

METRO

VOL. 11 NO. 3

home

**READY,
SET,
STYLE!**

**THE EXPERT
ADVICE ISSUE**

INSIDER TIPS
AND PRACTICAL
SOLUTIONS
TO DECORATING

& Entertaining

**TOP
TRENDS
FROM THE
DESIGN
INDUSTRY'S
NEW HOT
SHOTS**

**ALVEO
LAND'S
SOLSTICE
AT CIRCUIT
MAKATI
LIFE
ABOVE ALL**

**40+ PAGES
OF FANTASTIC HOMES**

**A MAJESTIC MODERN FILIPINO FAMILY HAVEN
A COSMOPOLITAN DREAM HOME IN MAKATI
A PRISTINE TAGAYTAY HIDEAWAY
A CONTEMPORARY DREAM HOUSE IN THE CITY**

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Electric City

PHOTOGRAPHY BY
WILLIAM ONG

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is available online at zinio.com.



i am
a dreamer
i am Amaia
Kaya ko na!



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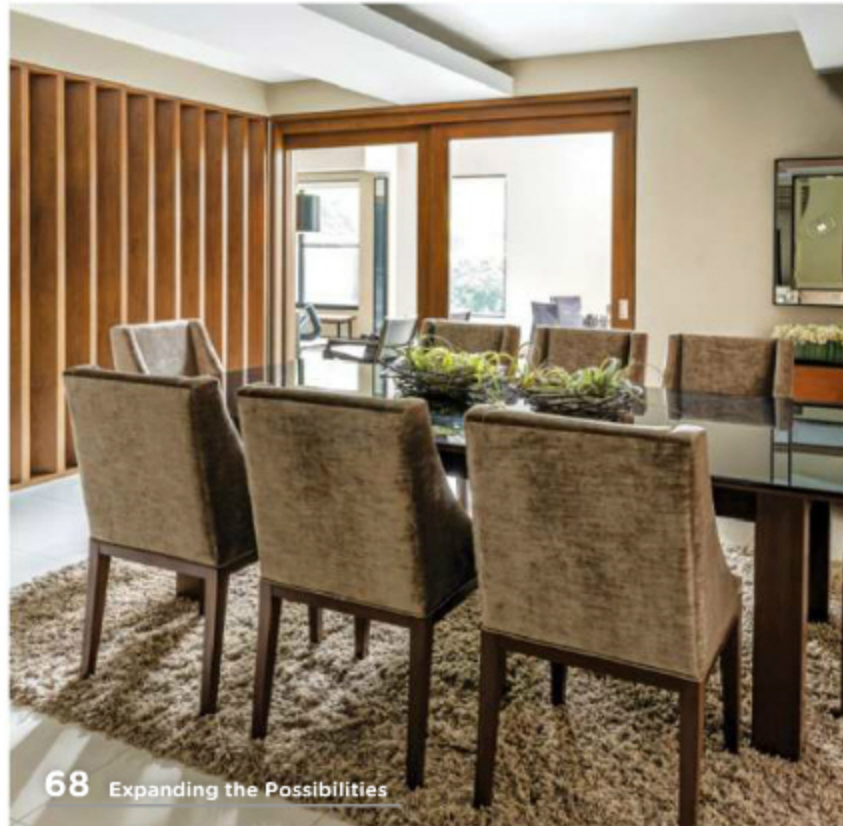
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Metro Home & Entertaining is published by **ABS-CBN Publishing, Incorporated** (formerly Benpres Publishing, Incorporated),
8th Flr, Eugenio Lopez Jr. Communications Center, Mother Ignacia St. cor. Eugenio Lopez Dr., Quezon City
Tel. 02-924-4101, 02-415-2272 loc. 4815; E-mail: metrohome@abs-cbn.com; visit <http://www.facebook.com/metrohome.magazine>
Circulation Customer Service, Tel. 02-415-2272 loc. 4826; Fax 02-415-1215
Color separation: **COLORGUIDE**, 14 Scout Borromeo, Brgy. South Triangle, Quezon City Tel. 02-411-6373, 02-410-2551, 02-415-4436.
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From the Experts: Lessons on Planning, Perspective and Patience

A FRIEND AND HER HUSBAND once called and begged me to check out their apartment. They were newlyweds with an empty apartment, and had reached their wits' end. So when I got to their place, I saw a huge cornflower blue sofa in the middle of the living room. The story just came rushing out of them. They had gotten so frustrated with staring at this living room. The lack of furniture seemed to taunt and haunt them that they went out and bought the first sofa they could find. Then they realized that the sofa was so bulky—they kept bumping into it—and hated its shade of blue!

"Now I know why people hire designers," my friend began, sighing at how he acquired his instant wisdom. "I thought we were saving money, but here we're stuck with something we hate!"

Well, it wasn't a lost cause. I recommended a reasonably priced upholsterer who redid the hideous blue sofa, and my friends learned the hard way that they preferred a neutral color scheme.

No one is immune to decorating mishaps. No space is ever instantly stylish and livable. It takes planning, perspective and patience. And who else should we turn to but the experts? We've gone to our fave design authorities and asked them to give us their best advice, and we found it a thoroughly enlightening experience; it's the exact opposite of the blind leading the blind.

Years of education, internship and on-the-job practice gave these experts the know-how and insider information that we now happily pass on to you, our readers. We hope that instead of being intimidated, you will feel empowered to plan your own spaces. Or choose one of our chosen experts to do your home.

Whatever you do, always keep in mind that you are the expert of your own life so, first of all, take into account how you live and let all your design choices flow from that point of self-awareness.



PHOTOGRAPH BY TERRY UY

anton

Out-of-the-box Interiors

EMBRACE INFLUENCES THAT ARE RELEVANT TO YOUR PERSONAL STYLE

BY BARBARA PARDO-TIANGCO
PHOTOGRAPHS BY IAN CASTAÑARES



Raphael Kiefer is a model, writer and entrepreneur with an advocacy for local culture. His most recent venture includes setting up and supporting livelihood programs in textile-producing communities in the Philippines to preserve and trade heritage looms. In the summer, he co-produces a peace festival in Mindanao, the place he still calls home, to support his other advocacy: promoting permaculture.

Jovel Lorenzo is a prolific photographer whose works are regularly published in leading business and lifestyle magazines and newspapers. He enjoys taking photos of destinations, food, and famous personalities. He has extensive experience in advertising and corporate photography, and caters to a diverse clientele, ranging from business magnates, expatriates, diplo-

mats, and government officials. Jovel is also a member of the Philippine Sailing Team, and he used to be part of the prestigious dance group Hotlegs.

After taking up Interior Design in the Philippine School of Interior Design, **Willy Marbella** worked in the field of visual arts as gallery owner, art manager, art writer, and curator for the De La Salle University. He also taught Philippine Art History and Art Appreciation in the same university. He also ventured into travel writing.

If the guy in the photo at left seems familiar to you, it wouldn't be a surprise if you're someone who regularly goes to posh events at upscale venues. **Norman Lleses** has been in the lifestyle photography business for nearly a decade now, having several highly publicized events under his belt. He also stands as official photographer for some of the biggest names in the world of food and beverages, apparels, hotels and restaurants with several celebrity pictorials thrown in the mix for good measure.

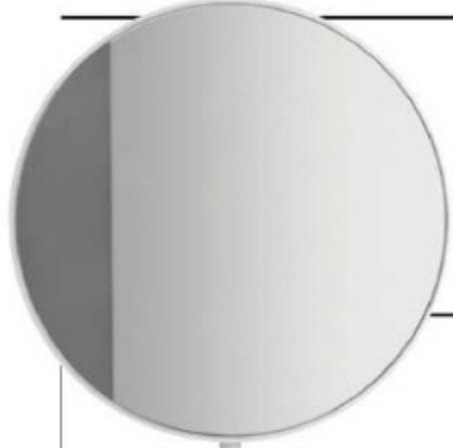


MATCHING FURNITURE and accessories is a thing of the past. Today, individuals crave a home that reflects the many facets of their personality instead of that once popular store-bought showroom look.

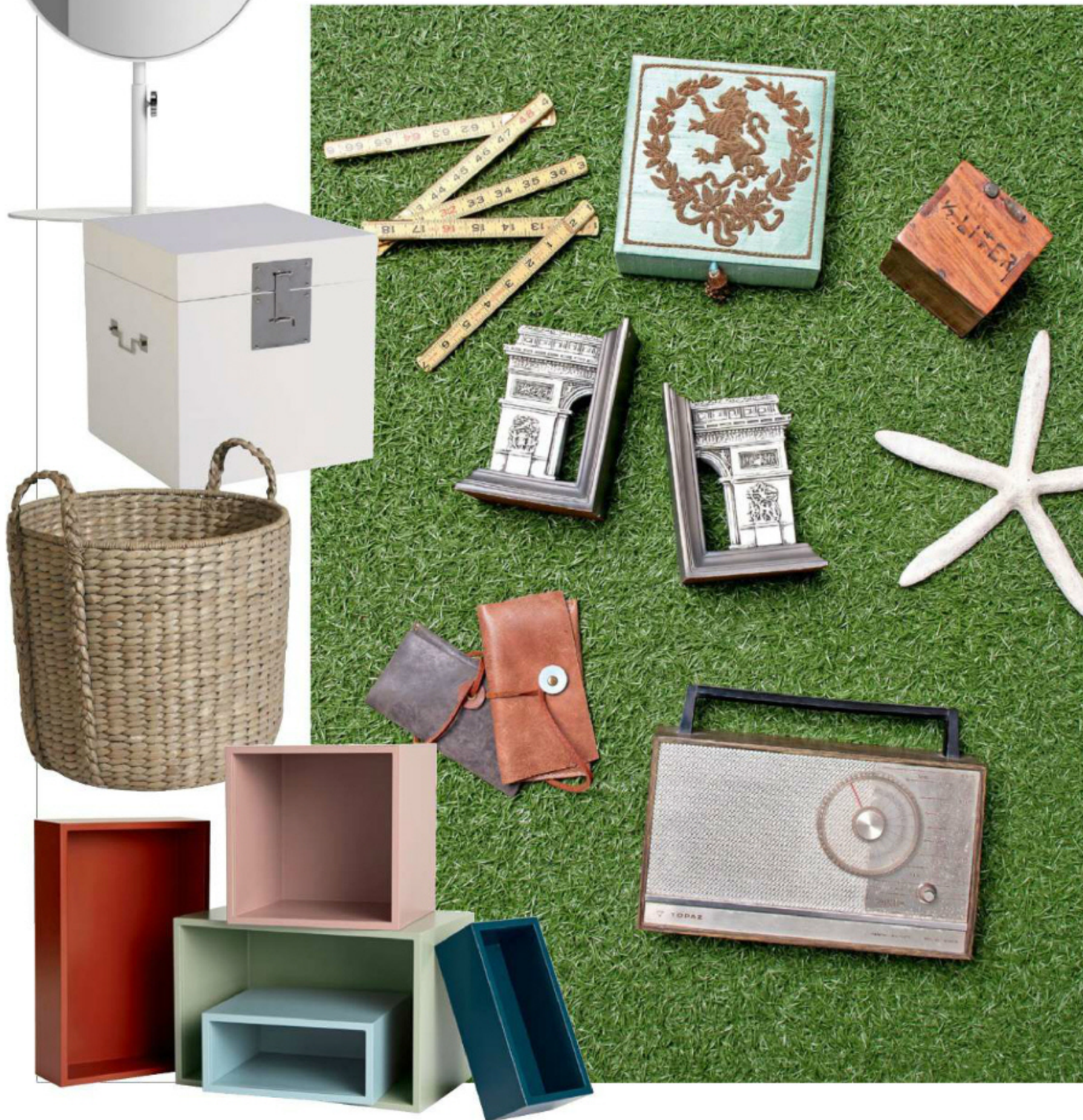
Today's homeowner has the confidence to mix and match design eras and styles. Design definitions such as *rustic elegance* and *modern traditional* are no longer oxymorons but a welcome eclectic design trend. Homes this year embrace influences that are relevant to the individual regardless of which aesthetic category they belong.

This results in a less rigid, less schooled but personal look.

ON THE WALL: (From left) Wooden hand candleholders, P2,000 each. Wall barn scone, P6,000. Small wall mounted antlers with grass, P8,500. Hanging shoelast, P1,200 each, all from Urban Abode. **FROM LEFT:** Elk cabinet, P80,000, Kish. Two halves fat vase, P11,500, Kish. Sand timer, P3,895, Sifra. Petrol bottle lamp, P18,500, Kish. Chesterfield sofa, P34,000, Urban Abode. Faux fur pillow, P2,200 each, Urban Abode. Baby cow rug, P6,900, Sifra. Handwoven felted wool pile carpet, P29,500, Kish. Coffee table, P28,000, Urban Abode. **ON THE TABLE:** Antler, P10,000, Urban Abode. *Shot on location at Urban Abode.*



IN PHOTO (Clockwise from top) Lion embroidery box metal, P10,500, Kish. Wooden antique rice metric P12,000 (4pcs. per set), Urban Abode. Vintage radio, P5,500, Urban Abode. Leather wallet, P900 each, Urban Abode. Arc de Triomphe bookends, P3,895, Sifra. Faux grass rug, price upon request, Urban Abode. **LEFT:** (From top) Kioo mirror, price upon request, Matteo Cibic for Calligaris. White canton floor cube, Oversized seagrass basket, prices upon request, both from Ethan Allen. Scopia boxed drawers, price upon request, Hülsta.



IN PHOTO: (From left) Ginza chair, P15,000, Kish. Calvin's chest of drawers, P28,000, My Apt. (On chest, from left) Candle holder, P7,500, Kish. Wooden boat, P4,500, Sifra. Wooden ball, P500, Urban Abode. Vintage typewriter, P12,000, My Apt. Burlap Curtain, P7,500, Urban Abode. Small faux grass rug, P6,100, Urban Abode. Handmade wool pouf, P11,500, Kish. **FROM TOP RIGHT:** Throw pillow, P950, Sifra. Africa rug, price upon request, Matteo Cibic for Calligaris. Oval mirrored brass tray, Lianne chinoiserie box on stand, prices upon request, both from Ethan Allen.



Random Pickings

STUFF FOR THE HOME, PLACES TO SEE, AND ACTIVITIES TO TRY



THE PRIVATO LIFESTYLE

Smart travelers know that choosing a hotel isn't always about the price. Instead, comfort and personalized service are crucial—inviting and restful rooms designed to maximize space and functionality, and equipped with all the amenities that make a hotel a home away from home. Style and image are considerations, too. Clean and fluid lines, a lobby that impresses with its stunning Italian marble, furniture and statement pieces that are proudly Philippine-made, and a conscious commitment to green design. These form the heart of the Privato Hotel.

The hotel's proximity to Capitol Commons, an upcoming lifestyle and dining development, foodie haunt Kapitolyo, the Ortigas Central Business District, EDSA, and C-5 is the answer to the busy traveler's prime consideration—location.

While the phrase "affordable luxury" comes to mind when describing the Privato, it is much more than that. Quality, style, comfort, culture, class, commitment, values, in short—lifestyle.

Privato Hotel is located at 706 Shaw Boulevard, Pasig, City. For inquiries, call 717-5888. Introductory rates at P2,200++ available until August 30, 2014.



ELBA ELECTRIC CONVECTION OVENS

The Elba nine-function electric convection oven comes with distinctive, state-of-the-art features including an electronic programmer with start/end cooking, electronic clock with alarm, all-glass design, rotisserie, oven light, catalytic self-cleaning panels, removable inner door glass, and, for accessories, a tray, shelf, and pastry plate. There are two models to choose from, the AC 425-825 BK in black, and the AC 425-825 MR in stainless steel. Available at leading appliance stores.



MUJI CENTRAL'S NEW HOME

Japanese lifestyle brand Muji invites everyone to step inside its new home in Bonifacio High Street. Located at the 2nd floor of the cosmopolitan Central Square building, Muji spans a 430-sq.m. floor area, walled with fine wood finish for clean and pristine store interiors. New selections from this year's Spring and Summer collection are now available. Organic cotton and linen take center stage as the best, premium quality fabrics to fight rising temperatures. Home fabrics and garments are designed and sewn using these core fabrics for a light and refreshing feel at home and against the skin. *MUJI is exclusively distributed by Stores Specialists, Inc. (SSI) and is located at BHS Central, Power Plant Mall at Rockwell, Robinsons Magnolia, Greenbelt 3, SM Mall of Asia, Shangri-La Plaza East Wing and Ayala Center Cebu.*

COLEMAN BRINGS 'GLAMPING' TO PHL

Short for "glamorous camping," glamping is the latest rising trend in camping all over the world. It defines a new wave of luxurious camping that is quickly gaining popularity among the world-wide camping communities. Coleman, a long trusted U.S. brand in outdoor recreational goods, has revealed a new range of products that cater to the Glamping trend.

Coleman's range of goods are categorized into three glamping-related outdoor themes: 5 Minutes Campsite, Chill Out, and Absolute Getaway. Set up your 5 Minutes

Campsite with the Instant Up tent, Instant Shade, Road Trip grill, lounge cot and table picnic set. Chill Out allows the fashionista you and your girl friends to camp out with Coleman lightweight and easy set-up products. Absolute Getaway provides everything you need to organize a grand outdoor party with friends.

Visit Focus Global Inc. at Pioneer corner Reliance Streets, Mandaluyong City, or contact tel. no. 6348587, fax no. 6348738; website: www.focusglobalinc.com, email: corporate@focusglobalinc.com



THE FINE ART OF FRENCH PORCELAIN

Intricately refined, classic, yet adventurous, and at times playful, the artistry of Bernardaud porcelain has never failed to fascinate both the untrained eye and the connoisseur for over one hundred and fifty years. Bernardaud products cater mostly to hotels and restaurants, but they also find their places in the homes of individuals who have the taste for sophisticated luxury.

One of the most anticipated designs to be showcased during the recent Philippine launch is that of select drawings by Russian-French modernist Marc Chagall, faithfully reproduced on Bernardaud porcelain. Aside from tableware, the Limoges-based Bernardaud product line includes interior design (decorative objects, furniture, light fixtures) and personal adornment (jewelry).

In photo are (from left) ABS-CBN Publishing's Sales Head Philip Cu-Unjieng, Bernardaud Group chairman and president Michel Bernardaud, and **Metro Home & Entertaining's** editor-in-chief Anton Barretto. *Bernardaud is exclusively available at Rustan's Makati and Shangri-La Plaza.*





**INDUCTION:
TURNING UP THE HEAT**

Performance and flexibility are the key features of the new Miele cooking appliances. The 80 to 90 cm wide induction models have a total connected output of at least 5 kW that ensures incredibly short heat-up times.

These models are also equipped with PowerFlex rings that adjust flexibly to cookware and offer maximum output when cooking with casserole dishes and oversized pots and pans. This particular feature also allows extremely uniform transfer of heat to the base of pots and pans. This steady transfer of energy to the food creates the ideal conditions for impeccable cooking results.

A stylish stainless steel frame on these hobs allows you to mix and match appliances to create a customized cooking area to suit your lifestyle.

Miele is exclusively distributed by Focus Global Inc. Visit their showrooms at Pioneer corner Reliance Streets, Mandaluyong City, tel. no. 634-8587, open Tuesday to Saturday, 10 a.m.-7 p.m., and Sunday, 1 p.m.-6 p.m.; The Residences at Greenbelt, San Lorenzo Tower, Esperanza Street, Makati City, tel. nos. 794-2095 to 96, open Monday to Saturday, 10 a.m.-8 p.m., Sunday, 11 a.m.-7 p.m.; Design Center of Cebu, P. Remedios corner A.S. Fortuna Streets, Mandaue City, Cebu, tel. no. 520-9888, open Monday to Saturday, 9 a.m.-7 p.m.



**HANDY HELPERS
FOR MAXIMUM HEALTH**

Homedics, the leading global manufacturer of total wellness products, allows users to easily and handily watch their blood pressure or weight in the comfort of their homes through fully-automatic products like the HoMedics Wrist Blood Pressure Monitor, HoMedics Premium Arm Blood Pressure Monitor, and HoMedics-USL-1000-EU (a device which helps reduce fat in hard-to-reach areas of the body). HoMedics is distributed in the Philippines by Ansons, Handyman, Rustans, Robinsons, Blims, The Landmark, Crossing, Makeroom and More, National Bookstore, PCX, S & R, Nemuri, Ace Hardware, Powerbooks, ROX, TrueValue.

PIVOT, THE NEW SINGLE-LEVER MIXER

With Pivot, the new single-lever mixer, Dornbracht presents the first fitting for use throughout the entire kitchen island. Pivot combines high-quality aesthetics with practical functionality. The particularly long projection of the 55-cm range of motion permits a 360° radius of activity while meeting the most demanding standards of flexibility and comfort in the kitchen. With the 360° radius of activity, the individual applications throughout the kitchen can be effortlessly combined. The product name derives from the word 'pivot' and refers to the design of this type of fitting as a moving hub of the cooking island. Pivot is available in chrome and matt platinum surface finishes. Dornbracht is now exclusively distributed in the Philippines by Focus Global Visit the Focus Global showroom at Pioneer, corner Reliance Streets, Mandaluyong City. For more inquiries, call (02) 634-8587.



THE BEAUXARTS KITCHEN

Advocating that the only important rules are those dictated by personal style, SieMatic introduces the BeauxArts.02, a design combining seemingly contrasting elements to craft a harmonious design. The new collection is an exhibition of rich design options and sophisticated contrasts—elegant kitchen cabinetry in combination with rustic cooking ranges, antiques and collectable items placed between modern stainless steel fronts, glossy and matte surfaces and many more. The Beaux-Arts.02 was designed by Mick De Giulio, known in the United States as the Rock Star of Kitchen Design. With a practical and efficient workspace, adorned with tasteful contrasts, the BeauxArts.02 is the kitchen for the strong, smart and expressive. SieMatic is exclusively distributed by Focus Global Inc. Visit the showrooms in Pioneer corner Reliance Sts, Mandaluyong, telephone 634-8587; open Tuesday to Saturday 10 a.m.-7 p.m., Sunday 1 p.m.-6 p.m.; The Residences at Greenbelt, San Lorenzo Tower, Esperanza Street, Makati, telephone 794-2095 to 96, open Monday to Saturday 10 a.m.-8 p.m., Sunday 11 a.m.-7 p.m.; Design Center P. Remedios corner A.S. Fortuna Streets, Mandaue City, Cebu, telephone +6332 520-9888 /238-7605, open Monday to Saturday 9 a.m.-7 p.m.



**WHY WE SHOULD
MEASURE OUR FOOD**

Founded in 1851, Taylor is the authority when it comes to precision measurement. Its range of kitchen weighing scales and thermometers is known for its accuracy, durability and design. It is the acknowledged leader in food thermometers. Exercise proper portion control with Taylor's 5 kg and 10 kg Mechanical Kitchen Scale. Taylor also boasts of a 5 lb Mechanical Add and Weigh kitchen scale that can weigh multiple ingredients in one bowl. Taylor is available at Anson @ Home, Anson Emporium, Anson Marketing, Handyman, Rustans, The Landmark, Cooks Exchange, Crossings



**A 'RAMEN'
LIKE NO OTHER**

Ramen Nagi opens its first Philippine branch at SM Aura Premier, upping the ante in the Japanese noodle market in the country. Born out of the vision of Ramen Master Satoshi Ikuta in Tokyo, the Ramen Nagi chain today is in Japan, Hong Kong, Taiwan, Indonesia, and the Philippines. Of course, the heart and soul of every bowl of ramen is the soup base. Ramen Nagi's rich base is made from a flavorful broth created by slow boiling pork bones for over a day, and infused with a secret blend of seasonings imported from Japan. Ramen Nagi offers the four basic menu items: Butao, the luscious signature tonkotsu pork broth; Red King, the ultimate in savory spiciness; Green King, a Japanese-Italian fusion combining olive oil, pesto, and cheese; and Black King, which adds squid ink and fragrant blackened garlic into the broth. Using the Omotenashi sheet provided to every customer, diners can customize the ramen according to their taste.



Flying High

FEATHERS AND PLUMAGE
FOR THE HOME

BY ANTON BARRETTO
PHOTOGRAPHS BY PAUL DEL ROSARIO

FEATHERED CREATURES, long loved for their rainbow plumage, are endlessly inspiring. Images of birds or objects with feathers can add patina to a modern place, and whimsy to a traditional place. Our increasingly urbanized lives have led to a longing to make a connection with the natural world. And so the burgeoning of avian aspirations is but a manifestation for this desire to decompress. From the soft pale colors of an Audubon painting to the vivid jewel tones of a peacock tail, adding bird-inspired details to an interior gives both freshness and a lived-in coziness.

CLOCKWISE: Painting by Michele Gempere, price upon request, NEST. Butterfly wing chair, P29,000, Sifra. Butterfly throw pillow, P1,750, AC+632. Bird votive candle holder, P395, NEST. Wooden chopping board, P780, AC+632. Moroccan area rug, price upon request, NEST. Black ottoman, price upon request, NEST. (On the ottoman) SC Vizcarra woven tray, P1,200, NEST. Feather fan, P13,800, Firma. Wooden planter, price upon request, NEST. Black three layer shelf, P12,000, NEST. (In the shelf) Ceramic lantern P3,895, NEST. Bird bookend, P3,895, Sifra. Moroccan bowl, P395, NEST. (On the shelf) Apple glass décor, P1,395, NEST. Blue glass vase, P7,480, Firma. Bitossi bird with acrylic stand, price upon request, Abitare. Brown ceramic owl in glass cloche, P3,995, NEST. Black metal lamp base, P4,900, bird stripe lamp shade, P9,380, both from AC+632.



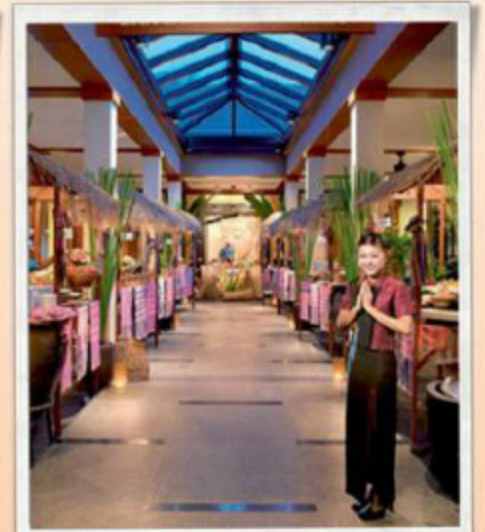
Asia's most beautiful are within your reach.



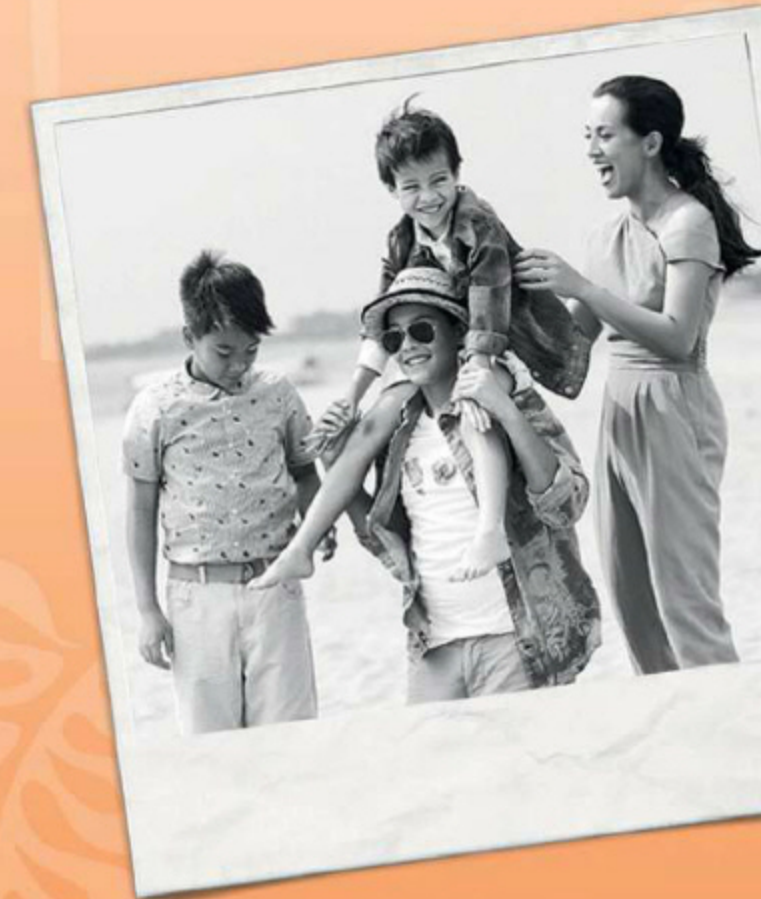
Four Seasons, Thailand



Borobudur, Indonesia



Banyan Tree, Thailand



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A Glamorous Garage Sale

THAT DESCRIBES EXACTLY WHAT SIX PLANET ESTATE SALE IS ALL ABOUT

BY NANA CARAGAY
PHOTOGRAPHS BY PAULO VALENZUELA



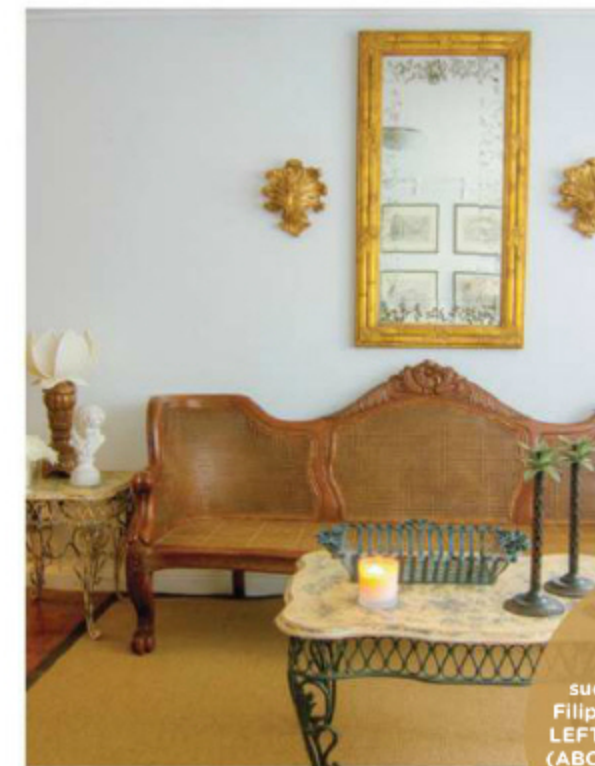
Finds at Six Planet Estate Sale include santos (LEFT) and framed charcoal prints (RIGHT)

WHEN ASKED WHAT “Estate Sale” means, Trish Chua-Juico answers, “It’s a glorified garage sale.” And definitely, upon taking in the chic, elegant interiors of Six Planet Estate Sale, we can say it’s the most glamorous garage sale we’ve ever seen.

True, a few pieces can be found, literally, in the garage. But the revelation comes when you see the treasures inside the home, such as the mirror-paneled coffee table, zebra hide rug, carved ivory centerpiece, and red lacquered chairs beautifully arranged in the living room.

