



ART HOUSE

CLEAN LINES AND OPEN SPACES PROVIDE THE PERFECT GALLERY-LIKE SETTING FOR THE HOMEOWNERS' EXTENSIVE COLLECTION OF ARTWORK.

WRITTEN BY **KIMBERLY OLSON** PHOTOGRAPHY BY **BILL TIMMERMAN**

INTERIOR DESIGN Arlene Semel and Brian Snow, SemelSnow Interior Design, Inc.

ARCHITECTURE Adam Berkelhamer, Berkelhamer Architects

LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE Todd Briggs, Trueform Landscape Architecture Studio

BEDROOMS 4 | **BATHROOMS** 5 | **SQUARE FEET** 10,000



The living room showcases just a taste of the homeowners' extensive art collection, including a large-scale piece by Francesca Galliani. A John Saladino sectional is upholstered in a Castel viscose-linen blend while two Pierre Chateau barrel chairs, from Historical Design in New York, sport a geometric print that echoes the architecture.



As a newly engaged couple hunted for a nest in Arizona, one wish topped their list: a mountain view. “I grew up and lived my whole life in Chicago, so the mountains were a treat for me,” says the husband. The couple indeed found a home with magical mountain views, but the house itself wasn’t exactly what they were looking for, so they razed it to build something new. “The design of the house started with walking on the land to decide where the living room should go,” architect Adam Berkelhamer says. “With that, we created one big room, all in glass, with the roof pitched toward the mountain to capture the view.”

The house would also have to suit the dynamic couple’s varied needs—from spending a quiet evening alone, to hosting overnight guests, to accommodating up to 200 people for charity events. “We designed it from the inside out,” the husband says. “There was a lot of thought put into how we would live in it. How many people did we want to entertain? How were we going to use the outdoor space?”

To answer these questions, the couple turned to Chicago-based designers Arlene Semel and Brian Snow to help conceive a spacious, clean-lined floor plan that mirrored how they wanted to live. “The intent was to use a block structure, with an open ceiling and I-beams in the living and dining rooms, to create that wonderful space,” Snow says. “The rest of the house would be very simple and pure.”



CONTINUED FROM PAGE 235

Berkelhamer then crafted the house to meet those needs, installing a long, wide corridor that forms the main circuit through the home and acts as a gallery to showcase some of the couple's extensive collection of art, which ranges from pre-Columbian sculpture to work by artists such as Jean Dubuffet and Bill Traylor. "I bought all of our Traylor drawings because they looked so whimsical to me," the husband says. "We're not investors in art; we just buy things that resonate with us." Precise planning was taken to fit certain pieces—such as a special space in the foyer designed to hold an 8-foot-tall, 3-ton steel Louise Nevelson sculpture that

Two tables in the dining room allow for hosting dinner parties for six, eight or 14. The square Hugues Chevalier table, purchased through Studium in New York, is paired with Mies van der Rohe's iconic Brno chairs upholstered in Spinneybeck leather. French chairs from the 1940s pull up to the round Michael Heltzer table.



The living room—housed mostly in glass framed in steel—maximizes the desert and mountain views. The oversize roof eaves and high-performance glass provide protection from the intense Arizona sun. Black slate by Norstone makes up the living room floors. Fleetwood doors open to the outside.



An Indian Amritsar rug, purchased at Doris Leslie Blau in New York, adds warmth to the living room. An abstract painting by Kenneth Noland hangs above a library table with a parchment top and ebonized X-base, from Lucca & Co. in New York. The track lighting overhead is by Erco; many hours were spent programming the museum-quality lights for optimal presentation of the art.



When the glass doors are open, the space is open to the courtyard, creating a seamless transition between the interior and exterior. The large windows provide a view of the surrounding landscape, while the glass doors allow for easy access to the outdoor area. The design is minimalist and modern, with a focus on natural materials and large glass panels.



While entertaining, the couple often use the kitchen island, topped with a walnut butcher block, to set up a buffet. The stylish barstools, by Powell & Bonnell, covered in Izit Leather vinyl, were purchased from Dennis Miller Associates in New York.




CONTINUED FROM PAGE 236

was carefully transported to and then assembled in the house and alcoves for sculpture that adorn the backs of two floating fireplaces, which separate the living and dining areas from the main gallery corridor that runs through the home.

Within the larger spaces, Snow created various furniture groupings to lend coziness, with most furnishings brought from the couple's Chicago home. "It's unusual that anybody that we work with doesn't have beautiful things that they want to reuse," Snow says. "There's a Viennese wingback chair in the living room with a bold geometric

A Louise Nevelson wood sculpture, set into a recessed wall, acts as a nice conversation starter in the den. A Brueton cocktail table is flanked by a Donghia sofa and a pair of club chairs, circa 1950s. The chairs are clad in their original Viennese cut silk-velvet. The bright red cotton rug is from Stephanie Odegard Collection in New York.

A photograph of a modern house at dusk. In the foreground, a large agave plant with thick, pointed leaves is illuminated from below. To the right, a covered walkway with a dark metal frame and glass railing extends from the house. The house itself has a dark, textured exterior with large windows that are lit from within. In the background, several tall, thin trees with dense foliage are visible against the twilight sky. The overall atmosphere is serene and modern.

