works dating back to the 15th century. Kinetic art mingles with stern, formal portraits. In the music room, a series of Gregorian chants, circa 500 A.D, printed on vellum hangs on the walls, while across the hall in the parlor, a surrealist hyperphoto by Jean

Francios Rauzier incorporates the homeowners—and their cats—into a detailed collage of the masterworks at Paris’ Musée d’Orsay. “Originally there was a mirror there, but this photograph is so warm, and it tells a story,” says Colletti.

“I still get butterflies in my stomach when I visit the house. It’s the crème de la crème of what design should be,” she adds. “I love that it’s grounded in traditional Mediterranean style, but there’s so much playful art around each corner.”



OPPOSITE A massive limestone fireplace commands the formal dining room. The wife found the statue that sits in the niche. It’s of a blind ballerina, and her skirt is crafted of twigs and sticks. Like most of the rooms in the house, the space is illuminated by a lavish crystal chandelier. **ABOVE** The homeowners commissioned “Blue Nun,” by Scottish painter Alan MacDonald for the bar. Around her neck, he added a bottle of Tokaji wine.



ABOVE A brightly hued landscape by English painter John Clayton adds a pop of color to the grand hallway. **BELOW** The husband collects works by 17th-century Flemish painter David Teniers the Younger. He has about 30 pieces by the artist, who was known for capturing tavern scenes.





LEFT The entry rotunda features a hand-painted dome ceiling that is accented by a stunning crystal chandelier. The 17th-century table is Italian. "It is hand-carved from a single piece of wood, and it is exquisite," says Colletti. A 6-inch wide border in the polished crema marfil marble floors highlights the architecture's many angles and corners. **BELOW** The homeowners' cat Tabriz naps in a ray of sunlight in the husband's wood-paneled office. The painting on the wall is by Picasso. **RIGHT** A small courtyard off the master wing was designed as a safe outdoor play zone for the cats. An arbor covered in climbing jasmine and orange jubilee protects the felines from birds of prey. Berghoff designed the rectangular water feature, which lights up at night and casts a warm glow that can be viewed from inside. Shade-loving cyclamen and geraniums add a blanket of color to the ground surface.



For the homeowners, every piece of their house tells a story, from the area rug in the library to the grouping of eight oversized black-and-white diptych paintings that encircle the formal living room. Each painting, sculpture and artwork holds a special memory of visiting a faraway destination or scouring antique shops for that just-right accent. Combined, they tell the story of the homeowners' personalities and history.

"People always ask me, 'What is your favorite piece in the house?'" says the wife. "Well, it's not a single item. I consider the entire house,

the landscaping and the furniture as the work of art. It's all art. To me, it all goes together."

The husband agrees. "It's what we set out to create, and we're actually rather proud of it. I think we succeeded." □

ARCHITECT: Mark Candelaria, Candelaria Design Associates. BUILDER: John Schultz, Schultz Development. INTERIOR DESIGNER: Kimberly Colletti, KC Design Group. LANDSCAPE DESIGNER: Jeff Berghoff, Berghoff Design Group.

For more information, see Sources on Page 118.