“We want it to feel like a home so that when you come in, you see that you can combine French and European with Philippine colonial furniture,” says Erica Concepcion-Reyes, who has long been fascinated with vintage jewelry.

The idea for this venture came when friends and fellow antique enthusiasts began looking for a venue to unload their wares. Now, they have an



A wealth of options representing varied design eras and styles such as turn-of-the-century Filipino and European (ABOVE LEFT) and Mid-Century Modern (ABOVE RIGHT). BELOW: In the foreground, a grouping of blue and white vases and in the background, all shapes of Venetian mirrors.



eclectic assortment of unique finds sourced from a group of about ten collectors, and curated by these ladies’ discerning eyes. “We pre-selected all of the pieces, so each item here is something we personally chose, like, and were drawn to. They’ve got this total look.”

The price range, as well, may surprise you. An antique candelabra can go for as low as P1,000, but many things carry a history and heritage that make them quite precious—and priceless. Take, for instance, the 19th cen-

tury sculpture of a saint valued at P300,000. The joy of owning something of its provenance, however, is that you can be assured it is one of a kind.

“We only have one of everything. Our pieces are either prototypes or things that are no longer in production,” Erica says. Besides, for real collectors, the pleasure is in the seeking. “It’s fun to look around and see what you can use or incorporate with what you have,” she says, which Trish seconds with “People enjoy the hunt!”

EXPERT ADVICE Handle with care

ERICA AND TRISH, COLLECTORS OF ONE-OF-A-KIND PIECES, SHARE THEIR GUIDELINES ON SHOPPING AND CARING FOR VINTAGE ITEMS AND ANTIQUES

VINTAGE VS. ANTIQUE.

Vintage always means that it’s the best of its era. A designer can have vintage pieces that are very iconic of his style. It should be indicative of the best of his work. Antique is a hundred years old, but in some cultures, it can mean more than that—for Japanese, it’s more than a hundred years.

cracks, but don’t buy broken pieces, like something that was just glued together. It’s important that you handle the piece, hold and inspect it.

CHECK BEFORE YOU BUY.

Wood has a patina that it can only get over time; collectors prefer that. Look at the condition, always. For some people, the more distressed and the more you can see the age of a piece, the more they’re drawn to it. Look at the grain of the ivory to see if it’s old or new. Unlike a brand new item, it will never be in perfect condition, but it doesn’t really matter because if it’s made well, it lasts through time.

EMBRACE FLAWS. Don’t be bothered by dirt and marks or

CLEAN PROPERLY. Don’t use water or strong chemicals when cleaning wood. For sterling silver, use a gentler silver polish. With ternos, you have to air them out. Don’t store them on a hanger because the weight of the dress puts too much stress on the shoulders. Never dry clean anything that’s really old because dry cleaning is very harsh. Always hand wash vintage fabric. With alabaster or blue and white pots, use mild detergent and water. Never use brushes with hard bristles—you’ll scratch the jars if it’s porcelain. Use an old toothbrush to get to the corners. *Six Planet Estate Sale is located in Makati. For appointments, contact 0949-3722102.*

The Dining Table

BY MAR

THERE ARE FOUR BASIC SHAPES: ROUND, SQUARE, RECTANGULAR AND OVAL. WHICH ONE SUITS YOUR SPACE BEST?

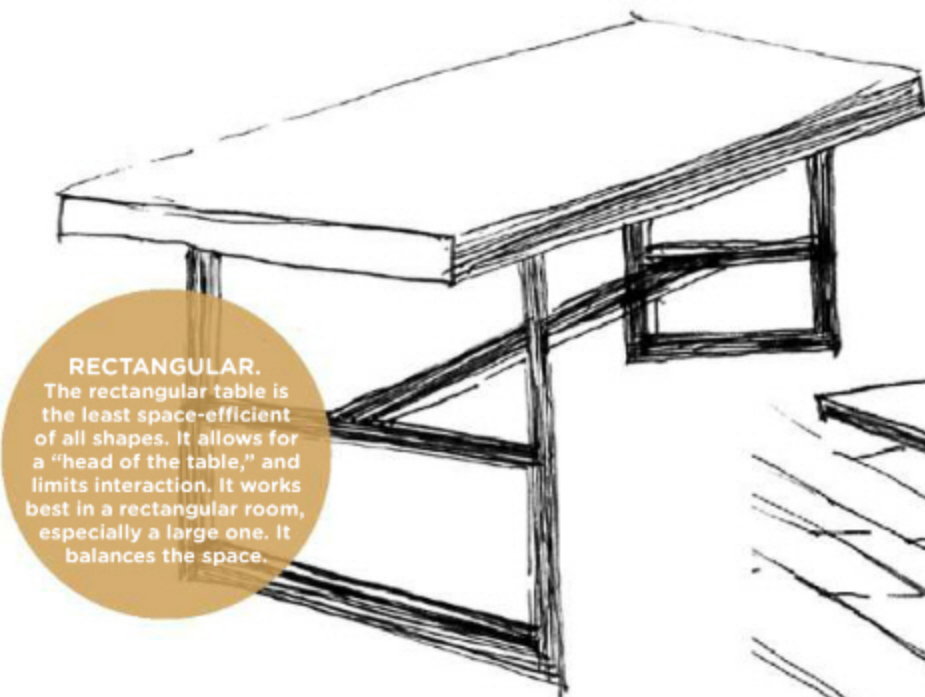
BY MARISSA ALEJANDRO LOPA / ILLUSTRATED BY ANNA M. ROSETE

THE FOCAL POINT of a dining room is the dining table. There are many considerations and options when choosing the right dining table—the size and shape of the room, and other uses, if any, you might have for the space. Will you be using it also as a work or study space? Will it be used for daily dining or only occasionally?

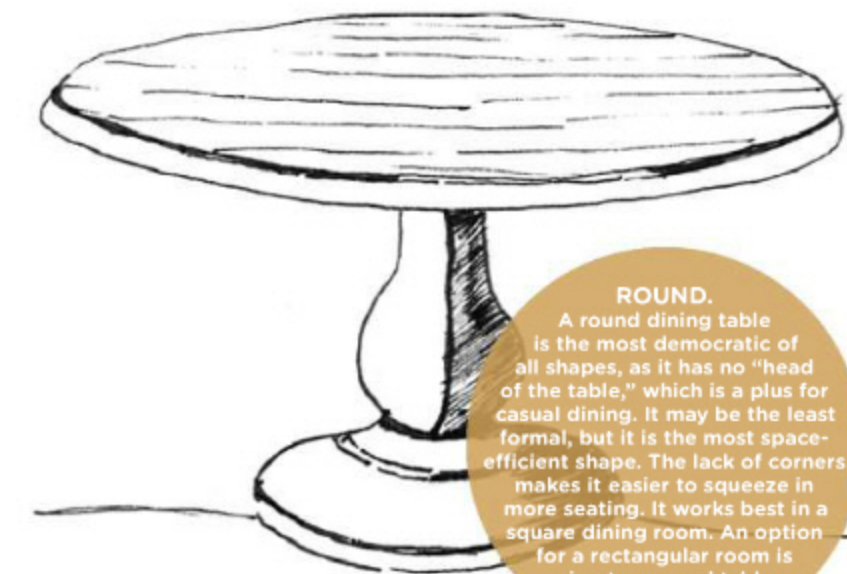
Although the design and style are important, making sure your dining table fits your space and needs is even more critical. The right shape and size will help maximize your space and create the atmosphere that will suit you best.



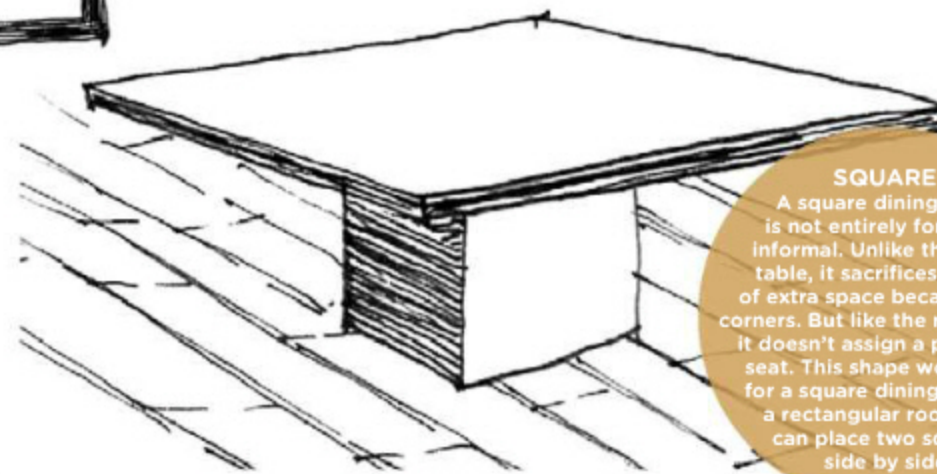
OVAL. The oval shape also works well in a rectangular room. Although it has rounded edges, it creates a “head of the table,” and allows squeezing in extra seating.



RECTANGULAR. The rectangular table is the least space-efficient of all shapes. It allows for a "head of the table," and limits interaction. It works best in a rectangular room, especially a large one. It balances the space.



ROUND. A round dining table is the most democratic of all shapes, as it has no "head of the table," which is a plus for casual dining. It may be the least formal, but it is the most space-efficient shape. The lack of corners makes it easier to squeeze in more seating. It works best in a square dining room. An option for a rectangular room is using two round tables side by side.



SQUARE.
A square dining table is not entirely formal or informal. Unlike the round table, it sacrifices the use of extra space because of its corners. But like the round table, it doesn't assign a privileged seat. This shape works best for a square dining room. In a rectangular room, you can place two squares side by side.

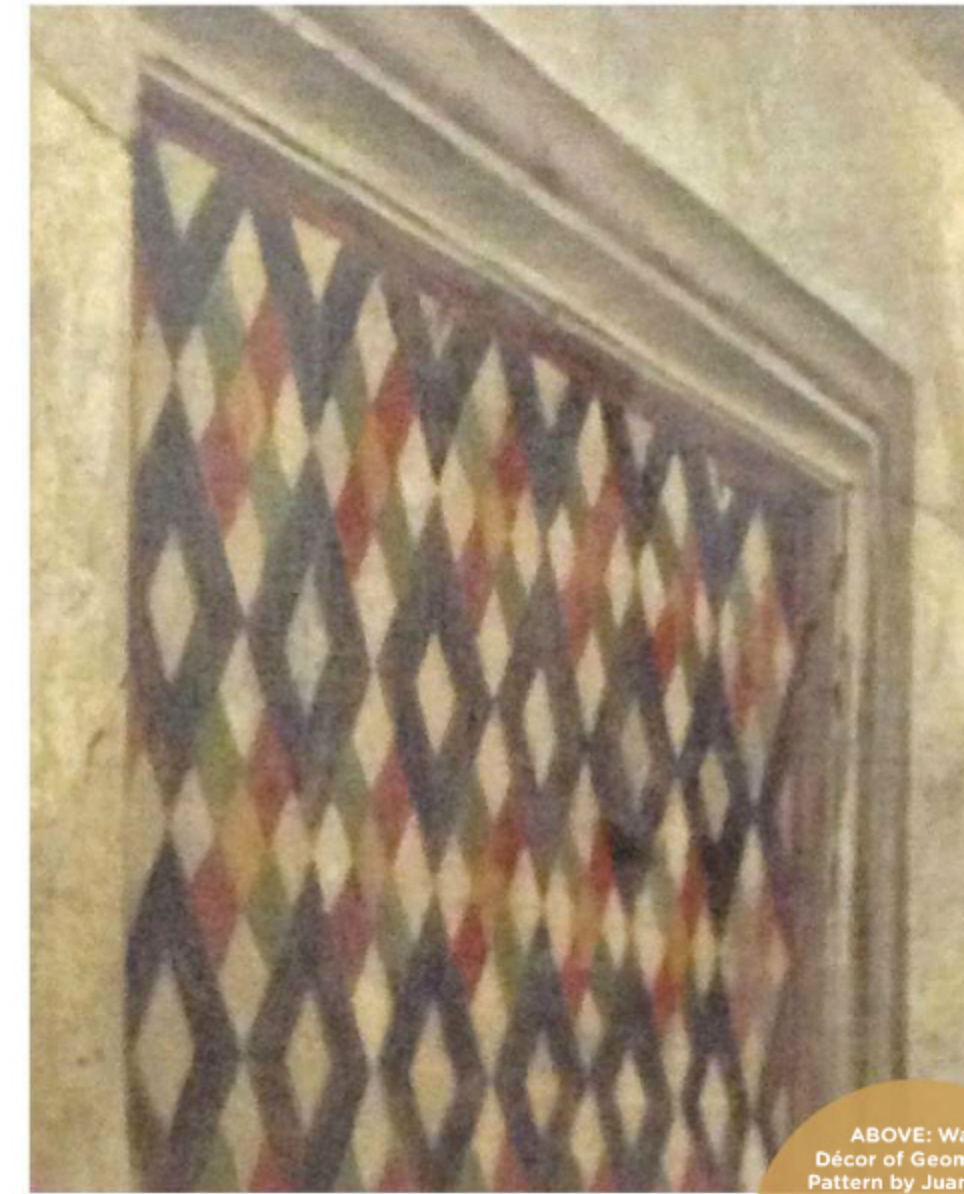
Other things to consider when choosing the perfect table shape for your needs:

1. The table must be at least 36 inches in width to accommodate your place settings nicely.
2. To be able to sit and get up comfortably, measure an allowance of around 42.5 to 48 inches from the table to the nearest wall or furniture. The least distance is 36 inches, which is a tight fit.
3. Measure 2 feet as eating space per person. This makes for a comfortable distance without persons elbowing each other.
4. For all dining table shapes, the more practical option is a pedestal base, as opposed to the four-legged. It frees up the corners or sides of the table, which makes it more flexible and avoids your knees bumping a table leg.

Musing on a Luna

A MODERN PALETTE FOR ANY ROOM
INSPIRED BY JUAN LUNA'S WALL
DÉCOR OF GEOMETRIC PATTERNS

BY TESSA ALINDOGAN
PHOTOGRAPHS BY **PAUL DEL ROSARIO**



WE DRAW INSPIRATION from this painting by Juan Luna because of its earthy and organic color palette. Translated into a room, think mid-century modernism punctuated with strokes of Windsor burgundy, sheen river, and cypress; colors reflected in the artworks, accessories, and other groupings of *objet d'art*. These colors add exuberance to the space. The earth gray, milky brown, and weathered wood textiles complement the use featured on the gray tiles, cream stone and soft earth wall paint. Wall shelves, an accent table, or a tabletop can be finished in green graphic coat color coated glass to keep the look light and maintain its modern vibe.



ABOVE: Wall Décor of Geometric Pattern by Juan Luna in the National Museum of Art. All paint swatches from Ralph Lauren, www.ralphlaurenhome.com. All fabric swatches from Studio 11 Modern Fabrics, tel. 894-1243 or 894-1244.



The Fashion Connection

FOR THE HOME,
INTERPRETATIONS
OF THE LATEST
RUNWAY LOOKS



SIMILAR TO FASHION'S runways, the home market is seeing an all-embracing compass for things that appeal to the emotions and the senses. Referencing exotic travels, delicate childhood memories, and art, today's trends for the home have less to do with rules, and everything to do with the visceral. It's all about materiality and its seduction. What appeals to your senses and to your innermost emotions is what works. After all, your home is your space, so put your personal stamp on it. Let our pages of carefully curated décor be your guide to finding the latest looks in home trends. *—Anna M. Rosete / Photograph by Ian Castañares*

IN THE WINDOW: (Clockwise) Patis Tesoro kimono style blouse with lace, P42,500, Rustan's. Blue flower vase, P700, Elipse small glass vase, P450, Green glass tumbler, P250, all from Regalong Pambahay. Lorena rack, P1,700, Chrysara Nest. Patis Tesoro lace shawl, P42,500, Rustan's. Fretted wood panel, price upon request, Jo-Liza Arts and Antiques. **BOTTOM FROM LEFT:** Wooden chair, price upon request, Jo-Liza Arts and Antiques. *Shot on location at Jo-Liza Arts and Antiques.*



Worldly Persuasion

An explosion and marriage of vibrant patterns and prints, rich and bold colors, traditional techniques—this season, when it comes to adding character to your home, the world is your oyster. The borders and limitations have been blurred by globalization, resulting in an upsurge in various cultural influences that are becoming a constant source of inspiration for designers the world over. As a homeowner, your creativity will overflow as you have free rein on what to mix and match—whatever speaks about your personality and inclinations best. *—Grace Ann M. Libero / Photograph by Paul del Rosario*



BACKDROP: Moroccan carpets, price upon request, NEST. **FROM LEFT:** (Top) Antique Maranao guitar, price upon request, NEST. Grey slim ceramic vases, P699.75 (short), P899.75 (tall), Our Home. Decorative leather tassel with brass accent P8,000, NEST. Terra cotta jar with cover P1,200, 6Planet. Moroccan silver tray, price upon request, NEST. Antique statue from India, price upon request, NEST. Tibetan necklace, P14,800, Firma. (Bottom) SC Vizcarra bag, price upon request, NEST. Ceramic bowl, P1,299.75, Our Home., wooden finial, P2,680, NEST. *Shot on location at NEST.*



BACKDROP: Sepino gray wool rug, P77,000, Shelter. Lace table runner, price upon request, Jo-Liza Arts and Antiques. CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT: Fretted wood panel decor, flower door knob, prices upon request, both from Jo-Liza Arts and Antiques. Our Very Own lace coasters set, P2,550, Rustan's. Multiple choice tea room plates, P899 (set of 4), Rustan's. Butterfly shadow box, P3,000, Chrysara Nest. Picture frame, tile block, prices upon request, Jo-Liza Arts and Antiques. Shot on location at Jo-Liza Arts and Antiques.



INSPIRATION: Balmain Spring/Summer Collection 2014

PHOTO COURTESY OF METRO MAGAZINE

Heritage and The New Lace

Perhaps it is true that lace is reminiscent of the fabric that drapes your *lola's* parlor table on Sundays when the family gathers for lunch in her heritage home. Owing to this loaded association with legacy, charm and nostalgia, lace is a classic. Also referencing a plentitude of motifs found organically: the formations of fractals that make up a snowflake, the repetition of soft petals in a budding flower, or the patterns found in a butterfly's wing, the charm of lace lies in its being a handmade interpretation of nature's glory. For the home, this trend is seeing numerous interpretations, from its tried and tested incarnations as crocheted tablecloths and beddings, to the more contemporary graphic patterns on plates and other serve ware. Incorporate this nod to nostalgia in numerous ways, from re-using antique fretted wooden panels, to dolling up a dark door with a crystal knob that recalls the delicateness of a doily, lace softens up any space, and adds just the right amount of feminine frill. —Anna M. Rosete / Photograph by Ian Castañares



INSPIRATION: Céline Spring/Summer 2014 Collection.

PHOTO COURTESY OF METRO MAGAZINE

Painterly Hues

From artists' palettes and museum corridors hails the painterly trend for interiors and giftware. Drawing inspiration from everything that artists brazenly bestow on a canvas, from the thick impasto that encrusts the works of the Impressionists to the nonchalant brushstrokes of the Fauves, the edginess of graffiti, and the delicate moiré of colors in botanical paintings, there is a multitude of décor for the home that urges home dwellers to say goodbye to safe neutrals and tired monotonies. Instead, embrace color! Vividly splashed on walls and strewn about accent cushions and rugs, or perhaps rendered in solid pieces, this expression of color suggests the dynamism and romance of care-free youth. —Anna M. Rosete/ Photograph by Ian Castañares



FROM LEFT: Turquoise garden ceramic stool, price upon request, Shelter. (On stool) Taxidermy birds, prices upon request, both from Xbesitzer. Wind-up robot alarm clock, P850, The Stockroom. Oversized Iris with bird, P6,500, Oversized sunflower with hummingbird, P6,500, Hardcourt sidetable with peony painting, price upon request, all from Chrysara Nest. Floral pixelated sofa, P26,000, The Stockroom. Trina Turk floral embroidered pillow, P8,390, Trina Turk hexagon pillow, P9,680, Kiss Me pillow, P3,100, all from Shelter. 7'6" x 10'6" gray and raspberry Lux Rubus carpet, P 52,415, Decoliving. Shot on location at Xbesitzer. Wall art by Rene Bituin.

Built for the Job

JJ CALMA CLEARLY LOVES EVERY CHALLENGE

BY NANA NADAL
PHOTOGRAPHS BY IAN CASTAÑARES



JJ Calma, president and principal designer of design-and-build company Jose Calma Development Corporation.

“I DON’T LIKE SEEING anything that’s not nice, so sometimes even if the design is there already, I tell the architect,” says JJ Calma. JJ may seem shy and aloof, but this man of few words does not hesitate to speak up when he spots something out of place. And that’s what sets Jose Calma Development Corporation apart from other contractors.

Someone who gives quality “Most contractors are just contractors, they will build anything and in any way,” he points out. Having taken up a few specialty subjects at the Boston Architectural Center and studied Architecture at Nottingham University in England plus Architectural and Furniture Design at Lorenzo de Medici School in Florence, JJ’s inputs

come from a knowledgeable perspective. “I would like to be known as someone who gives quality,” he quips. And he believes that the only way to ensure that is to be at the jobsite. “You have to do it personally. You shouldn’t let anybody do it for you,” he says. JJ’s mornings are usually for fieldwork while afternoons are spent at the office, which he shares with his wife, Trisha.



LEFT: A blueprint of Jose Calma Development Corporation's two-storey residential renovation project. RIGHT: Interior and facade shots of the Manila boutique of French ballet shoe brand Repetto.



The couple became business partners four years ago. “She’s a big part of the growth of the company because she started to put the structure in it and she also helps me with the paperwork, which I’m not very good at,” JJ discloses. “We specialize in interior finishing construction. We help each other plan, but I basically do the layout and then she does the material boards.” He laughs when asked if their ideas ever clash. “All the time!” he reveals. They settle the disputes by submitting both concepts and letting the client decide. “Sometimes I win, sometimes she wins,” he shrugs.

Predisposed to modern design The Calma genes (he is related to architects and interior designers Ed and Lor Calma as well as civil engineer Pabling Calma) have predisposed him to

modern design. However, he is steadily inching his way to other styles. “We are also starting to learn to do traditional because we’re starting to do boutiques, and not all are modern,” he says. When they were starting out, most of their projects were renovations. “But now we are starting to build from scratch,” he adds. His favorite projects are the ones that he built for himself. He dreams of building his own resort someday. “My wife says it’s just a box,” he describes his personal designs. “Very minimalist and very modern. I think it’s practical, it’s timeless. You can’t say it’s ugly, you can’t say it’s nice,” he rationalizes. But JJ admits that he is partial to renovation because it is more exciting. “It’s more interesting to take something old and make it look nice again than just building a new one. It’s like restoring a vintage car,” he says,

hinting at what’s in his garage. He enjoys riding his motorbikes and driving around but not as much as playing with his 4-year-old Gregggy, and 10-month-old Carmen. He still paints when time permits, usually during the first quarter of the year. Otherwise, he is focused on being a contractor. “You get to help a lot of people, and you see them grow and learn from one project to another,” he cites the best things about what he does. Needless to say, he matures along with them. “Getting harder projects,” he says chuckling when asked how he improves his craft. “A hard project is when the plan is very detailed and the time frame is tight. Sometimes I can’t sleep,” he grins without a trace of complaint, clearly loving every challenge. **Contact Jose Calma Development Corporation at tel. 738-7108. Check their website www.josecalmadedevcorp.com**

EXPERT ADVICE Before renovating or building:

1. Study your space very well and note down its strong and weak points.
2. Make a wish list of everything that you want in your space and how you want it to function. Consider the kind of lifestyle that you and your family have.
3. Make a list of all the items you would like to keep from the current space to be re-used for the renovated space.
4. Make an inventory of the items in your closet. This will inform the design of your storage space properly.
5. Plan the budget that you are willing to spend for the project. It would be best to inform your designer or contractor about this so they can keep it in mind when designing your space.

More Than Entertainment

ARCHITECT JERRY ISLES TRANSFORMS SPACES INTO FULLY FUNCTIONAL FAMILY AND ENTERTAINMENT ROOMS

BY ANZENNE ROBLE
PHOTOGRAPHS BY PAUL DEL ROSARIO



Architect Jerry Isles in the entertainment room he designed, which is decorated with the owner's The Beatles collection.

WHO WOULD HAVE THOUGHT that impressing your childhood crush would eventually lead to a life-long career? That's exactly what happened to Jerry Isles, principal architect of JVisles.Architect.

"Noong elementary ako, uso yung slum book. Meron akong crush, ang sagot niya dun sa tanong 'What is your ambition?' architect. Tinanong ko siya: 'Ano yung architect?' Sabi niya, yung nagdo-drawing ng mga bahay," Jerry recalls.

As he grew older and realized that creating houses and buildings is what he wanted to do, Jerry pursued Architec-

ture at the Mapua Institute of Technology.

Starting point

After five years of studying, he got into landscaping under IP Santos, known as the Father of Philippine landscape architecture. Six months later, Jerry realized that it was not for him.

"Gusto ko talaga architecture, yung gumawa ng malalaking building at mga bahay," says Jerry. He then worked with Architect Roger Villarosa, where he got his training for planning residential and commercial high-rise buildings. During that time, the coffee

shop industry was booming so Jerry's first projects included designing cafés.

Before establishing his own firm, he worked with architect and interior designer Anton R. Mendoza. "Our projects are more of high-end residential. May ginawa rin kami ng home theater project so I studied how he did it," says Jerry, who has since designed entertainment rooms for affluent families.

Design vision

"When I design, I want it simple but elegant," explains Jerry, adding that his style inclines to modern Asian. But it is his



ABOVE: Audio and video equipment are kept in the built-in cabinets below the rolling screen to keep the room neat and clutter-free. BOTTOM LEFT: Behind the sofa is a bar that the owners use to entertain guests or during get-togethers.



work with entertainment rooms that caught the attention of many so that he was featured in the TV program "Interior Motives."

His design style involves clean lines with continuity and uniformity and, of course, is defined by what his clients need. He makes sure that every space he designs is functional and well-made. "When I design,

I consider everything—saan dadaan yung wiring, lahat ng saksakan. I'm very involved, even sa lighting and equipment," Jerry says. And although he is moving on to doing commercial development projects, he knows that he will always design homes for everyone. 📞 Contact JVisles. Architect at tel. 671-7694 or email jviarchitect@gmail.com

EXPERT ADVICE

Four basic things to consider when planning your very own entertainment room:

Equipment. "To set up a home theater, you have to invest," says Jerry. It doesn't have to be the top-of-the-line systems, but you must prioritize the quality of the equipment, especially the speakers. Not to worry, as home theater suppliers have set packages from low- to high-end, to fit any budget.

Seating. Choosing where you'll seat is important. If you're into the movie-house type of design, the Lazy Boy or theater seat is perfect. "But now choices are evolving; others want couches or sofa. They want space not only for showing movies but also for

karaoke, games and entertaining guests. The entertainment room is becoming a multipurpose room," Jerry observes.

Lights. Dimmable lights are recommended to set the mood of the room. Use halogen lights because they are warm, soft and relaxing, but if you want a sharper, livelier vibe to the room, go for LED lights.

Acoustics. The ceiling should be made of gypsum board. Walls should be padded with fiber glass installation and wood frame. Don't use metal frames because the sound will just bounce off them.

Architectural Acoustics

APPLY THE SCIENCE OF SOUND IN BUILDING A NOISE-FREE HOME

BY MARTIN C. GALAN
PHOTOGRAPHS BY PAUL DEL ROSARIO



Jiggs Hermans and Martin Galan, principal consultants of Acoustic Analysis, Inc.

ASKED WHAT TYPE of work I do, I often reply “Acoustics.” A pregnant pause is likely to follow and an awkward “Oh, you play the acoustic guitar.”

Acoustics, the science of sound, is a word that encompasses everything that happens between your ears and your brain—medical diagnostics (i.e., ultrasound), sonar, noise control and even the acoustic guitar that I supposedly play. This article focuses on Architectural Acoustics, which is the sound that is made from a built environment. It is a contentious field primarily due to the personal tastes involved.

Sound has to start somewhere. We call it the sound source like the clapping of hands, the movement of guitar strings and the ubiquitous *karaoke* that your neighbor enjoys well into the wee hours of the morning. The sound generated by these sources travel through different media. The most common is air. It takes the form of a three dimensional wave, ebbing and flowing, into your ears. Your ear picks up these waves and converts them into electrical impulses that are interpreted by your brain. How and why you perceive this sound can be pleasant (it’s your favorite song), or irritating (it’s your neighbor’s favorite song).

This brings us to why we need good acoustics. Your church choir may sound great, but you can’t hear a word during the sermon. Your favorite movie sounds so different at home compared to watching it in the movie house.

Constant exposure to loud sounds can create medical problems. It can cause deafness, and is directly linked to high blood pressure and other cardiovascular diseases. Sleep deprivation, stress and other unhealthy



ABOVE: The delicate job of measuring sound: matching what the ear hears with what the instrument hears in the newly renovated Manila Cathedral. **RIGHT:** A professional acoustic and audio analyzer has 10 sound levels and 5 spectrum analysis functions.



occurrences all contribute to the latter. Not only that, think of how it will affect your relationships. No one wants a cranky, sick person in the house. The list goes on and I cannot help but stress the importance of a noise-free environment.

Productivity suffers in a noisy environment. Remember when you had such a hard time finishing a report with all the office machines and air conditioners making all that noise?

So when you think of an acoustic consultant, it isn’t really just about making concert halls. We also keep the noise down and improve the quality of communication within a space. We help improve the quality of your life.

Acoustics Demystified

When do you hire an acoustic consultant? Early in the project. You will save money and have less stress. An acoustic consultant can help control irritating sounds to make any room pleasant to stay in. There is no one bullet to cure your acoustic problems so walk away if anyone tells you otherwise.

How do you choose an acoustic consultant? Experi-

ence and qualification are key factors. There is no college course in Acoustics in the Philippines so vet their credentials diligently.

What materials do you use to control sound? Again, let me stress there is no one bullet that solves all your acoustic needs. If you want to keep sound out or in, then you need very dense materials such as concrete and thick glass. It should be airtight. If water seeps through, so will sound. You need absorptive materials, which are generally soft and porous. A good consultant will tell you: what material(s) to use, how much would be needed, and the optimum position of the materials. There is no guesswork

here. Challenge him to prove his recommendations in a quantifiable manner.

How do I decide what areas need acoustic treatment? First, establish the purpose of the room. If you hire an acoustic consultant early in the project, he can suggest positioning important rooms to avoid noise from the street, commercial establishments, machines or from other sources. He can work with you to identify the degree of acoustic importance a room should have. All this even before you spend a single peso to buy your first acoustic treatment. **•**

Contact Acoustic Analysis, Inc. at tel. 415-1424 or check their website www.acoustics.com.ph

EXPERT ADVICE 6 sound tips

1. There is no such thing as total soundproofing. The amount of sound that needs to be blocked must first be established. A room soundproofed to block street noise will not prevent the sound of a jack hammer directly outside from passing through.

