

# A SIMPLE PLAN

RICH TEXTURES, A QUIET PALETTE AND AN ABUNDANCE OF LIGHT DEFINE A COUPLE'S HILLTOP HOUSE IN SEDALIA.

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ARCHITECTURE / MICHAEL L. WOODLEY, WOODLEY ARCHITECTURAL GROUP  
HOME BUILDER / BOB WOODLEY, JOYCE HOMES, INC.  
LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE / BEN BROWNE, BROWNE & ASSOCIATES CUSTOM LANDSCAPES



Design can often be a balancing act. And as the team at Duet Design Group—including principals Miranda Cullen and Devon Tobin—approached the interiors for a new house in Sedalia, they found the perfect middle ground. “The husband and wife were on different pages aesthetically,” Cullen says of the empty-nester couple from Denver, who were in the process of downsizing. “She leaned toward a traditional sensibility, and he wanted something a little more edgy. Our job was to blend those styles together so they both felt at home.”

To create that home, the couple had painstakingly looked for the ideal location. It took several years to find, but their persistence and patience paid off when they discovered a jewel in the rough of Sedalia—a vacant 11-acre hilltop lot with panoramic views of the Rocky Mountain foothills. The site was ideal for the home they envisioned: a simple structure with big views, lots of windows, a large outdoor terrace

with a swimming pool, and, most important, an informal and inviting atmosphere that would become a magnet for their children and grandchildren.

“They were looking to simplify their life,” says architect Michael L. Woodley, with whom the couple also worked to design their previous residence. “The idea was to create a home that could accommodate grand family events, but also wasn’t out of scale when it was just the two of them.” With that in mind, Woodley designed an L-shaped structure with two distinct wings: one with a great room containing the main living areas and the other with a master suite. The wings are connected by a gracious hallway, which opens onto a covered outdoor terrace and pool. Stairs off the entry lead to a lower level, where Woodley positioned the husband’s studio, a recreation room and guest quarters. “The structure is simple and uncomplicated, while still allowing them to live exactly the way they want to,” says the architect.

**Above:** For the parlor of a couple’s new Sedalia house, designers Miranda Cullen and Devon Tobin kept to a monochromatic palette when reupholstering a sofa and two armchairs with Fabricut linen. The ceiling fixture is by Currey & Company.

**Opposite:** Architect Michael L. Woodley designed the entry of the stone structure to include a two-story tower. A grouping of Restoration Hardware pendants hangs above a stairway, which leads to the lower-level rooms.

A 13-foot-long island with a polished PentalQuartz countertop from Capco Tile & Stone anchors the kitchen. Black-and-white-painted cabinetry fabricated by Tharp Cabinet Company provides contrast, while the oak flooring by Kentwood grounds the space. The pendants are by Currey & Company, and the bar chairs and stools are by Orient Express Furniture.

Per the homeowners' request, custom-blended cobblestone in soft neutral tones was used on the walls, inside and out, with expansive glass openings framed in black steel puncturing the walls. "It was the perfect middle ground for both of them," says Woodley, "warm, yet modern." The architect oriented the house so that the sight line from the glass front door leads straight through the hallway to the pool in the back and the expansive vistas beyond. "So often a house plan is decided on and then the lot is chosen," explains Bob Woodley, the project's builder and the architect's brother. "But this house was perfectly designed and built for the site it sits on."

For the interiors, the designers focused on a monochromatic palette of ivory, white and earth tones, which they blended with linen textiles, wood elements and iron finishes. "The design of this home is unique because there really is no color in it," says Cullen. "Contrast is created with black accents, the exterior views and the homeowners' extensive art collection." Throughout the home, the walls and trim were painted "not white, not cream, but the perfect in-between," she adds, and the hue provides a crisp contrast to the rustic stonework. To keep the focus on the views, patterns were used minimally on the upholstered pieces and window treatments were kept simple. "This house illuminates with amazing natural light, and by sticking with tonal fabrics and surfaces, we were able to reflect that light to create a warm, fresh and inviting environment," says Cullen.

At one end of the house, a large great room creates a grand yet welcoming gathering space. "We designed that room with several different usages in mind," explains Cullen. Wood barstools pull up to the kitchen's island, creating a casual eating area on one side of the room, while sophisticated chairs encircle a hefty reclaimed-wood table in the adjacent, more formal dining area. Back-to-back seating areas—appointed with wingback chairs in both modern wood and classic tufted versions—anchor the opposite end. Subtle black accents throughout echo





Works by artist Emil Lukas line a lower-level hallway, which was designed to accommodate the homeowners' art collection. The spiky ceiling fixtures by Visual Comfort & Co. offer a striking presence without detracting from the art in the gallery-like environment.

