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FLORIDA DESIGN

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JUDITH LIEGEOIS

"We approach each new project with fresh enthusiasm. The house will tell you what it needs."



ORGANIC HARMONY

A courtyard-style home offers a satisfying and serene connection to nature

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ARCHITECTURE ROB HERSCOE AND MICHAEL HAJJAR,
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Designed to mirror the earthy color palette and organic feel of the interiors, this inviting loggia is backed by the lush Naples landscape and furnished with plush outdoor seating from Duo Designs. An expansive walnut slab coffee table from Christian Liaigre balances the long L-shape lounging sofa. Custom-designed sconces resembling tree branches cast beautiful shadows at night.

Integrated within the living room, the bar area was inspired by a Patagonia Exotic stone slab that illuminates with backlighting. An open-shelf bookcase from Alli Kriste designed for the front of the bar disguises it from the living room view, and barstools by Hamilton Conte emulate the organic shape of tree stumps to further bring the outside in.

SITUATED NEXT TO a cypress preserve in Mediterra—one of Naples' most exquisite gated communities—this 5,806-square-foot home is surrounded by silk floss trees, a plumeria tree, and a mix of bamboo varieties and pines. It's a setting the homeowners were intent on celebrating from the moment they laid eyes on the property.

"We chose to buy in Mediterra because of the neighborhood's Audubon aesthetic," says homeowner Robin Schiller. "Ever since I was a young girl, I have felt a harmony being in nature. As we approached designing this home, we knew we wanted to embrace the landscape around us. Our style is clean and classic, and we wanted to create a sense of outdoor/indoor, where the views themselves became art."

The home's entrance has the feel of a secluded oasis, with strategically placed foliage and discreet privacy walls.

BELOW: A backlit walnut slatted ceiling in the foyer offers a serene welcome. To balance the ceiling's visual appeal, a walnut dowel sliding wall provides just enough privacy for the formal living area. The compelling *Swarm of Thorns* wall installation was created by Naples-based artist Ran Adler.



RIGHT: The family room's Minotti seating takes on a similar shape and palette as the loggia's living space. Cove lighting around the sunken ceiling over the kitchen offers an intimate glow. Custom cabinetry from Allii Kriste artfully spotlights the greenery outside. Floating metal display shelving along with sliding metal-trimmed frosted-glass panels frame the outdoors.

BELOW: A 12-foot-long Christian Liaigre dining table provides space for large-scale entertaining yet offers intimacy for a small family. The artwork depicting a bucolic scene of a dining table set between a stand of trees was a wedding gift. Hanging overhead, a custom chandelier from CP Lighting suggests a modern reflection of the organic shapes viewed outside the floor-to-ceiling windows.



Rob Herscoe and Michael Hajjar, principals at Herscoe Hajjar Architects, met the clients a few years prior to the start of the project, and the homeowners followed the firm's work extensively so they could feel confident with their creative direction—an essential element to a successful design process.

“The architectural style is a contemporary version of a Florida courtyard home,” says Herscoe. “The property's natural vegetation links seamlessly to the preserve, so there is no hard designation between the two, which allows the home to feel built within a larger landscape. The entrance is accessed through a gate within a walled courtyard that allows the typical ceremonial front yard to become an active environment for entertaining as well as a private breakout from the room fronting the home.”

“Secondary entrances give access to the master suite from a separate garage so the homeowners can choose how to navigate the ever-changing daily flow of people to and from the house,” adds Hajjar.

“The key to making a house work for a family of different personalities and needs is to not force cross-path circulation that invades privacy.”

One of the main challenges for the architects was to demonstrate to the homeowner's association at Mediterra how their design would work within the neighborhood. The typical street presentation of most homes incorporates an obvious embellished front entrance element. “For this property, we wanted a humble entry sequence that utilized a more mysterious approach of sequential processing that courtyard style provided,” says Herscoe. “And it truly worked, as passersby are continuously trying to see beyond the gates of this unique home.”

Herscoe and Hajjar teamed up with Naples designer Judith Liegeois, owner of Judith Liegeois Designs. Because they all had worked together on many projects in the past, the collaboration was effortless. “Our design concept began when Robin recalled a fond memory of a childhood friend's



“The master bedroom is simplistic, yet each fabric and material selection is luxurious and ignites a reaction,” says interior designer Judith Liegeois. “There is a lovely glamour to the space. The red velvet Kevin O’Brien pillows create just enough of a pop on the white linens.”



ABOVE: In the master bedroom, a headboard cushioned in marble-motif velvet by Michael Schmidt complements the sleek oak wall paneling. Marble-top nightstands accented with red Murano glass lamps by John Hutton flank the bed, and a white gesso-plaster chandelier from Luxe Lighting lends understated glamour.