2. If you can see it, you can most likely hear it. Sound travels in the form of a wave. Imagine a wave heading towards you on the beach. If nothing is blocking that wave, it will reach you. If you can’t see it, you’re not hearing the complete sound, just reflections. This applies to loudspeakers. Have someone talk to you from a foot and a half away. Now put a cardboard sheet between the two of you. Did you notice any change?

3. Airtight is the first rule of soundproof. Sound will readily go through gaps. If light comes through, so will sound. Check around your doors if light passes through the gaps. Even the smallest gaps will still let sound through.

4. A material’s density and weight dictate how effective it is in blocking sound. A heavy concrete wall can block more sound than a plywood wall. Windows are usually the weakest barriers between indoors and outdoors. Consider double glazed windows if outside noise is a problem or you can simply use heavy drapes, hang comforters or towels. Blinds and rollers do little to block sound.

5. Soft materials like drapes and carpets can absorb sound; the thicker the material, the more absorption. Hard materials like marble, concrete, glass, and gypsum reflect sound.

6. The best audio equipment, if installed in a cave, will still sound like you’re in a cave.

Enlightened

BY NANA CARAGAY
PHOTOGRAPHS BY PAULO VALENZUELA

MARK WILSON AND NIKKI ESCALONA-TAYAG OF WE DESIGN LIGHTING-CENTERED ARCHITECTURE AND INTERIORS WILL HAVE YOU LOOKING AT STRUCTURES IN A WHOLE NEW LIGHT

IF THERE'S SUCH A THING as a lighting geek, Mark Wilson and Nikki Escalona-Tayag of WE Design would fit the bill. Bring up the subject of light bulbs and be prepared for more than the usual answers.

"I'm not a fluorescent girl, I wouldn't use it unless I really have to—maybe for the kitchen or the laundry," says Escalona-Tayag.

Wilson confesses to a weakness for dimmers: "You reduce your light output so you save energy, and you can do a lot of mood lighting. If I could put everything in a dimmer, I would!"

The pair met while studying Lighting Design at Parsons; their first professional collaboration was the lighting of a New York apartment. Other projects include landscape lighting for the gardens of a handful of Forbes Park homes as well as revamping the Tesoro's flagship store along Pasay Avenue and the Kultura section at SM Makati. Also in the works: day lighting analysis and fenestration (read: window placement) design for Filinvest's upcoming Residencia Santa Fe.

Metro Home & Entertaining picked their brains on why lighting is integral to a space and, as expected, their answers will surprise (and educate) you.

Why is lighting important?

Nikki: Light makes or breaks a space. You have to think about light at the very beginning, and that's why we try to be part of the project from the get-go. Normally, lighting design is an afterthought, but our philosophy is light should be thought of at the very inception of a project. **Mark:** One is functional—if there's no light, you're going to trip and fall. It also sets the mood. From a design point of view, lighting is

powerful because, like moths, we are photometric beings—our eyes go to the light. Where we put the light determines what you look at when you walk into a room. We orchestrate the view. The brightest layer is where we want the focal attention to go. We actually can subvert architectural intention and cover up architectural flaws.

What are the basic guidelines for lighting?

M: A typical homeowner wants to keep their electricity down, so how much will it cost

you to run? How much light is energy efficient? How much will you need for cooking or putting your makeup on versus how much light do you need for your garage? We're seeing homes that are uniformly bright with no contrast, and as they say in theater lighting, contrast equals interest. There need to be different levels and layers of light within a home.

N: You have to create that depth. We try to avoid using down lights because we think it's very pragmatic; we like directional fixtures.

M: A lot of clients ask us to light their artwork correctly. You have to specify a bulb that has a high color rendering index—95 would be very high.

N: Daylight and incandescent is 100, fluorescent is about 70.

M: The second is the beam spread: you have flood, narrow spot, medium beam.

N: There's also color temperature. It could be daylight or warm white. 6,100 Kelvin is daylight at noon, the neutral colors are about 3,000 Kelvin.

M: In retail, you'll specify 3,500 Kelvin. Candlelight is 2,200 Kelvin, that's a very warm yellow. That's what people like in a restaurant.

What can good and bad lighting do?

M: Bad lighting is glare. You're noticing the source of light, it's in your eyes, you're squinting and feeling uncomfortable. With very high quality lighting, you'll feel relaxed, like you can linger in this place for a long time.

N: Balance. You don't feel like the light is offensive. It's not too much and it's not too little.

M: Our professor told us about how he put pink-colored bulbs onto a restaurant's tables, and people wouldn't leave because it was just so nice to be there! The restaurant owner said, "You need to change this because my tables aren't turning over!"

What are the advantages of hiring a lighting consultant?

N: You save money! It's really the knowledge that we have, both artistically and technically, compared to interior designers and architects who didn't study or don't practice lighting design. When you specify color temperatures and types of bulbs, lighting designers tend to explore a wide range. We try to



LEFT: The WE Design office. RIGHT: Sketches, swatches and blueprints used for various projects.

break it down and dig deeper.

M: You put fewer fixtures in more strategic and judicious places, so you're saving money on fixtures and on electricity.

What services do you provide?

M: We have five stages which go from basic conceptual design, to developmental design, to construction documents where we start making the drawings so the contractor can actually build it, to construction where you manage the contractor as he puts in the lights that we specify, to commissioning, where everything has been constructed and you just want to make sure the dimming system and transformers are working really well.

N: Mark and I really find that the conceptual stage is very integral to the project. You want to refine it in the first six to eight weeks and have an easier time moving forward. When the contractors arrive, we're there to focus and aim.

When should a lighting consultant come in?

N: In big projects, collaboration is key. When the architect is space planning, the lighting designer should be there to suggest or show—where is direct sunlight coming in? Should you be putting this big window in the façade? Should you be mitigating light by using this type of material or finish?

M: The lighting designer could be the lead in coordinating

the architect and the interior designer because, based on day lighting analysis, we can decide the openings of a facade—where do we have the most overhangs? What are the important views? The architect can decide that too, but the lighting designer could take the lead.

What are your thoughts on LEDs?

M: I think it's very important. People can save electricity. It's the better thing for the planet from a consumption point of view. But what it costs to make an LED in terms of energy is a lot—you're creating this energy intensive device to save energy, so there's a lot of irony in it. They promise a very long life, ideally it lasts seven years—if it does, hopefully it pays back the embedded energy in it.

N: They don't like to drop the word "sustainable" because of how it's made, and even when it dies, is it still sustainable? How do you recycle it? What happens to the housing, to the diode? So don't use the word "sustainable" with LEDs, just use "green" or "energy efficient."

What are some lighting trends to look out for?

M: If you're a fan of incandescents, they're getting a bad rap, but they do things no other light source does—they dim incredibly well, they have a beautiful color rendering, they're very romantic. We use LED very judiciously and spar-

ingly in our designs, I think there's a place for them. I love neon lights, too, I think they're just so fun.

N: If you can find a LED version of a fluorescent strip, just use LEDs because it's probably half the wattage with the same light output. We have specified LEDs for most if not all of our projects. Apart from their being energy efficient, our clients are very particular about maintenance; they don't want to be switching out bulbs every two months. If you use incandescents every single day and they're on 10 hours a day, you would have to switch the bulbs every two or three months. They're super cheap, but wait for your electric bill! With regard to dimmers, the incandescent-plus-dimmer situation is the best.

What advice would you give to homeowners who want to play with lighting design?

M: Decide what you want to highlight in your living room, your bedroom. If you have a painting or a collection that you really like, direct light on that. I think bedrooms shouldn't be so bright—they have to be dim at night, because you want to fall in love with your partner all over again!

N: In the Philippines, the perception is you kind of have to over-light places, but the bedroom is a place for rest and sleep, so you can maybe have

light directed on a wall to help bounce in the light and a couple of side lamps or portables.

M: Turn off the TV screen and computer screen one or two hours before going to bed. Those are LED sources of light which have more blue in them, and blue tends to keep us awake and inhibit the production of melatonin. Probably just have incandescents very dim in your room.

N: Ask yourself what you want to see. Sometimes there are homeowners who don't like to see the source or bulb and just want to see the light, but there are some who are comfortable with it. Some people are okay with direct exposure to light, some people like indirect light. It also depends on your lifestyle and preference.

M: Homeowners shouldn't be afraid of something bold or mood-setting. Create drama and atmosphere; don't just light it uniformly like a supermarket. Don't be afraid to experiment.

N: Don't be afraid to mix different sources—just because you committed to a 100% LED energy-efficient home doesn't mean that you can't have a couple of incandescents in your makeup room and bedroom. It's okay to mix sources...

Mark and Nikki: As long as the color temperature is the same! *WE Design is located at Suite 301-C VECA Bldg., 1168 Chino Roces Ave. cor. Estrella St., San Antonio Village, Makati City*

Paint Maestro

TATS MANAHAN'S PASSION IS NOW HER VOCATION AS A TEACHER IN ESCUELA TALLER

BY WILLY MARBELLA
PHOTOGRAPHS BY IAN CASTAÑARES

"NO GREEN IN YOUR dining room!" says she whose fingernails and toe nails are painted—you guessed it—green!

Tats Manahan has become a byword in the field of surface decoration after studying decorative paint finishing with JoAnne Day in the late '80s in San Francisco and New York. She did all courses for approximately four years. Nearing the end of her studies, she was asked by Ms. Day if she would be interested to be one of the five handpicked students to learn furniture finishes, to which she agreed.

During the run of the course, Tats noticed that she was always asked to stay behind to repeat her work, leading her to think that she was doing a bad job. In fact, she was just being pushed to find out how far she will go. Ms. Day was proven right when the manager of the gallery of Neiman Marcus in Palo Alto, California saw Tats' work, and offered her an exhibition to open in six months. Needless to say, the show was sold out.

In the mid '90s, after practicing a few years in Manila, working with well known interior designers and architects, Tats thought, "If what I'm doing is a revival technique, then there must be an original."

After some research on learning institutes that offered these courses, she came across the perfect center in Venice, Italy: Centro Europeo per la Formazione degli Artigiani nel Mestieri del Patrimonio Architettonico. People who are accepted there must have a minimum five years experience which Tats had at that point, though not in any of the courses the center offered. Her portfolio, however, was more than enough to get her foot in the door.

The only Filipino to obtain certification from Centro Europeo per la Formazione degli Artigiani nel Mestieri del Patrimonio Architettonico, noted master in surface décor, Tats Manahan.



In this institution that specializes in keeping alive traditional craftsmanship of the 15th century European guilds, Tats found her answer under the mentorship of masters like Manfred Siller, a master in the tedious craft of *scagliola*, or marble plaster. He was the master craftsman who restored the charred *scagliola* parts of Buckingham Palace when it burned. And there was Mario Fogliata, master *stuccatore* and author of the only book written on Venetian plaster, for *stucco marmorino*, a kind of Venetian plaster requiring seven layers of lime mortar mixed with sand and marble dust. It is the plaster finish that adorns iconic Venetian heritage structures such as the Basilica of San Marco and other important heritage structures in Venice.

In 2011, Tats went back to the same institute, which had transferred to Vicenza, to get her "proper papers" certifying her in her craft. To date, she is the only Filipina who has gone to this school.

Tats' foray into the world of surface design has not only become her passion, it is now her vocation. This vivacious, vibrant and utterly delightful lady now teaches in Escuela Taller, where the teachers pass on their expertise to the next generation. Indeed, that's why they are called "Maestro."

If a client is totally clueless about your expertise, how can a client decide whether s/he will need your services? And which one will s/he need?

I don't think anyone who doesn't know what I do would hire me. At most, they may not know my full range of work. When they are not sure of what they want, I usually engage them in conversation to understand what they are after, what they want, what they feel, their lifestyle. In other words, I get to know them first before I even suggest anything. Then I show either photos or actual samples. Of course, the architecture of the house and the existing furniture and decoration



In Tats Manahan's studio, various pigments, compounds and chemicals are the tools that help her execute her flourish with surface décor.

contribute to my suggestions and the client's decision. Many times, though, I work with the client's interior designer. It is the interior designer who suggests the finishes and colors. Clients who hire me on their own usually know what they want, so the decision making and the work becomes highly personalized.

Are there certain finishes that are appropriate for certain situations?

The architecture or style of the space is usually what dictates the finish or paint decoration. This is where it gets tricky. It's so easy to label a mismatch as "eclectic." But "eclectic" is such a misunderstood word. There is a method to this sort of madness. Certain periods match and

others simply don't. It requires a certain gumption of style and taste and personality to get away with this. How a finish is used can turn out witty, or classic or downright tacky.

How long will the finish last?

So far, most if not all the finishes I've done in 20 years or so have stood the test of time because the clients take the time to take care of their walls. Some finishes in clients' homes I have seen again after a number of years have actually gotten to look better. They acquire an additional patina over time, which sort of deepens the finish, especially the Venetian plastered walls I have done. The finishes that didn't last were those that were painted over or those that

were in a high traffic area, like in office walls.

For furniture, are you strict about matching particular periods with particular finishes?

Furniture is easier to play around with. Criss-crossing of finishes and historical periods are prevalent in modern furniture. Start with Fornasetti, for example, who took modern shapes and used classically themed decoration, or Tony Duquette, who did classical shapes and went over the top. Current designers have borrowed and tweaked classical forms and have used historical techniques on modern surfaces, and vice versa. You see them all over the place, even with our local designers who have made it globally, like Kenneth Cobonpue.

Can original and revival finishes work for modern interiors?

Definitely!

At what stage of the project should a client get in touch with you?

Last, when everything is clean.

What's your philosophy on design?

Your sofa should not match your painting (artwork).

So, have you painted any dining rooms green?

I once painted a dining room celadon—the owner was very vibrant. She used orange for accessories. Never green on minimalist, otherwise you'll have green reflection on your skin. ☯

EXPERT ADVICE Tats' Tips:

- Don't use green for your dining room as this will reflect on your skin.
- Your sofa should not match your painting (artwork).
- You can criss-cross finishes and historical periods in modern furniture.

Escuela Taller tel. no. 525-1986 and 527-6623

Home Couture

THE LIFESTYLE NETWORK SEARCHES FOR THE NEXT BIG NAME IN DESIGN

BY RAPHAEL KIEFER
PHOTOGRAPHS BY JOVEL LORENZO

WE SIT DOWN and get to know the three teams who have been carefully selected from a large pool of talented hopefuls. One of these teams will win the competition to be announced in late June on the Lifestyle Network's Home Couture, a segment in the design show *Interior Motives*.

Has + Lau Designs

In an industry where collaborations often lead to creative differences, designers Nikki Laurel and Shigeo Hasumi use their individual expertise

to form a philosophy of 'unique simplicity.' Nikki prefers the modern, clean cutting edge look, and Shigeo adds the fluidity and calmness of his lines that are influenced by the aesthetics from his Japanese roots.

Together, they have created designs in their fruitful six-year partnership that bring out the best of both worlds. The team's penchant for working with earth tones is exercised through the use of natural materials such as stone, wood and fabrics. Their minimalist inclination results in



Interior designer Jen So Hu lets her clients decide on a look before she presents her ideas.



Design tandem Shigeo Hasumi and Nikki Laurel are proponents of the modern, clean and cutting edge look.

space-generous designs keeping it basic yet interesting, as the pair is adamant about developing their own innovations such as new methods in padding and lighting.

It is this emphasis on innovative and artistic ambient lighting that sets this team apart from the other finalists. Their accent wall lights are visually stunning and functional as the façade reveals little when the

lights are off, but once turned on, eye-catching hand carved designs change the ambiance of the room. This original detail has been a trademark of *Has + Lau designs* and is a favorite detail of their clients in both home and commercial applications.

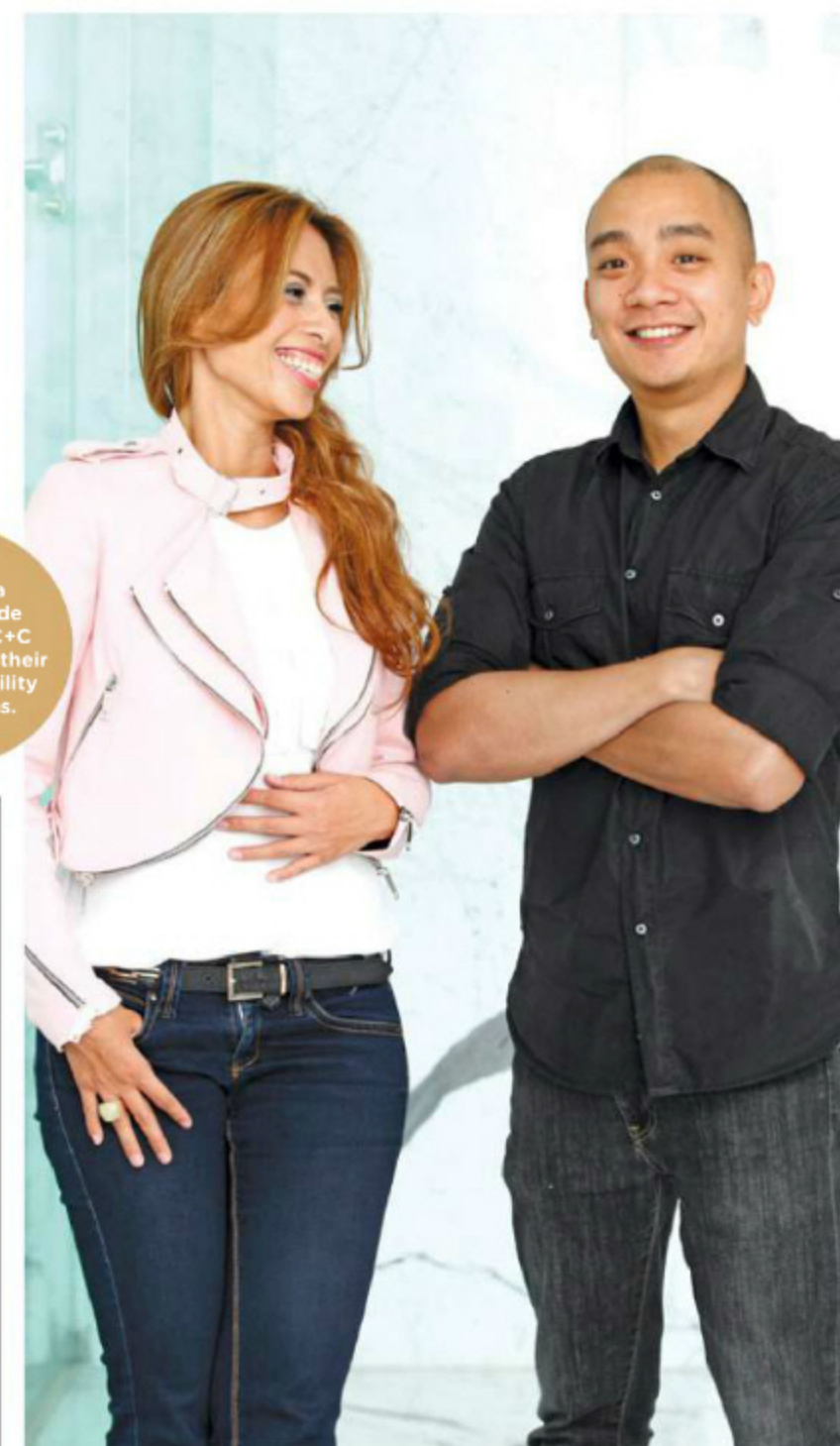
JEN SO HU

Jennifer So Hu is a designer who lets her clients decide which way they want to go

before she presents her version. To her, there is no design that she cannot achieve and improvise on. Jen's specialty is on converting awkward spaces into something which is pleasing to the eye and useful, as she believes that aesthetic must always meet function.

With her mathematical mind, she creates geometric layouts where each piece fits into the larger design like a puzzle. Jen and her team, assistant designer Errol Jimenez and contractor Samuel Caballero, place a special emphasis on wall accents, which essentially turn a façade into an art piece. For the competition, she challenges herself with the daunting task of using the complex patterns of a box turtle shell for her accent wall.

Generally, SoHu designs are busy, and yet all the individual elements blend seamlessly together into one picture from every angle of a given space. The designer's emphasis on functional aesthetics gives her clients creative solutions for odd spaces, as she turns these into storage or hidden cabinets, among others. A typical *SoHu* designed home is also monochromatic in color with perfectly placed splashes of contrasting hues.



Cal Tavera and Chino de la Torre of C+C Designs offer their clients flexibility and options.

C + C Design Services

Designers Chino Dela Torre and Cal Tavera are on opposite spectrums of personality and design preferences. It is this reality and the fact that their designs are perfectly balanced that validate the saying that "opposites attract." With six years of well lauded work behind them, it is obvious that the dynamic works.

Chino likes to work within the creative realm of the modern, clean, masculine and functional look, while Cal is motivated by the eclectic and adventurous composition. Together, they offer flexibility and

options with the main emphasis on staying away from generic looks. The range this team offers means that no design cannot be made into reality. "We build a relationship with the client first, which makes it easier to collectively agree on a look," says Cal.

The competitive advantage that C + C has over their peers is that they are a "one stop shop." Chino has a construction business, and Cal is a distributor of all kinds of tiles. These individual endeavors bring unique skills and access to materials and manpower meant to save their clients' time and money. ①

EXPERT ADVICE Renovating Tips

Has + Lau designs

1. Know your budget
2. Look for pegs online or by window shopping. Collect as many as possible.
3. Create a mood board and lay out all the pegs so that a visual mix-match is created without having to spend so much.
4. Start on actual renovation area by area.

Visit www.facebook.com/hasumi.laurel for more details on Has+Lau designs.

SoHu Designs

1. Work with your budget and buy the important items first.
2. Work with what you already have. If you have old furniture, they can be refurbished. The Internet offers many tips on how to do this.
3. Mix neutral earth tones with splashes of color. This will add character to your home.
4. Mirrors are a must.

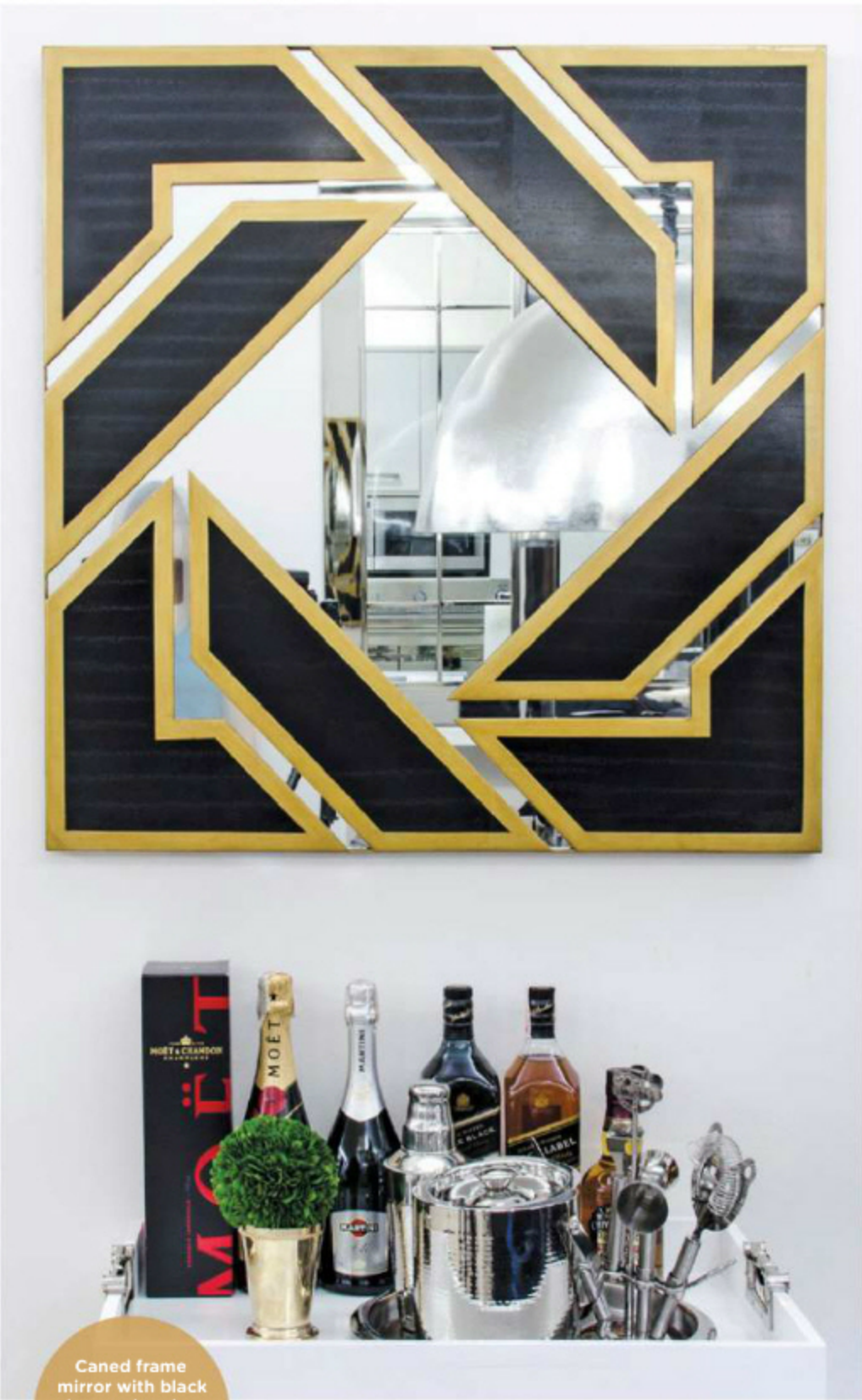
Visit www.SoHudesigns.com for more on Jennifer So Hu designs.

C + C Design Services

1. Know your budget.
2. Do your research first. Look for designers you like, and pegs that attract you.
3. If you have existing tiles and wish to change them, don't destroy them. Rather, cover them with a second layer made of laminates.
4. Use porcelain tiles instead of ceramic. They last much longer.
5. The colors of your floors and walls make a big impact. Be sure of what you want before executing. You will have to live with your decision everyday. Visit www.cpluscdesigns.com for more on C+C Designs.

The Next Wave

UP-AND-COMING DESIGN EXPERTS FORECAST HOME AND DÉCOR TRENDS



Caned frame mirror with black gloss and antique brass border from Blue Carreon Home.



PHOTOGRAPH BY NORMAN LLESES

Geometric Chic

CAT ARAMBULO-ANTONIO JUGGLES HER TIME AS A FULL-TIME MOM, FASHION STYLIST AND INTERIOR DESIGN STUDENT.

- 1. What kind of personality would be drawn to this trend?** People who are edgy, bold and very chic.
- 2. What color schemes would work with this trend?** Metallics, fire red or a deep purple will definitely complement it.
- 3. What is your personal connection to this trend?** I love anything metallic and Art Deco. It's classic, modern and has a lot of character! It's a good reflection of my personal style.
- 4. If our readers want to adapt this look, what would be their must-haves?** Naturally, our eyes are drawn to a focal point. Everyone's home should have at least one statement piece in each area or room, which all the furniture and accessories work around.
- 5. What fabrics would complement this trend?** Suede, velvet and any fabric that can take more than 10,000 rubs.
- 6. How do you envision the best use for this item?** It's a perfect conversation piece. It has a lot of personality and would look perfect in any wall that's visible to guests. I highly suggest that it be placed above a timeless console, simple buffet table or even a butler's tray/bar. It will definitely bring a lot of glamour to the space. 🍷



ABOVE: Fabric flower printed with Rijksmuseum painting 'Portrait of a lady' by Marie Wandscheer, P3,375.23. BELOW: Art pansy made of cheesecloth painted with image of *Jongen en meisje in het dein* by David Constant Artz, P3,067.48. Both from www.etsy.com/shop/PuurAnders



PHOTOGRAPH BY MILO SOGUECO

Soft florals

METRO HOME & ENTERTAINING'S ANNA M. ROSETE IS IN THE MOOD FOR FEMININE FLORALS

WITH DOUBLE undergraduate degrees in Psychology and Art History, and a masters degree in Interior Architecture from the Rhode Island School of Design, **Metro Home & Entertaining's** managing editor Anna Rosete balances her time between residential design consultancies, editorial duties and making hand-sewn, hand-embroidered and hand-painted dolls seen on her Instagram @annanasybananas.

1. What kind of personality would be drawn to this trend? This trend is attractive for people who like to stop and smell the roses. Perhaps they have fast-paced lives, and would like to be surrounded by things that are comforting. Fresh flowers are soothing, they make me reflective because I am aware of how fleeting they are.

2. What color schemes would work with this trend? Pastels are very popular, but also palettes from the Baroque or fête galante period of art, where muted shades are contrasted with vibrant hues.

3. What is your personal connection to this trend? I am

interested in making spaces feel positive, happy and alive. Flowers do that.

4. If our readers want to adapt this look, what would be their must-haves? This is probably the easiest trend to adapt in a room or a home because all it takes is a pretty vase and a bunch of your favorite blooms. It can be as simple as that.

5. What fabrics would complement this trend? For this particular item, rich velvets work well for matting when framing them shadow box style.

6. How do you envision the best use for this item? This is by Dutch fabric artist Miranda van Dijk of Puur Anders. This is a collaboration between etsy.com and Rijksmuseum to promote their collection through objects made by hand. I imagine that these delicate cotton flowers printed with select images from Dutch masterpieces will be quite lovely in framed shadow boxes, hung as a grouping on a wall that is painted with a rich shade to offset all the soft, muted hues from the artwork printed on the flowers. 🌸



PHOTO BY OLY GUIZ
COURTESY OF NIKKI BUENSALIDO

Whimsical Flair

ARCHITECT NIKKI BUENSALIDO IS FASCINATED WITH COLORFUL AND QUIRKY STATEMENTS

NIKKI BUENSALIDO is the vice-president, design ambassador and associate architect at Buensalido Architects together with her husband, architect Jason Buensalido. A champion and advocate of Philippine Architecture, Nikki takes Filipino sensibilities and combines them with global mechanisms.

1. What kind of personality would be drawn to this trend? People who are outgoing. They enjoy colorful, quirky, and happy things that can brighten up any space, big or small. They love conversational pieces that add flair to hosting dinner parties at home.

2. What color schemes would work with this trend? Neutrals or solid colors that match the chair. This piece will definitely pop out with a background of taupe, gray or white. It can also add character to any colored space that matches any of the colors on the print.

3. What is your personal connection to this trend? As an avant-garde, progressive and contemporary Filipino architect, I love introducing statement pieces wherever I can insert

them. I like sudden bursts of color amidst spaces because they remind me of the Filipino Spirit.

4. If our readers want to adapt this look, what would be their must-haves? A corner or a space in a living area or a bedroom that can be used to highlight the outgoing personality of the owner. It should be the first thing that catches the eye of those who would experience the space.

5. What fabrics would complement this trend? Plain colored fabrics paired with neutral colors can be used to accentuate, dilute or highlight this trend.