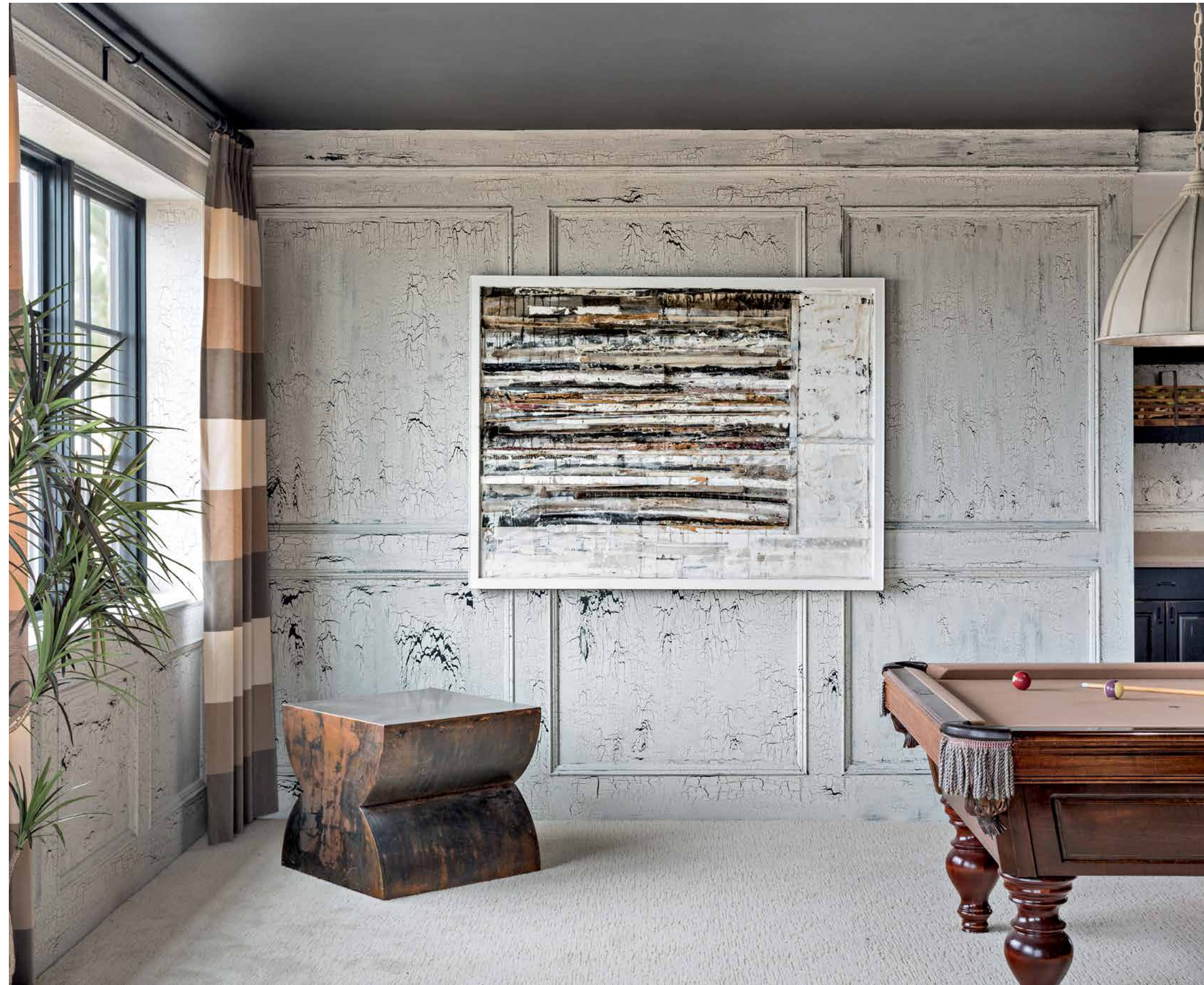
the shade of the window frames and sharpen the more traditional elements. Cullen points specifically to the black trim on the white kitchen cabinets and the pair of aged-brass ceiling fixtures marked by bulbs dangling from black fabric-wrapped cables above the dining and sitting areas.

Despite the large space, the room feels cohesive thanks to its muted palette. Those quiet tones continue in a separate parlor just off the entry—where the designers re-covered the homeowners' sofa and two chairs with warm linen—and pick up again in the master bedroom. Inspired by a beloved image the owners found in a book, the designers wrapped the doors to the bedroom and the wife's bathroom with creamy faux leather and detailed them with black nailhead trim.

Outside, "the views were the first priority," says landscape designer Ben Browne. "The homeowners wanted the pool terrace to make a statement and for everything else to blend in with the surroundings." To accommodate their requests, he incorporated native plantings and designed a low retaining wall made from the same stone used for the house to encircle the terrace. "Everything outside of the wall is natural," Browne says, "and everything inside is manicured and sleek."

After the two-year process of completing the house, it appears that persistence and patience has paid off for the homeowners once again. "We've created our own private resort," says the husband. "There's no reason for us to go anywhere." **L**

A custom finish, executed by Shades of Color, on the paneled walls in the recreation room mimics the look of crackled paint and complements the black-painted ceiling. The horizontal-striped drapery panels are made with Wolf-Gordon fabric. The artwork is by the husband.