TOP LEFT AND LEFT: In the master bath, floor-to-ceiling glass offers the sense of showering in a rainforest. Black travertine from Naples Stoneworks clads the floors, walls and front of the vanity, reflecting the striations from the black bamboo scene just beyond the windows. A vintage 1920s chandelier from the Berlin Opera House punctuates the space in grand style.

home,” explains Liegeois. “It was a perfect California mid-century-style home with large windows that invited the outdoors in, which became our ultimate design goal. To do this, we approached every detail [with that intent], from the color of the draperies to how the light is cast through the chandeliers and sconces. Every single element in the home speaks to nature in one way or another.”

One source of inspiration came from Schiller’s love of The Jumby Bay Resort in Antigua, where the rooms have a distinctive inside/outside feel. This greatly influenced the master bath, where Schiller wanted to emulate an outdoor vibe. Another was reflected in her experience growing up in New York City. In her 20s, Schiller often found herself hanging out with friends in the lounge of

the Mercer Hotel. “I loved the mood of that space,” she says. “I am drawn to Christian Liaigre’s design. He designed the Mercer Hotel interiors, among other New York favorites of mine. My favorite piece in the entire home is the Liaigre dining room table. The slight peek of red on the legs is sexy, like a woman’s shoe.”

Schiller relished the time spent with Liegeois on their shopping trips, absorbing new knowledge about design, design history, and art from Liegeois.

“It is truly a gift to live in a home designed and built by these most talented individuals,” Schiller says. “Still today, I find myself smiling at the most thoughtful, small details around the house and the sightlines that Rob and Michael were so passionate about incorporating. It was a great collaboration between builder, architect, and designer.”



ABOVE AND RIGHT: The front courtyard pays homage to a graceful silk floss tree. The Japanese sand garden in the far corner balances a stone-clad wall that surrounds a separate garage structure. Teak chairs in the conversation space and bleached teak loungers beside the 60-foot-long pool are from Duo Designs. Wood decking alongside the preserve leads to a private meditation space.

SOURCES

LOGGIA/POOL AREA

Furnishings – Duo Furniture + Lighting, Naples, FL

FOYER ENTRY

Console – Holly Hunt, Miami, FL

Table lamp – Claire Crowe Collection, Dallas, TX

Art installation above console – Art by Ran Adler, Judith Liegeois Designs Gallery, Naples, FL

Stools beneath console – Liaigre, MDD, Miami, FL

Flooring – Naples Stoneworks, Naples, FL

BAR AREA

Cabinetry and shelving – Allikristé, Naples, FL

Stone panel – UMI Stone, Naples, FL

Fabricated by Naples Stoneworks, Naples, FL

Barstools – Hamilton Conte, J Nelson, Hollywood, FL

Armless chair and wall sconce – Liaigre, MDD, Miami, FL

DINING AREA

Table, chairs and bench – Liaigre, MDD, Miami, FL

Centerpiece – Artisan John Serrian, Naples, FL

Chandelier – CP Lighting, Philadelphia, PA

LIVING AREA

Sofa, cocktail ottoman and armchairs – Minotti, Miami, FL

Tray on cocktail table and occasional table – Owners’ Collection

KITCHEN

Cabinetry, island and display shelving – Allikristé, Naples, FL

Countertops – UMI Stone, Naples, FL

Fabricated by Naples Stoneworks Naples, FL

Counter stools – Holly Hunt, Miami, FL

MASTER BATH

Cabinetry – Allikristé, Naples, FL

Black travertine wall treatment and flooring – Naples Stoneworks, Naples, FL

Lava stone shower flooring – Naples Stoneworks, Naples, FL

Stool – Owners’ Collection

Vintage chandelier – Judith Liegeois Designs Gallery, Naples, FL

MASTER BEDROOM

Custom bed base and upholstered headboard panels – Michael Schmidt Custom Interiors, Naples, FL

Bedside chests and headboard trim fabricated by Conceptual Woodworking, Fort Myers, FL

Hand-painted velvet accent pillows – Kevin O’Brien Studio, Philadelphia, PA

Table lamps – Hutton Home, Miami, FL

Chandelier – Luxe Lighting, Kravet Showroom, Naples, FL

Armless chair – Owners’ Collection

Drapery fabric – Zoffany Fabric, Ammon Hickson Showroom, DCOTA, Dania Beach, FL

Fabricated by Michael Schmidt Custom Interiors, Naples, FL

COURTYARD

Furnishings – Duo Furniture + Lighting, Naples, FL