6. How do you envision the best use for this item? This look is for those who want to add a touch of drama to an otherwise plain looking space. The chair can be used as an accent piece that complements regular furniture or more formal furniture pieces. It can be an interesting mix to a variety of seating types. It can make the space come alive. This works best when you have natural surfaces. The contours, curves and color bring a dynamic dimension to a cold space. **D**



Helix Chair
by Karmelina
Martina for Moroso,
Casa Bella Home
and Living Corp,
tel. no. 470-6250
or 470-1889



PHOTOGRAPH COURTESY OF NINA SANTAMARIA

The New Traditional

GRUPO SANTAMARIA PRINCIPAL, NINA,
ON THE MODERN TAKE ON TRADITION

NINA SANTAMARIA is an interior designer who loves everything that comes with her job.

Aside from her design firm Grupo Santamaria and maintaining their blog www.gruposantamaria.ph, she is busy with a jewelry store in Iloilo and a resort in Ilocos Norte. She is

Gold "Faux Bamboo" metal bar cart made of brass-finished metal with rings that simulate the natural design of bamboo stalks and mirrored surfaces. Blue Carreon Home. Custom order at P45,000.



also helping rebuild a Yolanda-devastated church in Leyte through the efforts of the UP Interior Design Alumni Association, which she's a part of.

1. What kind of personality would be drawn to this trend? Those who have modern homes but want a touch of classicism or tradition in their interiors.

2. What color schemes would work with this trend? Any scheme because gold is a metallic. For me, it will work best with charcoal, white, or dark purple for dramatic effect. Also with Chinoiserie patterns or the geometric prints that are so hot at the moment.

3. What is your personal connection to this trend? I love the history of art and architecture, entertaining friends, and all things elegant in a home. This is something I would love to have around my house or office all the time.

4. If our readers want to adapt this look, what would be their must-haves? This bar cart will look best in a Contemporary Classic or Modern Asian themed-home.

5. What fabrics would complement this trend? Chinoiserie, toile de Jouy, chintz and jacquard, even bold stripes and tartan. It really goes well with any fabric upholstery in the same room.

6. How do you envision the best use for this item? As part of a minimal, casually classic yet very elegant room lived in by a young, well-traveled couple or a single successful person. The upper part can be used to store liquor in glass or crystal decanters, and the bottom can hold some agate or stone pieces arranged artfully atop a few coffee table books to balance all that mirror and glass. **D**

New Eclecticism

ETHAN ALLEN SAYS, 'WHEN STYLES COLLIDE, ORIGINALITY EXPLODES'

BY WILLY MARBELLA
PHOTOGRAPHS BY IAN CASTAÑARES



ABOVE: A rendering of Amina Aranaz-Alunan's composition for Ethan Allen's New Eclecticism. LEFT: SOFA founder and designer of purses, Amina Aranaz-Alunan. CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT: Chrystiane armchair. Chinoiserie accent table. Sweet Bay topiary. Lattice glass table lamp. Emerson fauteuil.



YOU'RE FURNISHING YOUR first real estate investment. You're influenced by your travels where you saw traditional, modern, and even tribal pieces. You want a little of this, a little of that, in other words you want your personality to show in your living space. What do you do? Enter: Ethan Allen's New Eclecticism.

Known for their traditional look, Ethan Allen has now embarked on a new philosophy: your personality stamped on their furniture and accessories. Mixing and matching styles and finishes are not only acceptable, they are, in fact, encouraged. You want your fauteuil upholstery in rainbow stripes? No problem. Your Empire sideboard in mandarin red? They'll do it for you. How about a headboard in tribal upholstery? Doable. Your every wish and whim they will accommodate. This releases you from any

constraints when it comes to furnishing your home.

To launch this new philosophy, Ethan Allen chose three top experts in their field: a bag designer, a couturier and, of course, an interior designer.

Amina Aranaz-Alunan

Founder of SoFA (School of Fashion and the Arts), Amina has created a bag collection that has become a brand of sophistication and excellence in Filipino craftsmanship and materials. For this assignment, Amina chose to create a home office, precisely what New Eclecticism is all about—a mix-and-match with function.

To start with, she chose a Federal-inspired table as her office work space in a color called "ink," actually a very deep navy. It's a far cry from Ethan Allen's traditional natural wood grain finish. She also chose a fauteuil with a cane back, accompanied by tribal print cushions. But her major statement comes from the contrast of shine and textures reflected in the very functional Jocelyn étagère in brass, several accents in the same material, and an oversized



RIGHT: Couturier Albert Andrada. FURNISHINGS FROM TOP: Flowered ball chandelier. Geo symmetric table lamp. Evette settee. Nassau round ottoman. BELOW: Rendering of Andrada's design for Ethan Allen.



seagrass basket. What could be more contrasting? She has also opted for an ikat rug and some topiaries.

Her choice of the Emerson chair in stripes, apparently is an addiction. (She confessed that her house is filled with the stripe pattern as a concession to her husband.) Her choice of rich textures certainly brings a whiff of “newness” in contrast to what is typically Ethan Allen.

Albert Andrada

Two words: “Hollywood Regency.” For this premier fashion designer, the word “glamour” is always at the top of his mind, and appropriately so. The camelback French country sofa in deep blue, the tufted white ottoman, and a sideboard

completely covered in mirror screams “Hollywood.”

But the tufted frieze rug gives the whole look earthiness. His mannequin covered in blue and white shards is an homage to what he holds dear and precious—his Asian roots.

This is precise manifestation of New Eclecticism—Hollywood glam with an Asian twist. Just look at the vermillion box nestled atop the other boxes. Who said it can’t be done?

Chat Fores

The combination of black, grey, white is intense. It all starts with the faux hide zebra rug. It is organic, amorphous, and meandering, and about as undulating as it gets. Chat chose pieces that are quite masculine. And

true enough, when this interior designer was asked about frou-frou interiors, she merely said, “That’s not me.”

So she chose a full-bodied black leather sofa, and black winged chair with nickel-finish studs, and a gray neo-classic chair. For contrast, Chat used two pieces of Chinoiserie furniture, a box on a stand and a console. She also picked a stainless metal radial side table

to contrast with the all-black furniture. A lattice-inspired coffee table and herringbone crystal table lamps complete the room. From neo-classic to Chinoiserie, from zebra prints to lattice work, no rules govern this interior.

The New Eclecticism is not just about breaking the rules, it is, more than anything, a journey of discovery, one that celebrates personality and identity. 1

EXPERT ADVICE
Achieve the eclectic look in your space:

Amina: Create a focal point and use a neutral palette as background.

Albert: Pay attention to details. Mix the traditional with the new.

Chat: Use one big piece instead of many small pieces. Use different proportions to give a space a new look. For example, get one oversized piece of furniture.

From everyone: Choose the pieces that you like.



LEFT: Interior designer Chat Fores, in a vignette that showcases Ethan Allen's New Eclecticism. CLOCKWISE FROM TOP: Elements of Chat Fores' design for Ethan Allen: radial table, Rand wing chair, Francesca armchair, Carlton sofa.

folio

Painting Lives, p. 48



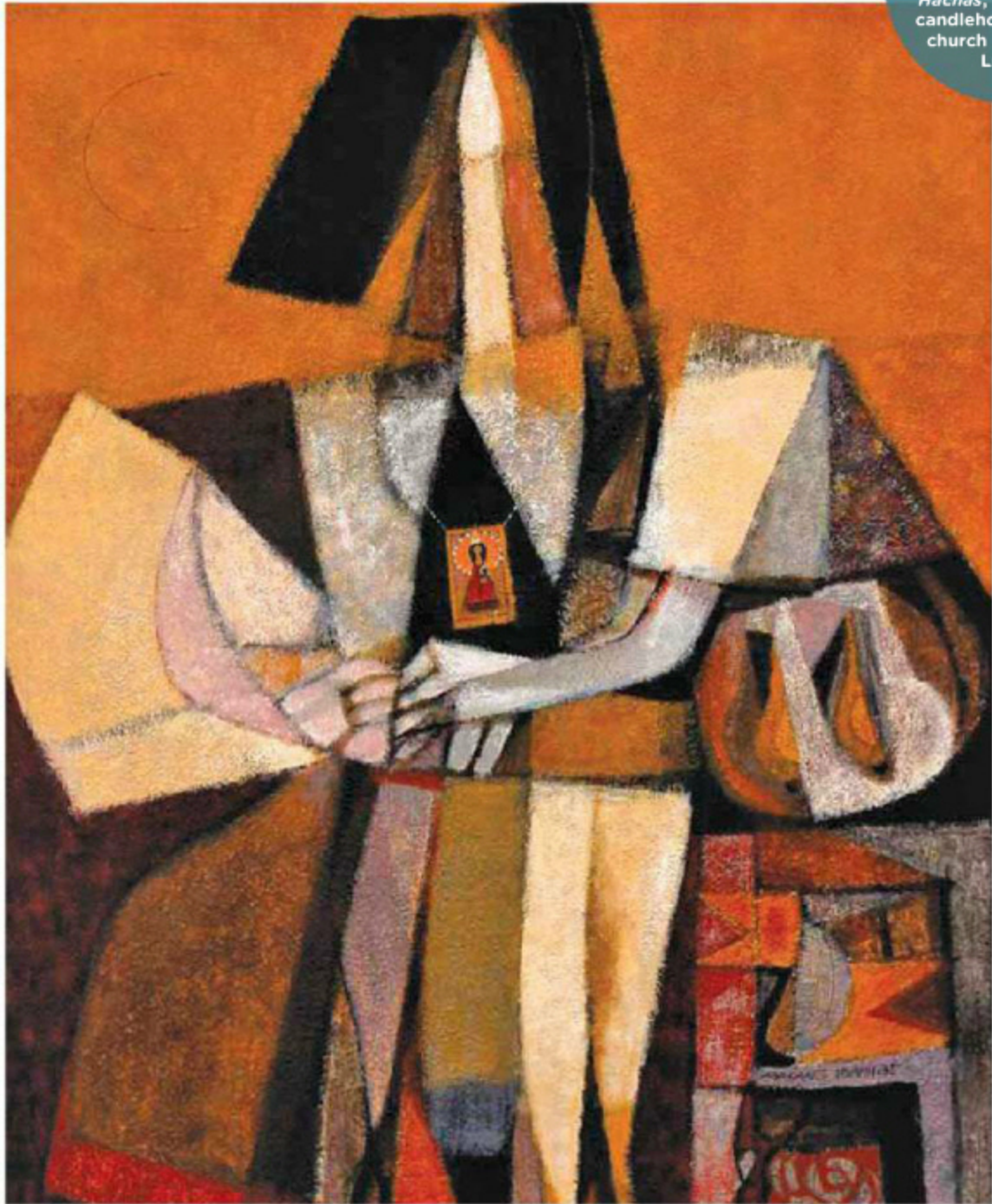
Fine Arts

BLENDING THE BUSINESS
AND PLEASURE OF ART TRADING

BY ANZENNE ROBLE
PHOTOGRAPHS BY NORMAN LLESES
ARTWORK PHOTOS COURTESY OF LEÓN GALLERY



CLOCKWISE FROM
LEFT: León Gallery
owner Jaime Ponce de Leon
with a Vicente Manansala
piece from the collection of Dr.
Alejandro Rocas. *Candle Vendors*
(Study), 1972, 7 3/4" x 11 1/2".
Untitled by Oscar Zalameda,
oil on canvas, 25 1/2" x 32".
Manila Bay Sunset by
Fernando Amorsolo, 1922,
47 1/2" x 31 3/4".



LEFT: *Vendor in Quiapo*,
by Mauro Malang Santos, 1975, 31 1/2" x 23 1/2". RIGHT:
Hachas, 18th century
candleholders from a
church in Northern
Luzon.



EXPERT ADVICE Collector's 101

JAIME PONCE DE LEON
SHARES TIPS ON STARTING
YOUR OWN ART COLLECTION

1. Focus on what you like. Go for the styles that appeal to you, regardless of who the artist is, just to delineate the direction of the collection.
2. As soon as you have your pieces, start to narrow down. When you buy these works, begin to make friends with gallery owners and dealers so you can derive insights from them.
3. When your collection starts to grow considerably, you can employ professionals to help you fortify certain schools in a collection, or periods of a particular art piece. There are art advisers and other collectors who have great insights because they are guided by experience.
4. Buying art as an investment is secondary. There is no insurance that a particular artist is going to pursue his career in art, or if it would be worth something in the future. Most collectors buy it because they are fans of a certain artist or a particular style.

LEÓN GALLERY OWNER Jaime Ponce de Leon did not plan on getting into the art business. "I started in 2005-2006, which was also the time I was taking up interior design in PSID (Philippine School of Interior Design)," he says. It was interior design, his first love, that led him to what would become his life's passion. "When I was designing homes, I would acquire art for my clients, and also help them sell whatever pieces they wanted to dispose," he says.

His fascination in trading and collecting Philippine art grew, leading to the birth of León Gallery. To some, opening an auction house might not be a good investment especially in a country that still needs to heighten appreciation for artworks, but this did not bother Jaime. "I started León Gallery in our other branch in Corinthian Plaza, but the place was too small, and we couldn't hold our auctions anymore, so we decided to look for another

place," he says. The gallery holds four auctions a year, when Jaime chooses what to put on sale "a good assortment of choices," from low-priced to mid-range art and up to the works of masters. At the core of the gallery's collection are paintings by the Old Masters such as those by Juan Luna, Felix Resurreccion Hidalgo, Fabian de la Rosa, and Fernando Amorsolo. The collection includes modernist works of notable artists such as Fernando Zobel,

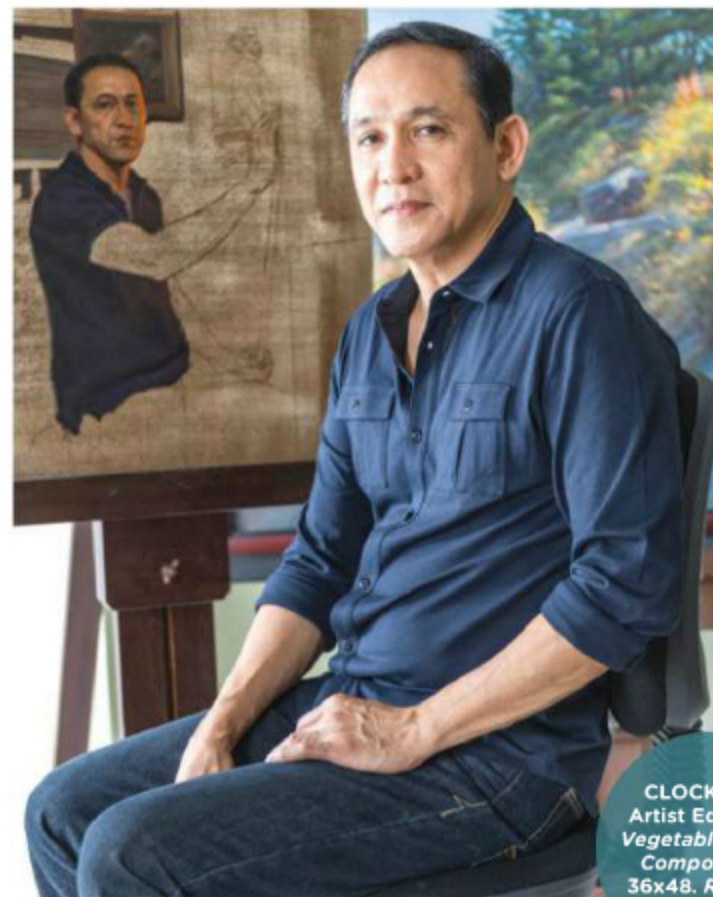
Romeo Tabuena, Diosdado Lorenzo, and Federico Aguilar Alcuaz, among others. It also has a wide array of Philippine antiques of the pre-Hispanic to Hispanic era. Antique furniture, ivory, Orientalia, pottery, and rugs are also included in the gallery's special heirloom and estate pieces. Aside from being an art dealer, Jaime is a collector by heart. "I have a very humble collection," he says. Among his favorites are the works of Fernando Amorsolo and Fernando

Zobel. "I seem to dwell on the older stuff. I like Fernando Amorsolo's pieces because they are easy to understand and I like the rural way of living. For the moderns, I like Fernando Zobel," says Jaime. More than buying and selling art, Jaime would like to contribute to the uplifting of the artwork by Filipino artists. He is not only a successful art gallery owner but also an advocate of appreciating works of art. **León Gallery tel. no. 846-7416. Website: www.leon-gallery.com.**

Painting Lives

AT ONE POINT, IT SEEMED ED LANTIN WAS DONE WITH ART. AS IT TURNED OUT, ART WAS NOT YET DONE WITH HIM

BY DODO DAYAO
PHOTOGRAPH BY WILLIAM ONG



CLOCKWISE:
Artist Ed Lantin.
Vegetable Vendor
Composition I
36x48. *Rev Seng*
Lu 36x48.



COUNTER
CLOCKWISE:
Bagong Huli
42x64. *Nicholas &*
Enrico Ng 30x40.
Jessica Magsaysay
Brimo 40x48.

LIFE CAN TURN ON A DIME, as the saying goes. And sometimes when it takes that sudden sharp turn, the catalyst is someone you never see coming. In Ed Lantin's case, it was someone he didn't even know. The moment he laid eyes on the old woman his sister-in-law was taking care of in Vancouver, he was so overtaken by the compulsion to paint her portrait. He didn't leave until he got her to say yes.

It was a casual congress between two strangers, remarkable for the fact that they were separated not only by generations but by nationality. And yet something life-changing had transpired that night. Neither of them knew it yet.

Lantin had migrated to Canada by this time. Five years later, the woman passed away, and bequeathed Lantin with the portrait and enough money for a ticket. The career and renown he basks in now as an in-demand hyper-realistic portrait artist ostensibly began for him on that first visit. This was in 1996 and he returned to Canada with his first handful of clients. He hasn't looked back since.

And who's to say he didn't finish up with something of an athletic career just the same. "You need the stamina of a tiger to keep painting," Lantin says. All this he practically owes to an old woman he met once and never again.

Of course, it could all have been a confluence of happenstance and coincidence but if there's anyone who's likely to warm to the notion that the random events are the secret machinations of fate, markers of destiny even, it would be Ed Lantin. The path from his humble country boy beginnings to his flourishing artistic career was not exactly a straight one but rather strewn with detours at critical junctures and certainly unpredictable.

He took up Fine Arts mostly on a whim when he realized he couldn't be an athlete. In college, he gravitated, perhaps sensibly, to advertising. His first five years post college were spent working in an ad agency. Then he migrated to Vancouver to start a new life. Except the painter Sofronio Y. Mendoza was also in Vancouver, holding classes. It was merely a matter of time before they met. Lantin enrolled in a class. An innocuous trip to New York led to even more classes, one of which was under renowned illustrator Michael Burban.

Broken down like this, it's easy to discern a sense of elegance and symmetry to everything. It seemed like life just kept turning

one dime after the other for Lantin. With his migration, it seemed he was done with art. But art, as it turned out, was not yet done with him.

The likeness may be central to portraits but most portraits tend to be cold, soulless and indifferent, no matter how accurate, without the necessary nuance and character. The reason Lantin's portraits feel warm-blooded, full-bodied and exude a sense of narrative is because he insists on getting to know his subjects as intimately as possible, talking with them at length, observing how they behave in their element.

He enthuses, at some point, about how John Singer Sargent's use of space in his paintings informs his own process. And he does tend to be as meticulous with the backdrops as he is with the subject, what goes in, what stays out, how much of it we see, its relationship with the figure, all that.

Regardless of whether the subject is a president or a doctor or a holy man or a philanthropist or a celebrity, all of whom he's painted, Lantin believes their definitions can all be gleaned from how they interact with their surroundings. With each portrait he paints, it's never about merely capturing a likeness. It's more like bottling an essence. "I'm not just painting faces," he says. "I'm painting lives." Check out his website www.edgardolantin.com

The Vibrant Contemporary

SILVERLENS SHOWCASES WORK BY EMERGING FILIPINO ARTISTS

BY RAPHAEL KIEFER
PHOTOGRAPHS BY JV NORIEGA
ARTWORKS COURTESY OF SILVERLENS GALLERY



LEFT: Silverlens Gallery founder and artist Isa Lorenzo. BELOW: *Memento Mori I*, oil on mother of pearl by Gregory Halili

“THE PHILIPPINES IS TOPS in Southeast Asia when it comes to producing art,” says Isa Lorenzo, the manager and owner of the ten-year strong Silverlens Gallery along Pasong Tamo Extension in Makati.

The contemporary art from the Filipino artists both here and abroad is gaining a reputation and, more important, has attained commercial success, which is the criterion of a country’s art scene. Lorenzo and her colleague Rachel Rillo have committed themselves to the artists and the arts with an annual output of 30 shows in the Philippines, 10 in the Silverlens Gallery in Singapore, five art fairs, plus multiple collaborations both here and overseas. This essentially bridges the country to the world.

Filling the gap

The galleries’ artists are under direct career management meant to build long-term

illustrious careers. “When we started the gallery, there was no organization or structure in Manila that would celebrate artists. We filled the gap,” says Lorenzo.

This fresh and vibrant revival in the art scene is, of course, a result of the creative expression of the modern artists themselves, many of whom do not pigeonhole themselves into one genre or medium. This ‘jack of all trades’ trend encourages diversity and gives the artists the opportunity to surprise their audience with something fresh and unexpected. Artists are not afraid of redefining their own work, and this approach has yielded great results.

Not long ago, art in the Philippines was figurative and while it was good, it was also generally predictable and mostly centered on painting. Today’s artists are experimenting with more media, which include collages, street art, mixed media installations and



LEFT: *Every Tool Is A Weapon If You Hold It Right XVI*, acid dye print on silk twill by Pio Abad. RIGHT: *Untitled*, acrylic on canvas by Maria Taniguchi

unexplored methods, which are breaking new ground. This freedom to create is where the artists of today are going and which the world has noticed.

Pio Abad, for example, who made his name in multimedia arts, has expanded his repertoire with photography and most recently has ventured into installations using fabrics as the canvas for his hand painted depictions of history, which are later printed onto the material.

Greg Halili, who has made his name as a miniaturist painter, known to fit immense detail of entire worlds into 1x1 to 4x12 spaces using mostly watercolor, is another precedent. His recent tour de force has him painting oil on mother of pearl, a move that has created much excitement in the art world.

The ‘full-time working artist’

Interest in Filipino contemporary art recently reached the premier international contemporary art show “Art Basel,” which stages exhibits in Switzerland, Hong Kong and the US featuring more than 300 leading galleries across the world. In 2013, mixed-media artist Maria Taniguchi was given a solo presentation in Basel. She is as good at painting as she is at making videos, and

transitions from one medium to another with ease. Her participation marked the first time that a Philippine gallery (Silverlens) participated in the fair.

With more young artists emerging with their own creative processes, the future of Filipino art is in good hands. It may have been rare in the past, but the ‘full-time working artist’ is here to stay. Art establishes a cultural identity and with a population that is highly creative and mobile, thanks

to a booming economy, this trend will only continue to grow as the competition and the selection process become more stringent.

When asked if she could predict which artists to look out for in the future, Isa Lorenzo’s response is simple: “The best forecast is standing in front of an art piece and loving it.”

The Silverlens Gallery is located at 2F YMC Bldg. 2, Makati City, tel. 632 8160044; visit www.silverlensgalleries.com

Myth and Reality

RODEL TAPAYA'S ART IS A SURREAL MERGING OF THE FOLKLORIC AND THE CONTEMPORARY

BY LISA ITO / PHOTOGRAPHS BY AT MACULANGAN
COURTESY OF THE ATENEO ART GALLERY



ABOVE:
Modern
Manananggals in
Rodel's *Bato-Balani*
exhibit at Ateneo Art
Gallery. BELOW:
Artist Rodel
Tapaya.

PHILIPPINE FOLKLORE has inspired the production of many other art forms, from songs and screenplays to sculptures and paintings. Rodel Tapaya, one of Manila's young established visual artists, has continually responded to this creative challenge by filling his canvases with scapes and stories drawn from both native myths and local realities.

This surreal merging of the folkloric and the contemporary is grandly displayed in Tapaya's latest one-man exhibition, entitled *Bato-Balani*. Composed of new paintings in acrylic on canvas, sculptures, and a collaborative video-animation, this extensive exhibition spans many Philippine mythic stories and folk figures, juxtaposing their stories into tableaux that are otherworldly yet reflective of what persists in society.

Fascinating images

What is fascinating about Tapaya's images is their continuous teasing out of



LEFT: (Top)
*She's From
the Sky* 136 cm in
diameter. (Bottom)
Lucky Fight 166x136
cm. RIGHT: *Faithful
Lover* 197x136 cm.



connections between the fictive world of mythology and their possible counterparts in the sobering realities that the Philippines faces daily. Greeting the viewer upon entering the exhibit, for instance, are several sculptural installations merging the figure of the *manananggal* with luggage commonly carried by plane travelers. The latter is a common sight, especially in a country where thousands depart daily to seek a better life and means of livelihood elsewhere. Tapaya creates hybrid entities here, framing both nocturnal monster and migrant labor as both peregrine figures of flight.

More stories unfurl in Tapaya's paintings inside the exhibition space. Many of these works are made using shaped canvases and framed with dark and engraved tin sheets, imbuing them with an even more emblematic character. It is easy to get the impression that one faces not a usual square or rectangular canvas, but a pulsating window or portal to an otherworldly realm. This is further heightened by Tapaya's distinct style as an artist, which merges a mastery of realism, stylized figuration, and a vivid yet nuanced palette of colors. Also remarkable is the animated video rendering of Tapaya's painting, installed in a viewing room right in the center of the exhibition.

Connections to contemporary events

Tapaya's star in the Southeast Asian contemporary art scene rose even higher in recent years, with his winning the Asia-Pacific Breweries Foundation Signature Art Prize by the Singapore Art Museum in 2011. Throughout this period, Tapaya has focused on creating art based on stories from his homeland, maintaining a studio in Bulacan with his wife and fellow artist, Marina Cruz.

Across his paintings for *Bato-Balani*, one can tease out connections to contemporary events and everyday states of being. But far from being overt indictments, the paintings challenge one to reflect on the wit and wisdom of folklore, hinting at redemption through renewed hope.

Seen as a whole, Tapaya's rich worlds filled with hybrid mythologies promise a fascinating encounter with art for those who stay behind to see the stories unfold. In merging myth and reality, Tapaya leaves the viewer with a renewed sense of seeing the world. **📍**



EXPERT ADVICE Framing art

Another aspect of experiencing art is weighing how other aspects, such as frames, contribute to the overall presence of the work. **Metro Home & Entertaining** asks visual artist Rodel Tapaya for advice on this.

MH: Can you give art collectors useful tips on choosing good frames for a work?

RT: It really depends. There are works which use frames as a form of protection; others have frames which are part of the work itself. Collectors can choose to treat the frame in a pragmatic way—as a means to protect the work—or to use it as a decorative element or even an extension of the work itself. It is best to get a good framer: one you can trust to handle works well and who can give you advice on what are the most appropriate frames. Lastly, make sure that the work is hung properly, with provisions to support the weight of the painting.

MH: Are you partial to any particular framing styles or materials?

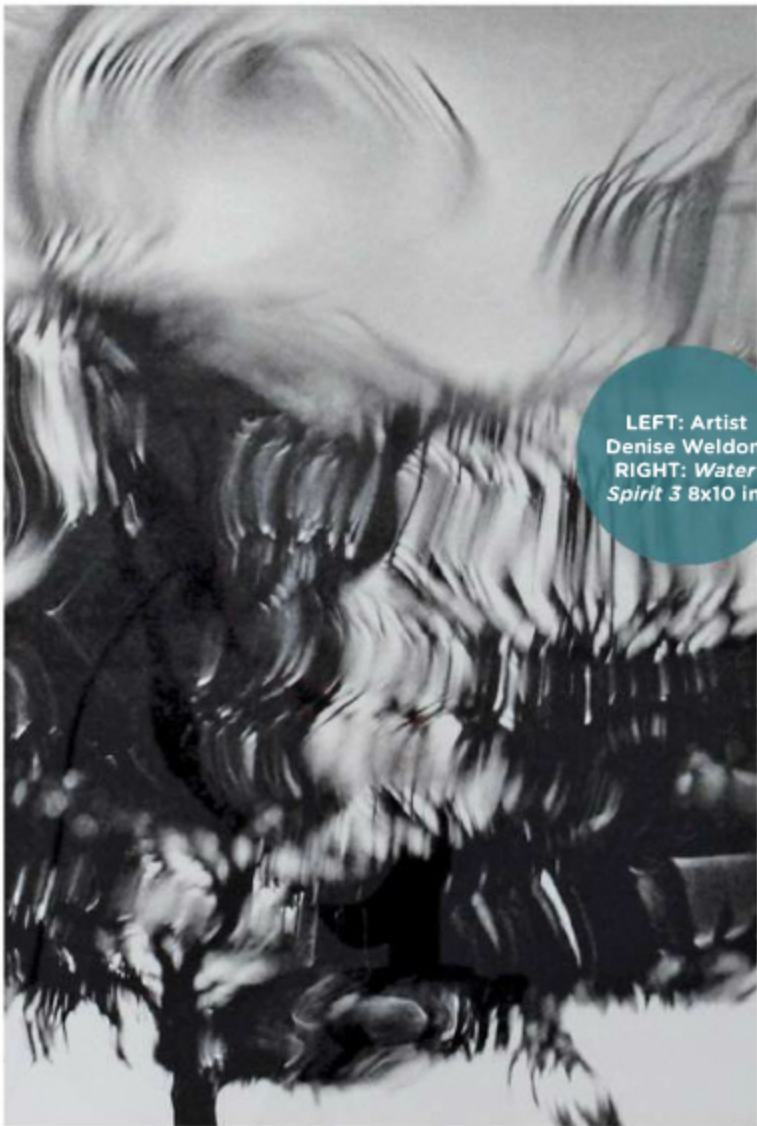
RT: It depends on the kind of work that I am doing. Some are large-scale paintings, where a thick box-type frame used as a stretcher is enough to provide protection. These can be hung as it is. But some works, such as the paintings in *Bato-Balani*, intentionally use tin sheet frames with patterns. Another series, *Deities*, used bronze mirror frames which became part of the work itself. On the other hand, I prefer to use a neat white frame for my series of underglass reverse paintings on plexiglass, just to protect the work.

Meditation in Images

MOVEMENT
AND STILLNESS

BY LEAH PUYAT
PHOTOGRAPHS BY JOVEL LORENZO

COUNTER
CLOCKWISE
FROM TOP: Denise's
Water Spirit collection
in Silverlens Gallery.
Luminous 2 32.5x18
in. *Water Spirit*
2 8x12 in.



LEFT: Artist
Denise Weldon.
RIGHT: *Water
Spirit* 3 8x10 in.



Water spirit

The magic of *Water Spirit*, and the sensitivity of Weldon's work is that she can take water, a liquid that surrounds us, sustains us, and flows within us, and make it seem new. The images are serene, yet complex. The gradations of light and shadows in what are close-ups of the undulations and stillness of water are myriad, and yet these nuances calm us rather than confuse us.

"When I realized that water droplets contained shadows, I was excited to have learned something new," Weldon enthuses with the wonder of a child who had felt water for the first time, like Helen Keller when Anne Sullivan spelled out the word "water" on her palm. This deep awareness of the wondrous beauty of the world around us comes from Weldon's years of meditation, which have honed her senses of observation and appreciation.