Builder Bob Woodley constructed the L-shaped house with glass and stone, which was procured in a custom blend from Sunset Stone. Landscape designer Ben Browne devised a retaining wall of the same stone to define the manicured grounds of the pool terrace.

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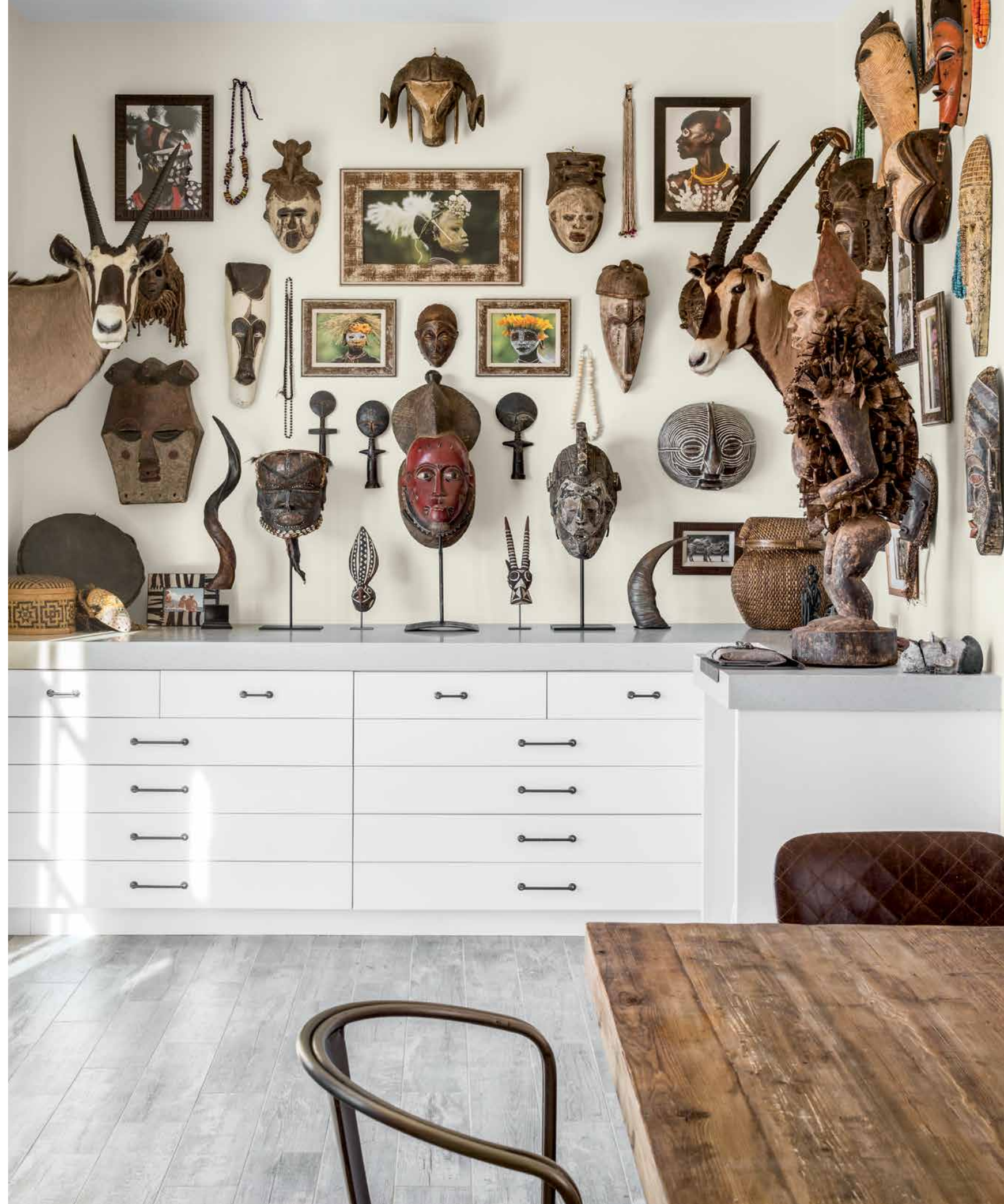
—BOB WOODLEY



**Above:** The husband's studio, which he uses for painting and insect collecting, is positioned on the lower level and offers sweeping views of the landscape. Pendants illuminate a large worktable from Four Hands.

**Right:** The husband collects a variety of colorful butterflies, moths and beetles from around the world and displays them framed in eye-catching groupings in his studio.

**Opposite:** Tribal masks and artwork from the homeowners' collection are hung en masse above streamlined custom drawers built by Tharp Cabinet Company in the studio. The flooring is from Bedrosians Tile & Stone.





**Above:** An upholstered door leads to the wife's elegant bathroom, which features a Tulip tub by Wetstyle paired with a filler by Rubinet Faucet Company from Ferguson. The shade fabric is by Schumacher.

**Opposite:** For the master bedroom, the homeowners' existing bed was refinished to blend within the overall palette. Wool carpet by Couristan lends texture to the room, and the door was upholstered by A&B Riely Upholstery with faux leather by Wolf-Gordon.

