

ART AND SOUL

An art-collecting couple, who get fired by their designer, shake up the North Shore with art, color and brazen originality

BY THOMAS CONNORS | PHOTOGRAPHY BY TONY SOLURI

"Nothing in the house is happenstance—it's all deliberate," says this North Shore homeowner. And she's not kidding. A woman with an eye for art—and the art of arranging interiors—she's made her '60s-era brick ranch a testament to beautiful objects judiciously displayed. From artwork by Jenny Holzer and Linda Green in the oval foyer, to the runners layered across each other at an angle on the kitchen floor, every aspect of this home exudes a sense of style. Even the magazine rack in the master bath (no Crate & Barrel basket here) is a smart, 1940s number in brass and leather by Jacques Adnet.

For all its informed chic, the home isn't without its quirkiness. On one side of the dining table—an early Michael Heltzer design—the chairs are all askew, as if guests had just adjourned to the living room for coffee. "My husband is an attorney and an accountant," relates the lady of the house. "He likes things very orderly. I, on the other hand, use the other side of my brain. I told him we have to have the chairs like that because it shows movement, it shows that someone lives here. He said no. So one side is all straight and the other isn't." And those who think books dress a room would find the collection here a tad *en dishabille*. Enconced in the family room, the library overflows the shelves of a wooden hutch, where volumes—some standing upright, others recumbent—share space with spooky-faced pots whose outlines mimic moonshine jugs.

A study in form, this home office combines parquet flooring, traditional millwork and distinctly sculptural furnishings. The Savela side chair by Fernando and Humberto Campana is made of wood chips and manufactured by Edra (and sold at Luminaire). The Le Corbusier Chaise Lounge sits next to a small blue table, the Diana E by Konstantin Gric, manufactured by Classicon (Luminaire).

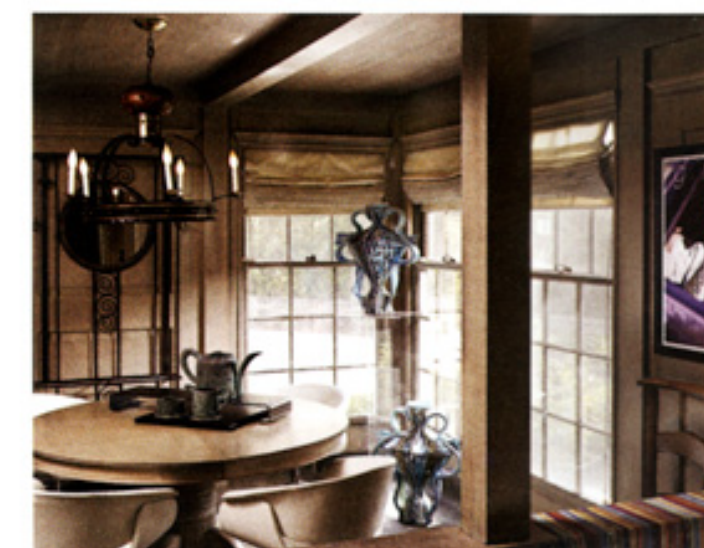




The couple took up residence here 25 years ago. The previous owner was in the antiques trade, and the home reflected his tastes: heavy, dark furniture, red carpeting and a suit of armor in the living room. There was even a rotisserie in the mammoth fireplace. "That was the first thing we took out," laughs the wife. Today, the once dark woodwork has been stained a soothing, pale green, and the kitchen walls sing in an electrified goldenrod. "We were in Costa Rica, and I loved the color of the walls there," she says. "I just knew I was going to paint something in my house this color. It's like someone hugging you."

For the visually curious, the home is one big embrace. In the dining room, there's a curious tableau, featuring wooden bottles from a carnival toss, an old lamp in the shape of a bird and an abstract ceramic piece by Louis Marak, among other things. A colorful, glittering "sound suit" by Chicago artist Nick Cave dominates the living room. There are fantastic lighting fixtures by the wildly inventive Ingo Maurer (one is a single light bulb sporting a pair of feather wings), and that piece by Linda Green in the foyer is a drooping web of hair (human and horse). While the couple's taste for contemporary art and furnishings is evident, so too is an appreciation for things of the past. In the

Opposite page: A "sound suit" by Chicago artist Nick Cave holds court in the living room, filled with fine art photography. Clockwise from left: A miscellany of cherished objects in the dining room include a vintage piece of scientific equipment, from the University of Wisconsin Astronomy lab, atop a Michael Heltzer table. The Smoke Chair by Maarten Baas adds interest to a European vanity. The breakfast room manifests an artful restraint with simple white B&B Italia chairs by Uwe Fischer around a chunky, round antique table.





Above: Midcentury classic and contemporary designs come together in the living room, where the Le Chaise by Charles and Ray Eames is the perfect complement to the set of plush side chairs by Gijs Papavoino. Hanging above it all, Ingo Maurer's paper chandelier has been customized with a few sheets the owners have created themselves. Opposite page: An heirloom desk and Brian McKee's image of an Uzbek interior give a corner of the family room incredible depth and a shot of bold blue color.

breakfast room, chairs by Uwe Fischer are gathered about a sturdy, wooden antique table. In the family room, a delicate, chinoiserie writing table that once belonged to the lady's grandfather, sits below a large-format photo from Brian McKee's Uzbekistan series.

"My wife has always loved art," says the husband, "and for a long time we bought art in lieu of furniture." Many of the pieces in the homeowners' collection were purchased at Art Basel Miami Beach, and every major acquisition is a joint venture. "We both have to like a piece or we don't buy it," explains his better half. "One of us can like it more, but we both have to like it to some degree."

Looking around this well-appointed home, it's natural to assume a decorator had a hand in it, but that's not the case. "We had a decorator, but he fired us," relates the husband. He couldn't tolerate that my wife was independent, freethinking, creative and did not want a stock designer home." So, with everything so carefully chosen and so perfectly in place, one has to ask: Is the home finished? "Never," says the woman behind it all. "I'm done buying, hopefully, but I'm never done rearranging. Because to me, when you're done, you're dead. Are you done in your career, are you done thinking, are you done learning? How can you be done in your house, in your environment? It bothers me when people say that, because how could you never foresee change in your life? That's what's exciting."

"I'm done buying, hopefully, but I'm never done rearranging. Because to me, when you're done, you're dead."