One of the mantras she uses is "Om namah shihvaya." There is no direct English translation, and some of the looser ones are: "I honor the divinity within myself. May the elements of this creation abide in me in perfection. May the greatest that can be in this world be created in me, in others and in this world."

A close look at Weldon's work in *Water Spirit* reveals that the artist revels in savoring moments. The solo exhibit opened at Silverlens Gallery, and owner Isa Lorenzo has chosen Weldon to exhibit for a simple reason. "People find it easy to connect to her work," Lorenzo sums up. ¹

PHOTOGRAPHER DENISE WELDON is Spanish-Austrian-American and yet she spent much of her years growing up all over Southeast Asia. In fact, she has spent her whole life crossing borders of geography, language, art and the classic conundrum of every modern woman—the borders of motherhood and one's personal flourishing as a human being.

She studied Studio Art, with a major in Fine Arts and minors in art history and Spanish in Wheaton College in Massachusetts, but lived for almost two decades in the Philippines. As wife to Architect Manny Miñana, mother to Alejandro and Carolina, and board trustee of the Museum Foundation of the Philippines, Denise lives a full and fulfilled life. And though she does take photos all the time, she admits that most

days, her first thought is: "Gotta get the kids to school."

But unlike most harassed modern moms, she doesn't let the daily school run kill her soul. Instead, she can still take the hundreds of little moments that can make one's heart sing (or sink) and let them feed her art. In fact, the seemingly mundane act of taking photos of shower-spotted windows while waiting for her kids get out of school took her on the journey to *Water Spirit*, her most recent show at Silverlens Galleries.

Images and reality

"I never stop taking pictures. I call it foraging, and from that foraging, patterns, themes and ideas emerge," Weldon says of her creative process, though she is the first to say that it is not a conscious method.

"At first, I was just seeing dots, droplets on windows. Then I started seeing puddles. So *Water Spirit* began with an inclination towards dots. Dots as design, as elements, as water, on glass and on surfaces. It became a game of connecting the dots. Then, after, the dots came the awareness of reflection, and the refraction.

"There was this moment as I was studying the drops of water. I became cognizant that the drops of water, aside from reflecting the bigger picture in front of them, had shadows within them that were silhouettes of both the outlines of the drops and the reflection! It was a 'coming forth' moment of sorts. I saw that in something so small, there is something much grander, deeper and wiser that documents and records everything."



ELECTRIC CITY

SOLSTICE IN VIBRANT CIRCUIT MAKATI IS SET TO TAKE URBAN DWELLING TO A HIGHER LEVEL, ALLOWING RESIDENTS EQUAL MEASURES OF LIVE, WORK AND PLAY

BY BARRY VILORIA / PHOTOGRAPHS BY WILLIAM ONG

IT'S INTERESTING TO NOTE that what was once a municipality of pilgrimage and farming is now the business capital of the country. Makati, inhabited dating back to 1670 and inaugurated for cityhood only in 1995, has since been the 42nd most densely populated city in the world. Yet, fittingly, it grows more and more as the premier financial and lifestyle hub in Philippine existence.

Such growth can be greatly attributed to Ayala Corporation, through Ayala Land, which has recognized—and harnessed—the potential of Makati since the early '40s. Between the 1940s and today, it helped carve a prominent business district, as well as the upscale residential subdivisions that surround it such as Forbes Park, Bel-Air Village, Dasmariñas Village, and Urdaneta Village. It also saw the potential of Bonifacio Global City, which, more obvious than before, is now home to great ventures in banking, information technology, food and retail, and leisure.

Ayala Land has since been at the vanguard of real estate development, from condominiums to house and lot properties. In 2002, it conceived Alveo Land Corp., a fully-owned subsidiary of the company that caters to the “upwardly mobile urban achiever.” With the 32 pioneered developments in key growth centers around the country, it's sufficient to say that, for the past 12 years now, Alveo Land has aimed to meet the needs and wants of its market.

First-class, mixed-use development

In early 2013, Ayala Land launched Circuit Makati, which spans 21 hectares. Located where the busy city streets of J.P. Rizal Ave., Ayala Ave. Extension, and Hippodromo St. meet, the lot was formerly the venue of the renowned Sta. Ana Racetrack.

Circuit Makati has since been poised as a mixed-use development with first-class facilities encompassing food, fashion, sports, art, and office spaces. In other words, a premier entertainment district, offering experiences that redefine modern living.



The dining area for this model unit showcases an unconventional yet efficient way of assembling dining room seating. A banquet leans against the wall, opposite a pair of chairs which are treated with the same neutral shade. Together, they render visual uniformity. Color-wise, the heads of the table are reserved for visual impact through its navy blue upholstery. Overhead, a bespoke chandelier drops from the tray ceiling. The ceiling treatment, along with the walls clad in wood veneer, provides another layer of texture.

This unit's living room is a lesson in powerful contrasts and effective visual tension. Opting for adventurous decorating, the room is outfitted in organic shapes, as seen in the sofa whose curvilinear form is a visual foil for the sharp angles of the coffee table, an original design by Empire Home, inspired by rocks. To the side of the sofa, the organic theme continues in the easel whose form references the branches of a tree. Consistent with the dining room, pops of blue enhance the space, along with orange, its complement.



These classical candleholders are given a modern spin through their metallic stainless finish, P1,500 each, Hive by Restoration.



Bust bookends, referencing silhouettes of American presidents George Washington and Franklin Roosevelt, underscore the preference for masculine decor in this unit.



A preference for sleek monochromes dominate these spaces. The fawn tones of this faux kangaroo hide is deemed to be more streamlined than that of printed animal hides.

"Circuit Makati will bring together Ayala Land's various product lines for commercial spaces, leasable offices, leisure accommodations, and its upscale residential addresses spearheaded by Alveo Land. It will be a truly large-scale, mixed-use community that will allow live-work-play in equal measures and will be uniquely highlighted by Ayala Land's high standards for quality and excellent customer service," says Eunice Acejo, marketing head of Alveo Land.

"Distinct entertainment nodes" are to sprawl Circuit Makati, catering to all ages. These include the Circuit Performing Arts Theater, a 1,500-seater indoor performance chamber for world-class performances; the Circuit Lane, a shopping and dining row with an interactive central riverwalk; and the Globe Circuit Event Grounds, a 20,000 capacity open area to hold different affairs.

"These are coupled by sports and unique retail and entertain-



A nod to architect Frank Gehry's famous titanium buildings, this stainless steel rock coffee table adds edgy appeal to the ensemble of furniture and accessories. P37,500, Empire Living.

The theme of neutrals and the use of wood finishes continue in the bedroom, a study in restrained drama with respect to its lighting scheme. Ambient lighting peeks through the veneered panelling behind the headboard, its glow enhanced by a table lamp. *The Mercury*, a stainless steel sculpture marked by organic lines, provides a dynamic focal point against the room's clean, straight lines. BELOW: Neutrals punctuated by blue accents are the prevailing theme of the kitchen (LEFT) and the bathroom (RIGHT). In these areas, design details, such as the complementary tiles paired with the cabinetry's wood veneer finish, the graining of which is oriented vertically, add visual texture to the space.





Marked by generous flow of light, this living room exhibits a merry mix of vivid colors, complemented by vintage-inspired pieces. The space is made brighter by the use of a sunny yellow sofa, paired with Hans J. Wegner's "Smile Chair." Both references the Mid-Century Modern design movement. Pillows by Iñigo Elizalde provide more vivid hues. A striped black and white rug anchors the splashes of color, complemented by a metallic spherical chandelier overhead.



Empire Designs maximized the given area, making use of the vertical space by installing shelving on the walls. The generous stream of light owing to the large windows also makes the room feel bright and airy.



Hans J. Wegner's Shell Chair is also referred to as "The Smiling Chair." Wegner employed Benslie wood and upholstered leather to achieve a light, floating look. Price upon request, Vitra



LEFT: A traveller's chest functions as a coffee table in this living room. BELOW: Adding vibrance to the room, Iñigo Elizalde's hand-stitched accent cushion cover features tribal art from Northern Philippines. Price upon request, Catalina.



ment options seamlessly interspersed throughout the development," adds Acejo. Themed clusters featuring arts, fashion, design, performances, culinary, and technology are also featured within the masterplan of Circuit Makati.

The residential anchor

At Circuit Makati, modern living is given an upgrade. Among the many residences that will soon rise—Solstice will be a landmark residential building, sitting right in the heart of this burgeoning entertainment district.

Solstice Tower One extends to 41 stories, housing 461 residential units in a range of studio, one-, two-, and three-bedroom units, while the Solstice Tower Two has 37 storeys, 394 residential units, in a range of studio, one-bedroom, and two-bedroom units.

As the residential anchor at Circuit Makati, Solstice greatly appeals to both active, mobile professionals, and starting couples and



This charcoal gray upholstered dining chair is inspired by Mid-Century Modern furniture, P10,500, Empire Living.



ABOVE: The use of stripes lends visual discipline to a room. Rendered in different colors and heights, the purple and pink stripes in this little girl's bedroom veer away from the rigid, giving a playful vibe. This linear scheme for the walls complement the lines of the Mid-Century Modern furniture found in the room.



Baby elephant stool by Eames, made from molded plastic, highlights fun and color for children, price upon request, Vitra.



In the master bedroom, a proclamation of color reigns. Graphic art work as a backdrop to the bed contrasts with the simple forms of the drop lights by Tom Dixon. The wooden walls, furniture, and the leather upholstered bed by Empire Home make a sparse décor palette against the radiant backdrop.

families. The podium at the eighth level will feature a lap and lounge pool, juice bar, lounge area, and kids' play area, kiddie pool as well as an indoor and outdoor fitness hub.

Incomparably strategic, surrounding Solstice are the various lifestyle and entertainment facilities that aim to balance living, work, and leisure.

Residents can take a short walk to these world-class and dynamic avenues that, Acejo stresses, "will allow each resident to explore their capabilities as they leave their workplace lifestyles at the office and come home to focus on more personal activities that nurture holistic growth."

"Catching the latest happenings will certainly be just a hop, skip, and jump for homeowners at Solstice," she adds.

The future of modern living

Ultimately, Alveo Land, through Circuit Makati, is pegged to be the most ideal home for the modern Filipino urban dweller, whether he's living it up solo or with a family. This is part of Ayala Land's "Make It Happen, Make It Makati" campaign, which hopes to revitalize the city with such deep-rooted socio-cultural heritage and infrastructure redevelopment.

"Circuit Makati, the country's premier lifestyle playground, is characterized by an evolving entertainment landscape that not only completes the vision of Ayala Land for Makati, but also strengthens the city's position as the country's unrivalled business capital," Acejo says.

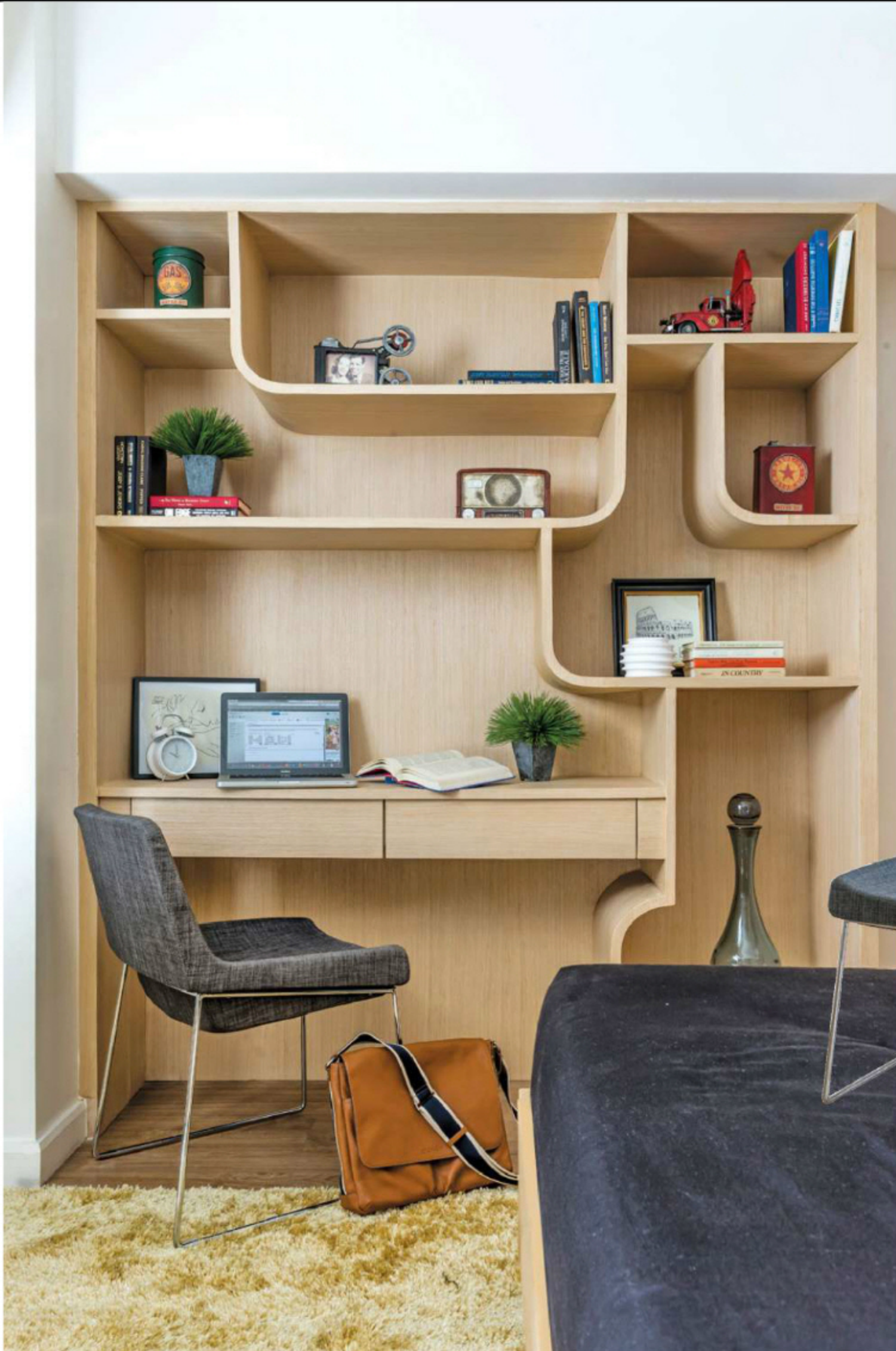
The key item towards this goal, she points out, is providing the residents accessibility to basic necessities.

"This is the top priority. Residents of Solstice get exactly that and



LEFT: Writing Desk in duccho paint finish, featuring slanted legs, P16,500, Empire Living. RIGHT: Plump pillow, using bold colors and stripes, adds a touch of spunk to an otherwise classic look, P449.75, Our Home.





Wooden shelves are made more functional and interesting here, by integrating a study and storage area in the lower portion.

The glint of this upholstered desk chair's stainless steel legs contrast with the muted finish of the wooden shelves. Desk chair, P7,195, Dimensione.



The bathroom is partially tiled and painted, and features a giant vanity that gives the illusion of a bigger space while serving as a counter for grooming essentials.

more. From Circuit Makati's retail and service offerings to its entertainment anchors, residents will be able to experience the convenience of living in Makati's lifestyle playground, where everything is just an elevator ride away."

For those interested, Solstice model units are currently on display at LIFESCAPES by Alveo (Ayala Center), located at G/L Greenbelt 3, and at LIFESCAPES by Alveo (Circuit Makati), Riverfront Drive, Circuit Makati.

For the interior design, Alveo Land tapped the help of Empire Designs. Composed of Vianca Añonuevo-Favila, Mark Perez, and JC Arcega, all former classmates at the Philippine School of Interior Design (PSID), the team brought in solid colors, minimal prints, subtle furniture, and the brilliant use of space. That is, to infuse modern touches from their interpretation of multifaceted, fun living while staying true to the vibrant environment of the residence. (See their design notes spread throughout the sidebars.)

"With pioneering living concepts in mind, Alveo Land wanted to tap a team that can infuse bolder, more creative, and more modern designs into a thoughtfully planned unit that sits right above an entertainment district," Acejo says. "Empire Designs' interpretation and design truly capture the character of Solstice and Circuit Makati as a whole—fun, bold, and exciting."

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The dream team

MEET THE THREE CREATIVE MINDS BEHIND THE MODEL UNITS AT SOLSTICE

BEFORE CATERING TO CLIENTS as high profile as Alveo Land, Empire Designs started on a rather humble note. After earning their degrees from PSID in 2009, classmates Vianca Añonuevo-Favila, Mark Perez, and JC Arcega thought of forming an interior design firm, where they could practice their skills.

The trio would do all the dirty work at the guest room of **Metro Home & Entertaining's** Barbie Pardo-Tiangco, who was then part of the team.

"We would have meetings and sourcing in the morning. At night, we would manually draft and draw perspectives because we didn't have CAD operators or renderer then. We would sleep at 4 a.m. and wake up early the next day," Añonuevo-Favila recounts. "We never brought in capital in our company. What we did for our first project—that was our capital."

Empire Designs started catering to family and friends. Their passion and perseverance helped boost them to local prominence via word of mouth, which have since led them to bigger, corporate clients. Apart from Solstice, their other projects include hotels, hostels, and major residences in Tagaytay, Cebu, Davao, and Boracay, among others. They also have restaurants and food chains among their clientele.

The three describe themselves as very "hands on." The company might have grown over the years—they now employ eight other junior designers, a secretary, and a CAD operator, plus the workers at the furniture and home accessories workshop they have in Baliuag, Bulacan (which they hope to expand into a full-blown store).

More projects invigorate Empire Designs to continue with the same level of commitment they have come to be known for.

"It's actually rewarding because you meet different people from all walks of life, from blue-collar workers to high-profile clients," says Perez.

And having been given many opportunities to showcase their designs, Favila says, "We want to uphold the design industry here in the Philippines."

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Modern Throwback, p. 96



EXPANDING THE POSSIBILITIES

AN AMBITIOUS COUPLE'S WORK PAYS OFF
AS THEY CONVERT AN OLD DUPLEX INTO
THE MODERN HOME OF THEIR DREAMS

BY CAL TAVERA / PHOTOGRAPHS BY WILLIAM ONG



THE HOUSE EXHIBITS A BRILLIANT EXERCISE in space planning, harmonizing the previous structure with more contemporary plans. In the last two years, the duplex that took up residence here in the 1980s was effortlessly transformed into a modern three-bedroom home that echoes the new homeowners' pragmatic sensibilities. Redesigned by Architect Jojo Dayrit and interior designers Anton Barretto and Tessa Alindogan, the home's end result is reconciled restraint with a touch of candor.

The couple purchased the 500-sq.m. lot in Makati in 2012 and were set on renovating the existing duplex. They were aware of the myriad challenges the project posed, but they liked the unconventional charm of the domicile. The homeowner shares, "We went through a lot of renovating because the house looked so old with its *anay* finish. It had been built three decades ago. It is much harder to renovate a home than to start from scratch. We had a lot of structural slabs to work around."

What remained were the bones of the previous dwelling and its concept of huge windows. The high ceiling in the foyer is another favorite feature of the couple that they decided to retain. Pointing to a column in the middle of the living room, she says, "That column was the main division between the two homes, and we just tore down the wall. Then we took out one of the stairs in one of the homes."

Most of the furniture in the foyer come from Locsin. The designers mixed these major pieces with a coffee table from OMO and accent chairs from PLC 107. While the furniture was suggested by Tessa and Anton, the choice of artworks was personally handpicked by the homeowners. A Lao Lianben painting holds a prominent spot on top of the sofa. The wife shares, "We have a lot of Lao paintings lying around. We met the artist when we attended his workshop and when we needed a piece, we thought of him." Another artist they are fond of is National Artist Arturo Luz. His sculpture is displayed on top of the coffee table. **OPPOSITE PAGE:** One of the couple's favorite pieces is the round table. The dining set is a custom order made by NEST. The wife says, "That is why we wanted to keep it in the foyer so we can see it every day." Keeping the table company is another Arturo Luz painting, lighting fixtures by Illuminati, and a glass masterpiece by Ramon Orlina.





Feng shui guru Princess Lim Fernandez from the Mandarin Hotel advised the couple that it is unlucky to have any element lower than the beams. For the dining area, interior design consultants Tessa Alindogan and Anton Barretto admit that the quest for the ideal lighting fixture was challenging but in the end, they were able to find the perfect accessory. Sitting pretty in the formal dining area are the aerial plants the wife considers great deals from the Salcedo Market. Much like the owners and the house, the plants fit right at home with the low maintenance theme. The wife quipped, "We just have to spray them weekly!"



Since the couple decided to retain the existing structure, the feng shui guru could not make major changes. However, she was able to make little adjustments around the home. The kitchen, for instance, does not have a stove. It was kept in the dirty kitchen. To maintain the continuous clean look in this space, the designers used Optimus Space Solutions to create all the cabinets for the kitchen. These clean lines are interrupted only by the interesting accessories. Perched on the bar counters are the steel and metal "First light" candle holders Kenneth Cobonpue designed for Habitat for Humanity, and by the wall, a red cactus-shaped Nespresso capsule holder, and the stools are from Dimensione.

Finding the perfect mix

"We visited an interior designer's home a few years ago, and the interiors were imprinted in my memory," says the wife, referring to the personal home of Tessa Alindogan that is frequently published for its monochromatic black and white interiors. "I really admire Tessa's place. I also love her and her business partner Anton's sense of style and attention to detail."

When the opportunity came for the couple to build their first home, they knew immediately who they wanted to work with. Tessa and Anton have both accumulated a compelling portfolio in the past two decades, turning over beautiful residential, commercial and hotel interiors that reaffirmed the couple's choice.

Initial meetings with the designers focused on the busy couple's preference to make things low maintenance. They both work and leave the house by 7:30 in the morning. The wife says, "We are inclined towards clean lines and nothing too *frou frou*. We also wanted the flow of the house to be continuous because we feel it is a small lot so we wanted the areas on the ground floor to open up to each other instead of limiting them." To create the feel of space, sliding doors instead of walls serve as divisions in case the couple want to keep a certain area air-conditioned.

The family room is dubbed the most frequently visited room by

everyone since the couple gets to spend a lot of quality time there with their kids. An accent chair inspired by Thomas Heatherwick's spun chair brings a playful vibe to the surroundings. The wife believes that the current space is ideal for their lifestyle. The house is small enough for them to see their young son and teenage daughter, yet big enough for every family member to have their own privacy.

They wanted to give each of their children their own bedroom and converted the two former master bedrooms with a balcony for their own private space. The wife shares, "The old structure had a garage with a roof. We flattened it into a personal balcony for our kids." She jokes that they should have thought about it more because it now makes it easier for the children to leave.

The son's room is the exact replica of the daughter's, even down to the bathroom size and tiles. For the new master bedroom, the couple combined some spaces but kept the two existing bathrooms to make up the his and hers area. The wife confides that the separate mirrored bathroom set-up worked out pretty well in the end.

Art as accessories

Enthusiastic art collectors, the couple furnished their home with stunning paintings by National Artist Abdulmari Asia Imao, Nena Saguil, Manuel Baldemor, Lao Lianben and others alongside sculptures



by National Artist Arturo Luz, Ramon Orlina and Daniel Dela Cruz. Even with the impressive collection, they like expanding their interest in art to random finds.

In the den, in front of a Prudencio Lamarroza painting, the wife gushes about a local art piece by an unknown artist. She exclaims, “Isn’t this amazing? Look at it from afar. Someone painted Einstein on a set of old encyclopaedias. I don’t even remember who I bought this from, I just chanced upon it in one of the local art fairs.”

Their grandmother gave the couple their first artwork. They decided to collect art when they returned to the Philippines from the States in 2004. The wife shares, “We like unusual items. The house took two years to finish so it is only recently that we have been buying more accessories to fill our space. Some of the items we have here, like the spectacles in the living room and the gourds from New York, were acquired from our travels.”

While the house is done, the wife says that the interiors are always ongoing. The den, for example, was only finished recently. A month ago, the wife claims it was filled with boxes but admits that she was happiest with the den and how all the pieces came together even though it is still a work in progress. Interior designer Tessa verified that the owners were not in a hurry so they took their time with the project. Unlike other couples, these homeowners were unfazed by the project and enjoyed the experience. The wife says, “You hear stories of people getting stressed and having headaches over their own homes. We actually look forward to the weekly meetings and loved the process a lot. We had a lot of fun renovating our dream home.”

Inspired by ideas from magazines and travels, the homeowners knew what kind of furniture they wanted and asked supplier Rene Atibagos to produce them. For the master bedroom, Rene did all the pieces including the padded headboard. After combining areas together to make a spacious master bedroom on the second floor, the couple was able to acquire their own his and her areas for their study and bathroom, which works quite well in their marriage. The bed is custom made by NEST, while the pair of wing chairs and ottoman are also by NEST. Above the table from Black&White is a painting by Arturo Luz. OPPOSITE PAGE: The wife reveals the den is her favorite part of the house. She says, “I really like the way the den turned out in terms of the design and how all the pieces come together. However, I feel it is still a work in progress. We still need a television in here.” Completing the room is the armchair and woven ottoman from Locsin, nesting coffee table by Carlo Cordaro and the Igan D’Bayan sculpture on the table. On the wall, a Prudencio Lamarroza painting blends quite well with the earthy tones of this haven.

EXPERT ADVICE

Design consultants Tessa Alindogan’s and Anton Barretto’s creative vision turned an old duplex into a modern dream house.



1. What is a design breakthrough that resonated with all involved?

The unification of both areas since it was a duplex and somehow the collaboration between architect and design team created a seamless space.

2. If you were to envision an architect or a fellow design expert to view this work of yours, who would it be and why?

Tessa: I would pick fellow interior designer Tessa Prieto-Valdes to view this work because our design styles are in the opposite ends of the spectrum so it would be interesting to hear her views.

Anton: Tita Opat Labrador Hermano. She has been a big influence in my design career, always encouraging me to create and be creative, and she also exposed me to modern Filipino art and to the local furniture design industry.

3. If someone wanted this look, what are three most important design lessons to take away from this home?

- A.** Plan the layout and spaces. Make sure to incorporate a lot of windows to ensure that natural lighting is maximized.
- B.** Color, furniture, and accessory collection, finishes, and window treatments for this home were carefully chosen to achieve the contemporary vibe the owners wanted.
- C.** Take into consideration artworks when designing a home.

4. Is there anything in your process that particularly taught you a lesson while designing and building this home?

Midway through this project, the owners decided to consult a feng shui expert. Several changes had to be implemented. We had to come up with solutions that integrated these changes without compromising our design.

5. If you were to save our readers from anything while in the process of designing and building their dream house, what would that be? Why?

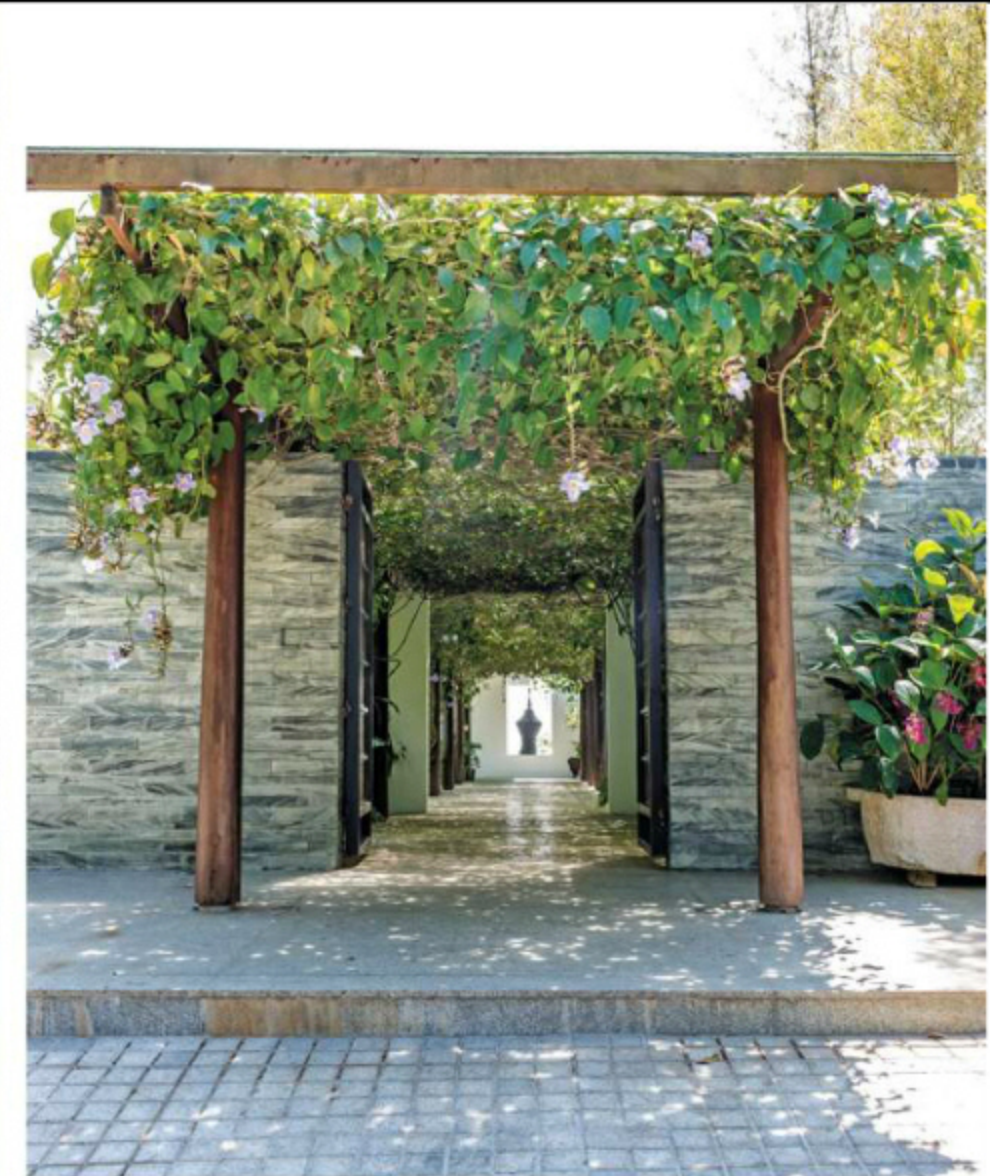
A good start would be to choose wisely. Go through the process of finding the perfect team. Be flexible and manage expectations. It’s rare that anything will ever finish on time. The most important consideration would be to enjoy the process from start to finish!

OPEN HOUSE

BALAI TAAL WAS DESIGNED TO LET IN
AS MUCH OF THE INCREDIBLE VIEW

BY GABRIELA ALEGRE / PHOTOGRAPHS BY WILLIAM ONG

Low-slung seating
in neutral tones in
the open plan living
room allows the
residents ample views
of treetops and the
Taal Vista beyond.



ABOVE: Greens, wood and stone come together in the dramatic entryway—a sampler of what's to come at Balai Taal. **OPPOSITE PAGE:** Big glass windows in the living area let in natural light and give a breathtaking view of Taal.

THE LOT OVERLOOKED TAAL LAKE, so the natural move was to construct and design a house that would let as much of the outside in. “The view is incredible so it was important to create a layout that maximized the views from all the rooms,” says lead architect Anna Maria Sy, a partner at CS Design Consultancy, Inc., who works with partner Jason Chai, and associate Kenneth Chua.