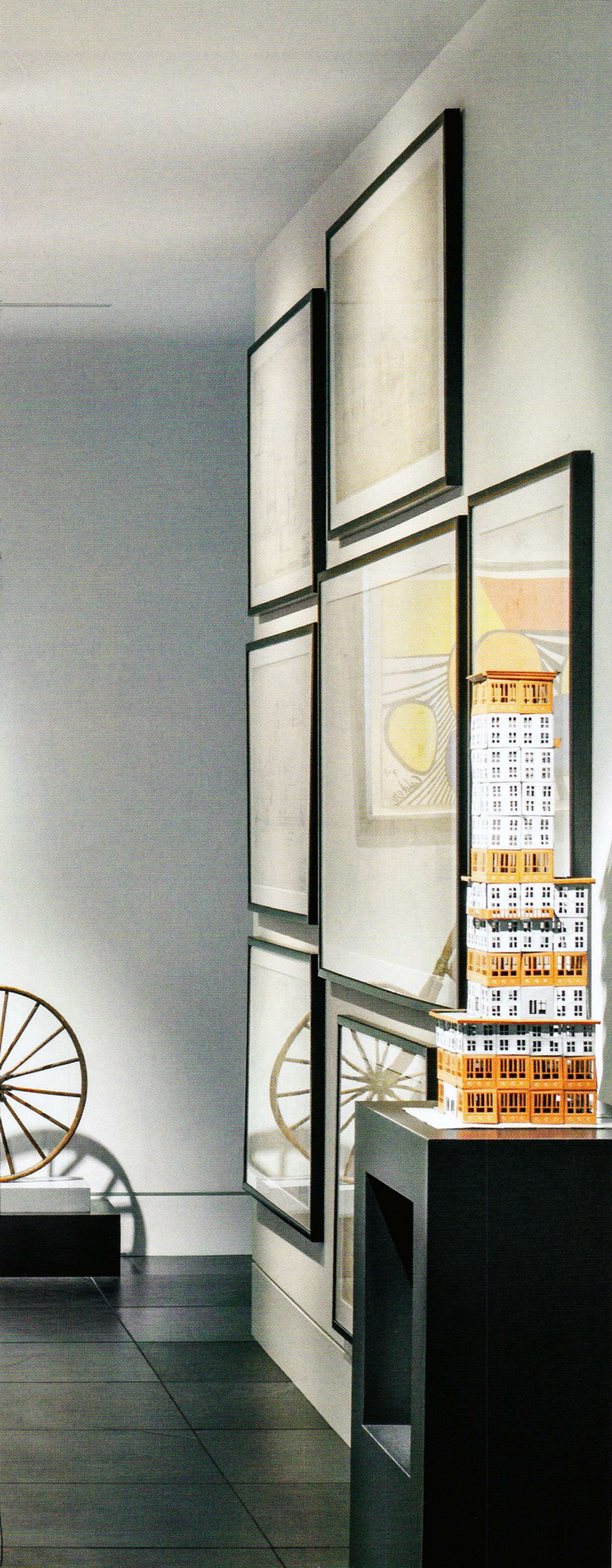
The landscape design near the house is modern and refined to reflect the tone of the architecture. Plantings include succulents and native specimen trees, which were craned into place, to evoke the sense of a home living in harmony with nature. Nearly all of the rooms in the house open directly to the outdoors.

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One end of the home's 120-foot-long central corridor, which runs perpendicular to the living and dining areas, leads to the guest wing. Among the art found in this gallery-like space is an Alexander Calder piece, which hangs above a whimsical bicycle sculpture.



CONTINUED FROM PAGE 241

print that came from the Chicago house. It was beautiful and didn't need any changes to it. But then we also brought in some new pieces, like the Art Deco rug by the living room fireplace."

Because the couple entertains, the kitchen had to be up to the task. "Behind the main kitchen is a second working kitchen, with cabinetry for backup plates and glassware," Snow says. "There are multiple dishwashers, refrigerators and freezers, with a door leading to an area where caterers can set up their outside kitchens or grills." Lucky overnight guests stay in the spacious guest wing—with its own den, morning kitchen and laundry room—which can be closed off for privacy.

"There are doors off the kitchen that pocket fully into the wall, so the room just opens to the outside," Berkelhamer says, describing just one example of the home's strong indoor-outdoor living concept. "In the evenings, you can sit at the fire pit right out in front and watch the mountain as it glows in the sunset." The couple loves spending time outside, and the elaborate yard, complete with its saltwater lap pool, gives them a venue to do just that.

Here, they are surrounded by landscape architect Todd Briggs' artful design, which honors both the modern house and its natural desert surroundings. "On the edges of the property, there's wildness, which is



The master bedroom features a custom bookcase headboard by SemelSnow Interior Design. A Tizio swing-arm lamp by Artemide makes late-night reading all the easier. The bedding, also custom by SemelSnow Interior Design, was fabricated by Custom Workshop for Designers. A pair of Josef Hoffmann by Thonet barrel chairs provide seating.



Above: In the master bedroom library, a 1930s Macassar ebony French Art Deco desk is paired with a Herman Miller Eames desk chair and another Josef Hoffmann chair by Thonet. *Left:* The master bathroom features a long vanity with cabinetry by Poggenpohl. Crosscut honed Roman travertine from Italy forms the floors.

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 245

beautiful in its own right," says Briggs, who had worked on the project while with Ten Eyck Landscape Architects. "As the landscape creeps into the more intimate parts of the house, it becomes more refined and structured." Plantings include salvaged ironwood, mesquite and palo verde trees—mainstays of the nearby Sonoran Desert. "Some of these trees are over 100 years old," Briggs adds. "To bring in trees with that craggy old character integrated the house with its surroundings."

Just as envisioned, the modern house is at once a home, entertaining space, art gallery, and guest quarters. "We love living here," the husband says. "In the mornings, when I'm calling my office in Chicago, I sit outside, just staring at that mountain." **L**

