

Creative Energy

Judith Liegeois designs an artful space for healing in Naples' Royal Harbor neighborhood.

A home is always more than a place: it bears witness to the lives of its inhabitants. Sometimes, the space itself—and the act of filling it—can be the vehicle for transformation. This Royal Harbor home exemplifies that, with art and furnishings that create a vibrant, healing environment.

Naples interior designer Judith Liegeois came onto this project as the homeowner was transitioning out of a decades-long negative relationship. It would be her first time living on her own. “When I was looking for interior designers, I saw a picture of Judith sitting on a yoga pillow, and I knew I wanted to reach out to her,” the homeowner says. “We met, and Judith just saw me.”

When the designer first walked into the home, it was brand-new, beautifully located and nicely situated, but it felt cold and empty. The furnishings were uninspired. “It was just a sofa here,

a dining table there,” Judith says. But the bones were there: abundant light from the canal off Naples Bay, a striking staircase to the second floor, a modern kitchen and a lovely stone-clad fireplace. “The home had potential; it just felt sad,” she says.

The homeowner had a clear direction for Judith as they embarked on the redesign: “I’m ready to take my power back,” she said to the renowned Naples designer, adding that she wanted the whole home to feel zen and safe. The two collaborated to infuse the residence with thoughtful furnishings that fill the space with positive energy. Much of that came through finding unique pieces by area artists, whose passion for creation extends beyond the frame. “The pieces she chose were full of color; it’s the common thread,” Judith says. “A point of view flows through the entire house.”





Two abstract paintings flank the foyer as you enter the home: *Alternate Reality* by Naples-raised Mike Browne and *I'll See it When I Believe It* by Gisela Miller, a German-born painter who splits time between Washington, D.C. and Naples. Each is calm but optimistic, with a mostly white field punctuated by peppery red, blue and yellow swaths. In an alcove in the foyer, Judith layered a circular mirror on top of a mirrored wall. "That was intentional, a way to expand the space," she says. She finished the area with an antique sculpture, carved-wood credenza and crystals from the homeowners' collection.

In the living area, the fireplace creates a striking impression. Judith lined the inside with selenite crystals, which glow by candlelight. An organically shaped custom screen covers the fireplace and plays off the commissioned branch-like chandelier overhead. "The whole house is art, even the fixtures," Judith says. The homeowner particularly loves the large sofa Judith selected for the room. "There's plenty of room for the grandchildren, dogs, birds and the cat," she says. Two abstract paintings, *99 Flowers on the Wall* by Mike Browne and *Ruby Quest* by Katie Ré Scheidt, flank the walls leading to the lanai. The white, blue and coral tones pick up the rich hues of the accent pillows in the mostly neutral room, making the space feel fun and unfussy.



Previous spread: Naples artist Ran Adler's *Currents* climbs across the stairwell wall. His work is also seen in a nook near the homeowner's bedroom (far left). Contemporary art throughout creates a cheery vibe, with subtle color.

The homeowner hired Judith to revamp her home after the end of a decades-long relationship. Everything in the design imbues a sense of peace and power.



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Nearby, you transition to the kitchen—a space the homeowner often uses when caring for her grandchildren. Here, *My Valentine* by Jason Cole Mager further plays off the living room’s hues and has pride of place above an ornate console table.

Upstairs, the home’s more private spaces enlist ethereal photographs for a meditative effect. In the family room, *Dahlia and Bud* by Karen Shulman pays homage to the wonders of a flower in bloom. In the primary bedroom, *Anna, Study #2* by Miami-based photographer Troy Campbell celebrates femininity; on the opposite wall, the digital collage *The Poets* by Austin, Texas-based visual artist Ysabel LeMay, represented at METHOD & CONCEPT, weaves a romantic environment. Throughout the home, flowers reside in vases Judith designed for her collection. The pebble-shaped vessels have a few holes at the top for easy flower arranging. “You just go to the grocery store, grab some tulips or roses, and plo p them in there,” she says.

Fostering a sense of zen and ease was essential to the design, so Judith commissioned Ran Adler—the Naples artist known for his sculptural installations made of organic materials—to create two key pieces in the home. Ran’s installation process is integral to his work, incorporating meditation rituals in the creation. This is evident in *Currents*, seen over the stairwell. Made from gathered horsetail rush, the sculpture’s meandering, sometimes intertwining lines evoke the changeable pathways of life. Just





The meditation room features antique chairs from Judith's warehouse and Troy Campbell's *Night Bloom, Study #1* photograph above a Balinese credenza.

outside the primary bedroom, Ran installed *Birds in Flight*, a collection of gold-dipped acacia thorns, which look like they are winging off into the distance. The piece evokes river currents and birds in flight—fluid, changeable elements and wonders to behold that are deeply connected to the Earth. “Ran is this very zen-like character, a master of calm,” Judith says.

They transformed the office into a space for meditation, health coaching sessions and relaxation. Judith sourced wide and low meditation chairs from her warehouse. They combine with an antique screen and Balinese credenza. Above it is Troy Campbell's *Night Bloom, Study #1*, a tonal examination of the ephemeral flower. “We used cooler colors here because we needed it to be calmer,” Judith says. “This is a room where you just need to be quiet.”

Judith and the homeowner slowly added all the art and furnishings over the course of a year. “We didn't just buy art for a room; it was a process,” the designer says. “Art has to balance a space and speak to the space.” Along the way, the homeowner had a chance to meet some of the artists whose work she gravitated toward: “I had the most amazing experience—not just with Judith but with everyone she introduced me to.”

The connection between the designer and client went beyond simply furnishing the home. It was a healing exercise that left both feeling connected. “It was a wonderful journey; I just loved making her happy. Designing her home was so rewarding,” Judith says. The homeowner adds: “Now, I feel at peace when I walk through the door.” 🌿