“We wanted to create a sequential experience through the house,” says Sy, and explains how the house was designed. “At the entrance, you walk through a trellis that traverses a courtyard garden. Within this quiet space, there are only suggestions of a view. It is only upon entering the main living area that the views of the horizon and lake are fully experienced. On the lower level, a dramatic hall (bordered by the beautiful stone wall of the swimming pool) becomes another quiet and transitional space that leads to bedrooms, and at the end, expansive views once again.” The result is a cinematic unveiling of the surrounding views—the garden and pool, and the view of Taal from the Tagaytay ridge.

Weekend home

The client, a couple in their late 70s, wanted a weekend home that could accommodate three adult children, their spouses, and four grandchildren. The house was designed to “feel like a country home with a contemporary aesthetic,” says Sy.



In the kitchen, as is all throughout the house, white planes and lines play canvas to warm wooden furniture paired with striking, simple sculptural accessories. OPPOSITE PAGE: A triptych by the client takes centerstage in the dining room.

With an older client with more traditional tastes, she says there was “a deliberate choice to design a house with a traditional form (pitched roofs) but articulated in a streamlined manner.” The pitched roof and lofty, ribbed ceilings, along with the glass windows that line the walls of the home, make the house feel as if it is opening upwards and outwards.

The layout of the 750-sq.m. home is simple and informal, says Sy, which reflects the way the client lives. A weekend respite from the city, Balai Taal is a place for reading, relaxing, and spending downtime with the family after playing golf. Balai Taal is centered on the common spaces—the living and dining room, and the terrace, which open up to unobstructed views of the lake and its surroundings.

The space where the family spends much of their time in naturally “has the best views,” shares Sy. The lower level, composed of bedrooms and a family room, was designed for the children and grandchildren of the couple.

When old meets new

The homeowners took charge of the interior design, and the end result is an interior that reflects the client’s diverse yet distinct taste. The all-white walls are paired with warm hardwood floors, a clean and sleek palette for the clients’ choice of furnishings. The pieces are eclectic, ranging from Asian-inspired sculptures and intricately carved lamps to large Orlina sculptures.



The client's penchant for art is evident in the host of sculptures that are housed in the floor to ceiling shelving unit of the living space.





The master bedroom is light, bright and airy, complemented by hardwood furniture from where the clients can relax and appreciate the view. No space is spared in the intent to blur outside and in—even from the poolside, one can catch a glimpse of Taal Lake through the glass windows on opposite sides of the living space.

It is a seamless mix of modern and traditional sculptures, art and furniture. A Chinese brush triptych by the lady of the house fills one wall of the dining room. The furniture is simple and understated, shares Sy, and yet brings character and charm without competing with the unparalleled views.

The intent to blur the distinction between outside and inside is also evident in the choice of materials. Natural stone and wood were used in constructing Balai Taal. “The house is very cool,” says Sy.

Large windows let in as much light and breeze during daytime. There is cross ventilation on particularly humid afternoons, and the family enjoys the chilly breeze in the evenings. Each room in Balai Taal has at least one large window, allowing users multiple views of Taal Lake.

Function and form

“Keep it simple.” That is Sy’s advice for homeowners looking to build a weekend home. Each design decision—the use of space, and choice of furniture and accessories—is purposeful and well thought out, aiming for a seamless scheme that is in harmony with its surroundings. The result is the charming Balai Taal, a weekend home so wonderfully simple, but is anything but ordinary. ☪

EXPERT ADVICE Architect Anna Sy on her inspiration in creating an ideal home getaway



1. What are the five words that best describe this home?

It was a very personal project. I would say it was special, close to the heart, bright, open, and precious.

2. What are your favorite pieces in this home? I think it’s more of the overall—how everything comes together rather than any particular piece that stands out. It’s really about the architecture more than the pieces within the house.

3. Were there any ideas that you edited in the process of design and execution? Yes, there were many ideas. We went through so many different themes and layouts, so there were so many different possibilities on the site, and eventually, we really just had to trim them down.

4. If you were to envision an architect or a fellow design expert to view this work of yours, who would it be and why? I have a professor from graduate school who was very positive about the work that I did when I was in school. His name is Kevin Kieran, he’s an academician, he’s not a practicing architect. He was always very positive and supportive of not just my work but the work of many of his students. He passed away, but I would’ve loved for him to see this house.

5. If someone wanted this look, what are the three most important design lessons to take away from this home? The layout is one of the most important things that you have to work out before you even

think about what the exterior or the aesthetics of the house is, particularly in a property like this wherein it’s all about the surrounding environment, not like a house that’s situated in a subdivision, where it’s internal and you try to design a house that looks away from all the other houses around you. In Tagaytay, it’s the opposite. You want the house to feel as open as possible to the surrounding environment. So the first lessons are that the plan and the layout are critical. Secondly, I think that given the extreme environment in Tagaytay, the environment can be a bit difficult to deal with. So you want to be able to use materials that can withstand all of that. If I were to do a second house in Tagaytay, I would probably restrain the use of natural materials and think of other substitutes.

6. If you were to save our readers from anything while in the process of designing and building their dream homes, what would that be? Why? Don’t make it too extravagant. I think people sometimes have a wish list when they have a dream home, and the wish list has so many things that need to be covered. And when you do that, the house loses its initial idea. Keep it simple. Try to be restrained in what you want for your house. Don’t feel that you need to do or have everything in that house, because at the end of the day, when you look at certain projects, the simplest ones are usually the most elegant ones.



ASIAN MODERN WITH A TWIST

A WARM WELCOME IS PART
OF THE FAMILY TRADITION

BY **MARISSA LOPA**
PHOTOGRAPHS BY **TERRY UY**
ADDITIONAL PHOTOS BY **WILLIAM ONG**



The formal living room's high ceiling and backlit onyx wall installation reflect the owners' affinity to natural light. The Natuzzi white sofa is complemented by the custom made coffee table and side tables.

The informal living room has a casual and modern feel with its black and gray tones. The sectional sofa and rug, by Bo Concepts, are flanked by custom made glass and chrome tables. *The Soler* (by Malang's son and Joy's brother-in-law) painting of autumn leaves provides the contrasting earth tone to the room. OPPOSITE PAGE: The powder room's mirror wall gives it an expansive feel. The counter is a white synthetic stone with an ornate round mirror to complement it.



WHEN JOJO AND JOY CONCEPCION embarked on expanding their home, they knew what they wanted—a place that would accommodate the needs of their growing family and be truly inviting to their wide circle of relatives and friends. Luckily, the property adjacent to theirs went up for sale, and acquiring it made their dream easier to achieve.

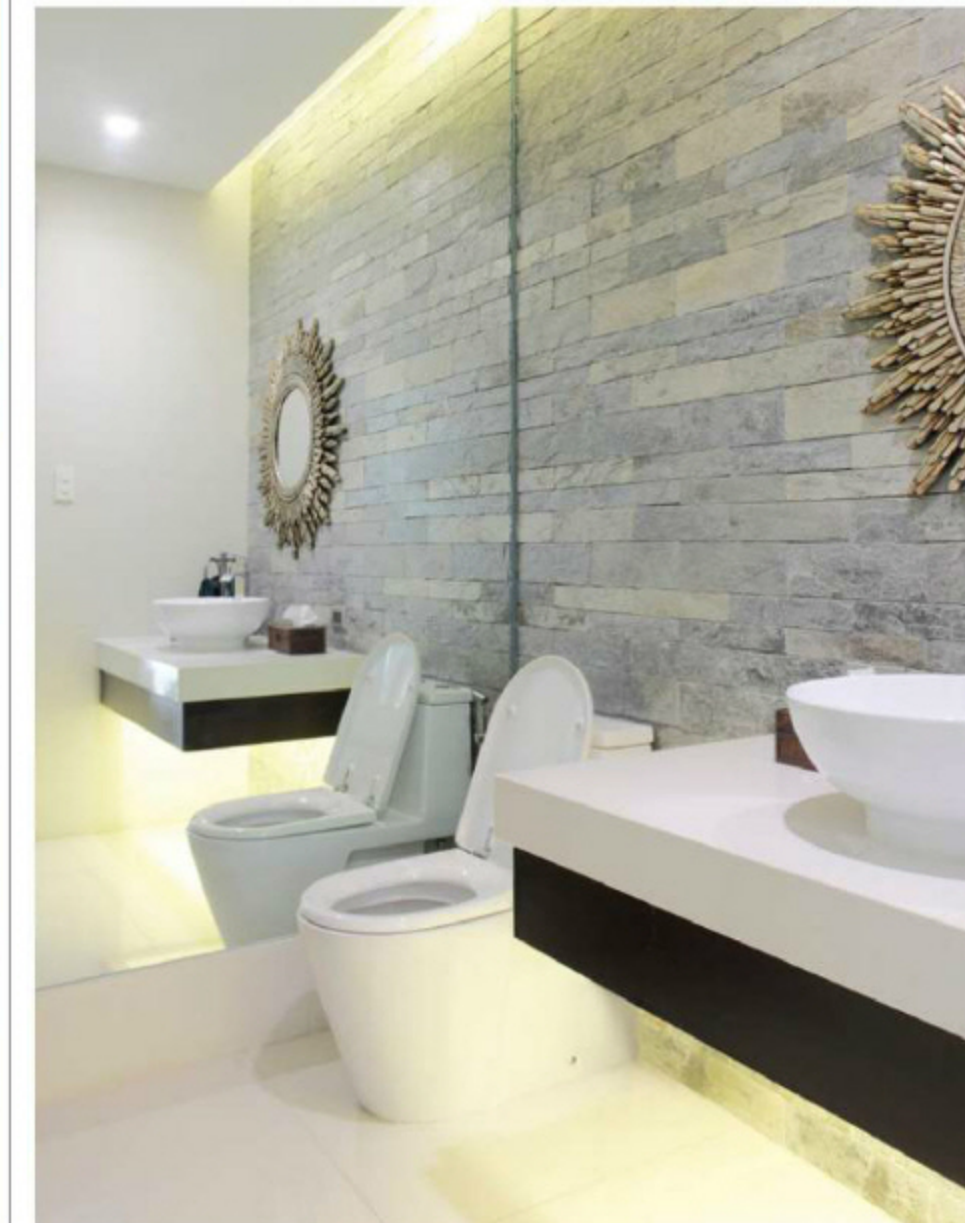
They worked with the original contractor, Tony Narciso, and his team to get the plan they were happy with. Their ideas were inspired by their trips abroad, and just driving around, picking out details they liked from different homes they saw. Special materials, like tiles and stone, were chosen on those little jaunts.

Asian-minimalist look

Since they had spent quite a number of years living in the original structure, they had definite ideas about what to improve on. They wanted an Asian-minimalist look with classic touches, but without reflecting fragility or frigidity.

More entertaining was to be expected as the family grew. They retained the formal living room but, as one moves further into the house, a more relaxed feeling takes over. The wide open plan of the informal living area to the kitchen serves as the main hub when the family sits down and indulges in their love for cooking.

The formal dining room was the last to come together, according to Joy. She simply ran out of ideas. Aside from wanting to use the original dining room table and chairs, the room was bare. Then Jojo's





The formal dining room is quietly elegant, featuring high backed upholstered dining chairs and glass top table. The burst of color is provided only by the painting by Mona, Joy's sister. OPPOSITE PAGE: Black granite dominates the spacious kitchen decked in stainless SMEG appliances. The stools, by Ikea, are refinished in wenge.



RIGHT: The floral black and white wallpaper is the perfect backdrop for Nichole's custom made bed and book shelf, which houses her collection. The little settee (pictured above, with their dog, Rue) where she usually curls up with a book is an imported piece from Dimensione.

cousin came for a visit one day and inquired how the renovations were coming along. Joy had intimated her dilemma and that perhaps a nice big painting would look great on the empty wall. The cousin mentioned that her mother had a large painting with colorful flowers she wanted to dispose of that might interest the couple. When Joy asked who the artist was, she was surprised that the artist was named Mona, who happens to be Joy's very talented sister. And so, as fate would have it, Mona's painting now adorns that once bare wall beautifully.

Many of the pieces found here have special meaning to the Concepcions, mostly sentimental in nature, as the pieces were legacies from their parents or mementos from trips abroad. The second level is where the luxurious living quarters are located.

Privacy and space

The Concepcions' brood of three young ladies and two boys needed their privacy and space. Each child was given free rein to express themselves in their own rooms. The eldest girl, Nichole, a highschool teacher, designed an interesting bookshelf to showcase her growing collection of books, which also serves as a divider between her workspace and bed. Maita, the



The favorite feature of the house, the roof deck, is where the family loves to entertain when the weather allows. The modular weather proof furniture by Outdoor Solutions from Cebu can be reconfigured to fit their seating needs.

budding event planner, showed her creative use of space and color. Her refreshing take on the classic is evident in her choice of a soft turquoise upholstered headboard and crystal sconces that were formerly used in the old dining room.

A separate building was built on the adjoining lot, which houses the gym, a guest room, and bathrooms to service the pool area. But the family's unanimous favorite is the upper deck. It offers an unencumbered view of the immediate surroundings; the cool air is perfect for evening get-togethers or just plain stargazing. The immaculate inner garden is surrounded by flowering bushes and a refreshing expanse of green. The wedding of a daughter's friend was held there once.

The Concepcions' generosity knows no bounds, it seems, in sharing their home, where everyone is welcome to enjoy their exuberance for life. It is like a welcoming embrace when you step inside their home. **PH**

EXPERT ADVICE Contractor Tony Narciso on his vision for this masterpiece



1. What were the most important steps in the creative process of building this home? Get to know the client, his family and their life-style and their individual needs. From there, you can prepare the plans and design according to their needs and preferences.

2. What are the five words that best describe this home? Homey (client is family-oriented), functional, comfortable, and presentable (in and out).

3. What are your favorite spaces in this home? Just three sections: the kitchen as the husband loves to cook! The roof deck with the artificial turf is a favorite entertainment area of the kids, and the lighting system, which adds sophistication to the total look of the house, especially at night.

4. What makes you happiest when you look at the result of this collaboration now? When you finish a project after a long process, and when your client is happy and satisfied with your service, there's a feeling of fulfillment.

5. If someone wanted this look, what are three most important design lessons to take away from this home? Overdesign your air

conditioning requirements due to the glass windows. Incorporate the LED lights in the lighting system to reduce heat/energy use. Have a minimalist look—less is best!

6. Is there anything in your process that particularly taught you a lesson while designing and building this home? There are always lessons to be learned on how to improve your craft. Trial and error sometimes cannot be avoided. The involvement of the whole team—client, architect, designer and contractor—in supervising the project is a must.

7. If you were to save our readers from anything while in the process of designing and building their dream house, what would that be? Why? The first step is to identify your needs and wants. The family must fill up a questionnaire. Prepare a budget and align your requirements. Get professionals (architects, designers, project manager and reliable contractor) to assist you. They can help you plan and build your dream house with your needs in mind.

MODERN THROWBACK

ARCHITECT
EMMANUEL MIÑANA
REFERENCES
ANCESTRAL FILIPINO
HERITAGE HOMES
FOR AN IDYLIC
FAMILY RETREAT
THAT MERGES THE
OLD WITH THE NEW

BY NANA CARAGAY
PHOTOGRAPHS BY PAUL DEL ROSARIO

A VISIT TO NEGROS WOULD NOT BE COMPLETE without a heritage house or two on the itinerary. Walking into these grand estates, one instantly feels transported to a time when the parties were lavish, the women dressed demurely (but to the nines), and the garage had space for a horse-drawn carriage or two.

Typically, the living spaces and bedrooms can be found on the second floor while the ground level is reserved for storage and various modes of transportation. You will also most likely find huge *capiz* shell windows that can be slid wide open, the better to allow air to circulate and let natural light in.

It was a nod to these genteel times that architect Emmanuel Miñana had in mind when he designed several elements of this family estate, located in a suburban enclave about an hour's drive south of Manila, right on the outskirts of a sprawling golf course.

A new 'bahay na bato'

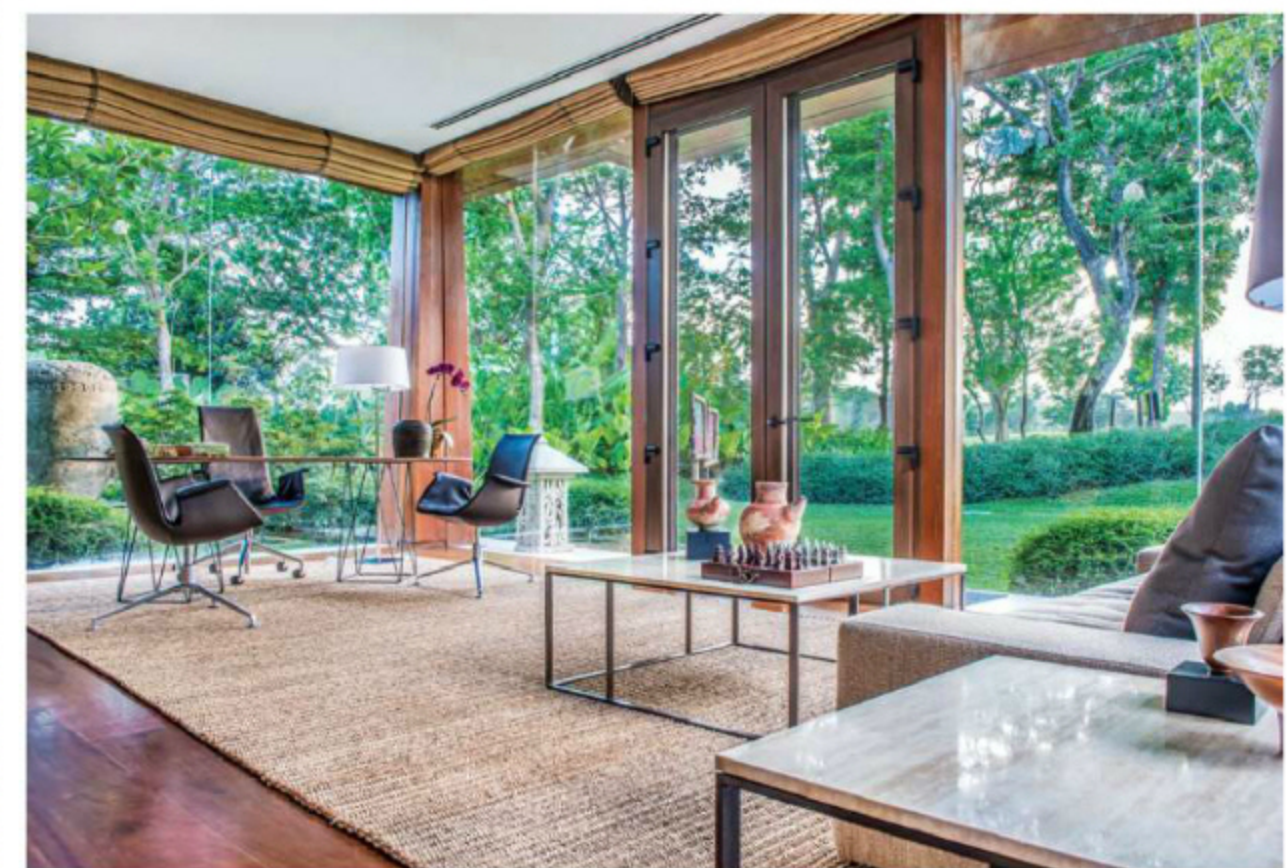
"This feels like a new *bahay na bato*," he explains. "It's very reminiscent of Filipino homes in the provinces—the ground floor is where they store all the grain, the livestock, the sacks of rice. The second floor is where they have the living room, the dining room, and the living spaces. This is an



This sprawling two-level estate located right next to a golf course in a southern suburban enclave is inspired by Filipino ancestral homes of old. "It's reminiscent of Filipino homes in the provinces," says architect Emmanuel Miñana. "The ground floor is where they store all the grain, the livestock, the sacks of rice. The second floor is where they have the living spaces."



The living room is dominated by a Roche Bobois couch, which the homeowner says her grandchildren like to disassemble whenever they watch a movie; hence, she has nicknamed it her "mahjong set." The base of the coffee table is a *carosa* from Pampanga, traditionally used during religious processions to carry statues of saints, while the carved lampstand on the right was once used as a pyre for offerings in Maguindanao.



example of that quintessential typology, but we've kind of merged it with a more Asiatic, international feel."

Thus, you will see some similarities to the ancestral heritage houses of the past, but with a thoroughly modern and updated twist.

Perhaps the most obvious element of this is the floor-to-ceiling aluminum shutters or louvers that can be found at the top floor, following the spirit of those distinctive sliding *capiz* shell windows. "In the evening, they look like lanterns when it's closed and it's lit up from within the house," he says. "The house is able to express various levels of its relationship with the environment. It can be very open, and it can also be rather private and enclosed."

He demonstrates that the windows can be slid to the side to give the entire room the feel of a balcony—the only thing that separates you from the outdoors is a freestanding glass rail bordering the bottom, hardly an obstruction to the gorgeous view. Once opened, the effect is

such that you almost feel like you've invited the sky in.

"It was serendipitous that my clients and I shared the same sensibilities and vision for this family home," Miñana says, that of designing an "open house—a house that merged the outdoors with the indoors, to really take in the beauty of the golf course and the gardens and try to integrate it with the home. We are trying to express the principles of cross ventilation, the *balkon*, the *silid*, and rearticulate it in a new way."

From the outside, you can see that the house is supported at the corners by wooden columns and beams, a reference to old Ifugao architecture.

The ground floor is no longer reserved for *kalesas* only, as upon walking in, you are immediately drawn to the lanai, where friends and family tend to gather and congregate. Here, snacks and drinks are prepared and served at the outdoor bar, with the lap pool constantly beckoning just a few steps away.

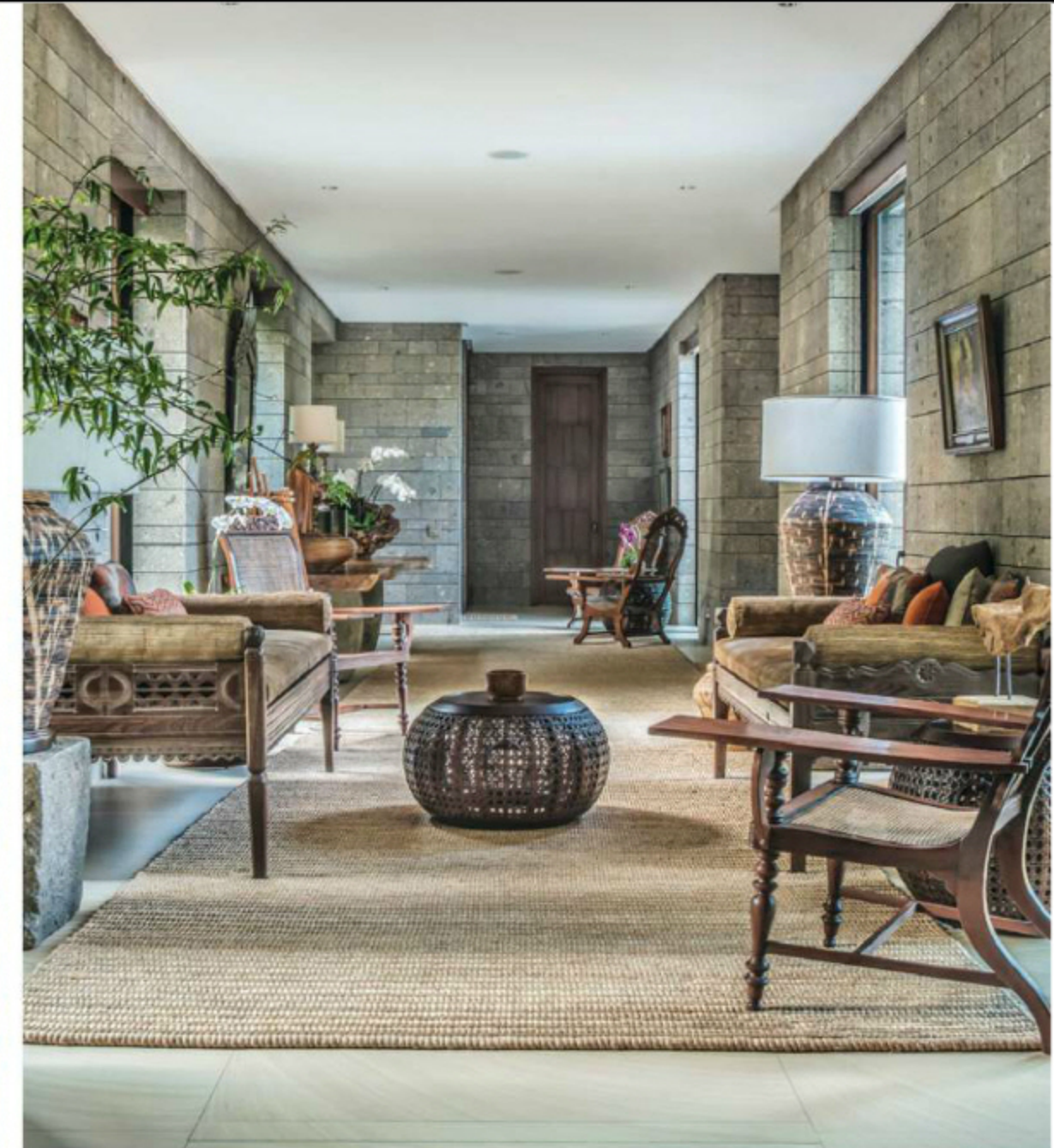
OPPOSITE PAGE: The floor-to-ceiling windows may look like wooden blinds, but they are actually aluminum louvers that can be slid wide open to allow the outdoors in. **TOP RIGHT:** The kitchen is the lady homeowner's favorite room—it features a wall with bricks sourced from a sugar mill, reminiscent of the one she grew up in at Negros. **BOTTOM RIGHT:** The study is located at the ground floor and features a stunning view of the golf course, which merges with the home's backyard. It has also become a depository for the many vinyl records the male homeowner has collected over the years.

Sleek, dark and marbled

But another thing that this home has in common with the heritage houses of the past is that the family's private living space is located on the upper floor as well. The main staircase is offset on one side by a sleek dark marbled wall, an element that is echoed throughout various areas of the home. Upstairs, you will see the living room, dominated by an L-shaped Roche Bobois sofa, designed by Italian fashion and home brand, Missoni, in alternating muted shades and striped, psychedelic prints. Behind it is the entertainment system composed of a flat-screen TV, two standing speakers, and a glossy turntable.

Miñana also had a hand in designing the interiors, conceptualized the landscape (later executed by Ponce Veridiano), and selected much of the furniture. He points out various pieces that have been culled from around the country, many of which have a significant detail that reveals just how much thought went into picking each item.

THIS PAGE: The sitting area on the second floor is a great space for entertaining. Miñana notes that his client has a fondness for natural materials, so he used Mangyan baskets as lampshades and decorative accents along with blocks of adobe stone. **TOP RIGHT:** At the hallway by the entrance are two day beds that stand opposite each other, an inviting spot for visitors to relax and lounge. Miñana chose the upholstery to mimic the pattern on the woven baskets found throughout the home. The throw pillows are covered in Manuel Canovas fabric. **BOTTOM RIGHT:** Even the bedsheets are sourced from the Philippines—covering this bed is Ilocos’ prized *inabel* weave, which is painstakingly woven by hand and takes weeks to complete.





"The house is like a family resort," says the lady homeowner, and the lap pool is a spot where the grandchildren like to frolic. There are sign posts bearing positive messages scattered throughout the yard, serving as reminders for the residents and visitors. One reads: "To live with soul is to love our neighbor as we love ourselves."

The base of the coffee table at the center of the living room, for instance, is actually a *caroza* used during religious processions to carry giant statues of saints.

The antique lamp stands with intricate carvings are from Maguindanao, once used as pyres for offerings and found in the homes of royalty. Large Mangyan baskets were converted into lamps while the bedsheets are made of Ilocos' prized *Inabel* weave. The kitchen even features a wall made of antique bricks sourced from a sugar mill, a special request of the homeowner, who says it reminds her of her childhood spent growing up in Negros. All of these blend flawlessly with the more modern pieces, such as Italian-made furniture and tiles from Tile Gallery.

At the center of the living room, the eye is quickly drawn to the striking *capiz* shell chandelier, the unusual shape of which was in-

spired by a crystal vase Miñana spotted at the shop of French florist Christian Tortu. In the den, there are jars made of volcanic stone sourced from Bali while adobe stone blocks infuse an earthy element to the place. The hand rails are made of *kamagong* wood. Miñana explains that even the pattern found on the doors is meant to recall the Filipino-Asian paneling that can be found on the walls of old homes.

'This home is so alive'

We can't help but be impressed by the attention to detail and deliberate thought that clearly went into every aspect of this abode. But when you ask the lady homeowner what it is about this place that she treasures most, her answer is quite simple: "I'm always thinking of our children and our grandchildren, that they will love coming home

here," she gushes. "This home is so alive. It provides them with security, with love—things that money can't buy."

She talks about how, whenever the grandkids are over, they disassemble the couch and spread out on it as they settle down to watch a movie, and recalls many afternoons spent swimming and playing in the pool. "We put a lot of love into this house when we were building it," she continues. "This is a sanctuary of our children and grandchildren. Anywhere they go, they will feel they belong (here)."

That, of course, is yet another element this house has in common with a traditional Filipino ancestral heritage home: you can be assured it will be lovingly passed down for years as a legacy, meant to be enjoyed by many more generations to come. **📌**

EXPERT ADVICE

Architect Emmanuel A. Miñana shares his design philosophy and his vision in building an idyllic family retreat house.

PHOTOGRAPH COURTESY OF METRO SOCIETY



1. What were the most important steps in the creative process of building this home? It's best to study well the site conditions and the clients' brief as their ideas and objectives for their home is very helpful. The creative design process then flows. Open communication between client and architect is imperative.

2. What are the five words that best describe this home? Open, quietly elegant, flexible, easy, natural.

3. What are your favorite pieces in this home? As in furniture? Easily, the old Filipino wooden altar tables, and consoles as well as the Indonesian lava stone jars in the garden.

4. Were there any ideas that you edited in the process of design and execution? The client and I further refined the functional objectives of certain areas, tweaked the design and discussed how to achieve these goals with the construction team.

5. What makes you happiest when you look at the result of this collaboration? There is fulfillment for the designer and his team when the client's needs and dreams are achieved, for the architect when his creative vision is genuinely appreciated by the client. I feel that my client is very happy with the work we did in their new home. That brings me much happiness.

6. What is a design breakthrough that resonated with all

involved? Having the client's trust and confidence that we will execute the design vision.

7. If you were to envision an architect or a fellow design expert to view this work of yours, who would it be and why? Frank Lloyd Wright and Mies van de Rohe. The former espouses organic architecture, and the latter is an elegant minimalist. They are great sources of inspiration!

8. If someone wanted this look, what are the most important design lessons to take away from this home? I think it is important to design with context and give architecture a sense of place. The house is comfortable and very livable and opens up to nature. You can enjoy the cool breezes, the varying qualities of light and the beautiful views of a natural environment. There is flexibility in each area of this house.

