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Changing Places

INTERIOR DESIGNER DAVID DESMOND AND ARCHITECT RICHARD MANION WORK TOGETHER TO STREAMLINE AN ELEGANT BEVERLY HILLS HOME

TEXT BY KAVITA DASWANI | PHOTOGRAPHY BY ERHARD PFEIFFER

THE FIRST TIME that Los Angeles interior designer David Desmond saw the sprawling 'Little Holmby Hills' home he would be consulting on, he was struck by the artwork, use of color and elegant spaces.

But his client wanted a change - not a dramatic redo, but a noticeable facelift. Desmond to help with the placement of pieces and fabrics that the client had selected.

"She wanted to change the feeling of the house - to make it brighter, fresher, younger and to incorporate more modern things," he said.

The client is a lifelong collector of art and antiques, and shares the home with her financial industry executive husband; they have four children between them who are, she said, "in and out of the house."

"My daughter and son-in-law were buying a house in Hancock Park and I gave them some pieces," said the client,

a doctor and entrepreneur who is now engaged in a non-profit jewelry venture with a patent pending. "It seemed like the perfect time to upgrade my place. It had begun to feel too serious. I wanted to lighten it up and make it more mid-century and sunnier."

A substantial renovation in 2010, helmed by architect Richard Manion and contractor Richard Holz meant that the upgrade was purely cosmetic.

Desmond worked with the client to move pieces around, acquire new rugs and lighting and reupholster existing furniture. Statement items in the approximately 11,700 square foot home include a brass and glass table by Mastercraft in the living room, purchased at Galerie Sommerlath in Culver City and the Alain Delon occasional tables for Maison Jansen in rare mahogany, chrome, brass and glass. A tessellated marble console table in the entrance hall is also from Maitland Smith.





Carpet runner from Jamal's Rug Collection in Los Angeles. Turkish Oushak, 1980 rug. Tessellated marble console table from Maitland Smith acquired at Galerie Sommerlath. Painting is 'The Jeweled Hills' by Joseph Kleitsch. Ottoman is Heywood-Wakefield refinished in textile found at F&S Fabrics For The Home in Los Angeles. OPPOSITE Painting over fireplace is from George Stern Fine Arts in Los Angeles and is from Helen Heller, 1939. Red chairs by Harvey Propper.



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—ARCHITECT RICHARD MANION



ESSENT Mahogany French Empire chairs with turquoise leather from Edelman. Hand made peacock leather plates by Bodley from Etse Abrams Antiques. ABOVE Brass and glass table by Mastercraft purchased at Galerie Sommerlath. Abalone side tables by Michael Taylor. Hand woven silk and wool Mayfair Hays Mevris rug by Samad. Tables flanking the white sofa against the wall are Alain Delon occasional tables for Maison Jansen in mahogany, chrome, brass and glass acquired at Habille Decor in Los Angeles. Sconces are Murano 1980s from Galerie Glustin Luminaires in Paris through Sat D'Os and large paintings by Franz Bischoff and Roland Petersen.



The project became, said the owner, a matter of looking at things differently: a Danish HVIDT sofa was moved from the office to the library. Vintage Murano 1980s sconces replaced the 19th century ones in the living room, a Lucite table went from the playroom to the living room, and a heavy antique Chinese coffee table is now in the basement. A Frank Lloyd Wright table is now in the kitchen with stripped down Danish chairs by Lindau & Lindkrantz which were refinished.

“We knocked around town and found things online,” she said. Manion stepped in as an advisor during the most recent revamp. “Over time we realized that because we had really lightened up the house so much and redone the architecture, maybe it was time to examine the many pieces she has, to look at the colors, rugs and artworks and take it up a notch,” said Manion. “It was about making things a little more streamlined, which was the direction she was going in. The house had a great neutrality in the sense you can decorate it in a way that is more traditional or more

streamlined very easily and most of the major rooms would become architectural backdrops to feature her collection. She’s able to let the house grow and adjust to whatever she’s collecting at the time, as her tastes change.”

Selecting the right rugs was a priority: these include a Mongol Khotan Afghan silk and wool from Jamals Rug Collection in Los Angeles (although the owner is especially partial to an exceptionally rare antique Agra in the den/family room. “The result is dramatically different,” said Desmond, citing how touches like changing the runner in the entrance hall from a more traditional one into something in an icy blue/off white combination with a touch of yellow “makes it modern and brighter.”

“I was there to be a supportive presence,” said Desmond. “We moved things around the house from upstairs to downstairs and it was a whirlwind. But it has created a different energy, and the more vibrant and newer feeling that she was going for.” ❧