9. Is there anything in your process that particularly taught you a lesson while designing and building this home? Always be true to yourself as a designer. Listen. Contemplate.

10. If you were to save our readers from anything while in the process of designing and building their dream homes, what would that be? Why? Dedicate and give ample time to the planning process. Document your design intent clearly and thoroughly, and estimate your projects costs fully. All this BEFORE breaking ground.

Design Direction

DON'T FORGET ABOUT STYLE
AND FUNCTION IN THESE ROOMS

BY ANTON BARRETTO AND ANNA M. ROSETE

Foyer

The foyer, also sometimes called a vestibule, is the prelude to your whole house. Here, you have a chance to set the tone for what your guests can expect from the experience that is your abode. Take advantage of this space to introduce some character and most important, a good amount of hospitality.

EXPERT ADVICE:

1. Reminiscent of the parlors and receiving areas in heritage homes, a round table in the foyer offers a place on which to display objects that will set the mood for the rest of the home.
2. Have a piece of furniture that will allow you to store keys and other personal effects that you cannot afford to leave home without. Having this by the entrance makes for a convenient place for essentials.
3. Space permitting, a bench is a thoughtful thing to have in your foyer. It accepts guests graciously, as they wait to be ushered into the home, after the hostess has been notified of their entrance. Similarly, it allows for prolonged last minute chit-chat and greetings when the guests are ready to leave.

Graciously greet guests with an entrance that is warm and welcoming. Photograph by Terry Uy.



EXPERT ADVICE:

1. Install lighting below the base of the whole floating shelf for drama.
2. Surprise your guests with unexpected accessories like sculptural works of art or clever lighting fixtures.
3. Plan out what goes on the wall—be mindful of the clearance you have from the point of entry to the wall so whatever you decide to put will enhance and not overwhelm the space.

If the first thing you see upon entering a home is a big wall, give it visual texture by creating ledges and shelving that will allow you to create interesting tableaux. A colorful painting will always warm the eyes. Photo courtesy of Metro Society.



Home Office/Study



Precisely because it is located at home, your home office/study can afford a little bit of eclecticism, a proclamation of yourself through personal touches as an ode to your own style. Here, give yourself permission for a relaxed and personalized look. Photograph by Terry Uy.

EXPERT ADVICE:

1. Create various types of seating in your home study for a cozy, personalized effect. Here, the chaise functions as the main seating area, but Kenneth Cobonpue's Bloom Chair makes a flirtatious statement.
2. Envelop your room's ensemble in one unifying color on the walls. Here, the chocolate brown walls make a cozy backdrop to the assortment of chairs and artwork on the walls.
3. Let family photos and tchotchkes mingle with books on your shelves and tables. They personalize the space.
4. A combination of textures is essential to making a room. Here, animal hide mingles with faux fur, velvets and leather.



Experts have now discovered that trying to achieve a "life work balance" is in fact adding more stress to modern life. It actually makes more sense that instead of relentless multitasking, one should just keep work in the office and totally decompress at home. But the reality of life is that there are times when working at home is absolutely necessary. The best compromise or solution is to carve out a working space that is not overly intrusive or visually dominant.

EXPERT ADVICE:

1. Make sure that this space does not get too much traffic from family members so that you can truly work in peace.
2. Using a glass top as a desk keeps the look light and visually less oppressive.
3. A sculptural shelving system can be both a practical solution and a visual statement. Slats within floating shelves double as storage and display units.
4. Plan the lighting. The lamp can be the quirkiest or sexiest element of your workspace depending on your own personal aesthetic. Make sure that the overhead lighting is sufficient for your work requirements.
5. Consider your technical needs. Place electrical outlets to charge your gadgets at an accessible angle. If your work entails contacting colleagues from other time zones, keep a big clock set to foreign cities in plain sight.



Clever use of a niche in an apartment or a small space to create an efficient workspace. Photograph by Terry Uy.

EXPERT ADVICE:

1. It's fair game to reference other cultures and countries by incorporating the theme into your home office. Do this by making use of select architectural features. Here, an antique door is paired with the use of shutters for the windows and a grand coffered ceiling fashioned of vintage wood.
2. Situate your home office where daylight is generous. Working at home can have its down side, in terms of motivation, but a steady stream of natural light ensures a continuous working pace.
3. Have various work areas, if possible. Think of the functions of your work. Segregate your main table for computer work, and have a complementary work area, space permitting. Use this for magazines, coffee table books and scrap books. This is where you can step away from the load of your work.



Open a door to another locale by making your home office a respite, a fitting contrast to your frenzied office space. Photograph by Terry Uy.

Powder Rooms



This powder room is an essay on achieving a visual feast in a smaller space. With radial floral patterns set against a rich earth tone, a pair of dancing capiz drop lights punctuate the lavatory area, heightening symmetry and balance. Photograph by Terry Uy.

The powder room can be a perfect place to experiment. It can be as ornate or as minimalist as you want it to be as it is primarily a transitory space so there is no chance that you will tire of it. If you are afraid that a purely streamlined or modern room will be cold and sterile, a powder room is a good place to indulge your minimalist fantasies. You can also play up on the classic and traditional to achieve a more elegant retreat.

EXPERT ADVICE:

- 1. Have fun with pattern in your powder room, but introduce a definite visual focal point. Here, it is achieved through the square mirror located at center of the lavatory.
- 2. In powder rooms that allow for horizontally generous vanities, enhance the focal point by creating symmetry in the room.
- 3. Over-the-counter basins allow for usage of more counter space.
- 4. You can never go wrong with full cabinetry below vanities, complemented by a bank of drawers. These allow for maximum storage space.

EXPERT ADVICE:

- 1. A counter with a built in cubby hole for guest towels and convenient hamper keeps the look streamlined.
- 2. A mirror makes a space feel bigger and more spacious.
- 3. A little table adds a touch of coziness and it allows you the much needed counter space in a small area where you can place scented candles, luxury home scents and other accoutrements.
- 4. Touches of the Old World such as an antique rug and Burmese lacquer containers add a touch of color.



This powder room is visually coherent and its clean lines and pure palette are a visual oasis. The interplay of glass and chrome are the quintessential embodiment of space age elegance. Photograph by Terry Uy.



The Kitchen Center

SMART CONSIDERATIONS
*BEFORE YOU REDESIGN
YOUR KITCHEN*

BY RAFAEL CALERO



IN THIS DAY AND AGE of multipurpose rooms and spaces at home, the one area that will remain ever present is the kitchen. That is because the kitchen is the soul of the house. Its purpose goes way beyond cooking, baking, and washing dishes but also includes converging, entertaining, and working. When you have a modest space, the kitchen's role multiplies to even the most unlikely ones like laundry washing area, library, or linen storage.

Today, people want a kitchen that incorporates a workspace and a casual space for dining or working. They want an efficient area and a whole lot of storage. Before you decide to rearrange or redesign your kitchen, consider these tips for a successful transformation:

Incorporate Workspace. It's always good to incorporate a workspace in the kitchen. Even if you don't necessarily work

there, at least provide a space where you can go through your favorite kitchen recipes, write additional notes, or sort them for easy access.

Beyond Triangle Boundaries. Think less in terms of triangle layout and more in terms of creating a work area that goes from fridge to sink to stove with several places in between. It's an ergonomic practicality—a kitchen is not a success unless this has been addressed. The fridge and the sink need to be linked, but the cooking section can be a little more isolated and independent.

Organic Countertops. For countertops, I like using organic materials but if the natural stone or granite is porous, you have to make sure it is sealed properly. I also like using cement countertop mixed with fiberglass resin to lighten the weight a bit.

Big Windows. Design your kitchen with big windows. The more light you have

Let in more light in your kitchen to make it better. Big windows can also improve the ventilation, providing cool, fresh air as you prepare your food.

in your kitchen, the better. Another benefit to this is having better ventilation and cool, fresh air as you prepare your meals. Try to connect your kitchen to the outdoors if you can by having large windows so you can feel connected to your garden. Perhaps a visually-inspiring view will make cooking and baking even more enjoyable.

Island of Wood. I like using wooden tops for the island because it gives the kitchen warmth, and you can use it as a butcher block.

Color Moods. Choose a kitchen that matches your personality. Colors can affect your mood.

Prioritize Safety. Always think of safety when designing your kitchen. Many fires and accidents happen in the kitchen. Watch out for faulty wiring, assign and label outlets for each appliance as voltage/ wattage varies for each, keep wires hidden, stick reminders around to close gas valves and the like. "Better safe than sorry" can never be stressed enough.

Climate Factor. For the Philippine climate, I suggest using good quality plywood over particleboard or MDF for the carcass. Engineered wood is like sponge and soaks up a lot of moisture. ☹

Use wooden countertops for the island to give your kitchen warmth. In choosing the color of your kitchen, you can mix bright hues and complement it with neutral and relaxing tones, depending on your personal taste.



Classic Chaos

CHITO VIJANDRE AND RICKY TOLEDO
ON CURATING ECLECTIC DÉCOR

BY ELGA REYES
PHOTOGRAPHS BY PAUL DEL ROSARIO



CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT: Ricky Toledo and Chito Vijandre in their always coordinated outfits, and one of their beloved dogs, Piero. An almost alfresco dining room that has a French palace appeal. Each nook and cranny of the Toledo and Vijandre home is a case for mixing decors that don't match.

THE STYLE OF CHITO Vijandre and Ricky Toledo is not for mere mortals, no matter how much you desire dreamy and decadent environs, and despite the dynamic design duo saying it's all about experimentation. This dapper duo, who are behind stores like Firma and AC+632, are masters of mix-and-match. Creating a look out of disparate objects and seemingly unusual colors and wild patterns, they are conductors in an orchestra of diverse embellishments and worldly accouterments.

'Fortune favors the bold' A Latin adage inscribed inside their museum-cum-home translates to 'fortune favors the bold.' Indeed, how bold their aesthetics are, and what good fortune they have been favored with to have a singular skill that is neither science nor an art form, but rather an innate sense of taste. Ricky, an advertising creative in his past life, says, "You can never get it right the first time." He insists that their décor are prized possessions ac-



cumulated over time, and even then, they are careful not to have everything on display. Their living room with carmine walls, including some chipped patches not unlike those in Venetian palazzos, juxtaposed with an aubergine ceiling that has a subtle snakeskin border, appears to be full of myriad artworks, books, and religious artifacts in glass cloches. And yet, despite the layers of details, the room is edited to achieve "visual harmony," says the two. Shapes, various hues, textures, including the use of metal elements and different prints and fabrics, all play a part in how the interiors become rich, inviting, and even a bit sensual. "It should be pleasing to the eyes," Chito, a former fashion designer, points out. Proportion, particularly, is key, he adds. Ricky says, "You should be able to tell if the look is jarring." Their TV and entertain-

ment den is a prime example of their advanced styling. Jokingly referred to as their *True Blood* or orgy room, the cloistered area, which is in a perpetual evening state, combines Western and Eastern influences, touches of the Victorian period, evoking an overall hedonistic vibe. The widely distinctive elements, such as the lavish Persian carpet, the large Chinese screen doors hiding the electronics, and even the big stump of an elephant foot, should appear clashing, but instead, looks perfectly put together. **The back story** What makes it even more effortless is how the pair knows the story behind each and every item in the room, indicating that no matter how minute or irreverent the object is, it has a reason to be there. The beauty of the interiors is not simply on the surface level, but it is in the



A miniature slipper chair brought back from Spain that has been Ricky and Chito-fied—the original "very mestiza upholstery" was replaced, the seat was lined with tassels they make and are sometimes seen on the lamps they sell, and Tibetan trinkets were added for a truly unique chair. BELOW: The entertainment room shows how mixing items that do not match can create rich interiors.





Ricky and Chito redecorate their home about three times a year based on the season and occasion, and Chito admits how having a store comes handy when they arrange abundant tablescapes for dinner parties.



knowledge and history of every bit of bric-a-brac.

Whether intentional or not, their ability to mix and match things that do *not* match is partly reflective of their favorite pastime, that of visiting museums during their travels abroad. Paris and London are their regular haunts, and the Victoria and Albert Museum in particular, is the *crème de la crème*. "I can live there," Chito says of the bastion of art and design. "There is always something new." And *galing* how they explain every object. For 'hoarders' like us, it's paradise," Ricky interjects.

The home interiors of Vijandre and Toledo are exhibits themselves, changed thrice a year depending on the season and occasion. When asked who

can replicate their style, they say anyone can, so long as they like it. "At the end of the day, they have to live with it," Ricky explains.

The sole point of differentiation, though, is the lack of a tiny preposition that sets them worlds apart. Vijandre and Toledo do not have to 'live with it'; they live it. From the clothes they wear, which they always coordinate right down to the aquamarine cufflinks on Chito during the interview, to the powder blue paisley printed tissue they used to serve snacks, they are every inch the refined version of the Mad Hatter or an estranged couple from the enclave of expats living in Tangier, as if forever stuck in an exotic era. **10**

EXPERT ADVICE Mismatched Perfection:

1. Experiment with your décor. There are various factors to consider. Think of your vignette's proportion and balance. Addressing these will help you achieve visual harmony.

2. Don't have everything from your collections out at the same time. You may rotate the objects seasonally.

3. Shapes, textures, color and pattern all play a part in making a sensual interior. Consider all of these when creating mismatched vignettes.

4. Know the story behind each of your pieces. Their beauty also lies in their provenance.

5. Visit museums and travel. Often, the best lessons on curating spaces and grouping objects are gleaned from visiting decorative arts museums such as the Victoria and Albert in London, the Museo degli Argenti in the Palazzo Pitti in Florence, and the Cooper-Hewitt in New York.

6. Decorating with mismatched objects takes some moxie. If you are so inclined to adapt this, make sure you can live with it.



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Playful planters

Reminiscent of totempoles, these colorful planters by designer Lilianna Manahan, in collaboration with Triboa Bay Living for Manila FAME's Red Box Program, make whimsical homes for your indoor plants. For inquiries, visit Studio Magee's website www.studiomagee.com.

gardens



Vivacious Blooms

Phalaenopsis, or "orchids" in layman's term, are undoubtedly one of the most popular flower plants. To maintain this beauty, avoid over watering it. If left constantly wet, both the bark mix and the roots will surely rot. By the time the leaves show signs, it may be too late to save the roots or the orchid. Get these at Purificacion Orchid and Ornamental Plant at Quezon City Memorial Circle or visit their website www.purificacionorchids.com.



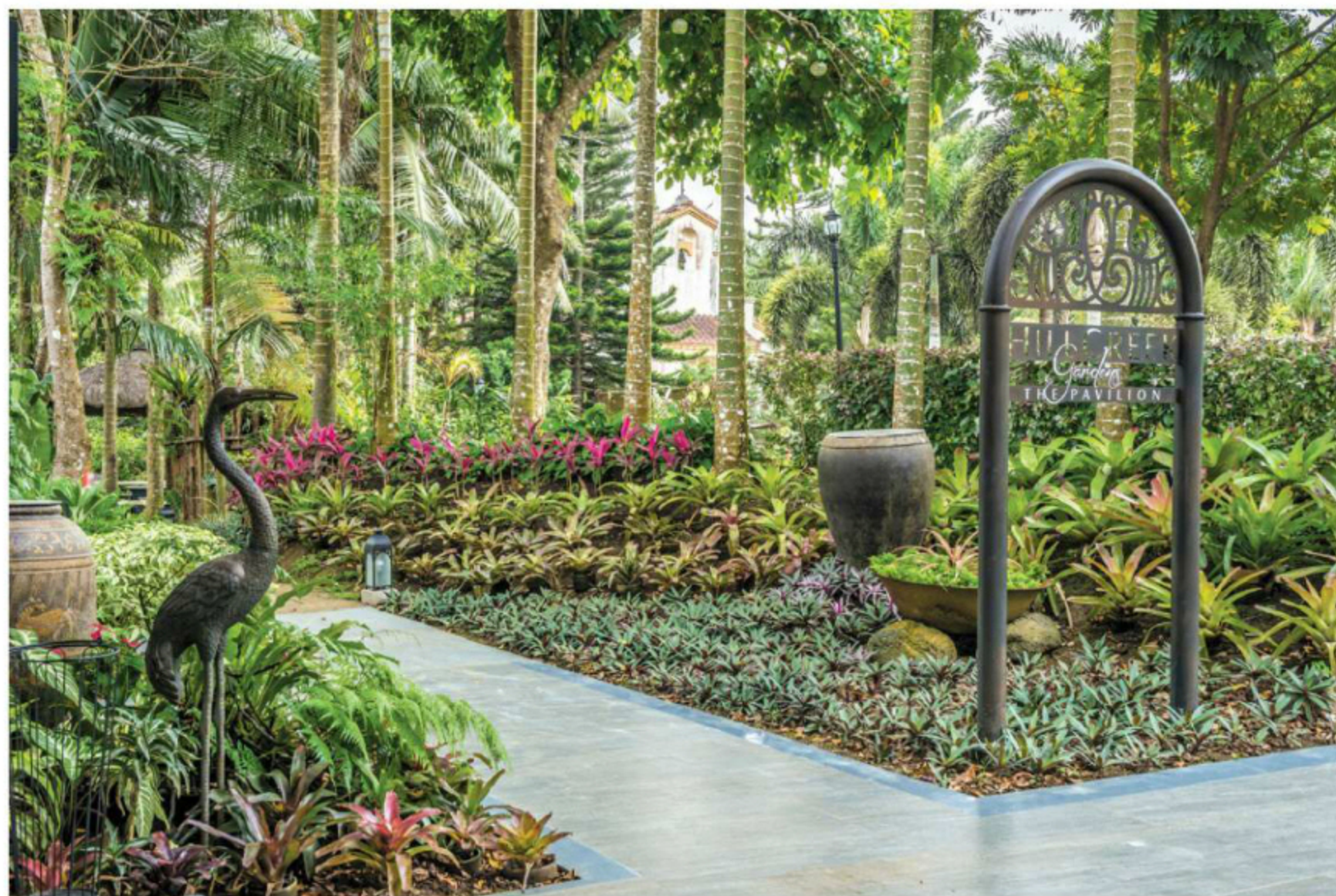
Wonderful Welcome

If you're looking for a low-maintenance indoor plant, consider getting the Zamio. Originating in Asia's subtropical forests, it requires little water and can grow beautifully in low light conditions. *Zamioculcas zamiifolia*, also known as the "welcome plant," ZZ plant, or eternal plant grows slowly, averaging around 40-70cm high. Check out Evergreen Tropical Plants at Quezon City Memorial Circle, or contact 0922-8189626.

HILLCREEK IS WHERE YOU SAY 'I DO'

FROM COFFEE FARM AND WEEKEND HOME
TO ELEGANT WEDDING VENUE

BY DAHL BENNETT / PHOTOGRAPHS BY PAUL DEL ROSARIO



Although Hillcreek Gardens is now open to the public for events, the original Spanish-inspired family house remains quietly tucked among rich tropical plants and fruit-bearing trees in the same property. OPPOSITE PAGE: The garden leading to the Pavilion plays with foliage hues of purples, reds and greens made more dramatic by strategic lighting and decorative elements such as stone sculptures and huge jars.



ABOVE: The Gazebo with the water feature in the backdrop serves as a picture-perfect location for garden wedding pictorials. The Lirios made sure that every nook is picturesque enough as most photos are instantly uploaded in different social media by clients and guests. **OPPOSITE PAGE:** Baby Lirio is a Sacred Heart devotee and initiated the construction of a chapel within the gardens. Today the chapel not only adds to the unique ambience of the place but is used for Christian weddings and renewal of vows.

NOTHING SAYS PRIVACY better than luxuriant, manicured gardens fenced by trees that jut to the sky. The owners of Hillcreek Gardens know exactly the value of a beautiful garden that you can call your own even for a day.

Owned by Rene and Baby Lirio, Hillcreek Gardens is an elegant wedding venue that sits on 3.5 hectares of hilly terrain. It is located in the boundary of Tagaytay and Alfonso in Cavite, where a creek runs through one whole side of the property.

Passion for plants

“Hillcreek Gardens started out as a private family weekend house, garden and coffee farm in 2000,” says Maryliz Lirio-Millan, daughter of the owners, who now manages Hillcreek Gardens.

The gardens stemmed from the matriarch’s passion for plants, special blooms and ornamentals. “My mom is also very spiritual, hence her insistence on building a small private chapel for her devotion to the Sacred Heart within the grounds,” adds Maryliz.

The very first wedding—that of Maryliz’s brother—was held in the property in 2001, but it wasn’t until 2007 that the Lirios opened it to the public. Maryliz recalls that the couple who held the first wedding in the now transformed wedding venue accidentally came across the property and asked the Lirios for permission to hold their Christian ceremony and reception in the gardens. The wedding was featured in a prominent wedding magazine and inquiries have kept coming ever since.

“In late 2012 we built an indoor venue and a small hotel on the grounds,” Maryliz says. The expansion required converting sizeable parts of the coffee farm but one-third of the entire property is still left for planting coffee trees.

Exclusive spaces

Privacy remains to be the strongest appeal of the place. The different themes of the gardens and structures define where one area’s privacy ends and where another begins.

“We really designed different spaces for specific purposes to give



our clients that feeling of exclusivity. We planned for a lot of pocket areas, always taking into consideration its photographic appeal and ‘social media-worthiness.’ Photos taken will be posted on Facebook and Instagram so the place should always look pretty and have unique details,” explains Maryliz.

Every space is so well-thought of that making each occasion special—and exclusive—seems effortless. The Pavillion is a modern indoor structure with sophisticated swagged ceilings and black and white tiled floor and, of course, its very own garden. The Anahaw House and Garden is a semi-indoor Spanish-Filipino inspired area that allows for intimate occasions and quiet dinners.

The Gazebo Garden is a favorite for Christian or civil wedding ceremonies. The Courtyard is defined by an enchanting white pergola and it is also the venue of choice for Christian weddings and

cocktail receptions.

The Lirios recently added the Conservatory, an all-white greenhouse structure overlooking the pool. It usually serves as a private proposal site where the couple can have a romantic private dinner for two while a string quartet plays in a corner.

“Each of these venues has its own entrances and parking spaces,” notes Maryliz. They are also far enough from each other so sounds are not overheard when two simultaneous events are ongoing.

Baby’s baby

For the original garden, the family hired in-demand landscape specialist Yuyung La’O who is well known for his knowledge and passion for exotic and ornamental plants. Later on, they worked with landscape artist Boyet Sumilang to create a dramatic entrance

OPPOSITE PAGE: A charming footbridge adds an element of drama and romance to the entire garden. It leads to the chapel that hides behind mature pines. **TOP:** Rustic trellises abundant with creepers give off a Spanish colonial vibe that complement the design of the family house. **BOTTOM:** The bromeliads’ reddish hues break the litany of greens throughout the property.

to the main driveway.

Both landscape artists worked in close consultation with Baby whom Maryliz credits for how the gardens look like today. “She is the main force in the concept and planning of most of the areas, and she is still active in the maintenance and continued development of the gardens,” she says.

Tropical, ornamental, flowering and even rare plants are seen throughout the property, the manicured carabao grass as their backdrop. There is a huge collection of heliconias in different varieties that grow wild in the gardens. Anthuriums, hydrangeas, and cosmos punctuate the driveways and pathways. Forget-me-nots that bloom year-round flank the pathway leading to the Sacred Heart chapel.

Bromeliads with rosetted reddish leaves frame rock and animal sculptures in different sections of the landscape. Towering over these



A lion sculpture stands guard in one corner of a garden while graceful cranes flanked by tropical flowers add an idyllic ambience to this side of the property. **OPPOSITE PAGE:** Stairs lead to the Conservatory, one of the newest features of the place. It is an all-white greenhouse structure overlooking the pool and has since become one of the most popular spots for solo portraits of the Bride, says Maryliz.

are palms of all kinds: Royal and Madagascar Palms, Blue Palms, Lastellana and Hawaiian palms.

Also adorning the gardens are the rare inverted pink flowers called the *Medenilla Magnifica*. They bloom for a few months a year and is a favorite of Maryliz's mom.

Location is everything

Fencing and, in a way, soundproofing each area are mature trees found at every single turn. Evergreens such as cypress and pines add a whole new mood to spaces. Especially romantic are those that are located by the footbridge with a calming pond underneath.

Fruit-bearing trees, most of which are original to the property, offer reprieve from the sun. Mango, *kaimito*, coconut, *chesa*, *langka* and *santol* are found all over, interspersed with coffee trees.

At the back areas of the land, the Lirios have planted more fruit trees such as *lansones*, *suha*, durian, *marang*, and abui.

"Location is everything," says Maryliz of the gardens' meticulous landscaping. "The area is carefully studied for time and duration of the sun at any time of the day, how much shade the plant will be subjected to and whether it is morning or afternoon sun. Once this is determined, we choose the appropriate greens for that area." Five gardeners tend the area to keep the blooms healthy all year round.

"Private" and "exclusive" are loosely used terms in many brochures and websites of businesses that promote their garden venues. For the Lirios, it boils down to a science that stems from their passion for plants, and this is what spells the difference for Hillcreek Gardens. As Maryliz puts it, "We always want the couple to feel like they have reserved the whole place for themselves." 📍

EXPERT ADVICE

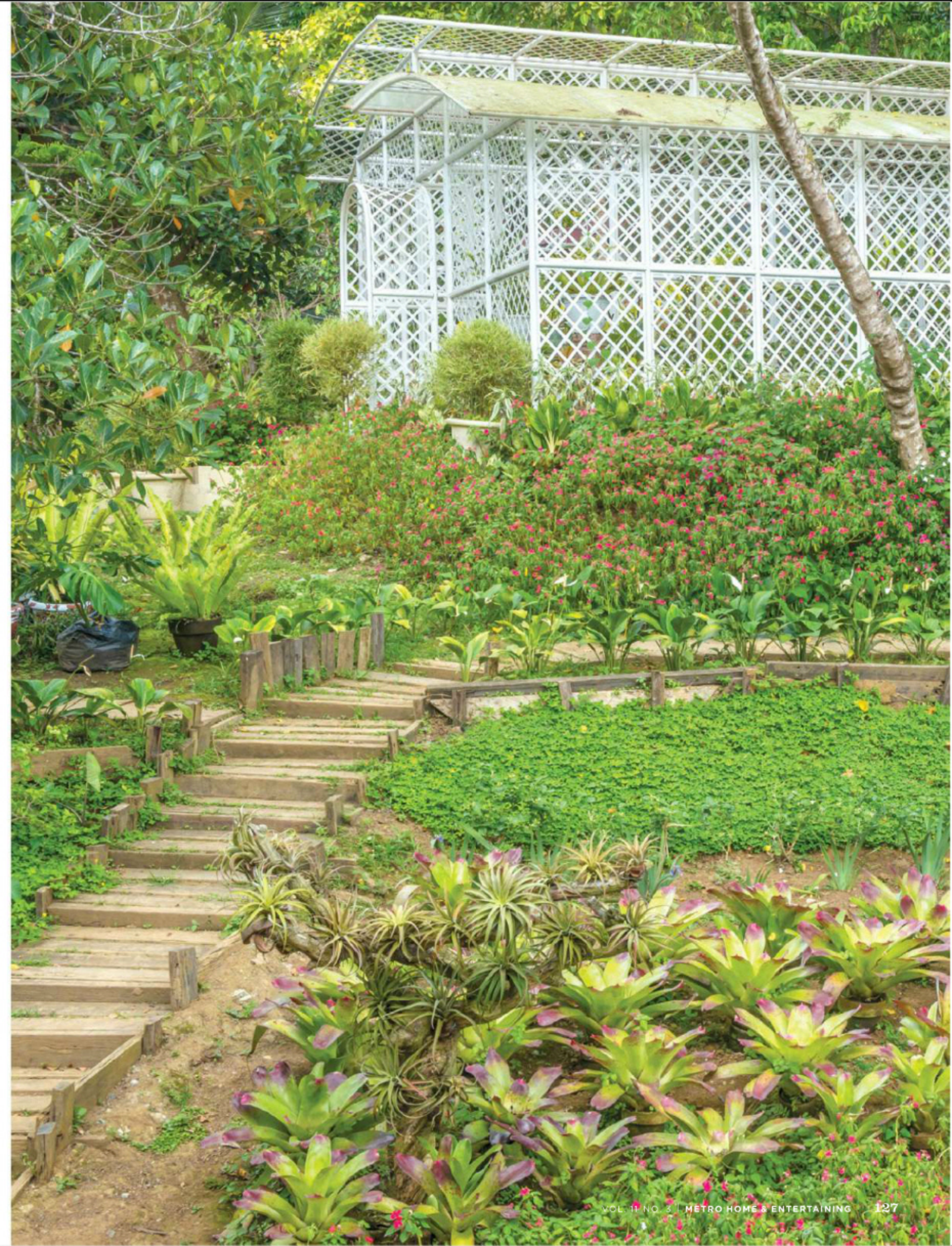
Saving on garden expenses

Tending to a huge garden can be overwhelming and costly. Maryliz shares how Hillcreek saves on their gardening expenses while keeping every pocket healthy and well-maintained:

1. Schedule regular grass cutting and trimming of flowering shrubs.
2. In Hillcreek, the pond water is recycled to water the grass and

plants, which is a very rich source of natural fertilizer in itself.

3. We do vermiculture as an organic source of fertilizer.
4. We never throw plant cuttings. They are used for propagation of plants.
5. To save on manpower, we have a water sprinkler system in many areas to keep the grass and plants watered properly.



A Green Revelation

ANTONIO GARCIA OF MABOLO FLOWERS AND HOME TRIES TO HELP THE PLANET, ONE GARDEN AT A TIME

BY MAAN D'ASIS PAMARAN
PHOTOGRAPHS BY PAUL DEL ROSARIO



Landscape specialist Antonio Garcia, amongst a bevy of blooms in his flower shop, Mabolo.

THE SEEDS FOR ANTONIO V.K.

Garcia's love for his craft were planted in his childhood. "I was about 12 when I found this weird plant at the side of the house and put it in our garden. It got bigger and bigger, then blooms started to come out. It was a heliconia."

"Then there was my mother's uncle who had a beautiful old home in Pasay, with a magnificent collection of ferns and begonias."

He also remembers building, with his brother and their *Lola's* houseboy, a wooden deck on one of their beautiful mango trees.

The exposure to the community at UP Los Baños fostered

the passion as well. "It was during Martial Law when we had the Green Revolution. At UPLB, I met collectors, doctors, horticulturists, and they mentored me. This interest in plants led me to travel to different parts of the world, to sister campuses, where I met experts in the fields of design, ergonomics of furniture, environmental architecture, and what is basically space management. I did a lot of cross campus studies, under mentorship programs, at one point staying in Mexico for 17 months."

Coming home in 1986, "I set out to do what I had studied: tooling and crafting of furniture.

Together with my brother and a couple of craftsmen, we put up a shop for the design export industry."

When things started to slow down in the export industry due to the peso devaluation, he found his new calling. "When I was giving out flowers, people were asking if I could arrange it for them. I started with friends' weddings and dinner parties. Soon, I got a call asking if I wanted to set up a shop, because they had a space available for me."

He and his sister named the shop Mabolo, after the fruit of the *kamagong* tree. "It was part of my advocacy to bring

back indigenous plants that are becoming rare, such as *macopa*, *champaca*, bridal veil, and jade vine. I am happy that I was recently able to cultivate a *batuan* tree, which is endemic in Iloilo, here in Manila."

Aside from offering cut flowers, Antonio also does gardens for friends, and his landscape projects range from homes to resorts.

He calls for more people to care for the planet by reducing their carbon footprint, and one way to do that is to go green. "I am a staunch believer, an advocate that what you give to the earth, you will get back in return. And it does not mean that you need hundreds of square meters of garden... no, wherever you live, you can do your share."

He adds, "Space is a valuable commodity these days, not everyone can live in a house with grounds for a garden. There are many who choose to live in a condominium because it is more convenient for them to get to work or school. However, there is a psychological effect, because you feel like you are boxed in, and this is more so with children

and pets like dogs."

For living spaces like these, he advises introducing the outdoors indoors. "Whether it is cut flowers or a potted orchid, palm, or dracaena, it brings so much oxygen without your realizing it. Plants bring down your carbon footprint from the smallest of scales to the largest of growers. This is why we need more green spaces in our country."

RIGHT: A lush bamboo grove that cools the senses. BELOW: The lobby of Asya Premier Suites in Boracay, one of his landscaping projects.



EXPERT ADVICE Landscape Basics

ANTONIO GARCIA TALKS ABOUT HIRING A PRO TO HELP YOUR GARDEN GROW.

Why is landscaping important? I believe we have a duty to Mother Earth to make our surroundings as pleasant as possible through landscape. It keeps us interested in nature, gives us a kick of creativity and makes us explore our inner selves. Also, entertaining in your outer spaces is quite magical. Private spaces may also be created for certain activities such as meditation and yoga.

What are the advantages of landscaping vis-à-vis planting without planning? Understanding landscape is key and vital, with equal importance given to the architecture and lifestyle. There are quite a few important aspects to know like the various styles of landscape, from classical all the way to free form. It is also very important to understand and accept that there are "zones" that dictate the kind of landscape we can do. At the same time, it is vital to understand the importance of area preparation and to have a clear-cut vision of a plan. Keeping your clients abreast of what is possible is very important.

Why hire a landscaper? Hiring a professional, a friend or an aficionado is beneficial. Completing a project can be overwhelming and sometimes quite a bundle to handle. Ideas, concepts and designs result from having these trusted people around. It makes your path and direction clearer. Just make sure that there are not too many people involved because that could further muddle the eventual outcome of what you're trying to achieve.

What part of the project should you come in? The architecture and lifestyle are designed first; landscape comes in once everything is final. In other cases, the landscape specialist may get involved in at the inception of the lot plan and work in conjunction with the architect or designer. This process becomes a team effort, thus creating a total lifestyle concept. The visions of both creative sides are considered vital because there are aspects to the exterior concept that are part and parcel of the whole project. These may be water features, a swimming or lap pool or a meditative space. *Mabolo Flowers* website: www.maboloflowers.com

Wonders Cast in Stone

FORMIDABLE INVESTMENTS THAT IMBUE YOUR GARDEN WITH ELEGANCE

BY IRISH DEGALA
PHOTOGRAPHS BY WILLIAM ONG



LEFT: House of Precast proprietor, Michelle Galan. RIGHT: Various garden ornaments in precast concrete. BELOW LEFT: Precast sculpture in early stages of completion.



LOCATED IN CUBAO, QUEZON CITY, The House of Precast continues to embrace the legacy that was started by a dream.

Established in 1948 by Conrado de Leon and now managed by his able daughter Michelle, with her husband Martin Galan, this sculpture and ornamentation firm's high standards of art and quality can be seen in the confines of the discerning: in gardens from Malacañang to New Manila, in mansions from Bacolod to Davao, as well as in the fountains of Fort Santiago.

Architectural ornamental precast concrete has all the advantages that have made concrete the most widely used man-made material in the world—strength, formability, affordability, and impressive insulative qualities and the flexibility that affords its aesthetic qualities.

The third generation

"Most of the (precast) models were inherited from the father of my wife. This business started 65 years ago, in 1948. We are third-generation precasters," says Martin.

This new generation of precasters have managed to introduce new procedures in production without jeopardizing the traditional procedures of design and execution,

maintaining the highest level of craftsmanship in Philippine ornamental arts.

"When we took over the business in 1989, we had six old employees. When new workers come in, they work as retouchers and basic helpers. When they show potential, they are trained four to five years before they can touch everything here. You just don't learn these things. It takes time, so the average employee has been with us for more than 10 years, and we have housing and scholarships for them already," Martin explains.

The House of Precast offers a full complement of lawn and garden products, including angels and cupids, balusters, bird baths, birds and animals, brackets, car-touches, frames, columns, capitals, dwarves, fairy-tale figures, fountains, heads and busts, lanterns, mouldings, oriental sculptures, panels, planters, relief sculptures, religious statuary, rosettes, screens, statues and statuettes, tables and benches.

When it comes to historical reproduction, detail is everything for the House of Precast. They have a staff of experienced craftsmen who repair damaged originals, cast new molds, and create new pieces that blend seamlessly with the originals.

"We cater to different clients here and



LEFT: Numerous themes executed by The House of Precast, including a rendition of the Pieta, originally by Italian Renaissance artist, Michelangelo. RIGHT: Sea monster, gargoyle and a column rendered in precast concrete.

abroad. In early 2000, we pioneered in restoration. We did work in Malacañang Palace," says Martin, whose credentials, he reveals, includes being a member of the board of the Heritage Conservation Society. "We did restoration work on the arches of the Manila Cathedral," he adds.

The House of Precast also welcomes custom designs. Lead times for custom work vary according to the scope and complexity of the project. Because of the expertise required to produce bespoke work, The House of Precast retains ownership of all patterns and molds.

"Our advantage, aside from the art, is architectural engineering. We are the only company whose works were exhibited in the National Museum. My father-in-law has patented works to his name. No other precast company can do that," Martin points out.

Their products are available for both residential and commercial projects, and they can work directly with builders, con-



LEFT: Garden ornaments by House of Precast. ABOVE RIGHT: The molding stage of the process. BELOW RIGHT: Wall ornament set against a precast wall panel.



tractors and homeowners. Their product line comes in a variety of custom colors and textures to give the appearance of natural, carved stone.

A fascinating history

The House of Precast has a fascinating history. Standing on a 1,700-sq. m. lot, its grand garden reflects the horticultural heritage of 18th century garden design. Engineered to withstand the various weather conditions, the concrete lawn ornaments and precast garden statues maintain their timeless beauty, owing to the superior selection of both modern and traditional precast garden ornaments that includes concrete bird baths, fountains, and accent stones, precast yard benches, concrete dragons and assorted concrete animals.

"My parents were the third settlers in the entire Cubao (pointing to the old house)," says Michelle. "My father designed the layout. He was a great collector of plants,

and owned rare varieties. We have the oldest Ashoka tree in Metro Manila. We were the first ones to have it."

As with any construction components exposed to the weather, care and maintenance is a major consideration. "Our ornamental cast stones weather well because our precast products last. Cleaning is number one. We rarely paint. Most of these are stone finishes—cement and marble or whatever stones that we crush together. If we made the precast item, we will restore it. There are ethics and procedures," Martin explains.

Competitively priced and engineered to last, the House of Precast's wide variety of ornamental concrete designs lets your imagination run free. Whether your goal is a garden in the traditional English, Mediterranean, or Asian style or one that is more whimsical and eclectic, The House of Precast has what you are looking for. **Check them on their website www.houseofprecast.com**

EXPERT ADVICE

How to care for cast stone

IT IS RECOMMENDED that all pieces be treated with a water sealer once a year for fountains and birdbaths, and every other year for statues, benches, etc. Air pollution and acid rain do more damage to concrete statuary than anything. They affect natural stone, too. But keeping concrete statuary looking new may not be desirable for all garden settings. To give statuary a natural antiqued appearance, permit them to "age gracefully" and develop moss growth. Take precaution with pieces exposed to weather cycles. Here are helpful suggestions:

- Place planters left outdoors year-round on pot risers, tiles or pieces of pressure-treated wood to leave the drainage hole open.
- Raise birdbath/fountain bases, statuary and bench legs off the ground so they will not come in contact with the soil.
- Bring the tops of birdbaths and fountain bowls indoors, or if that's not possible, turn them upside down or cover them with plastic or waterproof tarps so they don't fill with water and expand.
- Drain fountains during rainy season, and remove pumps and drain pipes, if accessible.

If your fountain or statuary comes with a warranty, be sure to understand what it covers and follow the manufacturer's maintenance instructions. Cast stone installations with marble or limestone aggregates may sometimes be cleaned with the same alkaline pre-wash/acid after wash chemical cleaning systems used to clean limestone and other calcareous natural stones. If no marble or limestone aggregates are present, acidic cleaners, such as those used for natural granites and sandstones, may be used.

entertaining

Porcelain Canvas

Select series of drawings by famous modernist artist Marc Chagall are in the latest collection of Bernardaud, premier manufacturer and exporter of Limoges porcelain. This new collection features lesser known works of Chagall and is exclusively available in Rustan's Makati and Shangri-La Plaza. *Bernardaud Marc Chagall "Dome of the Garnier Opera" Coupe Plate, ©ADAGP, Paris 2014-Chagall®*



Bernardaud Marc Chagall Double Face Tray, ©ADAGP, Paris 2014-Chagall®



Bernardaud Marc Chagall Breakfast cups and saucers, ©ADAGP, Paris 2014-Chagall®



Gracious Gatherings

CHEF JESSIE SINCIOCO TALKS ABOUT HOSTING GET-TOGETHERS THAT CREATE WONDERFUL MEMORIES. THINK GOOD FOOD AND GOOD COMPANY

BY MAAN D'ASIS PAMARAN
PHOTOGRAPHS BY JOVEL LORENZO

CELEBRITY CHEF JESSIE SINCIOCO is literally on top of the metropolis these days, as she savors the view from her fabulous 100 Revolving Restaurant in Eastwood, Libis, Quezon City. Here, she serves her signature dishes that genuine foodies enjoy, along with the novel experience of spinning slowly to catch a panorama like no other.

While her success can make her feel like she's walking on air, Jessie remains grounded and homey. Her childhood memories help keep her feet on *terra firma*. She recalls, "I am from Angat in Bulacan, and I remember that our house would be jam-packed during Christmas and town fiestas. We would even set up a tent to accommodate all the guests! My mom had really great PR skills, and people came to enjoy the food that was prepared at our house from morning until night!"

The family tradition continues to this day, and they are usually tasked to feed one of the bands that would march along the streets for the fiesta. "When they pass our house, they would point to it and say, '*Diyan yung masarap ang pagkain!*'" she says with a laugh.

'I love to entertain'

In her own Manila home, Jessie keeps guests at a more manageable number. She says, "I love to entertain! My friends like to come over to my house, but my biggest problem is time. I am busy with my restaurants (Chef Jessie at Rockwell Club, Top of the Citi by Chef Jessie, and 100 Revolving Restaurant), so whenever I entertain, it has to fall on a holiday, or on a special occasion like a birthday, anniversary, or *pag merong balikbayan*. I think a group of 10 would be a manageable size. My dining table can accommodate 10 people, and I think it is better if everybody sits down at one table." She says she can tell if her parties are a success (and we are guessing that they always are) if guests have a good time and tell her that they are so full, they can't eat another bite!



Alugbati Salad

50 grams Fresh *alugbati* Leaves
5 grams Solar dried premium *dulong*
5 grams Fresh Parmesan flakes
2 grams Micro arugula for garnish

Dressing:

25 ml Tamarind purée
75 ml Olive oil
1 tsp Powdered sugar
1 Tbsp White vinegar
1 tsp Honey
Salt and Pepper to taste

1. Pick and wash young *alugbati* leaves. Drain and chill.
2. In a pan with medium hot oil, fry the *dulong* very briefly until crispy. Set aside.
3. In a bowl, combine all the ingredients for the dressing. Mix well.
4. Make a mound of the *alugbati*, Parmesan flakes and *dulong* at the center of a salad plate.
5. Just before serving, apply the dressing and sprinkle the micro arugula all over the salad.

ABOVE LEFT: *Alugbati Salad* by Chef Jessie. RIGHT: 100 Revolving Restaurant's Chef Jessie Sincioco.





Assorted Seafood Gambas

30 grams Tiger prawns, peeled and deveined
30 grams Lapu-lapu fillet
30 grams Salmon fillet
30 grams Seabass fillet
2 pieces Scallops
Salt and pepper

Sauce

1 tbsp Olive oil
40 grams Garlic, minced
20 grams Onion, minced
120 ml Demi Glace
Salt and Pepper to taste

1. Season and grill all the seafood; set aside.
2. Sauté garlic and onion.
3. Add the demi glace.
4. Season with salt and pepper.
5. Arrange grilled seafood on a plate and pour sauce over.

The restaurateur proceeds to share her formula for choosing the menu items and their serving sizes.

She begins, “Usually I have two salads: greens and one with more texture, like a potato salad. My mains would be two meat dishes, typically beef and chicken. Then I also include seafood such as crabs or prawns. I also serve pasta, soup, and a dessert. I also remember to have wine and cheese on hand.”

When there are children, she offers kid-friendly favorites such as roast chicken or chicken cordon bleu instead of the usual fried chicken. “Roast chicken is very easy to make, all you have to do is marinate and leave in the oven for an hour. Kids, as a rule also like pasta.”

Serving size and buffet service

As for the serving size, she advises, “I allot about 100 to 150 grams per person as my basic amount. For example, 150 grams for a salad al-

ready has an allowance for bigger appetites.”

She opts to serve her guests buffet-style, instead of sit-down meals. “I have an island table in my kitchen, where I put my spread. More often than not, though, *napapasarap na ang kwentuhan*, and they don’t want to get up anymore, so I clear the table of the fruits and chips that I set down for starters, and just move the food there. So, it already becomes a family-style service,” she says with a smile.

Hosting a gathering, however intimate it may be, can be a little taxing. Chef Jessie says that preparation is the key. “Have your table ready to receive your guests before they arrive. Put down the place settings such as plates and cutlery. Food prep usually takes two hours, and it is actually quite easy, as long as you have everything on hand. A few minutes before your guests arrive, freshen up, then reheat your food. Preparing ahead can take out the stress of being the host and you’ll be able to concentrate on having a good time with your guests.”



OPPOSITE PAGE: Assorted seafood gambas. CLOCKWISE FROM ABOVE RIGHT: Caviar and quesong puti terrine. Duck adobo. Chef Jessie in action in the kitchen of her 100 Revolving Restaurant.



EXPERT ADVICE

Party Primer

CHEF JESSIE SINCIOCO SHARES MORE TIPS ON HOW TO HOST A SMASHING SHINDIG

ASK FOR PREFERENCES. “My menu would always focus on the guest of honor, because this person is the one that you should aim to please. I always ask what he/she would like to eat, and plan my menu from there. This would make the occasion more memorable for him/her.”

STRIVE FOR BALANCE. “When planning the menu, think of a balanced meal. This means serving vegetables, meat, and carbohydrates like pasta. I also put rice on the table, because this is the Philippines and people always look for rice.”

COOK FRESH. “My usual food stock is for one week, so I go food shopping whenever I entertain. It is very important that everything you cook is fresh.”

CHECK YOUR CUPBOARD. “When you have impromptu gatherings, go for pasta. It is something that is always in your cupboard because it does not spoil. I’m sure you have garlic in your kitchen, too, and you can start from there.”

IT’S OKAY TO GET OUTSIDE HELP. “I do this, too! When I am very busy, I just call the restaurant and have them prepare something for me. There are many establishments that offer good food, and I am sure that you already know where to find things like the best Pancit Malabon or your favorite desserts. I also offer a catering service where my minimum number of guests for a sit-down dinner is 10. Ordering out or having catered food takes out a lot of work, and lets you enjoy your party more.”

Fine Dining 101

THIS CRASH COURSE ON FORMAL DINING SET-UP WILL NO LONGER MAKE YOU FEEL INTIMIDATED BY IT

BY ANTON BARRETTO
PHOTOGRAPH BY TERRY UY

THERE IS A FAMOUS SCENE in the movie *Pretty Woman* where Richard Gere’s character takes Julia Roberts’ tart with a heart to a formal dinner, and in her valiant attempt to eat an escargot, the little shell goes flying across the table and it has to be caught by the ever-alert busboy. In pop culture, a formal dinner party is seen as an obstacle rather than a pleasurable repast. Dining has become increasingly casual, and so a multi-course dinner may seem archaic and on its way to obsolescence. But on the contrary, the popularity of period shows such as *Downton Abbey* has brought on record sales of specialist cutlery (e.g., fish knives) and exquisite stemware. And the elegance and specialness of the formal dinner party is making a comeback in our perpetually rush hour world.

The array of silverware and cutlery may appear intimidating. But master a few easy-to-remember basics and you will be ready to attend any formal dinner. Or better yet, to venture and host your own unforgettable dinner party!

The first step is to determine what courses you’re going to serve. The table setting will depend on the dishes you will serve. A five- or seven-course meal is typical for a formal dinner. The typical courses are served in the following order:

- First course:** Appetizer/shellfish
- Second course:** Soup
- Third course:** Fish
- Fourth course:** Roast
- Fifth course:** Game
- Sixth course:** Salad (yes, salad really does come after the entrée)
- Seventh course:** Dessert
- Eighth course:** Fruit, cheese, and coffee (optional)
- Ninth Course:** Nuts and raisins (optional)

Now, here comes the fun part: choosing your china. If you feel one pattern is beautiful enough to use alone then you can serve all dishes using one set of china. If you feel adventurous, you can mix patterns and styles to create a more colorful and fun setting.

The centerpiece of the place setting is the charger. This is a large dish that goes beneath each of the plates. The charger will remain on the table until after the entrée has been consumed, and then it should be

removed along with the entrée plate. Silver chargers would be the traditional choice but, again, you can be more adventurous with your choices.

Then on to the silverware. The cutlery has an array of designs and functions. You’ll need one fork for each of the meat dishes. A seafood fork should be used for a seafood appetizer; a spoon for the soup and dessert; knives for the entrée, butter; and of course, a fish knife if fish is served.

There is a proper way of choosing glasses, more formally known as stemware. The glasses you choose to use will vary on what you are serving with dinner. Traditionally, there is at least a water goblet and a glass for wine. Place the water goblet directly above the knife, along the same level with the bread and butter dish. Add your wine glass to the right of that, typically above the soup spoon. If you add a third wine glass, place it above and between the water glass and the first wine glass. An optional champagne flute can be included as well, and this should be placed above and to the right of the first wine glass. Similar to the utensils, your glasses should be placed in order of use.

A bit of formality and a few hours dedicated to enjoying fine cuisine, plus an artfully set table, are quintessential to a civilized evening. 🍷



The butter and bread dish will be placed above and to the left of the charger. The butter knife should be placed across the butter/bread dish.

Place your dessert spoon and optional dessert fork above, and your plate aligned horizontally.

Water is often served already in the glass, while wine and champagne are poured during the courses.

On the left side of the charger, you should have your fish fork, salad fork, entrée fork.

Your napkins can be positioned properly folded to the left of the forks or resting on the charger.

A place card should be directly on top of the dessert spoon.

The multiple forks, spoons and knives may appear to be a challenge but the one basic rule is that you start from the outside and work your way in, nearer and nearer the plate.

Each of the utensils should be evenly spaced from each other and the charger.

On the right side of your charger, place your dinner knife, fish knife, and soup spoon.

Dealing With Rude People

SIMPLY IGNORE THEM

ILLUSTRATION BY ARLENE SY

MISS DEMEANOUR: Have you ever been so appalled by rudeness that you wanted to slap the perpetrator?

CAT: It doesn't do any good to answer rudeness with rudeness. As Sting's song goes, it takes a gentleman to suffer ignorance and smile. And so it is best to just smile and perhaps, change the subject, or politely excuse yourself.

MISS DEMEANOUR: Even if you've been told something completely annoying such as my personal favorite, 'You look tired!' It makes me so exasperated I want to blurt out, 'Yes, tired of you and your unwanted comments.'

CAT: We've all been there. When faced with rude remarks, I sometimes pretend that I didn't hear well, and shift the conversation to something harmless such as 'Do you remember the last time we had a long chat?' Also, there's a fine line between being

rude and being mean. If there is cruelty involved, then firmly but calmly say, 'You are being unnecessarily inconsiderate and insensitive.'

MISS DEMEANOUR: Well, there is a certain satisfaction in taking control of the situation and uplifting the conversation back to civilized levels.

Gentle Reminders

- Try to avoid commenting on people's weight. Slim people don't appreciate being told they are too skinny, and overweight people don't have to be reminded of their excess poundage.
- Asking about money is a no-no, as money matters are considered private. If you are being pestered to reveal, say, how much someone spent, or one's salary, it is best to say that you don't know the exact number and move on to other topics.
- When assaulted by rude comments, count to ten before answering back. Do not retort with an equally insensitive response. Just change the topic.



Perched on the Pippa

THE SEAMLESS MARRIAGE OF PRACTICALITY AND LUXE

BY ANA ROCHA
PHOTOGRAPH COURTESY OF HERMÈS



LET US START with the meaning of the word "covet." It is to desire or want. I love the hunt. It is fun to look for objects that may occupy one's dreams. This page is meant to provide inspiration. Inspiration is derived from people, places and objects that have the ability to constantly awe. Let me share with you the beauty of both the natural and the contrived. Let us appreciate this together. I began this page with a classic piece from Maison Hermès. I encountered the Pippa chair years back in Paris. It is a classic whose beauty lies in the fact that it marries practicality and luxe seamlessly. It is simplicity and complexity personified. Be inspired.



Pippa chair, Hermès, www.hermes.com.

Out-of-the-box Interiors

EMBRACE INFLUENCES
THAT ARE RELEVANT TO
YOUR PERSONAL STYLE

BY BARBARA PARDO-TIANGCO
PHOTOGRAPHS BY IAN CASTAÑARES

MATCHING FURNITURE
and accessories is a thing of the past. Today, individuals create a home that reflects their tastes, facets of their personalities instead of that once popular store-bought showroom look.

Today's homeowner has the confidence to pair and match designs, eras and styles. Design definitions are as rustic elegant and modern traditional as to lounge asymmetry and a welcome eclectic design trend. Homes this year embrace influences that are relevant to the individual regardless of which aesthetic category they belong to.

This results in a less rigid, less schooled but personal look.

[illegible]

elements / TRENDS

The Fashion Connection

FOR THE HOME.
INTERPRETATIONS
OF THE LATEST
RUNWAY LOOKS

SIMILAR TO FASHION'S runway, the home market is seeking an all-enriching compass for the things that appeal to the emotions and the senses. Reflecting exotic travels, delicate childhood memories, and art, today's trends for the home have less to do with rules, and everything to do with the visceral. It's all about *materiality* and its seduction. What appeals to your senses and to your innermost emotions is what works. After all, your home is your space, so put your personal stamp on it. Let our pages of carefully selected ideas be your guide to finding the trend lines in your trends.

—Anna M. Boucra/Photograph by Ian Castelhano

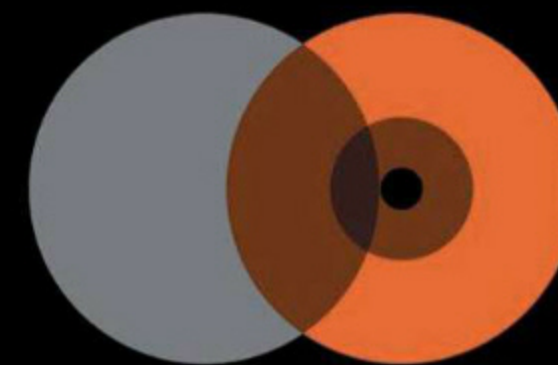
IN THE WINDOW: (Clockwise) Patti Taylor Adams' *Life's Striving* with teal, #42-50, #50-7's. Blue flower vase, #700. Elong small glass vase, #450. Green glass lantern, #250. A pair Regalium Pencilbox, Loretta Rock, #1,700. Chrysler Mini, Blue-Tone low stool, #42-50. Ruston's *Strutted until passed, gone again* request. Jo-Lisa Arts and Antiques. **BUTTON:** FROM LEFT: Window's down. Price under \$1,000. Jo-Lisa Arts and Antiques. *Shut on location* Jo-Lisa Arts and Antiques.



Website: www.theempirestyle.com; **Ethan Allen**, G/F The Residences at Greenbelt, San Lorenzo Tower, Esperanza St. Makati City. Tel. 794-2095 to 97; **Firma**, Ground Level Greenbelt 3, Esperanza St. corner Makati Ave., Ayala Center, Makati City. Tel. 757-4009; **Hive by Restoration**, 3/F Greenbelt 5, Legazpi St., Ayala Center, Makati. Tel. 729-8717; **Hülsta**, 3/F of Fully Booked, Building 6, 11th Avenue, Bonifacio High Street, Bonifacio Global City, Taguig. Tel. 738-2430; **Jo-Liza Arts and Antiques**, 664 Jose Abad Santos, Little Baguio, San Juan City. 4/F Bldg. B SM Megamall. Tel. 725-8303, 724-1944, and 725-3324. Fax: 725-2980; **Kish**, 233 N. Garcia St., Bel-Air, Makati City. Tel. 896-8366, Fax: 896-8367. Email: info@kish.ph; **My APT**, Suite 225, LRI Design Plaza, 210 N. Garcia St. (Reposo), Bel-Air II, Makati City. Tel. 804-3772. Website: www.heimastore.com; **NEST**, Jupiter St. cor. Paseo de Roxas, Bel-Air 3, Makati City. Tel. 818-8811 and 403-3062; **Our Home**, Website: www.ourhome.ph; **Regaleng Pambahay**, 6/F East Wing, Shangri-la Plaza Mall, EDSA cor.

Shaw Blvd., Mandaluyong City. Tel. 941-3113. Email: salesrp@regalongpambahay.com. Website: www.regalongpambahay.com; **Rustan's**, Shangri-La Plaza, EDSA corner Shaw Boulevard, Mandaluyong City. Tel. 633-4636. Website: www.rustans.com.ph; **Shelter**, 6/F Shangri La Plaza East Wing, EDSA corner Shaw Boulevard, Mandaluyong City. Tel. 633-1626. Email: sheltermanila@gmail.com; **Sifra Interiors & Objects**, 3/F Greenbelt 5, 3/F, Home Zone Glorietta 4, 2/F LRI Design Plaza, N. Garcia Bel-Air 2, Makati City. Tel. 501-3220 / 752-7174. Email: sifra.interiors@yahoo.com; **The Stockroom**, 2/F New Tiendesitas Mall, Pasig City; **Urban Abode**, CW Home Depot - Ortigas, #1 Dona Julia Vargas Ave., cor. Meralco Ave., Brgy. Ugong, Pasig City. Tel. 586-0026. Mobile no. 09175775683. Email: urbanabode.ortigas@gmail.com; **Vitra**, 3/F MOs Design, B2 Bonifacio High Street, Bonifacio Global City, Taguig. Tel no. 403-6620; **Xbesitzer**, 178 Mabini St. Brgy. Addition Hills, San Juan City. Mobile no. 0915-380 5172. Email: xbesitzer@gmail.com.

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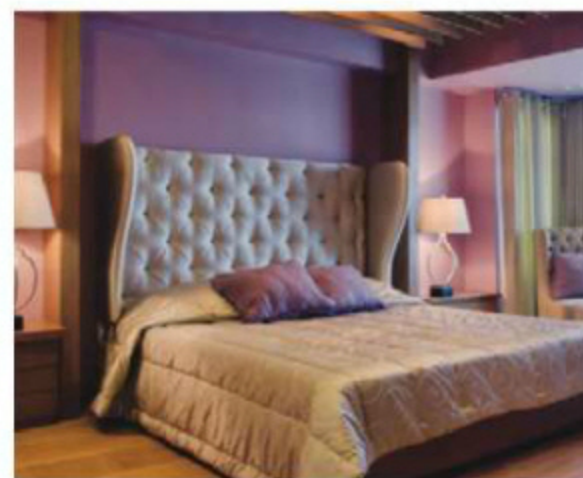
90.7 CEBU • 93.1 DAVAO • 99.1 BACOLOD • 105.1 BAGUIO

Advocate of Filipino Design

PHILIPPINE SCHOOL OF INTERIOR DESIGN DIRECTOR AND TEACHER JIE PAMBID AIMS TO UPLIFT FILIPINO CREATIVITY AND ARTISTRY
PHOTOGRAPH BY HAROLD TAPAN



FROM LEFT: Interior designer and professor Jie Pambid. Some of his residential projects where he combines functionality, design, and practicality.



PHOTOGRAPHS BY GREG MAYO AND WILLIAM ONG, COURTESY OF JIE PAMBID

WHAT ARE YOUR TOP FIVE PRIORITIES IN DESIGNING SPACES? Function is very important because it practically dictates the layout, the furniture, everything. Then I take into account safety and comfort. The design of the space should guarantee the safety and comfort of the people who are using it. Then comes the cost of working within a budget. Last is the aesthetics, when we go into colors, fabrics, style but in order of priority.

THERE ARE MANY DESIGN STYLES. WHAT ATTRACTS YOU THE MOST? WHY? I'm an advocate of Filipino design, especially Filipino contemporary or Filipino tropical. I feel that people are not using it enough, even if

it has limitless possibilities because the Philippines is culturally and traditionally rich in a lot of design details—colors, fabric, indigenous materials. I would bring to the fore the Filipino identity as far as design is concerned. That's my specialty, and I like to be able to do that a lot.

WHAT CAN YOU SAY ABOUT THE DESIGN EVOLUTION IN OUR COUNTRY? DO YOU SEE AN EMERGENCE OF CREATIVITY AND TALENT? Filipino furniture designers are making it big because of their creativity. The designers from Mactan are featured in international magazines. People from abroad always flock to our furniture trade fairs.

WHEN RECOMMENDING DESIGNERS TO YOUR FRIENDS, WHAT FACTORS DO YOU CONSIDER? I would recommend somebody who's very reliable and responsible. In interior design, we're always on a deadline. My recommendee must meet deadlines and turn over the project at the designated time.

WHAT ASPECT OF MANILA WOULD YOU CHANGE AS A DESIGNER? Urban planning. Urban design. *Kasi* sometimes all the lampposts are ugly, the landscaping is ugly, the flow actually leaves much to be desired. The Manila of the 1920s, 1930s, and 1940s was excellently planned. *Sayang, di ba?* I think it all stems from the fact that we don't recognize

our own identity, and we base it on somebody else's, on Hong Kong, Singapore. *Nagkakaroon tuloy ng chopsuey effect ang ating* urban planning. Given the opportunity, I think that's one thing I will sink my teeth into.

IF YOU CAN GIVE ONLY ONE DESIGN TIP, WHAT WOULD IT BE? Interior design works in a personal space. So I would still infuse the personality of the owner. As designers, we're facilitators of that (infusion). I tell my clients to accessorize based on what they like. But I'm not going to insist on my style because I'm not going to be using that room, it's the client's. **📞** Contact him through Philippine School of Interior Design tel. no. 887-4632 or 887-2126.